THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXIV (1946)

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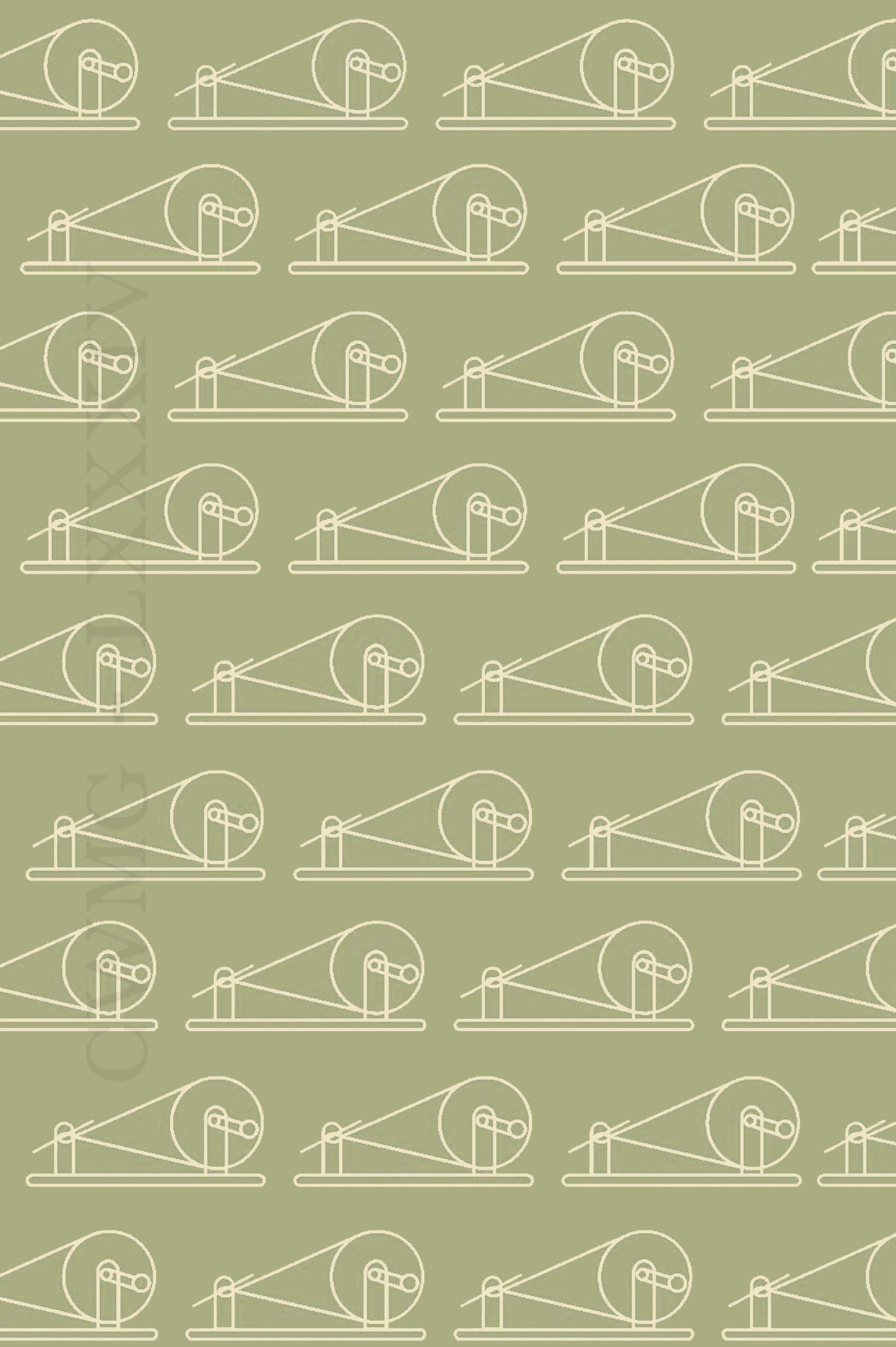


THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

THE
COLLECTED
WORKS
OF
MAHATMA
GANDHI
LXXXIV
(1946)

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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXIV

(April 14, 1946 – July 15, 1946)

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WITH LORD PATHIC-LAWRENCE

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXIV

(April 14, 1946 – July 15, 1946)

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
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PREFACE

The period (April 14 to July 15, 1946) covered by the present volume is largely taken up with the negotiations carried on by the Congress under Gandhiji's leadership with the British Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy for arriving at the modalities that would govern the transfer of power to Indian hands. It also marks the final phase of Gandhiji's leadership, when he is content to guide the Congress leaders while offering well-meant advice to the British representatives. At the same time he was actively preparing the people for the responsibility of self-rule and struggling with all his moral might against M. A. Jinnah who, impelled more by personal ambition than by genuine concern for the future of Islam on the sub-continent, was driving the country towards a suicidal division.

The Cabinet Delegation had arrived in the last week of March and, after prolonged but fruitless discussions with Indian leaders, issued on May 16 a State Paper (App. VII), proposing a three-tier Constitution which would formally preserve India's political unity and also partly satisfy the Muslim League demand for separate political self-expression for Muslims. Convinced of the sincerity and goodwill of the Mission, Gandhiji commended the paper as "the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances" (p. 169). But the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the plan filled Gandhiji with vague but deep fears about its working. He could not however explain these fears in rational terms and he advised the Congress Working Committee members to come to a decision independently of him, exhorted the people to follow the lead of the Working Committee and also helped at every step in promoting co-operation between the Congress and the Mission. But Gandhiji's fears proved true and in a few months' time the whole plan came to grief, aggravating the communal tensions which the Muslim League demand for Pakistan had generated.

The fundamental difference between Gandhiji's approach and that of the British Government was that while the latter thought exclusively in terms of political expedients based on a balance of agreements and disagreements among leaders, Gandhiji was concerned with the effects of any arrangements on the future progress and well-being of the country's millions. He used to describe the two approaches as "constitutional swaraj" and "organic

swaraj'' (*vide* Vol. XXXVII), meaning by the latter a political order sustained by the power of healthy and well-informed public opinion and promoting the moral, social and economic growth of all classes of people. Such ''organic swaraj'' (which Gandhiji also called Ramarajya) would be the only true democracy, based on truth and non-violence, in which people would obey the Government normally and cheerfully because they respected it, not reluctantly because they feared it. A deeply and sincerely religious man, Gandhiji believed in the politics of mutual trust and human brotherhood. He therefore deemed Pakistan a ''sin'' and could not, he said, co-operate to ''make sin a success'' (p. 385).

The State Paper rejected Pakistan on political, administrative, economic and military grounds and provided, instead, for a Central Government limited to the subjects of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications with powers to raise finances for them and for grouping in sub-federations of the Provinces in the North-East and North-West zones claimed by the Muslim League for Pakistan (pp. 469-71).

And while Gandhiji saw in it the definite intention of the British ''to get off India's back'' (p. 162), this commitment, he pointed out, was only ''the first step in the act of renunciation'' and was therefore like ''a promissory note'' (p. 171). For the note to be fully honoured, other steps were essential. Gandhiji explained them in a letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence (pp. 173-4), as also in a *Harijan* article (pp. 209-11). They related to the position of the European members of the Assemblies with regard to the Constituent Assembly, the exercise of Paramountcy in the intervening period, the withdrawal of British troops from India and the installation of an Interim National Government at the Centre. Gandhiji also assumed that the provision for the grouping of Provinces in sub-federations in the North-East and North-West zones was voluntary and that individual units would be free to keep away from the very beginning from the groups to which they were assigned. On the first two points, Gandhiji got partly satisfactory assurances from the Mission members (pp. 497, 173-4 and 478), but the latter were firm that the troops would not be withdrawn till after the Constituent Assembly had completed its labours and the Government of free India was established ''in accordance with the instrument produced'' by it (p. 480). Gandhiji and the Congress did not accept the position but acquiesced in it. The last two points, the installation of an Interim Government and freedom to Provinces to keep away from

the grouping, presented insoluble difficulties and ultimately led to the breakdown of the Mission Plan.

The Muslim League in its resolution of June 6 accepting the Mission Plan reiterated "that the attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India", and agreed "to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed" in the Mission's scheme "in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan. . ." (p. 488). The Congress Working Committee also felt that the Central Government as envisaged in the State Paper would be too limited for the affairs of a large country like India. But the Committee overcame its apprehensions and passed a resolution on June 26 accepting the plan outlined in the State Paper since it felt that, "taking the proposals as a whole, there was sufficient scope for enlarging and strengthening the Central authority and for ensuring the right of a Province to act according to its choice in regard to grouping. . ." (*Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 165).

Gandhiji advised the A. I. C. C., which met on July 7, to endorse the Working Committee's Resolution, but he was not happy with the decision. He attached great importance to the installation of an Interim Government which would practically function as a free Government, but there was no such Government in sight. From the very beginning he had been pressing the Mission members to give priority to the formation of an Interim National Government, for both political and practical reasons. Only when such a Government was formed, and not before, he wrote to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, "can a true picture of coming events be presented". The practical reason was the food crisis which had overtaken the country as a result of war shortages and official mismanagement. It demanded "immediate formation of a strong, capable and homogeneous National Government". "Every day's delay", Gandhiji added, "in forming such a Government is agony added to the agony of the famished millions of India" (p. 174). As the delay continued, he wrote in despair to Sir Stafford Cripps wondering "whether a satisfactory Interim Government will ever be formed . . ." (p. 216). The Mission members, however, found themselves faced with the old, insuperable difficulty of Jinnah's insistence on parity of representation between the Congress and the Muslim League. At the Simla Conference in July 1945, the Congress Working Committee had accepted against Gandhiji's advice Hindu-Muslim parity in place of Congress-League parity provided for in the

Bhulabhai Desai-Liaquat Ali Khan agreement of preceding January which had Gandhiji's endorsement. This time also the Congress would not accept Congress-League parity, and Hindu-Muslim parity as an alternative was not even discussed.

Gandhiji advised the Viceroy to by-pass the parity issue and invite the Congress and the Muslim League to submit a joint list representing "a coalition Government composed of persons of proved ability and incorruptibility". If they failed to produce a joint list, the Viceroy should examine the separate lists of the two parties and "accept either the one or the other (not an amalgam). . ." (p. 320). Gandhiji wrote again the next day, on June 13: "You are a great soldier —a daring soldier. Dare to do the right. You must make your choice of one horse or the other. . . . Choose the names submitted either by the Congress or the League. For God's sake do not make an incompatible mixture and in trying to do so produce a fearful explosion" (pp. 328-9). To Cripps also Gandhiji wrote: "As I see it the Mission is playing with fire. . . . You will have to choose between the two—the Muslim League and the Congress . . . Either you swear by what is right or by what the exigencies of British policy may dictate" (p. 330).

Gandhiji's solution required moral courage and a firm faith in the goodness and intelligence of the masses when given free play through "organic swaraj". Such courage and faith, or the wisdom of Solomon forbidding vivisection, could not be expected of practical politicians or administrators. The Mission members and the Viceroy feared that a one-sided arrangement such as Gandhiji proposed, either with regard to the Constitution-making machinery or the composition of the Interim Government, would lead to a civil war. Summarizing Gandhiji's attitude at a meeting on May 6, the Viceroy noted: "Gandhi seemed quite unmoved at the prospect of civil war, I think he had adopted Patel's thesis that if we are firm the Muslims will not fight" (p. 466). Recommending the proposals set forth in their State Paper of May 16, the Mission appealed "to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people" (pp. 475-6).

Gandhiji put his faith in those "four hundred millions", whom he knew well to be "godfearing and law-abiding". His hope was that the masses had "sufficiently imbibed the spirit of ahimsa" and that when the British went there might be "a little fight here and there" and then we should "settle down as bro-

thers giving a lesson of peace to the world'' (p. 47). The presence of the third party, pretending to be an impartial judge, encouraged the communal leaders to address their arguments to that party rather than to the common people who could be counted on to exert their own restraining influence on the extremists in either community. Charged with the sole responsibility of running the Government of the country, the Congress or the Muslim League, Gandhiji was convinced, would display greater realism and take pains not to put itself in the wrong in the eyes of the masses. British representatives, including Lord Mountbatten later, failed to appreciate this reasoning behind Gandhiji's suggestion to hand over power either to the Congress or to the Muslim League and persisted in their efforts to bring about an artificial agreement among leaders at the top.

Failing in that effort, Lord Wavell announced on June 16 a composite list drawn up by himself which, while denying parity to the Muslim League, also denied to the Congress the right it claimed of including a nationalist Muslim among its nominees. Both the Congress Working Committee and Jinnah were reconciled to the position. But Gandhiji pressed the Congress Working Committee not to sacrifice its character as a national organization by waiving its right, and even gave notice that if it yielded ''he would have nothing to do with the whole business and leave Delhi'' (p. 347). His firmness, coupled with ''the general right'' conceded by the Viceroy to Jinnah to have a say in the selection of names in future (pp. 387-8), finally decided the Committee against accepting the Viceroy's plan for the Interim Government.

For Gandhiji the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission were an experiment in trust. Though he felt dissatisfied with their approach and disagreed with their proposals, he was convinced of their sincerity and stressed it in all his public utterances on the subject (pp. 92, 102, 145, 162, 210-1 and 341). Even at the A. I. C. C. meeting in Bombay on July 7, Gandhiji declared that, whatever the defects in the State Paper of May 16, he had ''no doubt as to the honesty of those who have framed it'' (pp. 421-2). But in his private correspondence with the two Mission members whom he knew personally, Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps, he freely expressed his dissatisfaction. To Cripps he wrote: ''You do not understand how uneasy I feel. Something is wrong. But,'' he added, ''I shall come to Simla'' (p. 83). And again about a month later: ''But I shall hope against hope and work for the success of the Mis-

sion even in spite of itself, though not hiding from them or the public honest doubt'' (p. 216). A draft letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence vividly expresses the personal struggle in Gandhiji. ''As for me, I would gladly stay behind if you want me to. But I feel that I shall be a useless adviser. I can only advise out of the fulness of trust. I become paralysed when distrust chokes me'' (p. 324). In an interview on June 29 to Norman Cliff, Gandhiji summed up the final outcome of the Mission's efforts: ''While I have no distrust of the four actors''—the three Cabinet ministers of the Mission and the Viceroy—''I have a distrust of the way things have gone. . . . They have done a faithful job and yet a bad one. . . . The Mission . . . have done their best. But the best falls far short of India's needs or India's best'' (pp. 383-4).

According to Gandhiji, ''India's needs'' could only be met by the welfare and paramountcy of the people, even at the cost of vested commercial interests and princely privileges; and ''India's best'' could well be a harmony of world religions ensuring the supremacy in human affairs of spiritual authority over temporal power. Speaking at a prayer meeting after Badshah Khan, he compared the world religions to the various branches of the single human tree and declared, ''All of us, Hindus and Mussalmans, constitute an integral whole'' (p. 157).

A Vaishnava of purest ray serene, Gandhiji knew that in the long run dharma or ''soul force'', the dynamic spiritual dimension in all human beings, must prevail over all material or military strength, for ''there is no power greater than God in the world'' (p. 314). This God may be a big X (p. 315), the ''Unknowable'' of Advaita, the ''Unknown'' of the Christians, the great and powerful One of the Muslims, or the impersonal Truth of the atheist. But He, whether invoked as *Allah-o-Akbar* or by any other cry, was the sole Reality and the ultimate Power. The Congress, representing the millions of India, had no equivalent cry. Gandhiji's own ''cry from the heart'', his infallible Ramanama, not only thrilled him but evoked endless echoes in most Indian hearts. This dear, poetical, uplifting Name (Vol. XLVIII, p. 127) stood both for the formless, all-transcendent Being and the personal God, embodied and functioning in Time as the economic and social dharma that governs the historical process, for Rama was by common consent *Shuddha Brahma Paratpara* as well as *Kalatmaka Parameswara*.

While Gandhiji was willing to render unto Cæsar, and even prepared to collect by law, whatever might be due to him, he

never doubted or questioned the overriding sovereignty of God, the Real Ruler of the universe. The foundation of every Sangha is Dharma, for there can be no polity without the rule of law and no law without morality and religion. Religion as faith in a living God had a function in the modern world and this function was "to save the temporal power from losing its soul". As he told some Missionary friends anxious for the future of Christianity in a free India, no genuine religion depended upon the State for protection. Faith in a "living God" "needed no guarantee, statutory or otherwise" (p. 52).

Because of such firm faith in a living God, Gandhiji was humble and patient, and would not yield to the impatience which, refusing to be sottish, "becomes a dog that's mad". He was burdened with a heavy sense of responsibility in "dealing with the destinies of dumb millions" (p. 176) and feared that "failure now would be a great human tragedy" (p. 385). He felt that it was not for one man alone to bear such tremendous responsibility and he appealed to the crowds at prayer meetings to pray with him and rely upon the strength and guidance that this big X alone, God the "Unknown" and "Unknowable", could give (p. 315).

It was in the midst of these "dumb millions" or in the awful bliss of solitude that he felt most vividly the presence of God. Hence, to gain some strength and guidance from this inner light which he shared with the common people, he had first to free himself from the atmosphere of "corruption, falsehood and deceit" that seemed to surround him. Only thus could he put himself "entirely in God's hands" and he therefore wished to go alone to Simla for the negotiations (p. 87). He was overruled, but having reached Simla he sent away his companions the following day. He faced now "a crisis within a crisis", a moment of self-diffidence, and he wished (as he told Agatha Harrison) to give his "undivided self to God". If shaking off all attachment and, deprived of his daily human associations, he could still feel this "inner joy", he would succeed in another big experiment in his life and pass through "a necessary stage" in his "spiritual growth" (p. 98), the stage which led him later in the winter to the sublime loneliness of the Noakhali pilgrimage.

Gandhiji's faith in Ramanama was no mere superstition or blind credulity. It was firmly founded on personal experience and a rational philosophy. Day after day he wrote and spoke about its miraculous efficacy in preserving health of body and sanity of mind (pp. 29, 44, 56, 91, 125, 133, 203, 213, 214, 236-7

and 279). He assured a young Ayurvedic physician that those "inspired by it in all their actions can testify to the wonders of Ramanama" (p. 258). Faith in Ramanama came only to those who "cultivated the virtues of truth, honesty and purity within and without". But then Ramanama "was also a means for acquiring purity" (p. 209), Faith inspired practice and the experience of practice and its effects sustained and strengthened faith. This mutuality between purity of life and devotion to Rama could culminate in a state of perfect purity when the recitation of the Name would become unnecessary (p. 214). When *jnana* and *karma* merge, means and ends become one. As he had explained in *Anasakti Yoga* (Vol. XLI, p. 96), "the extreme of means" was the end, liberation.

Through all this striving for personal perfection and concern for the public good, Gandhiji remained intensely human. After sending away his companions from Simla, he wrote to his son Manilal: "Parting is such a sweet sorrow. I did feel moved to tears when bidding good-bye to you all, but soon calmed myself" (p. 130).

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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. A MINISTER'S WOE

Dr. Katju[1] sends the following note[2]:

> Owing to the comparative failure of winter crops . . . rationing has been introduced in many urban areas in the United Provinces. . . . The Government of India has suggested to Provincial Governments that in order to ensure continuous supplies, it would be desirable to enforce compulsory levies on agricultural produce in surplus districts. . . . This question of a compulsory levy is greatly agitating the public mind. It is said that the control price fixed by the Government is too low and should be raised. The answer to that is, that the price structure is an all-India affair and it is not possible to raise the price in any particular province without affecting the structure as a whole. . . . There is bound to be a black market where selfish people can buy foodstuffs at higher prices to satisfy their individual needs. No compulsion would be necessary if cultivators realize that it is their social and patriotic duty to do their utmost to feed their brothers and sisters. . . . I ask you to appeal to him at this critical juncture not to hoard, not to sell in the black market but to supply in the greatest measure possible to the Government stores. . . . We are doing our very best to encourage the 'Grow More Food' and 'Grow More Vegetables' campaigns in the United Provinces. The various suggestions[3] made by you have all been adopted. . . .

This note from Dr. Katju is worthy of close attention by the *kisan*[4] and his guides as also urban people. The impending calamity can be turned to good use. Then it will be a blessing in disguise. Otherwise, curse it is and curse it will remain.

Dr. Katju writes as a responsible minister. Therefore, people can either make or mar him. They can remove him and replace him by a better. But so long as ministers of the people's choice are in office as their servants, the people have to carry out their

[1] Kailash Nath Katju (1887-1968); Minister of Justice, Industries and Labour in U. P. in 1937-39 and 1946-47; Governor of Orissa, 1947; Governor of West Bengal, 1948-51; Minister for Home Affairs and Law, Government of India; retired as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh

[2] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 110-1, 127-8 and 194-5.

[4] Farmer

instructions. Every breach of law or instructions is not satyagraha. It can easily be *duragraha*[1] rather than satyagraha.

NEW DELHI, April 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-4-1946

2. *INDIAN PRESSMEN* v. *EUROPEAN*

An Indian journalist complains that our great men have a weakness for foreign journalists to the extent of excluding Indians at their Press conferences, and wonders whether I am myself free from this weakness. For myself, I can say without fear of contradiction that I have never been guilty of such partiality. Having suffered a good deal for the crime of being an Asiatic, I am not likely to be guilty of such weakness. And I must say that I know of no such example as my friend adverts to, if only because public men can ill afford to face a boycott by Indian Pressmen. What has happened with me and, so far as I am aware, with others too is that they and I have found it necessary at times to give special interviews to foreign journalists when it has been found necessary in the interest of the common cause to get messages across the seas. It is impossible in the present circumstances to do otherwise. It would be as foolish to invite a boycott by foreign journalists as by Indian. Any industrious person will find out that Indian journalists have been more often than not preferred by Indian public men again for the sake of the common cause. As a fellow journalist I would urge journalists, whether Indian or foreign, to prefer their particular causes to their employers' pockets or to descending to recriminations or personalities.

NEW DELHI, April 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-4-1946

[1] Literally 'obstinacy'

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3. GUJARAT HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SAMITI

Shri Amritlal Nanavati, the devoted disciple of Kakasaheb Kalelkar[1] carried on the propagation of Hindustani in Gujarat even when almost everyone was in jail. His work brings credit not only to himself but to Gujarat also. The propagation of Hindustani is not opposed to the spread of Hindi; on the contrary it supplements it. Pure Hindi laden with Sanskrit words and written in the Nagari script is not the national language; nor is it the language stuffed with Persian words and written in the Urdu script. I have written elaborately on this subject[2] and I will not therefore dwell further on it. Here I may only say that the student of Hindi should learn Urdu and *vice versa.* Then only shall we be able to create the real national language. Hence this note is intended only for recording the forward step taken by Gujarat. The following two letters[3] would make amply clear the nature of the step which I have referred to.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 14-4-1946

4. WHAT A KHADI-LOVER SHOULD KNOW

The foregoing article[4] is full of useful information. Khadi-lovers will not have read it in vain.

Every day I am getting more and more convinced that we should as soon as possible stop using machine-made slivers. They prevent us from making the villages self-supporting and they will surely let us down at the time of real need. Again, it is not in the least consistent with our way of thinking that these slivers should go to or be sold at Madras or Bombay. Neither the poor nor the rich are benefited thereby. The only purpose served is

[1] D. B. Kalelkar, President of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 251-3, 278-80, 340-1 and Vol. LXXVI, pp. 45-9.

[3] The two letters by D. B. Kalelkar explaining the harmonious blending of Hindi and Urdu, are not translated here.

[4] In his letter, not reproduced here, Jugatram Dave had described in detail the enthusiasm and self-sufficiency of the khadi workers in the Surat district as also the new experiment of Dilkhush Diwanji.

that somehow khadi is supplied to those who wear it. I do not think that this is the aim of the Charkha Sangh. The experiment being carried on by Shri Vinoba these days is significant and is worth knowing. One of his experiments eliminates carding. In the cotton-growing areas the cotton pods are picked up directly from the fields, the shell is removed, the seeds are separated from the cotton with the help of a roller and that cotton is spun straightway. Shri Vinobaji has coined the expression *punai*[1] to denote this process. But hand-carding has to be there and will remain. There also carding is eliminated, if desired. This process simplifies the work to a great extent. The results so far are encouraging. The yarn spun by this process has already been woven. If this thing works well, much time and labour will be saved. Whatever the count of yarn that is spun by this process, it is found to be strong to that extent. Wherever men like Shri Diwanji are making experiments we should, I think, watch the results carefully. Every worker should decide for himself how speedily these improvements can be introduced in his area.

As a general rule, machine-carding should cease immediately and slivers should not be sold beyond the *taluka*.

The second experiment is to reel the yarn in double thread before weaving. This experiment has already proved a success. Shri Vinoba is examining what further improvements are possible in this direction. Double-thread reeling is an easy process and all should learn it. Vinobaji is of the opinion that weaving will become easier and less costly if people who exchange yarn for cloth will give double-reeled yarn. That means, the yarn reeled in this way can compare well with mill-yarn. Such yarn does not need any starching.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 14-4-1946

[1] From *puni*, meaning a sliver

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5. *QUESTION BOX*[1]

Q. On what principle is the question of the salaries of ministers in Congress majority provinces going to be settled this time? Does the Karachi resolution[2] in this regard still hold? If the question is to be settled on the basis of the present high prices, is it possible, within the limits of their revenues, for the provincial budgets to increase the pays of all their servants threefold? If not, will it be proper for the ministers to be paid Rs. 1,500 while a *chaprasi* or a teacher is told to make the two ends meet on Rs. 15 and 12 p.m. and not make a fuss about it because Congress has to run the administration?

A. The question is apt. Why should a minister draw Rs. 1,500 and a *chaprasi*[3] or a teacher Rs. 15 p.m.? But the question cannot be solved by the mere raising of it. Such differences have existed for ages. Why should an elephant require an enormous quantity of food and a mere grain suffice for the ant? The question carries its own answer. God gives to each one according to his need. If we could as definitely know the variations in the needs of men as those of the elephant and the ant, no doubts would arise. Experience tells us that differences in requirements do exist in society[4]. But we do not know the law governing them. All therefore that is possible today is to try to reduce the differences as far as possible. The reduction can be brought about by peaceful agitation and by the creation of public opinion. It cannot be done by force or by *duragraha* in the name of satyagraha. The ministers are the people's men. Their wants even before they took office were not those of *chaprasis*. I would love to see a *chaprasi* become worthy of holding the office of a minister and yet not increase his needs. It should also be clearly understood that no minister need draw up to the maximum of the salary fixed.

It is worth while pondering over one thing that arises out of the questions. Is it possible for the *chaprasi* to support himself and his family on Rs. 15 p.m. without taking bribe? Should he

[1] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 21-4-1946.

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

[3] Peon

[4] The Hindi here adds: "unlike among ants and elephants. The requirements of different peoples and different communities cannot be the same."

not be given enough to keep him above temptation? The remedy for this is that as far as possible we should be our own *chaprasis*. But even so if we need them we must pay them enough for their requirements. In this way the big gulf that exists between a minister and a *chaprasi* will be bridged.

It is another matter as to why the pay of the ministers has been raised from Rs. 500 to 1,500 p.m. But this is nothing as compared with, and does not solve, the main problem. With the solution of the latter it will *ipso facto* be solved.

NEW DELHI, April 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-4-1946

6. *NOTE TO SHYAMLAL*[1]

April 14, 1946

I have read out everything to Poojya Bapuji. He says that in the evening Sarojini Devi should give in writing what she had told him verbally. You should enquire from her what Smt. Gyankumari is going to do and what her scheme is.

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

7. "*ROMAN URDU*"

If there is Roman Urdu, why not Roman Hindi? The next step will be to Romanize the alphabets of all the languages of India. They have done this for Zulu which had no alphabet of its own. The attempt in India would be on a par with the attempt to foist Esperanto on the world. It cannot succeed in the near future. Believers in the Roman script in the place of all the known Indian scripts will have a circle of adherents but the movement cannot permeate the masses. It should not. Crores of people need not become so lazy as not to learn their own respective scripts. A laudable attempt is being made not to replace the alphabets in vogue in India but to teach Nagari in addition in the hope that in course of time millions may learn to read the Indian languages in the Nagari character. And since Urdu characters cannot for well-known reasons be replaced by Nagari, it should be learnt by all the patriots who love

[1] Extracted from Amrit Kaur's letter to the addressee

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their country too well to find the learning of the Urdu alphabet a burden. All these attempts seem to me to be worthy.

With all my readiness to grasp new ideas, I have failed to find a substantial reason for inducing the spread of the Roman alphabet for the purpose of replacing the Nagari or Urdu script. It is true that in the Indian Army, the Roman alphabet has been largely used. I should hope that the Indian soldier, if he is saturated with the national spirit, will not mind learning both Nagari and Urdu characters. After all, amid the ocean of Indian humanity, the Indian soldier is a mere drop. He must shed the English mode. Probably the reason for Romanizing Urdu will be found in the English officer being too lazy to learn to read Urdu or Nagari characters.

NEW DELHI, April 15, 1946
Harijan, 21-4-1946

8. *MY ADVICE*[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 15, 1946

Shri Prakasam[2] I have known as a worker for many years. He has somehow developed a philosophy that a public worker is entitled to receive purses from the public for his expenses. In pursuance of that philosophy he has received a considerable sum in the shape of purses. Those who collected them have wired or written to me that they saw nothing wrong in so doing or in Shri Prakasam receiving them. Some have gone so far as to say that Shri Prakasam should even become a member of the Madras ministry, if not the Prime Minister.

With the greatest reluctance I must dissent from the whole view. I know that Shri Prakasam says that he has changed his mind. Sudden conversions are not unknown. But they are cast in a different mould. A ministership cannot be the end of genuine repentance and conversion. My advice to Shri Prakasam is that he should retire even from the Legislative Assembly and brood over the bad example he has set. There is ample field open to everyone for silent service which is often much greater than service done in the limelight.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. II, pp. 250-1

[1] This was published as a statement.

[2] T. Prakasam (1872-1957); President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee; Chief Minister of Madras, 1946-47; Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, 1953-54

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9. *SWEEPERS' STRIKE*[1]

There are certain matters in which strikes would be wrong. Sweepers' grievances come in this category. I do not want to go into others here. My opinion against sweepers' strikes dates back to about 1897 when I was[2] in Durban. A general strike was mooted there and the question arose as to whether scavengers should join in it. My vote was registered against the proposal. Just as man cannot live without air so too he cannot exist for long if his home and surroundings are not clean. One or other epidemic is bound to break out especially when modern drainage is put out of action.

Therefore I was perturbed when I read about the sweepers' strike in Bombay. Fortunately it has come to an end. I understand, however, that the sweepers, both men and women, refused to submit their case to arbitration.[3]

In spite of my close attachment to sweepers, better because of it, I must denounce the coercive methods they are said to have employed. They will thereby be losers in the long run. City folk will not always be cowed down. If they were, it would mean the collapse of municipal administration. Coercion cannot but result in the end in chaos. An impartial tribunal for settling disputes should always be accepted. Refusal is a sign of weakness. A Bhangi may not give up his work even for a day. And there are many other ways open to him of securing justice.

Townspeople should, on the other hand, forget that there is such a thing as untouchability and learn the art of cleaning their own and the city's drains, so that if a similar occasion arises they are not nonplussed and can render the necessary temporary service. They may not be coerced. I go so far as to say that the military who know this work should be used for such emergency. If swaraj is round the bend, we can now look upon the military as ours and need have no hesitation in taking all the constructive work we can from them. Up

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 21-4-1946.

[2] The Gujarati here adds: "practising law".

[3] The Gujarati here adds: "And the strike came to an end only after they had their demand accepted without obtaining a decision as to its propriety or otherwise."

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till now they have only been employed in indiscriminate firing on us. Today they must plough the land, dig wells, clean latrines and do every other constructive work that they can, and thus turn the people's hatred of them into love.

Now that the *hartal*[1] is at an end, it is the duty of everyone to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the Bhangis, educate them, see that they are properly housed, permit them, like anyone else, to live wherever they choose, look into the matter of an equitable wage for them and see that justice is meted out to them without their having to demand it. If this is done throughout India we shall definitely prove ourselves worthy of swaraj and be able also to maintain it.

NEW DELHI, April 15, 1946
Harijan, 21-4-1946

10. A NOTE

DELHI,
April 15, 1946

I endorse the above resolution[2].

M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] Strike

[2] Which read: "It has been decided that as a special case, this year the time-limit for convening the ordinary annual meeting of the Board of Trustees should be extended by three months and that the meeting should be held before June 30, 1946."

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11. NOTE TO BABA RAGHAVDAS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 15, 1946

The suggestion for not accepting office greatly appeals to me. Carry on silently whatever constructive work you can. These are difficult times. If all want power who will render silent service?

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 16-4-1946

12. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

April 15, 1946[3]

In a moment of introspection the poet asks himself:

> O man, why have you left off taking God's name? You have not given up anger or lust or greed, but you have forgotten truth. What a tragedy to save worthless pennies and to let go the priceless gem of God's love! Why would you not, O fool, renounce all vanities and throw yourself on the grace of God alone?

This does not mean that if one has wealth, it should be thrown away and wife and children should be turned out of doors. It simply means that one must give up attachment to these things and dedicate one's all to God and make use of His gifts to serve Him only. It also means that if we take His name with all our being we are automatically weaned from all lust, untruth and baser passions.

[1] Raghavendra Sheshappa Pachapurkar (1896-1958); popularly known as Baba Raghavdas; hailed from Konkan but settled down in Gorakhpur; joined Congress in 1920; established various institutions for social, moral uplift of the people; started Geeta Press at Gorakhpur.

The addressee, who had just been released from jail, met Gandhiji and apprised him of the scramble for power among Congressmen. It being his silence day Gandhiji replied in writing.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "Prayer Discourses"

[3] From *The Hindustan Times*, 16-4-1946

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In the first *shloka*[1] of *Ishopanishad* that is repeated every day at the beginning of the prayer, one is asked to dedicate everything to God and then use it to the required extent. The principal condition laid down is that one must not covet what belongs to another. These two maxims contain the quintessence of the Hindu religion.

In another *shloka* which is recited during the morning prayer it is said:

> I do not ask for temporal power, nor do I ask to go to heaven, nor even to attain *nirvana*[2]. What I ask for is that I may be able to relieve the pain of those who are in pain.

The pain might be physical, mental or spiritual. Spiritual pain due to slavery to one's passions is sometimes greater even than physical.

But God does not come down in person to relieve suffering. He works through human agency. Therefore, prayer to God to enable one to relieve the sufferings of others must mean a longing and readiness on one's part to labour for it.

The prayer, you will note, is not exclusive. It is not restricted to one's own caste or community. It is all-inclusive. It comprehends the whole of humanity. Its realization would thus mean the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

13. MESSAGE FOR I. N. A.[3]

[Before *April 16, 1946*][4]

Gandhiji's reply covered not only the I. N. A. but all Indian army men. Although the I. N. A. men had declared open rebellion under Netaji's[5] lead the spirit of rebellion was not confined to them. It had permeated even the Indian Army ranks. Some of the latter had seen him at Poona and sought

[1] Stanza

[2] Salvation

[3] & [4] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated New Delhi, 16-4-1946. According to the source, Sardar Ramsing Rawal met Gandhiji and asked for a message for the Indian National Army.

[5] Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945); General Secretary of the Indian National Congress, 1927, its President, 1938 and 1939; resigned from Congress and founded the All-India Forward Bloc. He was placed under house arrest but escaped to Germany in 1941; organized Indian Independence League in South East Asia and the Indian National Army.

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his advice.[1] Gandhiji had told them that it was open to them to give notice to the authorities that though they were in their pay, their loyalty was mortgaged to India, not to the King of England. Hitherto they had yielded obedience to military orders and been prepared even to shoot down their countrymen to order. But now that the spirit of independence had taken possession of them they would do so no more under a foreign Government's order.

For the I. N. A. men there were two alternatives. They could serve free India as soldiers-in-arms or they could convert themselves into soldiers of non-violence if they were convinced that non-violence was the higher and the more efficacious way. They should make use of their training and discipline to introduce non-violent organization among the masses, learn spinning and become veteran constructive workers. If they did that, they would set a glorious example to the whole world.

The I. N. A. men have shown great strength, heroism and resourcefulness. But I must confess that their achievements have not dazzled my eyes. To die without killing requires more heroism. There is nothing very wonderful in killing and being killed in the process. But the man who offers his neck to the enemy for execution but refuses to bend to his will shows courage of a far higher type.

Troublous times lie ahead of us. Our non-violence has brought us to the gate of independence. Shall we renounce it after we have entered that gate? I for one am firmly convinced that non-violence of the brave, such as I have envisaged, provides the surest and the most efficacious means to face foreign aggression and internal disorder just as it has done for winning independence.

The British were going to quit. What place would India have in the comity of nations? Would she be satisfied with being a fifth-rate power like China? China was independent only in name. India would have long to wait before she could become a first-class military power.

And for that she would have to go under the tutelage of some Western power. A truly non-violent India will have nothing to fear from any foreign power nor will it look to British navy and air force for her defence. I know that we have not as yet the non-violence of the brave.

Harijan, 21-4-1946

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 204-5.

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14. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 16, 1946

Speaking after prayers on Tuesday evening Gandhiji explained the meaning of swadeshi. It hurt him deeply to see that after 25 years of repeated exhortations the people had still not taken to swadeshi. Some people regarded Indian mill cloth as swadeshi. In his opinion, khadi alone was real swadeshi. The machinery in the mills was not made in India. Supposing in a free India they had their own engineers and were able to produce the machinery in India, he would still not call it swadeshi. He did not want anything that might ruin the villages. Honest servants of the people would devote themselves to the service of the villages and to that purpose become poor with the poorest.

Gandhiji expected all of them to take at least to khadi. What was the use of their attending the prayers, if they did not follow what they heard there? He had cried himself hoarse over khadi for the last 25 years. But his non-violence taught him that he was to go on proclaiming what he considered to be the truth. It was not for him to lose temper or feel disappointed if the people did not listen to him.

They might well ask him how they were to wear khadi when they could not get it in the khadi bhandars. Lack of khadi in the bhandars was of his doing. Just as foreign cloth even if it appeared to be cheap was not cheap in reality, similarly khadi produced at one place and sold at another could not serve the purpose that it was intended to serve. It was no use their wearing khadi without grasping the spirit behind it. Khadi had been called the livery of swaraj.[1] It gave the wearer a certain respectable status.

But if khadi was to be the symbol of non-violence and the livery of swaraj it had to be produced and used locally. Therefore he had asked the bhandars not to import khadi from other provinces. He had also asked them to sell it in exchange for yarn and to see that those who span for wages also wore khadi themselves. They were not to accept the yarn from those spinners who span for wages but did not wear khadi themselves even though it might result in a temporary shortage of khadi. People were taking to the new idea, but during the transition stage, some inconvenience might be experienced. The remedy was that they should spin for themselves and even engage handloom-weavers for weaving khaddar. There were many rich people in Delhi who could easily undertake this work.

The Hindustan Times, 17-4-1946

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 446 and 473.

15. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

GANDHIJI'S CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing to you on behalf of Shri Haridas Mitra.[1] You may remember that H. E. stayed the sentence of death on this young man a few months ago.[2]

I enclose a copy of a communique[3] which appeared recently in the newspapers. In view of this it would appear that Haridas Mitra should be eligible for pardon and release. I enclose a short note on Shri Haridas Mitra's case which his young wife has sent me.

I do hope he may come under the category indicated in the communique.[4]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

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

[1] & [2] Husband of Subhas Chandra Bose's niece Bela. He was sentenced to death in Bengal under the Enemy Agents Ordinance for helping or harbouring agents landed from enemy submarine. Consequent upon Gandhiji's intervention and appeals the death sentence was commuted to transportation for life. For Gandhiji's earlier correspondence, *vide* Vols. LXXXI and LXXXII.

[3] Which said that the British Government had decided "as an act of clemency not to institute further criminal proceedings against persons alleged to be guilty of collaborating with the enemy in the British territories of South East Asia where no atrocity or brutality is involved".

[4] The addressee, however, replied on April 22 that "the policy referred to in the communique . . . relates to cases which occurred in territories actually under Japanese occupation. It does not cover the case of Haridas Mitra who was convicted for assisting the enemy in India."

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16. LETTER TO G.E.B. ABELL

GANDHIJI'S CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Thank you for yours of the 16th instant. To me it seemed clear that the Havildar[1] had been executed but the poor widowed mother refuses to believe it. Hence my troubling you.

I now enclose a telegram[2] received last evening from Sialkot. This is the only intimation Gandhiji has and he knows nothing about the man sentenced to death. In case, however, a precious life should go which should have been reprieved, I send you the wire for immediate kind enquiry.[3]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 82-3

17. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,
April 17, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. I do not wish to criticize you. I accept what you have done. I plead guilty to your complaint that I stopped [you][4] from going. I also understand your accepting

[1] Havildar N. M. Mukherjee was executed on September 27, 1943.

[2] From Deshraj, a condemned prisoner in Sialkot Jail, entreating Gandhiji to ask Lord Wavell to stay his execution so as to give him a chance to prove his innocence

[3] The addressee's reply of the same date read: "Deshraj was convicted by the Sessions Court for taking part in a series of five murders. The sentence was confirmed by the High Court, and a petition submitted to His Excellency was considered and rejected in February. I am afraid there is nothing further that can be done about it."

[4] The source has "her", obviously a slip. *Vide* also Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 319-20.

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money from Brother. I want to tell you only one thing. Build up excellent health and live as you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 510

18. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI[1]

[*April 17, 1946*][2]

I got your and Chi. Dhiru's beautiful letter. Continue to write to me and give details. Admit only as many patients as you can easily look after. The most important thing is prevention of disease, and if we can teach the people that art, I will regard our mission of nature cure to have fully succeeded. Please, therefore, teach it to all, boys and girls and grown-up people.

No matter from what infectious disease a patient may be suffering, if the tub has been cleaned with burning-hot ash after that patient has bathed in it, I would, if asked, unhesitatingly bathe in it. For breakfast, I think it will be better if you eat home-made crisp biscuits which require to be chewed, together with fruit, instead of eating *ghensh*[3]. This may be followed with milk. Or you may drink milk at noon. This is only by way of suggestion. I am glad that Joshi has arrived there. Ask Gokhale to write to me. I am here up to the 24th at any rate.[4] I do not know what will happen after that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 2754. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

[1] Manager in charge of general administration at the nature cure clinic at Uruli Kanchan

[2] From Pyarelal Papers

[3] Porridge cooked in water or whey

[4] Gandhiji had arrived in New Delhi on April 1 in response to an invitation from Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. V. Alexander—Members of the British Cabinet Mission—and the Viceroy. *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, p. 310. He left for Simla on May 1.

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19. LETTER TO PRABHAKAR

DELHI,
April 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHAKAR,

I have your letter. I have not deliberately omitted to answer any [question]. Tell Viramma to be cautious. I will write to her if I get the time.

You may engage a music teacher if it is right. Chimanlal[1] should decide it.

Do not undertake a three-day fast. You should observe silence,[2] talking when work demands.

It seems that Kambleji has stayed on with Dastaneji[3]. Ask me if anything has been left out.

You can give this to Viramma to read. I had proposed to write more letters, but I find I cannot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 91034. Also C. W. 9158. Courtesy: Prabhakar

20. LETTER TO RAMMANOHAR LOHIA

DELHI,
April 17, 1946

BHAI RAMMANOHAR[4],

Bhai Humayun[5] is bringing this letter. I had thought that you would proceed further after meeting me in Delhi. And when

[1] Chimanlal N. Shah, Manager, Sevagram Ashram

[2] The Hindi original of what follows can also be interpreted to read 'and stop talking'.

[3] V. V. Dastane

[4] (1910-67); one of the founders of the All-India Congress Socialist Party; Secretary of the Foreign Department of A. I. C. C. (1936-38); resigned from Congress in 1948; General Secretary, Praja Socialist Party (1953-54); Member, Lok Sabha (1963-67). He was released from jail along with Jayaprakash Narayan on April 12.

[5] Humayun Kabir (1906-69); Minister of education in the Government of India, 1957-65; Chairman, University Grants Commission; later resigned from Congress and founded the Bangla Congress

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you went to Calcutta I thought that you did so because you regarded it your foremost duty to perform your father's *shraddha*. I am sure that we shall meet somewhere at some mutually convenient time. Does anyone attend to the social service programme of your father?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. RAMMANOHAR LOHIA

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

21. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 17, 1946[2]

It was the fault of the parents, Gandhiji remarked.[3] He had never seen children playing in a church or a mosque.

True culture requires that there should be perfect peace in the prayer ground at the time of the prayer.

There should be an atmosphere of solemnity as in a church, a mosque or a temple. He knew that many of the temples were full of clamour. It had hurt him deeply.

We go to the temple to worship not the stone or the metal image but God who resides in it. The image becomes what man makes of it. It has no power independently of the sanctity with which it is invested by the worshipper. Therefore everyone, including children, should observe perfect silence at the time of prayer.[4]

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "Prayer Discourses"

[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 19-4-1946

[3] A couple of children who had been romping about had disturbed the prayer meeting, which upset Gandhiji.

[4] As a result of his criticism there was a marked improvement in the behaviour of children from the next day.

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22. HE LIVES

Death has removed not only from us but from the world one of India's best sons.[1] That he loved India passionately, everyone who knew him could see. When I saw him last in Madras, he could talk of nothing but India and her culture for which he lived and died.[2] I am sure that he had no thought of himself even when he seemed to be on his death-bed. His Sanskrit learning was as great if not greater than his English. I must not permit myself to say more, save this that though we differed in politics, our hearts were one and I could never think that his patriotism was less than that of the tallest patriot. Sastri the man lives though his body is reduced to ashes.

NEW DELHI, April 18, 1946
Harijan, 21-4-1946

23. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

DELHI,
April 18, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Why does Gomati[3] persistently fall ill? How is it that none of you can resist illness? It appears as though you had made illness a darling visitor! Why so? I am sending this to the Ashram as I learn from Krishnachandra's letter today that you are likely to have reached there.

I have carefully gone through your writing on the Roman script. I appreciate the pains you have taken over it and also the erudition that is behind it. But the thing does not seem to me to be opportune. We are not immediately seized of the subject. If it is being discussed the discussions are confined to pundits. I see no use of it for the people. Besides, I have already expressed a contrary opinion,[4] which has nothing to do with

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri had passed away on April 17, 1946, in Madras.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 15-6, 62-4 and 87-8.
[3] Addressee's wife
[4] *Vide* pp. 6-7.

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your pamphlet. It was with reference to a venture they had planned here, which, I believe, never came off. Anyway, for the present, I have time to dictate not more than what I have done.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KISHORELALBHAI MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM

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

24. TALK WITH MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

April 18, 1946

You would have covered me with shame if you had come to me instead of my going to you.

Why do you lend a ready ear to such gossip?[2] Why can't you take a leaf out of my book? If someone comes to me and talks to me about the Indian States, I send him off to Pandit Nehru. If it is about internal politics of the Congress, I give him Maulana Azad's address. In this way I have rigorously restricted my ambit of work. Even so, I have hardly a moment's respite. Unless I did that I would have to give up the desire to live up to the age of 125 which I must not do, if my dream of non-violence as a world-conquering force is to be realized. You are a man of religion and purity of soul. It should need no argument on my part to convince you that if you completely empty your mind of outward things and fixing all your thoughts on Him inwardly pray, you will have more than contributed your share to the struggle for independence. You must complete your century. It is perfectly feasible if you will listen to my advice.

Malaviyaji followed Gandhiji's remarks with a . . . smile. . . . "I must not engage you in talk any further," he remarked, "I know you are always busy."

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Reporting this in his article "Young at Eighty-five" Pyarelal writes: "On reaching Delhi he wanted to come and see Gandhiji in Bhangi Nivas, but Gandhiji anticipated him by meeting him at 5, Canning Road."

[2] Gandhiji had heard that a lot of people came and disturbed Malaviyaji's peace by retailing all kinds of idle rumours.

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25. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 18, 1946[2]

As a result of his remarks[3] children had ceased to play about in the prayer ground today and this quick response from parents and children evoked congratulations from Gandhiji and he emphasized the necessity of children coming to prayers in clean clothes and with clean bodies. Next he drew their attention to the growing number of newspapers and the undue importance that was being attached to them by the people.[4]

The newspaper man has become a walking plague. In the East as in the West newspapers are fast becoming the people's Bible, Koran, Zend Avesta and *Bhagavad Gita*, rolled into one. All that appears in the papers is looked upon as God's truth. For instance, a paper predicts that riots are coming, that all the sticks and knives in Delhi have been sold out and the news throws everybody into a panic. That is bad. Another newspaper reports the occurrence of riots here and there and blames the police of taking sides with the Hindus in one place and the Muslims in another. Again, the man in the street is upset. I want you all to shed this craven fear. It is not becoming of men and women, who believe in God and take part in the prayers, to be afraid of anyone.

What if riots do actually take place and some people get killed? Everyone must die one day. I will expect you to go in the midst of the fracas and tell the rowdies to be sensible. A friend remarked in the course of the conversation the other day that whilst it was poor rowdies that killed and got killed in the riots, the real responsibility lay not with them but with educated people, some of them occupying respectable places in society. It is they who incite others to violence from behind the scenes. It is for these educated and cultured people to stop the riots by laying down their lives in the process if necessary. Even a little girl can go up to the hooligans and tell them to desist. Most probably they will. But supposing they do not and kill her, it will be

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*
[3] *Vide* p. 18.
[4] This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

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well with her all the same. She will live through her pure sacrifice. It is always well with those who believe in God and try to do His will to the best of their ability.

Independence is coming. But our lungs appear to have lost the capacity to breathe the air of freedom. But when freedom actually comes, you will find that the loss of the capacity was only apparent. Maybe, the first impact of freedom will give you a rude shock, and before you regain your equilibrium some undesirable things might take place. All that you need to do is to keep yourselves on the alert and undaunted and it will be well with you in the end.

The Hindustan Times, 19-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 28-4-1946

26. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *April 19, 1946*][2]

In talking to a friend the other day who was suggesting an expedient to solve the political tangle, contrary to his inner conviction of the wrong of it, Gandhiji told him that it was unworthy for a man of faith ever to believe that anything but evil could be born out of a poisonous germ. The friend replied, "The Cross was poisonous, full of hatred and ill will and yet redemption came out of it."

That is not my interpretation of the Cross. There was no poison there, no hatred, no fear. It was the way of self-suffering and therefore of love and hence the story of redemption.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

27. SOVEREIGN REMEDY

. . . Your new note in nature cure—reciting of Ramanama as the sure remedy—leaves me completely bewildered. The modern youth refrains from challenging some of your views out of toleration. Their attitude may be summed up in the following : 'Well, Gandhiji has taught us a whole lot of things; he has elevated us to unimaginable heights; he has, above all, brought swaraj within our reach; why not 'suffer' his Ramanama 'fad'?

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Amrit Kaur's report entitled "The Lesson of the Cross", dated "New Delhi, Good Friday, 1946", Good Friday fell on April 19, 1946.

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Inter alia you have said the following :

> "No matter what the ailment from which a man may be suffering, recitation of Ramanama from the heart is the sure cure" (*Harijan*, 3-3-'46).[1]
>
> "Man should seek out and be content to confine the means of cure to the five elements of which the body is composed, i. e., earth, water, *akasha*[2], sun and air" (*Harijan*, 3-3-'46).[3]
>
> "And my claim is that the recitation of Ramanama is a sovereign remedy for our physical ailments also" (*Harijan*, 7-4-'46).[4]

At first, when you introduced this new note in the system of nature cure, I thought you were merely putting in other words a kind of psycho-therapy or Christian Science based on faith. . . . I interpreted my first quotation above in that light. The second sentence quoted above is difficult to grasp. After all, it is physically impossible for medicines to be composed of anything but the five elements to which you refer, and which you say must be the sole means of cure.

If faith is what you insist on I have no quarrel; it is necessary for the patient to co-operate in getting well also by faith. But it is difficult to accept that faith alone would cure "our physical ailment also". Two years ago, my little daughter was struck by infantile paralysis; it was the most modern treatment that saved the child from becoming a cripple for life. You would agree that it would not avail to ask a two-and-a-half-year-old child to recite Ramanama to be rid of infantile paralysis; and I would like to see you persuade any mother to do the recitation (and recitation alone) on her child's behalf.

The authority from Charaka[5] that you have quoted in the issue of March 24,[6] leaves me cold; you have taught me not to accept anything, however ancient and however authoritative it may be, if it does not appeal to my heart.

Thus writes a teacher of youth.[7] While I am eager to be in the good graces of the student world, my eagerness has well-defined limitations. For one, I must please them with the rest of the world, which is admittedly much larger. In no case should a servant of the public pander to any person or class.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, p. 176.
[2] Ether
[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, p. 176.
[4] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, p. 263.
[5] One of the principal exponents of the Ayurvedic system of medicine
[6] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, p. 236.
[7] Only excerpts from the letter are reproduced here.

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If those whom my correspondent represents really think that anything I have done has taken India to unimaginable heights, they should extend to my so-called fads slightly more than toleration. Toleration by itself will do them and me no good. It may easily promote laziness in them, and false self-assurance in me. Let them think well before rejecting even a fad. Faddists are not always to be despised. Fads have before now made their owners mount the gallows.

Ramanama has the flavour of faith-healing and Christian Science; yet, it is quite distinct from them. Recitation of Ramanama is a mere symbol of the reality for which it stands. If one is knowingly filled with the presence of God within, one is that moment free from all ailments, physical, mental or moral. That we do not see the type in life is not to disprove the truth of the statement. My argument is admittedly useless for those who have no faith in God.

Christian scientists, faith-healers and psychotherapists may, if they will, bear witness somewhat to the truth underlying Ramanama. I cannot take the reader a long way with me through reason. How is one to prove to a person who has never tasted sugar, that sugar is sweet, except by asking him to taste it?

I must not reiterate here the conditions attendant upon the heart recitation of the sacred syllable.

The authority of Charaka is good for those who have some belief in Ramanama. Others may dismiss the authority from their consideration.

Children are irresponsible. Ramanama is undoubtedly not for them. They are helpless beings at the mercy of their parents. They show what tremendous responsibility parents bear to them and society. I have known parents who have trifled with their children's diseases even to the extent of trusting them to their (the parents') recitation of Ramanama.

Lastly, the argument about everything, even medicines, being from *panch mahabhutas*[1] betrays a hasty confusion of thought. I have only to point it out to remove it.

NEW DELHI, April 19, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] The five elements

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28. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

NEW DELHI,
April 19, 1946

MY DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

This I must write to you in English. You are wrong. When you say you are right and I do not understand you, I go to my betters and seek confirmation of your prop[osition]. If they do not confirm you, I pass their opinion on to you.

What you will have to do is to teach me your conundrums when I am free to take a few lessons from you. Heaven knows when that time will come.

Receipt of the money sent by you was acknowledged on 11-3-46. It is to be found in my register book.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Thanks for the interesting puzzle.

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY, HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

29. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

DELHI,
April 19, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI[1],

I saw the sample slips printed with blocks for the Urdu edition of *Harijan Sevak*. They are all right. I shall have nothing to say regarding the different sizes, for you will be using them according to your requirements. It is true that you had shown them to me before proceeding further.

How bad it would be if we could not publish in book form the writings received from Ashadevi[2]! I think we must if neces-

[1] Manager, Navajivan Press
[2] Wife of E. W. Aryanayakum

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sary, make arrangements with some other printer and publish them. If even that is not possible, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9966. Also C. W. 6940. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

30. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MEDH

[*April 19, 1946*][1]

CHI. MEDH,

It would be unreasonable of you to expect a letter from me. I can do service and live long only if all people spare me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4977

31. LETTER TO JAYAKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

DELHI,
April 19, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have gone through your letter three times—twice word by word and the third time for dictating a reply. By clinging to the letter of the pledge we often come to observe it only in form. The spirit is the real thing which alone makes us aware of our understanding of it. Flawless observance is possible only after we achieve a harmonious blend of the letter and the spirit. It has always been painful to me because I have expressed such an opinion in the context of my vow to abjure milk. I see there is a subtle pride in being content with the observance of a vow in its spirit. I therefore do not deceive myself. Literally according to my vow I gave up animal milk for all time, but since by milk is generally meant buffalo's or cow's milk and also because at the time of taking the vow I was not at all aware of any other milk, I took advantage of my own ignorance and

[1] The letter is written below another of this date.

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started taking goat's milk. Even then it did hurt my soul but somehow I consoled my mind. Had I been able to stick to my resolve of abjuring all animal milk, possibly I might have been freed of this body. Nevertheless, my heart bears testimony to the fact that I have fulfilled my vow in letter as well as in spirit. If I were to apply the same rule to you, and I ought to, you should observe your pledge literally and stick to the Ashram. And by staying on you will also be observing it in spirit.

Whereas other people felt that the movement[1] had been in vain I never had any such feeling. Failure has no place in the vocabulary of satyagraha. Satyagraha has endless time [to operate]. It may not therefore care for [any outside] help. There is much more to it than I have said here. If I begin to expound it I will have to devote a lot of time to it, which you also would not want me to do. Let me therefore be quiet having shown you what your dharma is.

I think you have raised a very good point. I am not shocked by it at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHANSALIBHAI
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

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

32. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
April 19, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. My order is that you will do as you like. I am not Almighty. So you can go wherever you want. Zohra[2] is [like] your daughter. You can take her wherever you wish. Badshah Khan[3] is here. For the present he will stay here. Till now I have not been able to talk to him. I shall be glad

[1] The "Quit India" movement of 1942
[2] Wife of Akbar Chavda
[3] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

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if you keep good health. I find myself very busy. I shall be here up to the 25th.

Blessings to Zohra.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 511

33. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
April 19, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT[1],

I have your letter. Everything will be all right if you remain content with yourself. There is scope for change of point of view regarding whole cereal meal. About this later. As regards the tubs I shall try to obtain more. Till then do what you can. You must have seen what I wrote about infection.[2] By all means go to help Appa if you can get away [from there]. See that the work which has been started does not suffer. I look upon this work as too important to be interrupted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2752. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

34. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

GANDHI CAMP, NEW DELHI,
April 19, 1946

DEAR BROTHER ANAND,

Pujya Bapu has your telegram. He wishes happiness to you both and hopes you will serve the country. He hopes that marriage[3] might improve your hearing. Bapu did not think it necessary to send a wire. Hope you are both well.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

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

[1] Chief Medical instructor at the nature cure clinic at Uruli Kanchan
[2] *Vide* p. 16.
[3] The addressee's second, to Gangi. His first wife, Vidya, had passed away in 1944.

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35. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 19, 1946

Speaking after prayers on Friday, Gandhiji referred to his latest love—nature cure. He had believed in it for years. He felt that what he had shared with his friends and close associates so far should be shared with the masses, poor villagers. He had been thinking of the villagers in particular in connection with the Kasturba[1] work.

Medical help had become an elaborate and costly affair nowadays. Those who could afford it called in a doctor who wrote out a prescription in a language unintelligible to the layman. The latter carried the prescription to the chemist, took the medicine and counted upon it to cure him. Apart from the utility of this method of treatment, it was beyond the reach of the masses.

During his recent tour of Bengal and Madras lots of people had joined the prayers and in the mass singing of *Ramdhun*. He had since introduced Ramanama in nature cure as a panacea for all ailments whether physical, mental or spiritual.

Physical ailments, Gandhiji continued, were not always the most serious. Those born of anger, lust, greed, infatuation, etc., were worse.

Bad as is the loss of a limb, the loss of reason would be worse. Ramanama when it is uttered not merely by the lips but proceeds from the heart is the sovereign remedy for the triple woes[2] to which man is subject. Reason follows the heart. It does not guide it. A pure heart is thus the most essential requisite not only for mental health but for physical too, and that could be had only through waiting on God—repeating Ramanama.

No remedy on earth, Mahatma Gandhi proceeded, could cure all physical ailments. But Ramanama enabled one to put up with suffering bravely and calmly when it could not cure. Ramanama also stood for the natural and right way of living. That was why he had taken to nature cure in the evening of his life and thereby added another to his numerous burdens.

The Hindustan Times, 20-4-1946

[1] Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
[2] Viz., physical, mental and spiritual

36. TALK WITH S. A. AYER[1]

[Before *April 20, 1946*][2]

Shri S. A. Ayer of the Azad Hind Government came to discuss with Gandhiji the other day the question of issuing a news bulletin in the Roman script for the I. N. A. as proposed by the Central I. N. A. Relief Committee. . . . "The men had got used to the Roman script while they were in the Indian Army and so retained it when they were operating in South East Asia."

You forget that you are not working in South East Asia today, but in India. May I ask if these men ever write to their wives and children in the Roman script?

Never, they write one and all in Hindi, Urdu, Tamil or any of the other Indian scripts.

This means that they all know one or the other Indian script. I could understand your wanting to adopt the Roman script as a temporary makeshift if we had no script of our own. But to adopt the Roman script for Hindustani which has got two acknowledged scripts is only a sign of the psychological conquest that the English have made over us. In order to conquer the English who had conquered you, you adopted the English garb, i. e., Roman script, for your bulletins in South East Asia. You should have discarded this symbol of the cultural conquest and insisted on having your bulletin in the two Indian scripts rather than in Roman. The latter was primarily adopted for the sake of the British officers and men who had to learn Hindustani in order to rule over us. They solved the difficulty presented by the permutations and combinations of the Urdu alphabet and tempted us by their typewriters, telegraph and printing machines which use Roman script. We succumbed. We may not hark back to the symbol of our cultural conquest when we are out to end India's slavery *in toto*. When you served in the British army it was with the prospect of getting rewards in the form of decorations, comfortable pay and pensions, grants of land, etc. But now you don't want such temptations. You serve only for the independence and honour of your country. You do not want the easy way.

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report entitled "Cultural Conquest and Roman Script" dated "New Delhi, April 20, 1946"

India will soon have independence. Do not think that there will be one script for Hindustani all at once. It will come when you and I have honestly and diligently learnt both the scripts—not before. That is the least price we have to pay for independence.

In support of his argument he cited the parallel of South Africa where they have everything in two languages. The Government gazette is published in two languages and so are the textbooks for use in schools.

And it is not called partition, but Union of South Africa. To maintain this union they have four capitals one for each province. That is the way of a free and freedom-loving people.

Shri Ayer agreed and said, "We shall have the Hindustani bulletin in Nagari and Urdu scripts, not in Roman.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

37. GOSHALAS AND PINJRAPOLES

The following condensation from a scheme propounded by Sardar Sir Datar Singh[1] will be of general interest:

It is estimated that there are at present 3,000 *goshalas* in the country with a population of over six lakh head of cattle. These organizations, besides taking up the improvement of their institutions as envisaged by the Government of India, in the present threatened famine conditions can come to the country's help by production of more milk in the institutions. The number of well-organized *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles* can be taken as half, i.e., 1,500. The cattle may be classified as:

1. Good dairy type 20% 1,20,000
2. Fair type—good for breeding, though not highly productive 20% 1,20,000
3. Old, infirm and unfit for further breeding 60% 3,60,000

It is the first and second class that could be exploited for milk production and breeding. Out of these 2,40,000, half will be milch and half dry.

Better feeding, management, organization, etc., would mean an increase in production of 1,20,000 seers or, say, 3,000 maunds of milk per day.

In order to achieve this end immediately, a skeleton plan is suggested below:

[1] Agricultural expert and pioneer of animal husbandry in the Punjab

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1. Productive animals should be separated from those that are aged, infirm or otherwise useless. The latter should be removed to rural areas, preferably to forest *rakhs*[1] in order to relieve congestion and allow better feeding of productive cows. These cattle should not be allowed to propagate. Their care, as well as that of dry stock farms, may be in the hands of a committee.

2. For the achievement of this end, the stock should be divided in the following manner:

a. Milch animals about to calve should be kept at the *goshala* premises.

b. Dry animals fit for breeding should be kept on the lands, if any, belonging to the *goshala* in the neighbourhood or may be provided for at a place from where they could be returned when about to calve, and the animals, which go dry in the *goshala*, should be sent there.

3. The congestion relieved, *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles* will have enough space to house cattle properly, feed them scientifically and carry out other improvements.

4. To further help, encourage and stimulate these institutions in this direction, it is suggested to help them financially by giving them 50% reduction on concentrates and fodder on the condition that these institutions will increase their milk production immediately either by keeping milch cattle of the owners who are not able to keep them during the famine days or by buying cattle where their finances permit. The Government will have the option of purchasing one-third of their milk supply for the needy people of the locality and in the neighbourhood, if required.

5. Attempts should be made to feed cattle more on feeds which are not generally required for direct human consumption such as oil-cakes, cotton seeds, etc.

6. It may also be stated here that by feeding by-products of grains to the cattle, not only can the production of available food be increased in the form of additional milk from these animals as compared to the food value of these by-products of food in case they are directly consumed, but it will also be a more economical method of using the latter. Within limits, it will have double effect. It will help in the production of human food and will also protect the cattle from being underfed during the scarcity period.

[1] Reserves

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7. All possible facilities should be provided for transport and supply of concentrates and other cattle-feeds to these institutions. Collection of data as to the requirements of the *goshalas* and the available stocks in these organizations should immediately be taken in hand. Provision should be made well in advance for the supply of these essential requirements from surplus to deficit zones. All this must be done in advance through Goshala Development Officers, who will be responsible for the working of the whole scheme.

The Sardar suggests to every province the appointment of Goshala Development Officers, training of workers and the supply of bulls. He rightly says that for real success there must be genuine co-operation between Government and the public. He has no doubt that *goshalas*, humanitarian and cattle welfare and such other bodies will give the co-operation if approached.

Another friend of cattle writes as follows:[1]

> I want you to consider one or two suggestions for saving our cattle during the coming famine. . . .
>
> My concrete suggestion is that well-to-do people . . . should be generous enough to permit cattle belonging to less fortunate people to graze in their compounds.
>
> Provincial governments should establish a chain of *goshalas* where owners of cattle, who are unable to maintain them during the period of famine, may leave them to be fed and maintained at State expense until the crisis is over.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

38. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND FOOD SHORTAGE[2]

The more I study the food crisis the more convinced I feel that people are being starved not for want of food, but for want of the co-operative effort of the experts and a national Government at the Centre bent upon meeting the crisis and inspiring the masses with confidence.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

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

[2] In the article, not reproduced here, Sushila Nayyar had suggested how the research institutions could help ward off the famine by "finding out alternative food", "efficient husbanding of the available food resources" and proper storage of grain and by working out austerity meals.

39. NOTES[1]

'Silk Khadi'

If partial payment in yarn is necessary for buying cotton khadi why should the same not apply to 'silk khadi'?

There can be only one answer to this question. Silk khadi too is khadi and its purchase should, therefore, also be contingent on the requisite payment of yarn.

Why Only Yarn?

Since spinning is a part of the constructive programme, why should not all constructive workers be exempt from paying for khadi in yarn?

There is some confusion of thought in this question. The reason for part payment in yarn, instead of in money, is to give khadi its rightful place, and in time make yarn current coin. That yarn is a part of the constructive work has no bearing on the present argument. Let us leave aside for the moment the fact that the wheel is the central sun of the solar system of our constructive programme. If we believe that swaraj hangs by the hand-spun thread, then it is clear that the value of yarn will be far greater than gold and silver currency. Constructive workers are not exempt from spinning. How can there be any such exemption from *yajna*? Spinning is the necessary *yajna* for everyone.

New Delhi, April 20, 1946
Harijan, 28-4-1946

40. WHY NOT?[2]

You say that if Kasturba Agents are also members of the legislatures, it will be setting a bad example to the villagers.[3] I can understand this being applicable to the present Assembly, but when we have swaraj the position will be changed.[4] Will it, therefore, not be

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-4-1946.
[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 28-4-1946.
[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, p. 341.
[4] The Hindi here adds: "The M. L. A.s will be the guides of the voters."

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an advantage for us to be there? Will not such work as we want done be done in one session of the legislature, whereas ordinarily it would take years to do?

So writes a sister. But there seem to be three flaws in her line of argument.

Firstly, I have not made any distinction between the present and the future Assembly under swaraj. It is unnecessary for my argument.

Secondly, it is an illusion to think that M. L. A.s are the guides of the voters. Voters do not send representatives to the Assemblies in order to be guided by them. On the contrary, they are sent there loyally to carry out the people's wishes. The people are, therefore, the guides, not the M. L. A.s. The latter are servants, the former masters. The illusion is due to the present system of government. When the illusion disappears, the existing unseemly competition to get into the legislatures will also be much less. There will be a few whose duty it will be to go there, and they will go to do the people's will. Today they go to the Assembly in order to fight there for swaraj, but it has now dawned on most people that they cannot achieve much there even in this line.

The third mistake in the argument is that the Assemblies are best fitted to guide the people. If we look around the world we shall find that the best guidance is given by those outside. If that were not so, a rot would set in all governments, because the field for guidance is vast and the Assembly is a very small thing. Parliaments are, after all, a mere drop in the ocean of national life.

NEW DELHI, April 20, 1946
Harijan, 28-4-1946

41. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

DELHI,
April 20, 1946[2]

With regard to a Press report in which Mahatma Gandhi was reported to have stated that the Madras Congress Legislature Party was free to elect any leader it liked and he had no objection to Mr. Prakasam or anybody being elected leader, Gandhiji stated today that he had said nothing of the

[1] & [2] This appeared under the date-line, "Delhi, April 20, 1946".

kind to anybody but he had written a private letter to Mr. Prakasam, which Mr. Prakasam was at liberty to publish and which should be read out to the persons concerned in case of doubt.[1]

The Hindu, 22-4-1946

42. SPEECH AT KASTURBA BALIKA ASHRAM[2]

April 20, 1946

I attach far more importance to the cultural aspect of education than to the literary.[3] Culture is the foundation, the primary thing which the girls ought to get from here. It should show in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal behaviour, how you sit, how you walk, how you dress, etc., so that anybody might be able to see at a glance that you are the products of this institution. Inner culture must be reflected in your speech, the way in which you treat visitors and guests, and behave towards one another and your teachers and elders.

I was pleased too that you walked all the distance to and from Bhangi Nivas, when you came to see me. But if you came only to please me, your trudging had no merit. It will do you no good. You must make it a rule to prefer walking to using a conveyance. Motor-car is not for the millions. You will therefore shun it. Millions cannot afford even train journey. Their world is their village. It is a very small thing but if you faithfully adhere to this rule it will transform your entire life and fill it with a sweetness that natural simplicity carries with it.

Education here won't qualify you for luxurious living. I want the Harijan girls here to show such a degree of culture that everybody should feel ashamed to regard them as untouchables. That is the goal of the Harijan Sevak Sangh's activities.

[1] T. Prakasam told the Associated Press of India on April 22 that he had not received Gandhiji's letter referred to in the news agency despatch from Delhi. *Vide*, however, p. 7.

T. Prakasam was elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party, Madras, on April 22.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report entitled "A Light in Darkness". Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani. The Ashram was being run by the Harijan Sevak Sangh under the personal guidance of Rameshwari Nehru and Amritlal V. Thakkar.

[3] The training at the Ashram included house-keeping, crotchet work, cooking, kitchen-gardening, spinning and allied processes, *batik* work, embroidery, singing of *bhajans* and recitation of Sanskrit verses.

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This institution should demonstrate to the whole world the heights to which Harijans can rise, if they are freed from the incubus of untouchability and conversely the sacrilege and inhumanity of the institution of untouchability itself. I look forward to the day when this institution will fill the whole country with its fragrance and become a centre of attraction for girls from near and far.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

43. SPEECH AT JAMIA MILLIA[1]

[*April 20, 1946*][2]

I have proved my claim to being a member of the family by coming without previous notice,

Gandhiji remarked, touched by the spontaneous welcome. He then invited questions.

One student asked, "What can the students do to bring about Hindu-Muslim unity?"

The way is simple. Even if all the Hindus turn rowdies and abuse you, you may not cease to regard them as your blood-brothers and *vice versa*. Is it impossible? No, rather the contrary. And what is possible for the individual is possible for the mass.

Today the whole atmosphere is poisoned. All kinds of wild rumours are circulated by the Press and are indiscriminately swallowed by the people. Panic results and both Hindus and Mussalmans forget their humanity and behave towards one another like wild brutes. It behoves men to act decently, irrespective of what the other party might or might not do. If one returns decency for decency, it is a bargain. Even thieves and dacoits do that. There is no merit in it. Humanity disdains to calculate profits and losses. It enjoins on one a unilateral obligation to put up decent behaviour. If all the Hindus listened to my advice, or in the alternative the Muslims listened to me, there would be peace in India which neither daggers nor lathis

[1] Reporting this in his "Weekly Letter" Pyarelal writes: "Gandhiji had thought of returning to his residence from the Balika Ashram, but a number of students and some members of the staff from Jamia Millia came and requested him to pay a visit some time, to their institution too. "Some time must mean now", replied Gandhiji. "Having come so far I cannot go back without going to you."

[2] Gandhiji visited the Balika Ashram on this date.

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would be able to shatter. The mischief-maker will soon be weary of the sorry business of stabbing, when there is no retaliation or counter-provocation. An Unseen Power will arrest his uplifted arm and it will refuse to obey his wicked will. You may throw dust at the sun, it won't dim his lustre. All it needs is to hold one's soul in faith and patience. God is good and does not allow wickedness to proceed beyond a certain length.

I had a hand in the building up of this institution.[1] It, therefore, gives me much pleasure to be able to pour out my heart before you. I have said the same thing to the Hindus. May yours be a shining example to India and the world.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

44. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 20, 1946

Addressing the gathering after the prayers on Saturday evening Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the fact that Ramanama recited from the heart was the never-failing remedy for all the ills—physical, mental or spiritual. He watched them taking part in the *Ramdhun* but whether they did it from the heart God alone knew. They themselves might know. But self-deception was quite possible. It was so very easy. One thing was clear. If a man or a woman who claimed to recite Ramanama from the heart was always ailing or was given to outbursts of anger the claim was eventually unproved.

Tolstoy had said that if man dismissed God from his heart even for a single moment Satan occupied the vacancy. Ramanama would expel Satan. Honest men and women had said to him that with all their efforts they could not say that Ramanama came to them from the heart. His reply to them was that they must go on and have infinite patience. A boy required at least 16 years' hard study in order to become a doctor. How much more time must be necessary to establish Ramanama in the heart?

While he was endeavouring to enthrone God in the heart and believed in nature's way he would confine himself to the five elements as curative means. He would give first place to pure air. It was the prime necessity. That implied that their houses and social surroundings should be perfectly clean. They must not live in air-tight boxes miscalled houses. They should live as free practically as they were on the prayer ground.

The Hindustan Times, 21-4-1946

[1] Jamia Millia was founded at the commencement of the non-co-operation movement in 1920 with the joint efforts of Hakim Ajmal Khan, M. A. Ansari and the Ali Brothers.

45. DEPLORABLE

Shri J. C. Kumarappa, writing in the *Gram Udyog Patrika*, says that to rely on or encourage imports from abroad is wholly wrong in principle. In the matter of the expected shortage of sugar owing to the failure of winter rains in the U. P. and Bihar and by frost in the Punjab and N. W. F. P., he suggests that the deficit in sugar should be made good by tapping palm trees in jungle areas for *nira*[1] and preparing *gur*[2] and sugar from it.

In regard to the import of a primary necessity like kerosene oil, he suggests further extraction of vegetable oils to meet our needs. Imports will entail export of some of our own production to pay for them, and will only cause further distress in the long run.

He also draws attention to the insidious scheme for the development of Virginia cigarette tobacco in Bihar sponsored by Sir Herbert Stewart (Vice-Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research). Under the scheme a number of research stations on tobacco are to be opened in various places and the Imperial Tobacco Company have given two studentships of £500 per annum for training in tobacco cultivation abroad. At such a time the obvious duty of a government should have been not to waste good money or time on tobacco research, but to devote both to reclaim all available land for food cultivation. But Imperial Councils can only think in terms of either tobacco, long staple cotton or thick rind sugar-cane for mills and groundnut for export, and thus serve foreign business masquerading as "India, Ltd.".

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946
Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Unfermented palm juice
[2] Jaggery

46. "HARIJAN" IN URDU SCRIPT

Harijan is variously described as '*Harijan Sevak*' when it is the Hindustani and *Harijanbandhu* when it is the Gujarati edition. Hindustani was Hindi when it was in Nagari type only. Now, for reasons already known, it is Hindustani in the two scripts—Nagari and Urdu. The Urdu edition would have been published simultaneously, if the arrangement could have been completed. But there were difficulties of official permission and type to be surmounted. Litho printing became well-nigh impossible, and expert advice favoured Urdu type. The type could not be had for the wanting. But it is now hoped definitely to bring out the Urdu edition on 5th May next.

Whilst the matter in the three editions is not as a rule mere translation, one of another, and to an extent differs in the three editions, the Nagari and Urdu will be the same, word for word. An endeavour will be made to produce Hindustani which will neither be Sanskritized Hindi nor Persianized Urdu. Whether the Hindustani will be popular or not will depend as much upon the writers for the Hindustani *Harijan* as upon its readers.

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946
Harijan, 28-4-1946

47. IS IT GENUINE?

Q. In one of your post-prayer discourses last week you stressed the use of khadi to the exclusion of all other cloth.[1] I love the very touch of khadi as it links me, in my heart and thoughts, to my poor sisters and brothers, to whom it brings a well-earned morsel of food. I love it from every point of view—on hygienic, aesthetic, humanitarian, moral and spiritual grounds. But I have so far never been able to take to spinning, much as I like the soothing hum of the wheel, and thanks to our system of education, my hands are utterly untrained and unfit to learn spinning at this stage. I am, therefore, unable to comply in a straightforward manner with the conditions now imposed on the sale of khadi, and it is galling to me to have to go in for mill cloth.

[1] *Vide* p. 13.

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A. If the love for khadi is so genuine as to cover moral and spiritual values, surely the writer should be able to learn spinning easily at his age. The late Pandit Motilal Nehru learnt it, after he was fifty. The late Ali Brothers learnt it, though they did not practise it regularly. And all these three learnt it for its national and political value in the highest sense of the term. As a matter of fact most of the public workers learnt it late in life.

The writer should learn spinning without delay. There is nothing wrong with his fingers. All who can write can spin. And spinning for swaraj is any day more valuable than writing.

I agree that for one like the writer the only straightforward way to give his quota of yarn for buying khadi is self-spinning. If he was incapable for any cause, it would be perfectly right for him to get his many friends or relations to spin the required quota for him.

As an earnest student of affairs, he should know, too, that while khadi is good for the poor as an honourable occupation for earning bread, it has an additional and far greater value as an instrument of winning swaraj through non-violent means. Let it not be said of men like him that they could write eloquently about moral values without realizing the implications of the statement.

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946
Harijan, 28-4-1946

48. MERCY v. RUTHLESSNESS[1]

The virtues of mercy, non-violence, love and truth in any man can be truly tested only when they are pitted against ruthlessness, violence, hate and untruth.

If this is true, then it is incorrect to say that ahimsa is of no avail before a murderer. It can certainly be said that to experiment with ahimsa in the face of a murderer is to seek self-destruction. But this is the real test of ahimsa. He who gets himself killed out of sheer helplessness, however, can in nowise be said to have passed the test. He who when being killed bears no anger against his murderer and even asks God to forgive him is truly non-violent. History relates this of Jesus Christ. With his dying breath on the cross, he is reported to have said: "Father, forgive

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-4-1946.

them for they know not what they do." We can get similar instances from other religions but the quotation is given because it is world-famous.

It is another matter that our non-violence has not reached such heights. It would be wholly wrong for us to lower the standard of ahimsa by reason of our own frailty or lack of experience. Without true understanding of the ideal, we can never hope to reach it. It is necessary for us, therefore, to apply our reason to understand the power of non-violence.

NEW DELHI, April 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

49. LETTER TO ALAGAPPA CHETTIAR

NEW DELHI,
April 21, 1946

BHAI ALAGAPPA CHETTIAR[1],

Bapa[2] tells me that you have been ailing for some time. Why is it so? Do you recite Ramanama? Ramanama will bring you peace if nothing more. Bapa is staying here. He had been rather unwell. He is all right now.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] Of Karaikudi

[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar (1869-1951); joined Servants of India Society in 1914; established Bhil Seva Mandal in 1922; President, Gujarat Antyaja Seva Mandal; Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh; General Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust; established Bharatiya Adimjati Sevak Sangh

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50. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 21, 1946

Gandhiji had noticed that several men and women did not take part in beating time with *Ramdhun*. He pulled them up in his after-prayer discourse on Sunday. There was nothing to be ashamed of in repeating the name of God and in beating time with it. Modesty was an admirable virtue, but out of place it became a fault.

Reverting to the subject of the previous evening, i. e., nature cure, Gandhiji spoke about pure water, the second in importance among the five natural elements, the first one being air about which he had spoken on Saturday.[1] Large numbers of men and women in this country drank impure water and washed their clothes with and bathed in water which made the body and the clothes dirtier than before.

Will any of you care to bathe or wash your clothes in the gutter water? Yet many of the small tanks where people bathe and wash and even drink from are no cleaner than the gutter. Nature is lenient. It often does not punish us for our sins immediately. Thus we can go on breathing impure air and drinking impure water over long periods without any dramatic ill effects. But there is not the slightest doubt that such a thing lowers the vitality and makes one fall an easy prey to disease.

Gandhiji told the audience what he had seen on the banks of the sacred Ganges at Hardwar. People went there to wash off their sins, but they made the place so dirty that it could not even wash their bodies clean. He used to find it difficult to bathe at Har-ki-Pauri if he was at all late. People evacuated on the banks and did not even care to cover it up with sand. They made the bathing-ghat filthy, strewing flowers which were trampled under the feet and so on. It was a painful state of affairs, a thing of which Indians had real cause to be ashamed.

He had taken up the new job of advising people on nature cure. A doctor had to go through five years of hard studies before he could begin to treat patients. Not so the nature-cure man. Speaking about himself he said he had picked up the essentials of nature cure by reading a few books and talking to experts in the line. Experience and experimentation had made up the rest. They could all do the same and become their own doctors. People had a notion that what was simple was no good. A spinning-wheel was

[1] *Vide* p. 38.

simple. It was, therefore, condemned as primitive and crude. A mill cost a lot and was elaborate. It was an indication of progress. If this was their view, he was afraid they would have no use for him as he was but a simple-minded villager and a believer in the philosophy of simplicity. But he knew that most of them were simple-minded men and women like him and though they lived in a city, they had not lost all contact with the villages. Therefore, he felt emboldened to place nature cure before them.

Pure air and pure water were the first essentials, and of course Ramanama was there all the time. A man who repeated Ramanama and thereby cleansed his inner being could not tolerate the filth outside. If millions took to Ramanama in real earnest there would be no riots, which were a social malady, and there would be no illnesses. The Kingdom of Heaven would come on earth.

The Hindustan Times, 22-4-1946

51. MINISTERS' DUTY

It is legitimate to ask what Congress ministers will do for khaddar and other village industries now that they are in office. I should broaden the question and apply it to all the Provincial Governments of India. Poverty is common to all the provinces and so are means of alleviation in terms of the masses. Such is the experience of both the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. A suggestion has been made that there should be a separate minister for the work, as, for proper organization, it will occupy all the time of one minister. I dread to make the suggestion, for we have not yet outlived the English scale of expenditure. Whether a minister is separately appointed or not, a department for the work is surely necessary. In these times of scarcity of food and clothing, this department can render the greatest help. The ministers have experts at their disposal through the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. It is possible to clothe today the whole of India in khadi on the smallest outlay and in the shortest time possible. Each Provincial Government has to tell the villagers that they must manufacture their own khaddar for their own use. This brings in automatic local production and distribution. And there will undoubtedly be a surplus for the cities at least to a certain extent which, in its turn, will reduce the pressure on the local mills. The latter will then be able to take part in supplying the want of cloth in other parts of the world.

How can this result be brought about?

The Governments should notify the villagers that they will be expected to manufacture khaddar for the needs of their villages within a fixed date after which no cloth will be supplied to them. The Governments in their turn will supply the villagers with cotton seed or cotton wherever required, at cost price and the tools of manufacture also at cost, to be recovered in easy instalments payable in, say, five years or more. They will supply them with instructors wherever necessary and undertake to buy surplus stock of khaddar, provided that the villagers in question have their cloth requirements supplied from their own manufacture. This should do away with cloth shortage without fuss and with very little overhead charges.

The villages will be surveyed and a list prepared of things that can be manufactured locally with little or no help and which may be required for village use or for sale outside, such for instance, as *ghani*[1] pressed oil and cakes, burning oil prepared through *ghanis*, hand-pounded rice, *tad gud*[2], honey, toys, mats, hand-made paper, village soap, etc. If enough care is thus taken, the villages, most of them as good as dead or dying, will hum with life and exhibit the immense possibilities they have of supplying most of their wants themselves and of the cities and towns of India.

Then there is the limitless cattle wealth of India suffering from criminal neglect. Goseva Sangh, as yet not properly experienced, can still supply valuable aid.

Without the basic training the villagers are being starved for education. This desideratum can be supplied by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The experiment was already commenced by Congress Governments but it was interrupted by the resignations of the Congress ministries.[3] The thread can be easily resumed now.

NEW DELHI, April 22, 1946
Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Oil-press
[2] Palm jaggery
[3] The Congress Ministries which were formed in 1937 had resigned in October-November 1939.

52. *QUESTION BOX*[1]

Sugar and Sweetmeats

Q. The sugar ration in Bombay has just been reduced by 25 per cent. Would it not have been fairer to reduce sweetmeat shops' rations rather than cut down the individual's?

A. It is always well to cut down the ration of sweet vendors rather than that of individuals. In these hard times I would not mind if sweet-making were even prohibited. Sweetmeats are not a necessary part of a wholesome diet.

White Bread and Brown

Q. Up till January it was obligatory to mix ten per cent of bran with wheat flour. Later the rule was abolished. Should it not be reinforced?

A. I am a witness to the age-old rivalry between white and whole-meal brown bread. People are attracted by whiteness. I nurse the belief that the Negro is not drawn by it. Be that as it may, it is a fact that special effort is made to make bread look white. Fortunately, only city-dwellers indulge in such fads. Doctors say that one *chapati* of whole-meal flour is more tasty and contains more nourishment than two to five *chapatis* made out of refined flour. And in these days it is our duty to use whole-meal, because all flour saved is flour gained. From one point of view it is even more than that. Wheat stored in villages is far more useful than sacks of it lying in ports. Therefore, it is desirable to make the mixing of bran with wheat flour compulsory. The war is over but post-war conditions are worse for us than during the war, and the situation is daily deteriorating. God alone knows when it will improve.

Rowdyism in Elections

Q. You are no doubt aware of the rowdyism resulting in severe damage during one of the recent elections in Bombay. Does it become the teacher of ahimsa to keep silent on such an occasion?

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 28-4-1946.

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A. I do not want to enter into the question of whether silence becomes me or not. If the rowdyism is not a forerunner of what the future holds, it will be wrong to take note of it. Such sporadic clashes should not worry us. The education of the masses in ahimsa can make way gradually. It may be that it will develop from the lessons learnt from such happenings. But it may be that this rowdyism is symptomatic of an epidemic. Many people imagine that they alone are right and everyone else wrong, and they do not consider that there is anything unworthy in forcing their point of view down others' throats. This error has to be rectified. If we are in the right we must have infinite patience.

Just now we seem unable to see our own mistakes. Those who lack the faculty of reason, or who desire to live for the sake of enjoyment, can never see the error. If there are many such, then we must conclude that our non-violence has been a weapon of the weak, *himsa* masquerading in the guise of ahimsa. If this weakness continues we shall have to go through rivers of blood once the British rule goes. We may even come under the sway of some other foreign power or it may be that with internecine warfare the weaker side will have to submit to the one that has the mightier weapons. If we are unfortunate enough to witness such strife, believers in non-violence will joyfully die in the effort to stop it and thereby live.

My hope is that the masses have sufficiently imbibed the spirit of ahimsa and that when the British go there may be a little fight here and there and then we shall settle down as brothers giving a lesson of peace to the world.

Only those who fought in Bombay know what good they achieved by fighting. I am ignorant of who fought and what the fight was about and what were the gains if any.

NEW DELHI, April 22, 1946

Harijan, 28-4-1946

53. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

[*April 22, 1946*][2]

You are right.[3] As it goes forward, it becomes progressively lifeless. I shall try to do what is possible.

From the original : C. W. 4210. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7846

54. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

Why not get your hair cut by Kanu? Do you remember my having cut your hair ? I must not give the time now. But if you have patience, I would gladly cut it. I do not like your going to a hair-dresser. But if you feel like it, you should go.

From the original : C. W. 4224. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7860

55. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

If Matthai[4] had only agreed, he would have been finance minister. It is wrong always to think of ministership. It is wrong to seek to satisfy all interests. Why should not a Christian think that he is represented if a good man is a minister?

From the original : C. W. 4227. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7863

[1] & [2] Apparently a silence-day note, this is written on a telegram dated April 20, 1946. The silence day, i. e., the following Monday, fell on April 22.

[3] The addressee had written : "For *Gitaparayana* [recitation of *Gita*] can I suggest that those who are able to read should read, say, three chapters each in turn? They seldom keep together. The pace increases as the reading progresses. Sometimes, as today, the key changes. Words become a jumble after the first five chapters or so, partially because of the pace and partially because of fatigue. Someone or other drops out to take breath. It is jarring for the listener. I don't know if you have noticed the thing. If you have you will understand what I mean."

[4] John Matthai

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56. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

Your silly letter in Marathi addressed to Sushila[1] was read out and translated to me. It is good to be clear about one's goal. Forget the person who has become the symbol of your goal. But the difficulty is that the person himself has become your goal. That happens to many and they suffer in consequence. When we make the person symbolizing our goal himself our goal, the result is that we feel happy when his actions and words are such as please us, but get offended when they are otherwise. One should, therefore, keep one's goal independent. Until you can do that, you will suffer, and so will your work. You have been educated, but learnt no wisdom!!! Learn it now. Learn it from me if you don't have it. In doing this there will be no conflict at all between your goal and the symbol of your goal, for learning wisdom means acquiring knowledge of practical affairs. But remember that practical affairs may be conducted either truthfully or untruthfully. Wake up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10444. Also C. W. 6883. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

[1] Sushila Pai

57. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
April 22, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Bhansali[1] can do what he likes. It is not necessary to obtain my permission for giving up ginning.

Did the thunderstorm cause any damage? Or did it do any good?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4552

58. TALK WITH A ZAMINDAR[2]

[Before *April 23, 1946*][3]

"Where shall we stand when India is independent?" asked a friend representing the landholders' interests, the other day during his visit to Gandhiji.

You will be as free as any scavenger, but whether you will be able to retain all the privileges which you are enjoying under the British Government is a question you can answer for yourself.

We realize that we shall secure our salvation at the hands of Indian leaders, not the British Government.

Everybody believes that today. Even the British Government feel that they cannot do otherwise than to leave India to settle her own affairs.

The landholders derived their charter of rights and privileges from the Permanent Settlement which was of the nature of a contract between the British and the zamindars, but they are quite willing to negotiate an agreement with the leaders of the country on the future of their rights.

[1] Jayakrishna P. Bhansali

[2] & [3] This and the following item are reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated "New Delhi, April 23, 1946".

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Being a non-violent man by nature I cannot countenance the usurpation of anybody's just rights. But some of the extraordinary privileges that pass muster under the British rule are themselves in the nature of an usurpation. The history of British rule is a history of usurpation. Those who helped the British Government in this process got certain rights as a reward for their services. These cannot be insisted upon.

Many ancient *zamindaris*[1] existed long before the advent of the British and were exercising sovereign power, as a product of indigenous social and economic system of long standing. Don't you think they have a title to continue their existence? They are trying their best to discharge a philanthropic function in the shape of founding educational and social institutions.

Anything that is ancient and consistent with moral values has a title to be retained. *Per contra* anything that does not conform to moral values has to go. Wrong has no prescriptive right to exist merely because it is of long standing. If those who are on your *zamindaris* feel one with you and you with them, like members of a family, you have nothing to fear from anybody.

We want even-handed justice. We have no objection to an independent Indian Government abolishing all manner of vested interests. But let there be no discrimination against the zamindars especially. We only want a conciliatory gesture, an assurance that you won't wipe us out as a class, without giving us a sporting chance to vindicate our existence.

A just man need have no fear of any kind from an independent India. India may, however, fall into unjust hands. Every Congressman is not an angel, nor is everyone who is not a Congressman a devil. Let us hope that, if Congress comes into power, it will try to be more than just. Otherwise all the good that it might have done would disappear in the twinkling of an eye.

I do not deny that there are bad boys amongst us. But you can cure us. We only wish that nothing should be done without consulting us.

That goes without saying.[2]

Harijan, 28-4-1946

[1] Absentee landlordism

[2] Gandhiji concluded the interview, pointing in a mute petition of mercy, as it were, to the heap of papers in front of him awaiting disposal.

59. TALK WITH MISSIONARIES

[Before *April 23, 1946*]

Another group of friends presented Gandhiji with a poser: "Could he guarantee that under independence the right of proselytization would be guaranteed by a statute?" This provoked the counter question, "Did they really believe in the ideal of independence or was their support to the independence ideal only for a consideration?" In the latter case, he would say, remarked Gandhiji, that they believed neither in independence nor in religion. Who could suppress the voice of truth if it filled one's being? And of what avail was a statutory guarantee if there was not the fire within to bear witness to truth?

"It is true, no one can suppress the voice of truth," interpolated one of them. "We want a guarantee from you that no attempt would be made to suppress it."

I cannot give you that guarantee because I have no authority.

It was the function of religion, he continued, to save the temporal power from losing its soul; religion did not depend upon it for protection. And he cited to them the illustration of Daniel, the servant of God, who used to pray behind closed doors. But when Darius the King issued a decree prohibiting the worship of any God or man save himself under a penalty, he began to pray to God publicly, the windows of his chamber being open so that all could see him praying. He was thrown into the hungry lion's den but came out unscathed. The result was that the King rescinded his former decree which was 'unalterable' under the laws of Medes and Persians and made another decree to the effect that in every dominion of his kingdom, "men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God and steadfast as ever". And "so Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus". That was the only true way of proselytization and it needed no guarantee, statutory or otherwise. It was its own seal and sanction.

To take a leaf from the history of our own times, remember the words of the late Lord Salisbury who, when in office, had told a missionary deputation about [*sic*] China that they were a poor specimen if for their mission they sought the protection of British guns.

Harijan, 28-4-1946

60. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

DELHI,
April 23, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Yes, it will be possible to give my blessings to both couples[1], but won't that have to be after the wedding? I don't feel the slightest inclination now to give my blessings to marriages within the same caste, but I also see that I must give them.

Your letter regarding a peace brigade is excellent. I have discussed the matter with someone, but I don't remember with whom. I am keeping the letter with me. If possible I will discuss the suggestion.[2] I have finished writing the articles for the next Sunday's issue of *Harijan*. Whatever I write now will have to wait for the issue after that. This is an inconvenience which must be endured as long as I do not settle in Ahmedabad, and that does not seem possible during the present life.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
SABARMATI ASHRAM

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9141

61. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

DELHI,
April 23, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have both your letters. What you say about textbooks is correct. It will be good if the Adhyapan Mandir can be opened in Mahila Ashram. It will be equally good if you wish to open it in Bhagalpur. But we shall have to consider whether we have the capacity.

[1] Mohan, addressee's son, and Anasuya; Sushila and Navaneet Desai
[2] *Vide* pp. 66-7.

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Bal[1] arrived here yesterday and I am giving him both your letters to see, so that he may ask me if any point has been left out and tell you if and when he meets you.

We can make the study of Hindustani compulsory in non-government institutions. I see danger in trying to make it compulsory through the Government. The latter's duty will be to reward, by way of encouragement, persons who know both the scripts. In this way study of both the scripts can be introduced. This whole question of Government policy requires careful consideration.

You must have seen what Kishorelal has written regarding the Roman script. I have given my opinion against his suggestions.[2] Go through his pamphlet if you have not done so and communicate your opinion to Kishorelal. Write to him regarding the *vidyut*[3] script also. How long I shall have to stay in Delhi will depend on acts of God and the King (King—Cabinet Mission).

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10970

62. *LETTER TO GAGANVIHARI L. MEHTA*

DELHI,
April 23, 1946

BHAI GAGANVIHARI,

You did well in sending me the three cuttings. I have seen them. The news regarding Burma is startling. Have you or have you not written to Dr. Khare[4] about it?

I am sure you are interested in the Gujarati language. Is the word *katran*[5] neuter or feminine?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GAGANVIHARI MEHTA
CALCUTTA

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

[1] Addressee's son
[2] *Vide* pp. 19-20.
[3] Shorthand
[4] N. B. Khare, ex-Premier of C. P., 1937-38; Member-in-Charge of Commonwealth Relations in the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1943-46
[5] Cutting

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63. LETTER TO MANJULA M. MEHTA

April 23, 1946

CHI. MANJULA[1],

I have your letter. I had no idea about an earlier letter. Before I can offer a categorical answer to the question you have asked I should know what the other party has to say. I have seen that it is dangerous to express an opinion on the strength of a statement made by one party. I write this to you so that you understand this matter correctly. I should certainly like to see you all when I go to Bombay but you rightly say that you will write to me if you have anything to ask, because I find that as the days pass I am growing increasingly unfit for personal discussions. I just cannot spare the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANJULABEHN MAGANLAL MEHTA
82 GHORBUNDER ROAD
ANDHERI

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

64. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 23, 1946

Speaking after the prayers, Gandhiji thanked the Maulvi Saheb for the recitation.[2] The selections[3] were not all made by him. For instance, the Koranic prayer had been introduced by Raihanabehn Tyabji[4]. She came and recited it herself in the beginning and then taught it to others. The prayer from *Zend Avesta* was introduced by Dr. Gilder[5]. Maybe there were mistakes in the recitation. But God cared for what was in men's hearts

[1] Wife of Maganlal, the late Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta's son

[2] Of the *al fatiha*, from the Koran

[3] Which included a Buddhist prayer, some Sanskrit *shlokas* from the *Gita*, a Hindustani *bhajan* and *Ramdhun* and verses from the Koran and *Zend Avesta*

[4] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji

[5] M. D. D. Gilder, Minister of Health and Excise in the Government of Bombay, 1937-39

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rather than what was produced from their mouths. It would be best if a Muslim recited the Koranic prayer and a Parsi recited the Parsi prayer and so on. But in the absence of such an arrangement one did the best one could.

Next he drew the attention of the people to the need for discipline. Shri Kanu Gandhi had made it his profession to teach people *Ramdhun* and through it discipline in every walk of life. They should all sit in regular rows instead of in a disorderly and haphazard fashion.

He had come to know that Harijan collections at the prayer meetings were very meagre nowadays. That was bad. They should all contribute their bit according to their capacity.

Finally, he reverted to the question of nature cure. He had talked to them about air and water.[1] Today he wanted to talk about earth, the earth which the human body is made of and to which it must return.

Whether the dead are buried or cremated, dust returns to dust. Like air and water, earth is God's creation and we must not soil it.

People were in the habit of spitting anywhere, throwing orange skins and bits of paper here and there. All that was sin. To put anything out of place was equivalent to soiling the earth. A man of prayer could never do that.

Death might claim us at any moment. Let us then be on the alert and recite Ramanama all the time. We must cleanse if we can, never soil, His creation.

The Hindustan Times, 24-4-1946

65. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

[Before *April 24, 1946*][2]

Write and tell him that my blessings are given only when one of the parties to the marriage is a Harijan. This is a marriage of two caste Hindus. Let them marry and be happy. Why do they need my blessings?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8396

[1] *Vide* pp. 38 and 43-4.

[2] From the postal cancellation stamp

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66. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

April 24, 1946

CHI. BALKRISHNA[1],

Take whatever steps may be necessary regarding your need for milk. If you can keep a cow for that purpose, that of course will be the best way.

How is your health? It seems you are experiencing difficulty in getting land there. Discuss the matter with Bhai Bhansali and others.

Other things seem to be going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 816. Courtesy : Balkrishna Bhave

67. LETTER TO PUSHPA N. NAIK

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA[2],

I have your letter. I did not wish that you should attend the wedding, but thought it desirable that you should pay a visit to Bombay.

You should not stop taking interest in the kitchen all at once. But it is of course desirable that you should train others to take your place. It is necessary to arrange frequent visits to villages. Slowly start doing some work in the hospital there. When you learn to see God in service, all doors of service will open to you. As regards the cooking of food, in addition to what you have mentioned you should learn what will constitute wholesome and balanced diet, and how it can be popularized.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9271

[1] Also known as Balkoba, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave
[2] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel

68. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

You wish to be addressed as 'thou' and to have 'lal' dropped, but leave that to the future. Does not a man who rises very high run the risk of falling, too? Ultimately what difference does it make whether one is addressed as 'you' or as 'thou'?

It will be better if the Panchayat spends the money on boards, etc. If a rich man offers either money or the boards, you may accept them. You can take, instead of boards, bamboo poles, two if they are thick, or more, depending on the size, tie the ends with strong ropes and make a support for the feet. This would be quite inexpensive. If you tie bamboo poles together, they make a sort of bridge. Without a support for the feet made of boards or bamboo poles, you may be sure that the pits will be useless. If you can get discarded railway sleepers, they also will do. I am sorry that you have not been able to secure the land. Discuss the matter with the *mahajan*[1] there.

You are getting a good number of patients now. We may accept from Dr. Bhagwat only such services as he willingly offers. The equipment belonging to the Trust, too, is intended for service. Do whatever you can gently.

If it is necessary, purchase a cow for Balkoba. See that he does not go without milk. That must not be allowed to happen. It is desirable in any case that you should have a good number of cows there.

I suppose Kanchanbehn also has come there.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 2754. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

[1] Community leader

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69. LETTER TO JAYAKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

You will admit that it is alarming that you fell ill critically. Man ought not to strain his powers to the utmost. It is indeed desirable that your whole life should be disciplined. It is better if you yourself decide to live such a life, not because I say it. Ultimately we have to live as God wills.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

70. LETTER TO BHAGWADACHARYA

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

BHAI BHAGWADACHARYA,

I have your letter after many days. I must admit that I don't like it. Firstly, why should you involve yourself in the ritual sacrifice which is more or less a fraud? I can understand those who are ignorant of the true nature of dharma or are downright hypocrites busying themselves with it, but why a man like you should concern himself with it is something beyond my comprehension, especially because I don't want to look upon you as a hypocrite and because I am not prepared to believe that you are so sunk in abysmal ignorance. And if there was a sacrifice, wherefore all the discrimination? Those who do not want to come may not; those who want may come. Hence, in no way can my heart accept either your act or your justification of it. I would wish you to devote yourself single-heartedly to what is straightforward and truthful, rather than indulge in mere casuistry.

I am strongly opposed to sacrifice as it is currently interpreted. I consider it a sin to throw ghee into the sacrificial [fire] in our age. Sacrifice really means an act of service. I had

therefore hoped that you would follow only that which is truthful even by giving up your position as a swami.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI BHAGWADACHARYA
RAJKOT

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

71. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. Write to Jiten Babu what you think proper and do what you like.

I shall return Jiten Babu's letter after showing it to Pra[fulla] Babu.

It will be very good if your health improves.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 512

72. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

DELHI,
April 24, 1946

CHI. K. C.,

Rajkumari will write about the tents.

I do not like what you say about Bhansalibhai.

As for Anna[1] he may look after things.

It is good that Shakaribehn[2] and Champabehn[3] have taken up ginning.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4553

[1] Harihar Sharma
[2] Chimanlal N. Shah's wife
[3] Ratilal Pranjivandas Mehta's wife

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73. A TALK[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 24, 1946

Ply charkha and spin as much as you can. There lies your highest duty.[2]

Lay down your lives for Hindu-Muslim unity.[3]

Gandhi's remedy is easy and inexpensive too; everyone knows it. His prescription, which hardly costs anything, is recitation of Ramanama.[4]

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 25-4-1946

74. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[5]

April 24, 1946

Speaking after the prayers on Wednesday evening Gandhiji reverted to the place of earth, which in nature cure was only next to air and water. One of the curative uses of earth was an earth-bath. Dry, finely powdered earth rubbed on the body cleansed the skin. Mud applied to the body and allowed to dry could cure many skin diseases. More than 40 years ago a little nephew of his had boils all over the body. They were slow to respond to any treatment. Finally he took the case in his hands, covered the boy's body with mud and made him run about naked. The boy was cured in eight to ten days.

Gandhiji said that earth was full of miraculous properties and it was as useful in man's life as any other thing could be.

[1] Yamunadutt Brahmachari, Purnachandra Azad, Basantsingh Bhring and Raghubir Singh Tyagi, four workers from Meerut, who had been released from prison after three and a half years, met Gandhiji and asked him three questions.

[2] The question was: "In the present age of party strife, what is the duty of the workers who have been released recently?"

[3] The second question was : "What is their duty in the panic-stricken areas where there are strong rumours about riots?"

[4] The last question was: "What is the remedy in nature cure for dysentery, a common disease among those who have been released from prison?"

[5] The Hindi report in *Hindustan* has been collated with the version in *The Hindustan Times*.

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We are born of earth and return to earth after life's journey. In the morning prayers there is a *shloka* in which the devotee invokes mother earth and asks her forgiveness for treading upon her. If we expect our prayer to be heard, we must show our reverence in practice. We must not soil the earth or dirty it as many of us do today. If somebody soils the earth through ignorance or oversight by spitting or in any other manner, we should cover up the filth with dry earth.

The Hindustan Times, 25-4-1946, and *Hindustan*, 25-4-1946

75. THE MONKEY NUISANCE[1]

People get weary of the trouble caused to them by monkeys. In their hearts they wish them dead. They are inwardly pleased if anyone kills them. At the same time they will oppose their slaughter. A friend who is well acquainted with the scriptures writes that monkeys ruin the crops, they even kidnap children, carry away articles, and eat up fruit, etc. Their number is daily increasing. I am asked as to what non-violence dictates in the matter.

My ahimsa is my own. I am not able to accept in its entirety the doctrine of non-killing of animals. I have no feeling in me to save the lives of animals which devour or cause hurt to man. I consider it wrong to help in the increase of their progeny. Therefore, I will not feed ants, monkeys or dogs. I will never sacrifice a man's life in order to save theirs.

Thinking along these lines I have come to the conclusion that to do away with monkeys where they have become a menace to the well-being of man is pardonable. Such killing becomes a duty. The question may arise as to why this rule should not also apply to human beings. It cannot because, however bad, they are as we are. Unlike the animal, man has been given the faculty of reason.

NEW DELHI, April 25, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-5-1946 with the dateline, "New Delhi, 26-4-1946". The translation has been touched up.

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76. *DRAFT AND NOTE ON PROPOSED PROCLAMATION ON SALT*[1]

(A) The Proclamation

In order that the poorest in the land may feel that independence is coming and as an earnest of their *bona fides*, the Government of India declare that the Salt Tax is abolished from today. To that end the inspectors of. . .[2] shall withdraw from their scenes of activity and the villagers will be notified by beat of drum and otherwise that they are at liberty to manufacture salt wherever they can for themselves or for sale. Other instructions about the State manufacture and sale of salt will be issued in due course.

(B) Note on the proposed Proclamation on Salt

When the Salt Tax is abolished the monopoly goes likewise. Individuals should be free to manufacture salt for consumption or sale. Therefore, while there would be no monopoly in law, the Government will by their better organizing power and scientific skill be able to create a virtual monopoly. They will not allow private corporations to make manufacture and sale of salt a source of profiteering. It will be a legitimate paying business in the hands of the State. Consumption of the article is so universal that the profit of even a pie on every seer would bring in a natural income to the State. Every dealer in salt will be required to take out a licence for selling salt in his shop. [A] dealer is not to be confused with a hawker. A hawker who carried salt on his person will be free to sell without a licence. This will free the individual manufacturer and seller from interference.

Government will add to the revenue also by putting a heavy, though not a prohibitive, customs duty on foreign salt, whether British or otherwise.

[1] In response to Gandhiji's suggestion about the abolition of the Salt Tax Sir Archibald Rowlands, Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, had met Gandhiji on April 5, 1946. The draft and the note were sent to Sir Archibald in compliance with his request. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VII, however, places the proclamation just after Gandhiji's letter to the Viceroy dated April 6, 1946. For Gandhiji's correspondence in this connection *vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 354-5 and 374-5.

[2] Omission as in the source

Whilst anxiety has been shown in this note to show how salt may be made to yield legitimate revenue to the State, equal if not greater care has been taken to make salt free like air and water for the individual who wants to labour for its manufacture and sale.

NEW DELHI, April 25, 1946

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 316

77. *LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL*

HARIJAN MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
April 25, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing on Gandhiji's behalf.

He was under the impression that all I. N. A. prisoners were going to be released in batches. Meanwhile he gets from Shri Raghunandan Saran a paper with reference to three trials.[1] A copy thereof is enclosed.

Before Gandhiji offers any further remarks he would like to know, if you do not mind, why these impending trials and consequent irritation, seeing that independence is imminent?[2]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 45

[1] The three I. N. A. men to be tried by Court Martial were Col. Kasliwal, Col. Inayat Hassan and Rasul Bux on a charge of "cruelty" to Maj. Durrani, "also of the I. N. A.", to extract a confession from him in an investigation instituted by the I. N. A. High Command.

[2] In reply the addressee wrote: "The I. N. A. policy is, as you know, to bring to trial only those against whom there is evidence of brutality. The new trials are, I understand, in this category.

I am, however, sending a copy of your letter with a copy of its enclosure, to War Department, and if there is any other point that ought to be made, they will write to you direct."

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78. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

April 25, 1946

Speaking after the prayers, Gandhiji introduced Badshah Khan as a fakir and a man of God. He had come to Delhi in connection with the meeting of the Working Committee of which he was a member. But he was essentially a man of God. His company was *satsang*, hallowed company for them as it was for him.

Gandhiji told the audience of a letter he had received from a correspondent criticizing Mr. Kanu Gandhi and the way he led *Ramdhun*. *Ramdhun* should be in the heart; where was the need for all the external show, the correspondent had asked. There was no doubt, observed Gandhiji, that Ramanama should come from the heart. But the external things were an indication of what was within. Supposing everyone struck a different note while reciting prayers in the mosque or during the chanting of hymns in the church, it would utterly ruin the solemnity of the service. There was a right way of doing everything and prayers were no exception.

A gentleman, Gandhiji proceeded, had sent him a book describing how *namaz*[1] should be offered. While turning over the pages of that book he came across a sentence in it which was to the effect that prayer said in congregation was 27 times as effective as prayer said by oneself. If they all joined in the prayer whole-heartedly and methodically it would gather momentum in geometric progression and so transform the atmosphere that riots in Delhi would become an impossibility.

The Hindustan Times, 26-4-1946

79. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
April 26, 1946

Mr. Hoover's[2] flying visit to India has excited considerable interest and possibly hope. Whilst all the help that America and other countries can send to India, struggling against starvation, must be welcome, my endeavour has been to find ways and means

[1] Prayer as offered by Muslims

[2] Herbert Hoover, Chairman of the United States Famine Emergency Committee

to make ourselves self-supporting. The moment people give way to panic, starvation is a certainty in spite of a continuous line of steamers off-loading grain from outside on India's wharves. Conversely, every grain from abroad sent as a matter of duty to self-reliant India, honestly and manfully braving the threatening danger, will be twice blessed. Let Mr. Hoover's visit serve as a reminder to Government servants, monied men and grain merchants that they must think all the time of their duty to the masses. Nature never fails those who will help themselves.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

80. NON-VIOLENT VOLUNTEER CORPS[1]

Some time ago an attempt was made, at my instance, to form *shanti dals*[2] but nothing came of it. This lesson, however, was learnt, that the membership, in its very nature, of such organizations could not be large. Ordinarily, the efficient running of a large volunteer corps based on force implies the possibility of the use of force in the event of breach of discipline. In such bodies little or no stress is laid on a man's character. Physique is the chief factor. The contrary must obtain in non-violent bodies in which character or soul force must mean everything and physique must take second place. It is difficult to find many such persons. That is why non-violent corps must be small, if they are to be efficient. Such brigades may be scattered all over; there may be one each for a village or a *mohalla*[3]. The members must know one another well. Each corps will select its own head. All the members will have the same status, but where everyone is doing the same work there must be one person under whose discipline all must come, or else the work will suffer. Where there are two or more brigades the leaders must consult among themselves and decide on a common line of action. In that way alone lies success.

If non-violent volunteer corps are formed on the above lines, they can easily stop trouble. These corps will not require all the physical training given in *akhadas*[4] but a certain part of it will be necessary.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-5-1946.
[2] Peace Corps
[3] Locality
[4] Gymnasiums

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One thing, however, should be common to members of all such organizations and that is implicit faith in God. He is the only Companion and Doer. Without faith in Him these peace brigades will be lifeless. By whatever name one calls God, one must realize that one can only work through His strength. Such a man will never take another's life. He will allow himself, if need be, to be killed and thereby live through his victory over death.

The mind of the man in whose life the realization of this law has become a living reality will not be bewildered in a crisis. He will instinctively know the right way to act.

In spite, however, of what I have said above I would like to give some rules culled from my own experience :

1. A volunteer may not carry any weapons.
2. The members of a corps must be easily recognizable.
3. Every volunteer must carry bandages, scissors, needle and thread, surgical knife, etc., for rendering first-aid.
4. He should know how to carry and remove the wounded.
5. He should know how to put out fires, how to enter a fire area without getting burnt, how to climb heights for rescue work and descend safely with or without his charge.
6. He should be well-acquainted with all the residents of his locality. This is a service in itself.
7. He should recite Ramanama ceaselessly in his heart and persuade others who believe in it to do likewise.

There are many who, whether from mental laziness or from having fallen into a bad habit believe that God is and will help us unasked. Why then is it necessary to recite His name? It is true that if God is, He is, irrespective of our belief. But realization of God is infinitely more than mere belief. That can come only by constant practice. This is true of all science. How much more true of the science of all sciences!

Man often repeats the name of God parrot-wise and expects fruit from so doing. The true seeker must have that living faith which will not only dispel the untruth of parrot-wise repetition from within him but also from the hearts of others.

NEW DELHI, April 26, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

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81. WHITED SEPULCHRES?[1]

I am a woman but feel I must write to you about this matter. About three months ago a man who said he was . . .'s servant came here. . . . One evening he brought a car and asked me if I had ever been in one and if not, would I not go with him for an outing? It never entered my head to suspect him and I acceded to his request. I was first taken to . . . where I was gagged and later we proceeded to a house in . . . For some days every effort was made to commit an outrage on me. . . . Then one day a wealthy merchant and Congress leader of . . . came and asked me to go and enjoy life with him in . . .

Later one day I was rescued by a friend of my father's with the help of the police.

I have received more than one such letter[2] accusing some Congressmen of immorality. It would not be wisdom to believe that they are all untrue and ignore the complaint. It has never been claimed that every Congressman is a model of virtue. But it is a matter of pride that the public expect a high standard of morality from Congressmen. All kinds of immorality are prevalent among us. It is a reformer's duty to try to wean from error those who are justly accused of misbehaviour. There are limits to immorality, if any can be claimed to pass muster. If what has been related is true, every man has to ask himself how far he is justified in seeking to satisfy his lust at the expense of innocent girls.

NEW DELHI, April 26, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-5-1946.
[2] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

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82. SWARAJ THROUGH SPINNING[1]

An A. I. S. A. worker writes thus:[2]

> You have said that we must make the spinners self-sufficient and that to obtain swaraj through their activity is the aim of the A. I. S. A. . . . This way lies swaraj, you say. I admit it is right for spinners to learn well all the processes. . . . The quality of yarn and cloth will also improve. But how can we win our freedom this way? How are we to bring home this lesson to the spinners?

Imagine, if all the spinners understood the inner meaning of the wheel and span willingly and not under pressure, what an India there would be! The awakening of crores of women spinners would *ipso facto* produce lakhs of khadi-weavers. Imagine too the numbers of men and women workers needed to bring about this awakening! If such a time comes, textile mills, even if any were working, would have to rely on foreign countries for the sale of their produce. They would not, as they do today, hold imperialistic sway over the villages and cities. There would be Hindu-Muslim unity, all would be truthful, there would be no need to tell anyone to wear khadi, for no cloth other than homespun would be available. That swaraj is hidden in this revolutionary change should be self-evident to seeing eyes. The question may imply that such a consummation is impossible. If such is the question, it means that swaraj through non-violent means is impossible.[3]

Another question asked is how the spinners are to be given the requisite education. To seek out the right answer is the main work of the A. I. S. A. Enough research has not so far been done. It is the duty of every A. I. S. A. worker to try to solve the puzzle. Now that we have Congress ministries in several provinces the work should be easy. Let the workers throw themselves heart and soul into it. They will never succeed if they look all the time to the Central Office for help and guidance.

NEW DELHI, April 26, 1946

Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 5-5-1946.

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

[3] The Hindi here adds: "In other words the questioner betrays his lack of imagination."

83. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

DELHI,
April 26, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I have gone through your long letter. There is nothing private in it. I have given it to Sushila Pai to read.

I was not pained by your letter. I see, however, that my vanity is disappearing. I thought I understood a large number of people. But I can now see my ignorance more clearly. I welcome this.

I do not know when I shall be able to see your activities with my own eyes.[1] But I do wish to see them some time.

It seems to me that you remain excited and tense. If so, that must cease.

I had written a letter[2] to you, but Sushila had held it back. Now that also will go with this.

I have put no pressure on you or anybody else, nor wish to. If I have made any mistake in regard to your work, I am ready to rectify it. Keep your promises[3]. I will discuss this subject with Bapa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10445. Also C. W. 6884. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

[1] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to visit a camp she had organized at Pimple, a village in Maharashtra.

[2] Presumably the reference is to the letter dated April 22, 1946; *vide* p. 49.

[3] To the trainees, *vide* p. 72.

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84. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 26, 1946

Nobody knew who the miscreant[2] was, said Gandhiji, nor would it be right to venture a guess.

It might be presumed at first flush, that because the victim in this case was a Hindu boy the assailant must be a Muslim and *vice versa.* Such speculation, in my opinion, is not only idle but mischievous. We should rather ask ourselves as to how we would have or should have acted, if we were present on the scene.

To remain passive witnesses to the dastardly attack would be cowardly. Should they, then, whip out a knife and pay back the miscreant in his own coin? Both these courses would be wrong, observed Gandhiji. The only becoming course, he told them, would be to plead with the miscreant not to stain his hands with innocent blood. If in doing so they themselves become victims of the miscreant's anger, they should not mind but should rather welcome it. Such an occasion should provide them with an opportunity to test the sincerity of their daily attendance at the prayer meetings.

When passions rise high and panic and mass hysteria lay hold on the people, it is up to the man of prayer to keep his head above the storm and refuse to sink to the level of the brute. We should pray to God to help us to keep down the hatred and anger in the heart. To be able to conquer anger and hatred and all other baser passions is the fruit of prayer. It is braver far to disarm the miscreant with cool determination devoid of anger than to counter him with a dagger, to prevent an angry word from escaping one's lips than to indulge in abuse.

He recalled another instance of assault on a harmless German during the Victory Day disturbances in Delhi that had been brought to his notice the day before. The madness at the time was directed against Englishmen and Europeans. In his opinion, it was not less cowardly.

We should pity the ruffian. A Maulana who saw me just before I started for the prayer was telling me how a number of

[1] The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] A Hindu boy had been stabbed in New Delhi on April 24, 1946. The injuries, however, were not fatal.

newspapers were fanning the flames of communal hatred day after day and week after week. They are the real culprits. To incite murder is as bad if not worse than the murder itself. The actual murderer is very often an ignorant tool, victim of mischievous propaganda.

But even such propaganda could take effect only in a vitiated atmosphere. In a healthy atmosphere it would be sterilized.

Panic is the result of fear after all. But a man of prayer knows no fear. Your prayer is vain repetition if it does not clear the atmosphere of fear, panic and mass hysteria.

The Hindustan Times, 27-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 5-5-1946

85. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

DELHI,
April 27, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

You have raised three issues in your letter.

1. After completing their training in the camp, the women are bound to give their services to the Kasturba Trust.
2. The Trust is bound to give them work and pay them.
3. In every district one mature and experienced woman and one comparatively younger woman should be posted.

Though these points are not included in the rules of the Trust, as I had promised you before the rules were framed, all the three demands have been accepted.

At the same time it is also recommended that:

1. Efforts should be made to collect as much money as possible from the place concerned and the district.
2. Where work can be done through one mature and experienced woman, only one should be posted, for, posting two women of the same age and experience at the same place is likely to result in conflict between them. There should be no objection, however, to posting two women if one of them is elderly and the other young. This should be treated as an exception. Care should be taken to see that the exception does not become the rule.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10446. Also C. W. 6885. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

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86. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

April 27, 1946

Speaking after the prayers . . . Gandhiji dwelt on the danger of giving credence to panicky reports. Newspapers had reported that Bombay was full of panic, Hindus dared not go into Muslim quarters and *vice versa*, the shops were closed early in the evenings, the streets deserted and the people did not venture out at night for fear of riots breaking out. All that had proved to be a Press canard. Gandhiji said that these false reports had reached him only today. There was neither any panic nor disturbance worth noting in Bombay. Hindu women and children freely visited and went about in Muslim quarters and *vice versa*. The whole story was faked. In Delhi itself a Hindu woman was being driven by a Muslim *tonga*-driver only the day before. The driver had expressed amazement and horror at what was taking place. "Why should there be any quarrel between Hindus and Muslims?" he had asked, and added, "God turns his back on those who quarrel amongst themselves." That showed, remarked Gandhiji, how dangerous it was to give credence to panicky rumours.

The lesson to be learnt from all this is, that we should not be afraid, because people will always frighten the timid, not the brave.

But it was no use making a show of bravery when there was fear in the heart. Probably they had all heard about a child playing with a snake without coming to harm. But if a grown-up person who was afraid of snakes tried to play with one, it would detect fear in the very touch and probably bite him. But supposing they were afraid and wanted to shed fear, the first condition was that they must not carry any arms. They should put faith in God and depend upon Him to protect them. The man who was afraid and carried arms repudiated God and made the arms his God.

Later, Gandhiji reverted to the theme of nature cure and talked about ether. Man was made of clay but even clay was pervaded by ether. The cavities in the human body, the pores in the human skin were all filled by ether. The stars, the sun and the moon were suspended in the void. The astronomers said there were many a heavenly body, like the sun and the stars which the human eye could not see. Gandhiji wanted them to stretch their mental vision so as to grasp the infinity of ethereal space. Ether was the most intangible thing known to man, but it was occupied by something still more intangible, namely, God.

[1] The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

In nature cure they had to establish contact with ether as with the earth. They could sleep under the sky and have as much empty space around them as possible. If they attuned themselves to ether they would realize what insignificant little creatures they were and how ill-becoming it was for them to quarrel amongst themselves.

Gandhiji referred to his visit to the Bhangi quarters on Saturday morning. He lived on the outskirts of the Bhangi quarters. But his was a clean and airy place, where he could live all his life. The Bhangi quarters were dirty and filthy. Their rooms were dark and ill-ventilated. There was just one little ventilator in the room, so that he felt suffocated as he entered it. It was a shame that their brethren should live in that state. Gandhiji told the gathering to visit the Bhangi quarters. The Harijans had a right to feel that his claim to be one of them was more than mere idle talk.

We are all made of earth, ether and the rest of the five elements. God makes no distinction between man and man. By ourselves we are insignificant worms. We become great when we reflect His greatness. If we are attuned to Him, illness will not touch us. And if perchance we do fall ill, we shall be content to seek cure only through His grace by the application of the simplest means provided by nature and not run about hither and thither to find ways and means to prolong our lives.

The Hindustan Times, 28-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 5-5-1946

87. QUESTION BOX

Criminals and Non-violence

Q. What would be the treatment meted out to criminals in free India in the light of your non-violence?

A. In independent India of the non-violent type, there will be crime but no criminals. They will not be punished. Crime is a disease like any other malady and is a product of the prevalent social system. Therefore, all crime including murder will be treated as a disease. Whether such an India will ever come into being is another question.

New Delhi, April 28, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

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88. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your kind note of yesterday is characteristic of you.

I reciprocate the hope expressed in the last sentence of your note.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 184

89. LETTER TO M. K. SYED AHMED

HARIJAN MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

DEAR SYED AHMED SAHIB,

Your letter to Gandhiji has come. Export of cloth is not possible these days. We cannot meet our own requirements. But you should arrange for spinning and weaving in Ceylon itself. This should not be beyond your powers. I showed your letter to Shri Rajaji[2] also. His view too is the same.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

JANAB M. K. SYED AHMED SAHIB
C/O M. & M. BUCARI ESQ.
BAZAAR ST.
BATTICOLOA
CEYLON

From a photostat: G. N. 8961

[1] Thanking Gandhiji for his continued presence in Delhi, the addressee had written: "Critical days lie ahead but I venture to hope and believe that it will not be so very long now before the matter will be concluded and you and we will be able to leave Delhi with a sense of our labours satisfactorily ended."

[2] C. Rajagopalachari (1878-1972); member of Congress Working Committee, 1922-42, 1946-47 and 1951-54; Governor of West Bengal, 1947-48; Governor-General of India, 1948-50; one of the founders of Swatantra Party

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90. ADDRESS TO CONGRESS SEVA DAL VOLUNTEERS[1]

NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

Gandhiji said that it would have been better if the report had been sent to the Congress leaders.

The volunteers had been in attendance in his camp. Mahatma Gandhi thanked them for the service they had rendered him and his party. He knew the volunteers had worked hard and had been doing night-and-day duty. He felt grateful for the love and diligence with which they had served him and his party. But what was the use of their serving him if they served not the lowest among the low who were his next-door neighbours. They kept his place spotlessly clean but the sweepers' quarters next door were extremely dirty. It was their shame as it was his. He would not be satisfied till they served the sweepers as they had served him. They should rather go and serve the Bhangis who lived next door to him in filth and squalor. Such service carried with it its own reward. He had come to live in the filth in which they lived. The fault was not theirs but of those who had reduced them to that state. The quarters provided for them were worse than the worst prison cell that he had seen in India or in South Africa.

Mahatma Gandhi recalled how he had written to Mr. Birla[2], Mr. Viyogi Hari and Mr. Brijkrishna Chandiwala to make arrangements for his stay in sweepers' quarters. They had done it. He was Mr. Birla's guest even here, as the management and the expenses were Mr. Birla's. The result was that he was neither in Birla House nor in the Bhangi quarters.

Gandhiji said he had identified himself with the Bhangis mentally, but he could not live like them. The Bhangis had a right to feel that his claim was an idle one. He would like them to go and work in the Bhangi quarters so that the place became as clean as where he was staying.

If they went to the Bhangi quarters, not as their patrons or teachers but as their true servants, they would be able to reach their hearts and transform the look of things in no time. The volunteers were not to do this by ordering the Bhangis. They were to be their humble and silent servants.

[1] The *Harijan* version has been collated with *The Hindustan Times* report and the Hindi report in *Hindustan*. The volunteers had gathered to seek Gandhiji's blessings and advice. A report of their work was read out by Radharaman.

[2] G. D. Birla, President, Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh, 1932-59

Today those who became volunteers had a lurking desire to be counted as leaders. This, he added, was bad. Their one ambition should be to serve those whom we have made the lowest of the low.

The Hindustan Times, 29-4-1946, *Hindustan*, 29-4-1946, and *Harijan*, 5-5-1946

91. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
April 28, 1946

Gandhiji reminded the gathering that that was the last Sunday of the month. It was customary to have flag salutation on that day and render more service than usual. Those who believed in spinning span more than usual on that day. He had been to see the volunteers in the morning. From the report that was read out he had gathered that they were doing a lot of good work. Volunteers who would really and truly be servants of the people were required in their millions.

There was hardly any merit in their serving him. To serve the so-called big people in order to gain importance or in order to earn their blessings should not be their ideal. Real selfless service carried with it its own reward. They should go and serve the Bhangis who lived next door to him in filth and squalor.

If sincere selfless workers came forth in their thousands, swaraj would be theirs for the having. The Cabinet Mission would find itself without any job. Britons would quit India or decide to stay on as her servants. Two hundred spinning-wheels were plied on the prayer grounds for one and a quarter hours. But Gandhiji said that this demonstration did not come up to his requirements. If swaraj was to come through the spinning-wheel, everyone of them, young and old, had to spin regularly. To those who easily lost their temper his prescription was to spin in silence.

The late Sir Prabhashanker Pattani[1] used to suffer from insomnia. Gandhiji advised him to spin before going to bed, avoiding all talk of politics. He did it for a year round and wrote to him saying the prescription worked wonderfully well.

The Hindustan Times, 19-4-1946

[1] Dewan of Bhavnagar State

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92. CASTE CORROSION

Soil corrosion eats up good soil. It is bad enough. Caste corrosion is worse, it eats up men and divides men from men. Letters continue to come from Christians, Parsis, naturally, from Scheduled Castes and women. They require representation in the ministry. Provincial competition is already there. The makers of ministries are not free from the taint and even when they do not favour it, they will lose caste if they dare to do the right thing and restrict their choice to merit only. Democracy can only represent the average, if not less than the average. Therefore, a democratic institution to be pure has to attend to the all-round education of the humblest and the lowliest. It must take in its sweep all superstition and social abuse. In such a society there will be no Christian and non-Christian, there will be no distinction of sex. If best persons are women all ministers will belong to that sex, if Parsis they will be all Parsis. That good day may be far off. What is to be done in the meanwhile? Those who feel that they are left out should have patience and rise by dint of service and merit. Those who happen to be ministers should mete out even justice which must include extra effort to raise the neglected and the downtrodden. They should make all feel at every step that they are servants, not masters, of the nation.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

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93. MARCH OF CIVILIZATION

Q. On page 91 of *Harijan* dated 14-4-'46,[1] it has been argued that the bullock is a living machine and that contact with such harmless animals is a potent factor in the onward march of human civilization. The animals are, however, made 'harmless' by making them 'impotent'. Is this the correct method of the onward march of civilization? If we have cows, we must have bulls. The bullock is a creation of human selfishness and cruelty. If not in thinking man, in the lower animals at any rate, all the force of their nature rages in the fury of the generative desire. Therefore, to turn the noble animal, the '*Vahana* of Mahadev'[2], into a beast of burden is sad.

A. The writer is logical. But such logic would prevent the domestication of the cow. For there is probably more cruelty in domesticating the cow than in castrating the bull. It is a question of degree. Further march of civilization seems to imply increasing domination of man over beast, together with a growingly humane method of using them.

There are three schools of humanitarians. One believes in replacing animal power by the use of any other. Another believes in treating animals as fellow-beings and making such use of them as a brotherly spirit will permit. The third will not make use of lower animals for man's selfish purpose but will employ instead one's power and that of fellow-beings to the extent that the latter give intelligent and willing use. I belong to the third school. It is possible by human labour, judiciously and humanely employed, to do fruit culture to a large extent and even corn culture. Indeed, as prisoners we civil resisters in the Transvaal dug up stony ground for converting it into a municipal garden. No ploughing would have answered the purpose. The ground could yield only to the pickaxe.

The first I hold to be useless and even injurious in the end to mankind. A judicious combination of the other two seems to me to be the goal. I can see no escape from castration. The only thing to be done is to make it progressively humane.

A correspondent has brought forward in this connection the question of branding animals. Does the pain caused by branding

[1] In V. G. Desai's article "The Case for the Bullock"

[2] Mount of Lord Shiva

compensate for the benefit it confers upon the owner and the animal? If it confers none on the animal, naturally, branding must be taboo.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

94. INDEPENDENCE

Friends have repeatedly challenged me to define independence. At the risk of repetition, I must say that the independence of my dream means *Ramarajya*, i. e., the Kingdom of God on Earth. I do not know what it will be like in Heaven. I have no desire to know the distant scene. If the present is attractive enough, the future cannot be very unlike.

In concrete terms, then, the independence should be political, economic and moral.

'Political' necessarily means the removal of the control of the British army in every shape and form.

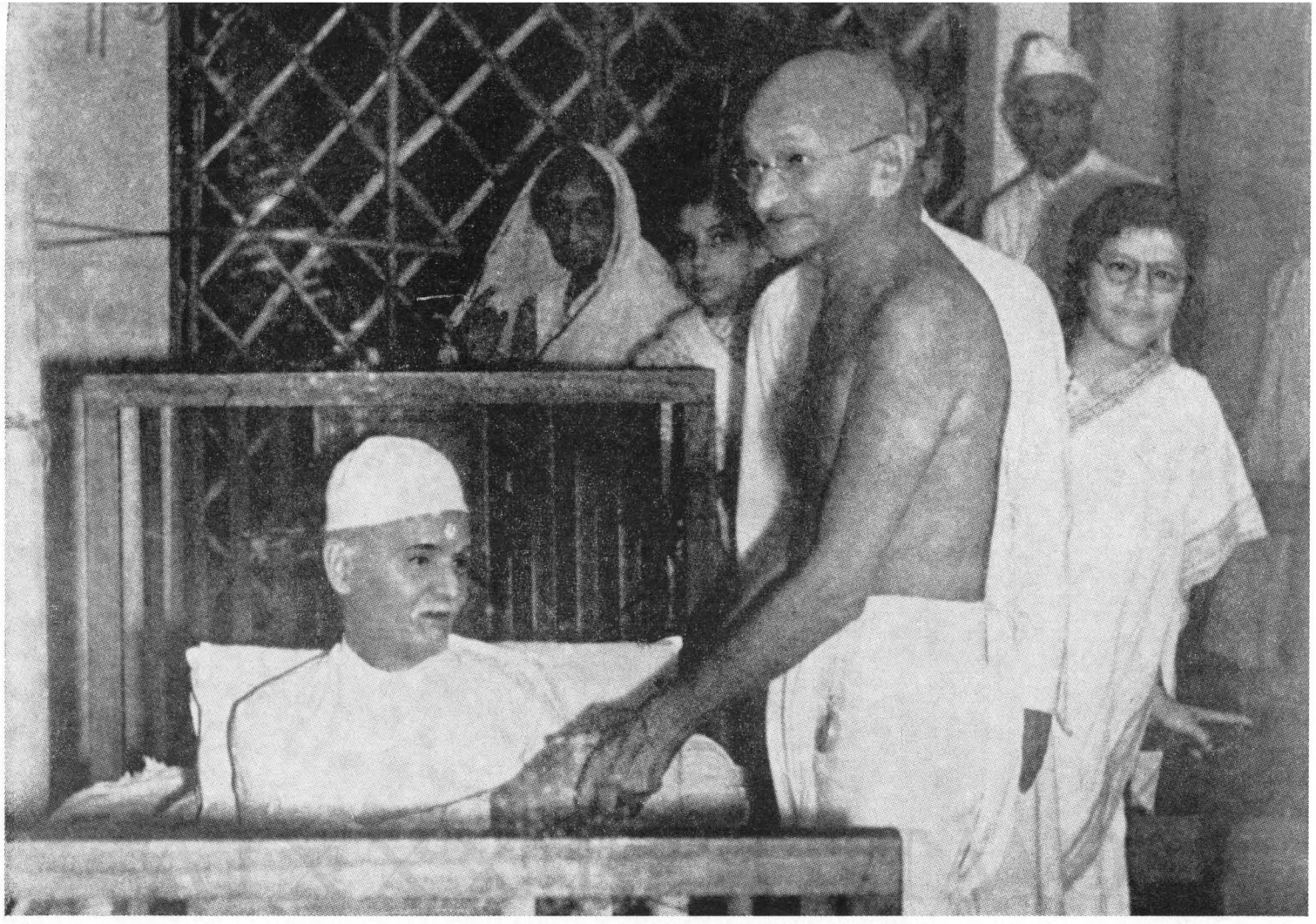
'Economic' means entire freedom from British capitalists and capital, as also their Indian counterparts. In other words, the humblest must feel equal to the tallest. This can take place only by capital or capitalists sharing their skill and capital with the lowliest and the least.

'Moral' means freedom from armed defence forces. My conception of *Ramarajya* excludes replacement of the British army by a national army of occupation. A country that is governed by even its national army can never be morally free and, therefore, its so-called weakest member can never rise to his full moral height.

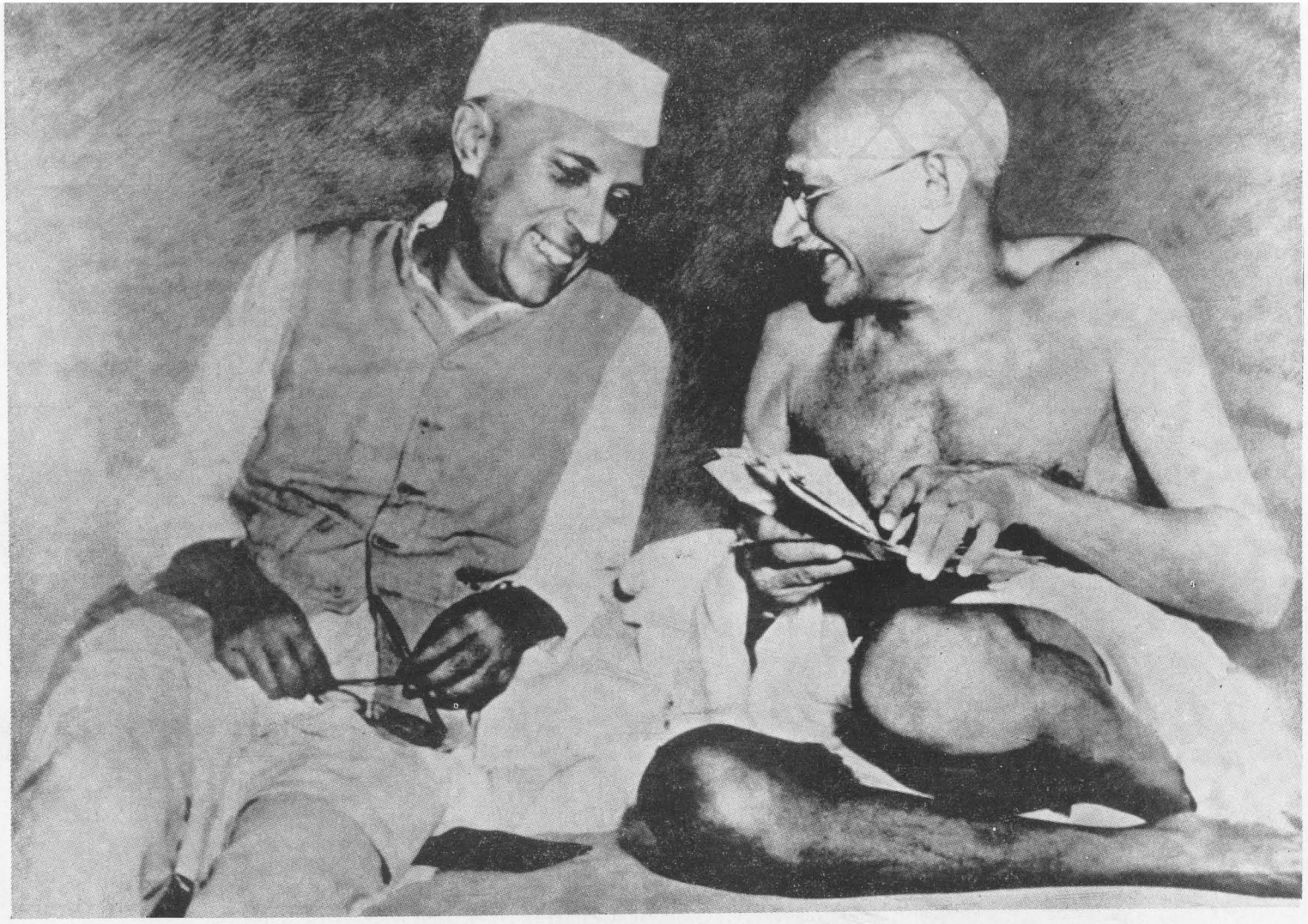
Though Mr. Churchill is claimed to have won the war for the British, he has in his Aberdeen speech uttered words of wisdom from the standpoint of a radical non-violent reformer. He knows, if any panoplied warrior knows, what havoc the two wars of our generation have wrought. In another column I reproduce the summary of his speech as reported in the public Press.[1] Only I must warn the public against the pessimistic note underlying the speech. Nothing will be found to have gone wrong if mankind recoils from the horrors of war. The bloodletting that men have undergone to the point of whiteness will not have been

[1] *Vide* Appendix I.

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WITH THE AILING MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA



WITH JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

in vain, if it has taught us that we must freely give our own blood in the place of taking other people's blood, be the cause ever so noble or ignoble.

If the Cabinet Mission 'delivers the goods', India will have to decide whether attempting to become a military power she would be content to become, at least for some years, a fifth-rate power in the world without a message in answer to the pessimism described above, or whether she will by further refining and continuing her non-violent policy prove herself worthy of being the first nation in the world using her hard-won freedom for the delivery of the earth from the burden which is crushing her in spite of the so-called victory.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

95. KANU GANDHI'S CAMP[1]

This issue contains an abridged account of Kanu Gandhi's second camp[2]. How the candidates[3] were selected, how there was no financial loss, how beginning with cleaning latrines they carried out all the other work, what they ate, etc., are all matters worthy of attention. The smallest detail was not neglected. The running of this camp will serve as a guide to others who wish to organize or attend training camps.

The secret of Kanu Gandhi's camp lay, in my opinion, in the fact that the organizers knew their job and were there as workers rather than for issuing orders. Where the organizers are mere superintendents the work is often apt to be lifeless or slack.

It is sad that the camp had to be of short duration[4]. There were strong reasons for this being so. Let us hope that those who came for training will utilize in their own lives the lessons they learnt and thus make progress towards becoming perfect servants of the people.

NEW DELHI, April 29, 1946
Harijan, 5-5-1946

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-5-1946.
[2] Not reproduced here. The first camp was held in 1945.
[3] Twenty-two men and four women
[4] Viz., three weeks

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96. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA[1]

[*April 29, 1946*][2]

I want to leave it to the Government, but only after I have come to a decision.[3] Has his letter been received? I got a reply to yesterday's letter.

If a Bhangi also could not clean it, then? A Bhangi's work is the most important and also the most difficult. Let us see what happens. You may go there. Do not send me. The job has grown so dirty that I do not at all want to go there. If I go, is there any place where I can stay? I cannot stay at Rajkumari's. The party is large. I cannot reduce it.

From the Hindi original : C.W. 8078. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

97. NOTE TO SUDHIR GHOSH

[*April 29, 1946*][4]

Tell Cripps that my party will be large. All of us cannot stay at Manor Ville[5]. I do not want to go anywhere. I would be willing to go if a place can be found in Simla where we could comfortably stay. In my heart I feel I should not go.[6] I would rather that they left me out. Talk all this over with Blaker[7].

There is a moral aspect, too. They say one thing to the world and another thing to me. Why get mixed up in all this? I have faith in you. I believe that your faith in God is a living faith. Think over this and if you want to ask me anything further about it, do so.

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Gandhi's Emissary*, facing p. 212

[1] & [2] Apparently a silence-day note, this is written on the reverse side of a letter dated April 28, 1946. The following Monday was April 29; *vide* also the following item.

[3] *Vide* p. 83.

[4] According to the source this was written prior to Gandhiji's departure for Simla on a silence day, which was April 29.

[5] Amrit Kaur's house

[6] *Vide* footnote 1 to the following item.

[7] George Blaker, Private Secretary to Sir Stafford Cripps

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98. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

You do not understand how uneasy I feel. Something is wrong.[1] But I shall come to Simla.[2] I cannot take my necessarily big family to Rajkumari's house. I have to fall back upon the Government for quarters for about 15 people. Hardly any service will be wanted. But utensils and food stuffs will be necessary. Goat's milk and train accommodation and the lift from Kalka. All this is strange for me but it has become true.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 184-5

[1] According to the source "The reference is to the postponement of negotiations at Delhi and the decision to hold a meeting instead with the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League at Simla. In the letter of invitation to the Conference to be held at Simla, the Congress and the Muslim League were asked to send representatives to enter into negotiations about a scheme based upon certain 'fundamental principles'. Acceptance of the invitation thus implied acceptance of the proposed basis. This basis, Gandhiji felt, contained in it 'the seeds of Pakistan'. When he expressed his apprehension about this, the members of the Cabinet Mission explained to him that by accepting the invitation the invitees committed themselves to nothing, but the Mission had to word the letter of invitation as they had done to bring in Jinnah. To Gandhiji this smacked of 'double talk'. He immediately alerted his Congress colleagues and insisted upon their obtaining a clarification in writing from the Cabinet Mission before they accepted the invitation. This was done by an exchange of letters between the Maulana Saheb and Lord Pethick-Lawrence on the 28th and 29th April, 1946."

[2] The addressee and Lord Pethick-Lawrence had met Gandhiji the previous day to persuade him to go to Simla.

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99. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[*April 29, 1946*][1]

If you don't eat here out of cussedness, you are wholly wrong, and you have not understood me. This is not the way of obedience and resignation. Think well and act as your inner voice dictates, not as I tell you. If you want to do as I tell you, then it should be willing and intelligent obedience.

From the original : C. W. 4214. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7850

100. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI[2]

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

CHI. MRIDULA[3],

I got your letters. I am overburdened with work.

I showed your letter to Sucheta[4]. She will go to Jharia and work there. I see that at present your presence in Ahmedabad is necessary.

I hope you are taking care of your health. Do continue the hip-bath and the friction-bath. Have the mud-packs at night. I hope Saraladevi[5] is maintaining good health. What is the news about Nimubehn?

Regarding me nothing is definite. I shall know in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Apparently a silence-day note, this is written on the reverse side of a letter dated April 25, 1946. The following Monday was April 29, 1946.

[2] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

[3] Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai

[4] Wife of J. B. Kripalani; member, Constituent Assembly, 1946; member, Congress Working Committee, 1950-52; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-62; Chief Minister of U. P., 1963-67

[5] Addressee's mother

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101. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

BROTHER BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. Amtulbehn[1] has come over. I have already written that you should go to Appa if you can. Yes, it is true, he may not be able to send for you often.

Your work there is going on well and it is very important. At present it is only a beginning. For making progress you will have to confine yourself to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2750. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

102. LETTER TO SRIRAMULU RAJU

NEW DELHI,
April 29, 1946

BROTHER SRIRAMULU,

I am not publishing your notice. Caste Hindus who associated themselves were not many. You must not try to gain publicity. Render silent service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 108

103. TALK WITH MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[2]

[*April 29, 1946*][3]

In reply to Gandhiji's question as to what he proposed to do since the venue of the Cabinet Mission talks was going to be shifted to Simla,

[1] Amtussalaam

[2] & [3] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report entitled "Seeking Blessings". Gandhiji paid a visit to Malaviyaji before his departure for Simla and communicated in writing as it was his silence day.

Malaviyaji said he would be returning to Benares. That relieved Gandhiji as he was half afraid lest in his irrepressible enthusiasm this *enfant terrible* should decide to venture up the heights of Simla. That would be courting disaster at his age and in his present state of health. Gandhiji asked him, marvelling at his perennial freshness:

How long are you to continue to worry over the country's affairs ?

"So long as the country's affairs continue to cause worry," he replied, with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

Won't you leave something to a youth like myself ? It will make me even younger.

"This young man," replied Malaviyaji in an audible whisper, his eyes beaming at his visitor, "is going to remain young for many a day yet."

You can entrust any of your burdens to me. The only condition is that you must cease worrying and bless me with some of your strength.

The name of God is the strength of our strength.

That is true. The recitation of Ramanama is there all the time. But where from shall I bring your learning? I am not flattering. I have neither your erudition nor your knowledge of the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata* lore.

But you have God's name which is the quintessence of all knowledge. Is it not?

That is true, but all the same I do feel jealous of your learning. But now you must get well and make use of all your learning to that end.

I will get well.[1]

It is a national menace, this spread of vegetable ghee, on the one hand, and the slaughter of the cows on the other. Between the two the vitality of the people is being sapped. I feel so happy over what you have done and are doing for the milk supply.

Gandhiji agreed with him as regards the menace of vegetable ghee and added:

My efforts to solve the milk problem, of course continue, but success is not possible without the full co-operation of our commercial and trading class. But I must now take leave of you.

[1] Pyarelal mentions that "at this stage . . . Radhakant told Gandhiji that he had read out his article 'Vanaspati and Ghee' to his father and it had pleased him immensely." *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 380-2.

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Malaviyaji smiled leave and blessings in reply, making *namaskara* at the same time. As Gandhiji rose from his seat he (Malaviyaji) slowly recited the following verse:

Forget not yourself,
But continue to spread your fragrance wherever you are,
Even like the rose.

Harijan, 12-5-1946

104. A TALK[1]

May 1, 1946[2]

The Government had thoughtfully placed at Gandhiji's disposal a big bungalow at Simla and made transport arrangements for him and his party. Should he avail himself of these without stint? His faith in God and his detachment, he felt, were on trial. Further reduction in the staff seemed hardly feasible. But did he hope to cope with the situation through unaided human effort? And if he was to be merely an instrument for carrying out the Divine Will, were outward trappings necessary for his purpose?

We are up against heavy odds. There is so much corruption, falsehood and deceit all round. How can I cut my way through it and come out of it unscathed, except by the use of the sharp axe of detachment. In this hour of trial I wish to put myself entirely in God's hands and proceed to Simla all alone. But I do not want to do so unless I can carry you with me. To force my will upon you would be the negation of detachment.

None or all, faith cannot be divided. You cannot trust me to God in part. As the poet says, "Want of faith in aught is want of faith in all."[3]

Harijan, 12-5-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji had this talk with the members of his party who were to accompany him to Simla.

[2] From "Statement to the Press", *vide* p. 99.

[3] According to the source, the party members could not take upon themselves the tremendous responsibility of letting Gandhiji go altogether unattended. After a hurried deliberation they communicated their unanimous decision to Gandhiji that if he took with him three only, or Pyarelal alone, they would be satisfied. However, the whole party accompanied Gandhiji to Simla but was sent back to Delhi soon after their arrival.

105. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 1, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the British Cabinet Mission and said that the Mission had come with good intentions, but that the extent of the Mission's success would depend on the people's own strength and purity. If they did not have these, they were bound to be disappointed.

Mahatma Gandhi expressed regret that he had to leave for Simla. Human nature was such that one became attached to the environment. The people of Delhi had been very good and had joined the prayers wholeheartedly. He said he was going to Simla out of a sense of duty. During summer his heart was at Mahabaleshwar. Doctors had advised him to spend two or three months in the hot weather at Mahabaleshwar or Panchagani. But he had to go to Simla instead, and he had to go by a special train which was a matter of shame for him and for them.

Gandhiji said people crowded at stations, and their noisy affection embarrassed him. He wished to live up to the age of 125 years, yet he was an old man and could not bear the din and the noise. What did it matter if the Government paid the fare for the special train? The money came from the pockets of the poor. Special trains were used for high officials or dangerous prisoners. He had to use them to escape the loud expressions of affection. It was their duty perhaps to go to stations to see their leaders, but their affection must be subdued and disciplined.

The Hindustan Times, 2-5-1946

106. CERTAIN QUESTIONS

A London friend has put seven questions on the working of non-violence. Though similar questions have been dealt with in *Young India* or *Harijan*, it is profitable to answer them in a single article, if perchance the answers may prove helpful.

Q. 1. Is it possible for a modern State (which is essentially based on force) to offer non-violent resistance for countering internal as well as external forces of disorder? Or is it necessary that people wanting to offer non-violent resistance should first of all divest themselves of State-authority and place themselves vis-a-vis the opponent entirely in a private capacity?

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A. It is not possible for a modern State based on force, non-violently to resist forces of disorder, whether external or internal. A man cannot serve God and Mammon, nor be 'temperate and furious' at the same time. It is claimed that a State can be based on non-violence, i. e., it can offer non-violent resistance against a world combination based on armed force. Such a State was Ashoka's. The example can be repeated. But the case does not become weak even if it be shown that Ashoka's State was not based on non-violence. It has to be examined on its merits.

Q. 2. Do you think that it would be possible for a Congress government to deal with foreign aggression or internal riots in an entirely non-violent manner?

A. It is certainly possible for a Congress government to deal with "foreign aggression or internal riots" in a non-violent manner. That the Congress may not share my belief is quite possible. If the Congress changes its course, the change will prove nothing save that the non-violence hitherto offered was of the weak and that the Congress has no faith in State non-violence.

Q. 3. Does not the knowledge that the opponent is wedded to non-violence often encourage the bully?

A. The bully has his opportunity when he has to face non-violence of the weak. Non-violence of the strong is any day stronger than that of the bravest soldier fully armed or a whole host.

Q. 4. What policy would you advocate if a section of the Indian people tries to enforce by sword a selfish measure which is not only repugnant to others but also basically unjust? While it is possible for an unofficial organization to offer non-violent resistance in such a case, is it also possible for the government of the day to do so?

A. The question assumes a case which can never exist. A non-violent State must be broad-based on the will of an intelligent people, well able to know its mind and act up to it. In such a State the assumed section can only be negligible. It can never stand against the deliberate will of the overwhelming majority represented by the State. The government of the day is not outside the people. It is the will of the overwhelming majority. If it is expressed non-violently, it cannot be a majority of one but nearer 99 against one in a hundred.

Q. 5. Is not non-violent resistance by the militarily strong more effective than that by the militarily weak?

A. This is a contradiction in terms. There can be no non-violence offered by the militarily strong. Thus, Russia in order to express non-violence has to discard all her power of doing violence. What is true is that if those, who were at one time strong in armed might, change their mind, they will be better able to demonstrate their non-violence to the world and, therefore, also to their opponents. Those who are strong in non-violence will not mind whether they are opposed by the militarily weak people or the strongest.

Q. 6. What should be the training and discipline for a non-violent army? Should not certain aspects of conventional military training form a part of the syllabus?

A. A very small part of the preliminary training received by the military is common to the non-violent army. These are discipline, drill, singing in chorus, flag-hoisting, signalling and the like. Even this is not absolutely necessary and the basis is different. The positively necessary training for a non-violent army is an immovable faith in God, willing and perfect obedience to the chief of the non-violent army and perfect inward and outward co-operation between the units of the army.

Q. 7. Is it not better under the existing circumstances that countries like India and England should maintain full military efficiency while resolving to give non-violent resistance a reasonable trial before taking any military step?

A. The foregoing answers should make it clear that under no circumstance can India and England give non-violent resistance a reasonable chance whilst they are both maintaining full military efficiency. At the same time it is perfectly true that all military powers carry on negotiations for peaceful adjustment of rival disputes. But here we are not discussing preliminary peace parleys before appealing to the arbitrament of war. We are discussing a final substitute for armed conflict called war, in naked terms, mass murder.

SIMLA, May 2, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

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107. A SURE AID

A correspondent suggests three aids to self-control, of which two are outward and one is inward. The inward help he describes as follows:[1]

There is no doubt that Ramanama is the surest aid. If recited from the heart it charms away every evil thought, and evil thought gone, no corresponding action is possible. The outward helps are all useless if the mind is weak. They are superfluous if the mind is pure. This must not be taken to mean that a pure-minded man can take all the liberties and still keep safe. Such a man simply will not take any liberties with himself. His whole life will be an infallible testimony to the inward purity. The *Gita* truly says that the mind makes the man and unmakes him. Milton paraphrases the same thought when he says:

> The mind is its own place and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.[2]

SIMLA, May 2, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

108. RAMANAVAMI CELEBRATIONS[3]

> They get the best talent from the South at enormous cost for the sake of amusement. The artists who preside are of questionable morals. All this at a religious festival.

This is a condensation of a correspondent's letter. When a man begins a downward career, it is difficult to say where the deterioration will end. Intoxication of wealth is often as bad as that caused by liquor. The only way to stop this degradation of religious or for that matter any celebrations is for the public not to patronize them.

SIMLA, May 2, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

[1] The extract from the letter is not reproduced here. The third aid suggested by the correspondent was Ramanama.
[2] *Paradise Lost*, I. 253
[3] This appeared under "Notes".

109. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SIMLA,
May 2, 1946

I did not know that I would have to come to Simla this time. If we have faith in God we simply would not care to know beforehand how He may dispose of us. It is enough for us to hold ourselves perfectly in readiness for whatever happens. We are not allowed to know what tomorrow has in store for us and our best conceived plans have a knack very often of going awry. The highest wisdom therefore is never to worry about the future but to resign ourselves entirely to His Will.

I do not propose to say anything here about the Cabinet Mission. And I would like you, too, for your part, to repress your curiosity about it. Let us all mutely watch and pray. As I told the people, who attended the evening prayer gathering at Delhi yesterday, the Cabinet Mission will not be able to go beyond what is warranted by our strength. We shall be fools to think otherwise. Even if they tried to go beyond, it would only cause us surfeit and we would not be able to take advantage of it. Therefore, even if the Mission should prove infructuous I would not blame them for it. Rather I would blame ourselves for our weakness. It would enable us to measure our strength. By strength I mean non-violent strength. We are pledged to gain swaraj non-violently.

Many people today share the belief, and I am one of them, that this time the Cabinet Mission will do the right thing by India and that the British power would finally and completely be withdrawn. Time alone will show how far this belief is justified.

Now to take up the question I want to talk to you about. Last time also I had mentioned it. But truth is such a thing that one may repeat it from the house-tops any number of times without getting tired of it, just as one is not tired of repeating the name of God. Hypocrites too have the name of God on their lips but what use is it if they carry a knife under their arms? If

[1] The version from Pyarelal's report, published under the title "Introspection", is reproduced with alterations to bring it in conformity with the Hindi original.

Ramanama comes out of the heart one would never feel tired of it. So never mind if I repeat endlessly whatever I want to say. It is bound to have its impact on you. The first *mantra* of the *Ishopanishad* says that God pervades the universe and it is man's duty to surrender his all to God in the first instance. There is nothing which he can call his own. Having made the surrender man is to take out of it what he may require for his legitimate needs but not a whit more. He must not covet what belongs to others. Take my instance. I have been housed here in a palatial building. For fear of your embarrassing affection I had to seek Government's hospitality and they put me up here. That however does not mean that since the Government have placed a big bungalow at my disposal I am free to make use of the whole of it. Tolstoy, in one of his inimitable parables, has answered the question, how much land a man requires. The Devil tempts a man by granting him a boon that all the land that he can circumscribe by running around shall be his. The man runs and runs, goaded by his greed and in the end when the sun is just sinking below the horizon, he reaches back the starting point only to drop down dead. Six feet of the earth is all the land that he requires for his burial. If, therefore, I were to delude myself with the belief that I needed the whole of this bungalow and took possession of it, I would be set down as a fool. Only a perverse nature can interpret the verse to mean that after making a ceremony of offering everything to God one can indulge oneself in the good things of life to an unlimited extent. That would be a travesty of its true meaning. I would far rather like to see a man dressed in old, mended clothes than in gaudy new ones. To wear torn clothes is a sign of laziness and therefore a matter of shame, but to wear patched clothes proclaims your poverty or renunciation and industry. Similarly, if someone gives me Rs. 25,000 and I spend it on my person I am a robber and thief. I can use only enough for my bare needs. That would be the teaching of the *Ishopanishad*. If you understand this you will achieve great things.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-5-1946

110. IS KHADI TOTTERING?

To those who have no faith khadi is tottering. In reality it is gaining ground. From being the poor man's staff of life, it is trying to become the non-violent means of gaining independence. The difficulty is fairly clearly expressed in the following paragraphs[1] from a letter from Tamil Nadu.

> The A. I. S. A. is faced with two problems now. The one is to keep on the khadi production on the present methods. The other is to give re-orientation to our activity related to artisans and their villages where we serve.
>
> The commercial production as it is, is seriously affected in the last few months owing to competition of the uncertified merchants in khadi. The uncertified merchants buy the yarn from our spinners who spin with better cotton supplied by us. They buy khadi woven by the weavers . . . for us by giving extra wages . . . . The khadi thus bought is sold . . . at higher prices.
>
> There are more than fifty uncertified khadi dealers in this area. Among these are Congressmen also, who occupy places in the Congress Executive.
>
> We are not able to influence the artisans against being exploited by the uncertified merchants. They simply say that they are not able to resist the temptation of higher wages for inferior labour and with no conditions that we impose with regard to quality and their wearing khadi, etc. . . . .
>
> This tendency among the artisans is a great impediment and obstacle in approaching them with our ideal of village reconstruction through the charkha.

The present method of khadi production has to be sacrificed if it hinders re-orientation. This requires faith and alertness which faith brings. Faith never accrues to the lazy.

Uncertified khadi dealers are a powerful menace to khadi whether from the standpoint of the poor man or of non-violence. For the dealer knows only his own pocket and nothing else matters to him. Of course, he goes to the weaver and the spinner and makes all kinds of promises, not knowing that if he killed the A. I. S. A. he would kill himself.

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here

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The pity of it all is that Congressmen become willing tools in the hands of these uncertified dealers. They have brought into being an association of specialists. Yet they do not know that they are willingly or unwillingly killing the goose that lays the golden egg. They have a right to do so in any case, more so if they do not believe in khadi as the non-violent instrument of swaraj.

It has been suggested to me that the policy of the A. I. S. A. can be changed only after consultation with Congressmen. This is wrong in the nature of things. The A. I. S. A. is composed of Congressmen. Though created by the Congress, it is an autonomous body. It can be disowned by the Congress at any time but while it is owned it must be trusted to do the right thing in terms of swaraj. Part payment in yarn is a potent cause of worry to Congressmen. This should not be so, if they believe that khadi is a symbol of non-violence and all that it implies. If such is not the belief the clause about compulsory wear of khadi should be given up.

Moreover, khadi furnishes the acid test of public honesty. It is a great effort to find the best way of inducing honesty in public dealings, for it means coming in close and selfless touch with the millions of men and women in the villages.

The upshot of it all is that workers like the writer have to carry on their work with full faith in their mission and leave the result in the hands of God.

SIMLA, May 3, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

111. THE SO-CALLED DECIMAL COINAGE

> The Central Legislative Assembly having decided to circulate the Cent Bill for eliciting public opinion, as one, perhaps, partly responsible for influencing this decision, I owe it to the public to explain more fully my views about this measure. . . .

Shri K. G. Mashruwala's[1] note[2] is a fairly conclusive argument to show that there should be no hurry over the proposed change. Let such things await a full-fledged national representative government.

SIMLA, May 3, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

[1] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[2] Of which only an extract is reproduced here

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112. USEFUL HINTS

The following excerpts are taken from Prof. Kumarappa's[1] notes.[2]

SIMLA, May 3, 1946

Harijan, 12-5-1946

113. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CHADWICK, SIMLA WEST,
May 3, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Salt is not off my brain.[3] For the sake of English honour I say that there should not be a day's delay about the abolition of this monopoly.

It is to impress upon H. E. what the monopoly has meant that I enclose herewith an additional note[4] prepared by Shri Pyarelal.[5]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
SIMLA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 158-9

[1] J. C. Kumarappa, Secretary of the All-India Village Industries Association

[2] The extracts, not reproduced here, contain suggestions regarding co-operative societies, agriculture, irrigation, etc. The concluding part of the notes appeared in *Harijan*, 19-5-1946.

[3] *Vide* pp. 63-4; also Vol. LXXIII, pp. 374 and 382.

[4] Which appeared in *Harijan*, 19-5-1946 under the title "An Exaction and Oppression"

[5] The reply from the addressee, dated May 6, 1946, read: "H. E. has personally studied the problem since you first mentioned it to him, but is not in a position to anticipate the results of the enquiry which is taking place. He realizes how deeply interested you are in the matter, but feels that he must make a full examination of the consequences which would follow any [reduction or] abolition of the tax, and might bear heavily on any new Government."

The same day, however, another letter followed, inviting Gandhiji for "a short talk" with the Viceroy at 7 p. m.

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114. A TALK[1]

[*May 3, 1946*][2]

"Unless the Lord build the house, they build in vain who build it."[3] Why not let me take my chance with God?

It was not too late yet to perform that act of faith, he told us.

Now retire within yourself and seek the answer there. Do not consult others. And let me know the result.[4]

Harijan, 12-5-1946

115. TALK WITH AGATHA HARRISON[5]

[*May 3, 1946*][6]

The world will laugh at me and say, 'Here is a theatrical man.' I do not mind it. When one is used to human aids it is not easy to tear oneself away from them all of a sudden. I am very conservative in my feelings. I have spent half a day in searching for a small bit of pencil which had been with me for a long time. I could not reconcile myself to its loss. And here I have to detach myself from my entire surroundings and send away a party whom I have trained and seasoned for my work for years—no easy job.

It should not be so. All should be same to one who has surrendered his all to God. My Ramanama will be vain repetition and I would be a wretched guide for the Congress, the Cabinet Mission and others, if I allowed that feeling of attachment to weigh with me. If they follow my advice it might be like a plunge in the dark. As seasoned politicians they cannot afford to take that risk. My guidance must, therefore, be unalloyed.

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji had this talk with the members of his party.

[2] From "Statement to the Press", *vide* p. 99.

[3] *Psalms* 127, Bible (Old Testament)

[4] This was addressed to Pyarelal.

[5] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[6] According to the source this and the talk reported in the preceding item took place on the same day.

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If you are surrounded by your family, they divide your attention in however small or subtle a measure. I wish in this crisis to give my undivided self to God.

"You feel you have to deal with an extraordinarily acute crisis?" asked Agatha Harrison.

Yes, there is a crisis within a crisis. Not only is there the outward crisis, which you see, but a crisis within myself.

It remains to be seen how I come out of the test. So far people around me had attended to every little thing for me. If anything went wrong they were responsible. From tomorrow I shall have to do all that myself and blame myself only, if anything goes wrong. With all that I must feel at ease with myself. I shall have to watch myself. It will be a great thing if I survive that detachment and feel the inner joy—not start running high blood-pressure. It is a big experiment in my life and a necessary stage in my spiritual growth.

Harijan, 12-5-1946

116. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 3, 1946

I am grieved to know about the immorality prevalent among the people of Simla and its surrounding hills. Simla is the summer capital of the British Government and immorality is a feature common to all capitals. But it does not absolve us from our responsibility. Those who follow immoral ways can be nowhere near God. As in other places, in Simla as well, there is a wide chasm separating man from man. Harijan huts are situated adjacent to the Viceregal mansion.

I do not believe in having separate quarters for Bhangis. Those who make it possible for us to live (in sanitary conditions) should have the opportunity to live in open and in the best of localities to enable them to set an ideal in sanitation. But out of sheer callousness we treat them cruelly. Their condition will certainly improve provided every one of us treated them as our own kith and kin.

Mahatma Gandhi urged the people of Simla to eradicate corruption and to give up the desire to do evil things.

Gandhiji said they were probably wondering why he was living at "Chadwick". He had come to Simla at the instance of the Cabinet Mission,

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who had arranged for his accommodation. He would, however, assure the people that he or any member of his party was using no more room in that big building than they did elsewhere. That was why he had asked Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and others to stay with him.

Mahatma Gandhi pleaded for amelioration of the living conditions of Harijans and said if everyone decided to take one Harijan to live with him the problem could be solved.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 4-5-1946 and 5-5-1946

117. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

SIMLA,
May 4, 1946

Pressmen are inquiring already why my large party is going back. This is a personal question. I would rather avoid answering it, but in these days of publicity and speculation the question cannot be evaded. The reason is purely moral, if it may not be described as spiritual. My task as a self-appointed adviser to all the parties concerned is the most delicate at the present moment. The Simla venue was declared all of a sudden. It dawned on me that if I was to go to Simla, I must go without the usual party, even though *Harijan* work might suffer. Had I succeeded in carrying conviction to the members of my party, they would have remained behind in Delhi.[1] The time within which the decision was to be taken was only a few hours on the lst instant. They were anxious for my well-being. The whole moral purpose would be defeated, if I did not carry their mind with me. They, therefore, came to Simla. But the matter was still agitating me. So I conferred with Pyarelal yesterday.[2] He felt convinced that I should be left free to put myself solely in God's keeping, if I was to work under as much detachment as was possible for me. The best part of the afternoon was devoted to prayerful discussion that the party should go back to the heat of Delhi and await me there to rejoin me when I descended. This is the sole reason without reservation.

The Hindustan Times, 5-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 12-5-1946

[1] *Vide* p. 87.
[2] *Vide* p. 97.

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118. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 4, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Rashid[1] has passed away. All of us have to go the same way. I hope, therefore, that you are not grieving. I have sent a wire to Amtul[2].

Whether or not to go to Indore rests entirely with you. I have no courage at all to guide you. I cannot judge in what your good lies. You must not feel any hesitation in doing what you like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 503

119. LETTER TO DEVPRAKASH NAYYAR

SIMLA,
May 4, 1946

CHI. DEV,

Daily I think of you. Now all would be reaching there. They have realized that it is better to leave me alone at Simla. When I come down from Simla I shall be with you all. Pyarelal will give you all the news.

Hope Satya[3] is all right and her operations have been successful.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Prakash must be keeping fit.

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] Abdul Rashid Khan
[2] This is a slip. Begum Rashid's name was Hosa. *Vide* pp. 135-6.
[3] Addressee's sister

120. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

May 4, 1946

Gandhiji explained to the audience how his permanent staff had shortly before left for Delhi with smiling faces and his blessings. His task was very hard. But all difficulties could be overcome by leaning on God. Ever since he had reached the years of discretion he had felt that God is always with those who wait on Him.

In reality He is everywhere but because He is formless and invisible, man cannot always sense His presence. But if we have listening ears, God speaks to us in our own language, whatever that language be.

Badshah Khan had just explained what prayer was. God was all-powerful. Man lived at His will. It was because Gandhiji wanted in these crucial days to rely solely on His help that he had asked his people who looked after his every need and helped him to edit the *Harijan* weeklies to leave him to God. Yet he was not quite without human help. He had the Fakir Badshah Khan with him, the Sardar and his daughter[2], who was as his own daughter, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta and Shri Brijkrishna and Shri Sudhir Ghosh. Birlaji had sent some of his staff too.

The British have to end their rule and quit India. They have promised to do so. Yet we should recognize the fact that a handful of Englishmen have been ruling over us. It is shameful not only for us but also for Englishmen. It is because of this feeling of shame that they have resolved to quit and go. That is why I say that their task is the hardest.

I have come here to advise the Congress and I am well aware of the fact that the Congress has always respected and listened to my counsel. If the Muslim League seeks my advice I shall gladly give it to them. I have to guide the Cabinet Mission as well. I know my task is difficult and equally arduous is the task of the Congress and the Muslim League. But the task of the Cabinet Mission is even more difficult. There are a few persons who are suspicious of the Cabinet Mission and who

[1] Pyarelal's report in *Harijan* has been collated with the Hindi report in *Hindustan*.

[2] Manibehn Patel

are afraid that the Mission might betray us. In my opinion it is quite wrong to think so. I have faith in the sincerity of the Cabinet Mission and in their avowed intention of giving up power.

Gandhiji warned people against believing that Britain was crumbling.

It is a great power.

Hindustan, 5-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

121. A HARIJAN'S LETTER[1]

A Harijan friend complains bitterly about my article on sweepers' strike[2].

His first complaint is that I have given up the sweet name 'Harijan' and used "Bhangi" instead. The criticism shows the sensitive nature of the correspondent. It was a Gujarati untouchable, in the first instance, who suggested the name 'Harijan' to me and I willingly adopted it. This does not, however, mean that a current word for any sub-caste may never be used. I count myself a Harijan and it pleases me to call myself a Bhangi among them, because that is the lowest caste of Harijans. When I stayed recently in the sweepers' quarters in Delhi, the Harijans there too complained against the use of the word 'Bhangi'. They suggested 'Mehtar'. I tried to make them understand that it mattered little as to which of the current words was used for the same occupation. In spite of being considered the lowest occupation, it was in fact the highest inasmuch as it protected health and they should be indifferent to the name. Whatever the origin of the word may be, 'Bhangi' is, in my opinion, another name for 'Shivji'[3]. Whether you call a sweeper a Mehtar or a 'Bhangi', like 'Shivji' he brings health to man. The one brings it by keeping the home clean, the other cleanses the mind of man.

The second criticism is more serious. Prejudices are responsible for misunderstandings. If we take by force even that to which we are entitled, the action is likely to lead to a quarrel. We may not even be able to digest what we get by force. The strikers got what they did by coercion. At least, that is my

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 12-5-1946.
[2] *Vide* pp. 8-9.
[3] Lord Shiva

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belief. If my occupation is to keep latrines clean and I refused to do the work, can it be termed anything other than coercion? Of course, I am not bound to take up the job of cleaning latrines and I may be said to have every right to lay down my conditions of service. But according to my way of thinking, the laying down of conditions is not an absolute right. Even if such an absolute right were to be permitted, it might not be proper to use it under certain circumstances. But I do not want to enter into the justification of this reasoning. I tried to show in my article the duties of Bhangis as well as of citizens. I have often said that every kind of injustice is meted out to Bhangis. I have no doubt that citizens do not fulfil their obligations to them.[1] Thus it is their duty to see that Harijan dwellings are built properly, the means employed for cleaning are decent, that they have a special working uniform given to them, that they and their children have facilities for education, etc. These and other problems should be solved without loss of time. The Bhangis may not go on strike for lack of these amenities but it is up to all citizens to raise their voice on behalf of them.

Yet another criticism is directed against my suggestion of the use of the military to do sweepers' work. I do not see any wrong in what I said. I have reread my article and am not willing to withdraw one single word of it. I do not regret having written as I did. I advise Harijan friends to read it in the proper spirit. If they do so, they will see that my feelings on their behalf have undergone no change.

SIMLA, May 5, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

122. THE CHARITY OF THE RICH[2]

The following is the gist of what a friend writes:

> You accept many donations from the wealthy. There can be no doubt that the money is well spent. But the question is as to whether these donations should be accepted for your work. The donors certainly get a name thereby and among them might even be black marketeers. Can such charity benefit the poor?

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "Hence, whether the Bhangi brethren go on a strike or not, citizens ought to fulfil their duty independently. I have already explained what their duty is."

[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 12-5-1946.

The question really boils down to whether donations are in themselves wrong. I have no doubt in my mind about their being so. But the world works differently. The author of the *Gita* has said that all undertakings are tainted.[1] Therefore, all action should be performed with complete detachment. The *Ishopanishad* begins by saying that all action must be preceded by a full surrender of everything to God. It must, however, be admitted that even if everyone ceased to receive charity, the rich would not cease to amass wealth. It is also a fact that some rich people are stingy enough never to give anything in charity. Some even give money for nefarious purposes. Therefore, all that one can say is that certain principles should be observed in the matter of receiving charity. Not one pie should be taken for selfish ends and all should be received with God as witness.

I do, however, hold that it would be wrong to receive money from any group or individual whom the recipient considers to be unworthy. The discussion is naturally relevant only for those who are troubled by conscientious scruples.

SIMLA, May 5, 1946
Harijan, 12-5-1946

123. LETTER TO PUSHPA N. NAIK

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

Your letter. With God's grace, everything is working out well. I personally liked your going to Chi. Mukta's wedding with the consent of all the elders there. You are on test. You will be pleasing your parents and other relations. Chi. Vrijlal also will be happy. Return to the Ashram after satisfying them all and then throw yourself heart and soul into service and see God therethrough. Remember that God has no form or shape.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9272

[1] XVIII. 48

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124. LETTER TO PRAMOD MEHTA

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

CHI. PRAMOD[1],

I have your letter. I am not writing a separate letter to Chi. Champa. You did well in sending more money. It would be good if you find Ratilal in Ahmedabad. You must see that he does not starve for want of food.

I hope that all you brothers and sisters will keep good health, study well and devote yourselves to service. Champa has suffered so much that her only duty now is to shape you brothers and sisters into dedicated workers.

May you all be happy there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8763. Also C. W. 1047. Courtesy : Champa R. Mehta

125. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 5, 1946

Addressing the vast audience[2] assembled for prayers, Gandhiji said that he had to cut short the time of his evening prayers because he had to go to consult the Congress leaders on some urgent matters in connection with the present political deliberations.[3]

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 6-5-1946

[1] Ratilal P. Mehta's son

[2] It being Sunday, people in thousands had assembled to attend the prayers.

[3] The meeting with the Congress leaders lasted an hour.

126. TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

My daily post may be said to have increased fourfold since the *Harijan* weeklies started. It is impossible to answer every letter. Every communication is read but not by me. If I attempted to do so I would be unable to render any service. My staff put before me only what I should see. Much of the post does not merit replies, but questions of public interest are answered in *Harijan*. Personal correspondence has to be rigidly restricted. I receive a large number of requests for blessings on the occasion of marriages which I am hesitant to send. I have already stated publicly that my blessings should be asked for only such marriages where one of the contracting parties is a Harijan. But in reality where is the need for blessings ? Those marriages which are undertaken for the sake of joint service carry their own blessings. Those entered upon for self-satisfaction are wholly unworthy of any. In any event, in these days of famine, no money should be spent on feasts and enjoyment. Weddings will continue, but is it not possible for the event to take place quietly and without fuss ?

SIMLA, May 6, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

127. TELEGRAM TO DHIRUBHAI B. DESAI[2]

May 6, 1946

NO CALL FOR SORROW. BHULABHAI[3] HAS GONE FULL OF HONOUR. HE IS RELIEVED OF PAIN BY FRIENDLY DEATH[4]. YOU SHOULD BOTH FOLLOW THE BEST IN BHULABHAI.

The Hindu, 7-5-1946

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946. This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes".

[2] Bhulabhai Desai's son

[3] Bhulabhai Desai (1877-1946); leading lawyer of Bombay; Leader, Congress Party in the Central Legislative Assembly for nine years; President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee; member of Congress Working Committee

[4] Which occurred on May 6

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128. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

It was the heroism and travail of Bardoli that brought to public life men like Shri Bhulabhai Desai. He might otherwise have remained a distinguished Government servant and ended his career as a judge of the Bombay High Court. He reached the heights of fame when his forensic talents resulted in the release of the I.N.A. prisoners. His son and daughter-in-law have in me, like many others, a co-sharer in their grief which it is to be hoped they will turn into joy by inheriting the deceased's love for the country's service, which alone makes life worth living.

The Hindu, 7-5-1946

129. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[2]

Confidential

THE RETREAT,
SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

DEAR LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE,

My colleagues and I followed with care the proceedings of the Conference yesterday and tried to understand what our conversations were leading us to. I confess to feeling somewhat mystified and disturbed at the vagueness of our talks and some of the assumptions underlying them. While we would like to associate ourselves with every effort to explore ways and means of finding a basis for agreement, we must not deceive ourselves, the Cabinet Mission or the representatives of the Muslim League into the belief that the way the Conference has so far proceeded furnishes hope of success. Our general approach to the questions before us was stated briefly in my letter to you of April 28. We find that this approach has been largely ignored and a contrary method has been followed. We realize that some assumptions have to be made in the early stages as otherwise there can be no

[1] This appeared in *Harijan* under "Notes", 12-5-1946.

[2] This was drafted for Abul Kalam Azad by Jawaharlal Nehru and was revised by Gandhiji.

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progress. But assumptions which *ignore or run contrary to*[1] fundamental issues are likely to lead to misunderstandings during the later stages.

In my letter of April 28, I stated that the basic issue before us was that of Indian independence and the consequent withdrawal of the British army from India, for there can be no independence so long as there is foreign army on Indian soil. We stand for the independence of the whole of India now and not in the distant or near future. Other matters are subsidiary to this and can be fully discussed and decided by the Constituent Assembly.

At the Conference yesterday I referred to this again and we were glad to find that you and your colleagues, as well as the other members of the Conference, accepted independence as the basis of our talks. It was stated by you that the Constituent Assembly would finally decide about the nexus or other relationship that might be established between a free India and England. While this is perfectly true, it does not affect the position now and that is, the acceptance of Indian independence now.

If that is so, then certain consequences inevitably follow. We felt yesterday that there was no appreciation of these consequences. The Constituent Assembly is not going to decide the question of independence; that question must be and, we take it, has been decided now. That Assembly will represent the will of the free Indian nation and give effect to it. It is not going to be bound by any previous arrangements. It has to be preceded by a Provisional Government, which must function, as far as possible, as a Government of free India, and which should undertake to make all arrangements for the transitional period.

In our discussions yesterday repeated references were made to 'groups' of provinces functioning together, and it was even suggested that such a group would have an executive and legislative machinery. This method of grouping has not so far been discussed by us but still our talks seemed to presume all this. I should like to make it very clear that we are entirely opposed to any executive or legislative machinery for a group of provinces or units of the Federation. That will mean a sub-federation, if not something more, and we have already told you that we do not accept this. It would result in creating three layers of executive and legislative bodies, an arrangement which will be cumbrous, static and disjointed, leading to continuous friction. We are not aware of any such arrangement in any country.

We are emphatically of the opinion that it is not open to the Conference to entertain any suggestions for a division of India. If that is to come, it should come through the Constituent Assembly free of any influence of the present Paramount Power.[2]

[1] The words in italics are in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] This paragraph is in Gandhiji's hand.

Another point we wish to make clear is that we do not accept the proposal for parity as between groups in regard to the executive or the legislature. We realize that everything possible should be done to remove fears and suspicions from the mind of every group and community. But the way to do this is not by unreal methods which go against the basic principles of democracy on which we hope to build up our constitution.

Yours sincerely,

From a facsimile : *Reminiscences of the Nehru Age*, p. 33

130. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter, in fact, two letters. I see that your work is progressing well. No good work is accomplished in a day. A job that can be finished in one day cannot be of much value. We must, therefore, cultivate patience, and for that we should learn non-attachment. Non-attachment implies faith that only good results can follow from good actions. This firm faith should make us indifferent to the results. We are certain that the sun will rise tomorrow and do not worry. We should have still deeper faith about the results of good works. There is bound to come a day when the sun will not rise; but there can be no time when a good deed will not bear good fruit. Hence you should go on with your work in the faith that the people will one day see its merit. Sanitation comes first, because it covers most of the other things.

I do not have your letter before me while writing these lines. If, therefore, I have missed any point, ask me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 2749. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

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131. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN[1],

You are now left alone. I do not worry about that. You are brave. But I do worry about your health. If you can become mistress of your health in the atmosphere there, I would consider it a great achievement.

I have deliberately isolated myself. The others understood my need and have returned to Delhi. I need to be left alone at the present moment. Rajkumari, however, is here and so is Dr. Mehta[2]. Hence I am not having as much solitude as I should have. But is it not true that we can do only what God permits us to do? Munnalal also will remain in Delhi. I think I shall meet them within a fortnight.

It is not possible to say anything about the position here.

Please convey the contents of this letter to all.

Write to me a detailed letter. I left Amtussalaam and Zohra at Delhi but they were to go to Sevagram with Sushilabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8258. Also C. W. 6982. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

132. LETTER TO MOHAN AND ANASUYA PARIKH

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. MOHAN AND CHI. ANASUYA,

I knew the date of your wedding[3], but I wished to say nothing on that occasion. May you both lead shining lives, dedicate yourselves to service and live up to the age of 125, serving till the end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9191

[1] Wife of Munnalal G. Shah
[2] Dr. Dinshaw Mehta
[3] May 4, 1946

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133. LETTER TO DHIRU

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I got your letter. I am glad that you are doing a lot of work. If Dr. Bhagwat dispenses pills and so on, one cannot call it nature cure. It would be more polite if you settled the matter in consultation with Dr. Bhagwat himself. For my part I am prepared to write to him. But where work proceeds harmoniously it is better to have mutual discussions.

I shall be here for another few days. Then we shall see. Our entire party has left for Delhi. It was necessary for the work I have to do here.

Blessings from
BAPU

DHIRU
URULI KANCHAN

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

134. LETTER TO VINOD

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

CHI. VINOD,

I read your letter to Pyarelal. The best course I can suggest for both of you is that you should both devote yourselves to my work of education or nature cure. If you can stand the heat, you may settle at Sevagram or in a village nearby. If you want a place less hot, you may settle in some village near Poona. Take it that fresh air and open atmosphere go with any activity of mine. You may take up the Nayee Talim work if you like it.

I should welcome it if you or both of you did some writing. I am sure it will be worth printing since both of you will write only after careful thought.

Ayurveda has not been making progress. No doubt, much of the therapy that it offers is sound, and it certainly is cheap.

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The sovereign [therapy] is of course nature cure, since it includes Ramanama, the unfailing remedy.

Please write to me what both of you together will need, in case you join in my activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosed with letter to Pyarelal, Delhi

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

135. LETTER TO VISHWAMITRA N. VAIDYA

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI VISHWAMITRA,

You rightly employ the term "culprit". If Ayurveda is in a poor state the fault lies with the vaidyas, and they alone can remedy it. Other help will follow as a matter of course.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

VAIDYASHRI VISHWAMITRA NANALAL
GHEEVATO
KHODANO PADO
PATAN

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

136. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[*May 6, 1946*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am enclosing this in the cover for Pyarelal who will pass it on to you. It will save a day's delay.

There has been no letter from you till now. There should be one. Of course I have not received today's mail.

I am now fairly free but that is welcome.

The Conference here is going on, but what will come of it one cannot tell. Take it that all I can do is to wish it well. Rajkumari, Mani and Brijkrishna are here to help me. So much for today.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] In the source this letter is placed among those of this date.

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137. LETTER TO U. N. DHEBAR[1]

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI DHEBARBHAI[2],

I have your letter. I see no way of improvement for the small principalities of Kathiawar so long as they are concerned only with themselves. Their subjects have no strength. I shall congratulate you and Kathiawar if you can find a way.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. UCHHARANGARAI DHEBAR
RAJKOT

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

138. LETTER TO CHIMANBHAI

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI CHIMANBHAI,

I have your bank draft for Rs. 1,000. I shall credit it to the public funds account that stands in my name. Congratulations to all the friends.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] This was sent for the Kathiawar Food Conference which was to be held under the Presidentship of Mangaldas Pakwasa, at Rajkot on May 11, 1946.

[2] (1905-77); actively associated with Kathiawar Political Conference; President of the Indian National Congress, 1955-59; Chairman of Scheduled Tribes Areas Commission; President of Bharatiya Adim Jati Sangh; 1962-64; Chairman of Khadi and Village Industries Commission, 1963; Chairman of Primary Education Commission

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139. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I got your detailed letter. There is nothing wrong in including milk and ghee in a balanced diet. It would be another thing if you can do without milk, and a great thing it would be. [But] I very much doubt [that you can].

How can tub-bath be arranged? If you arrive at something definite regarding the land your work will proceed faster.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2748. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

140. LETTER TO GURUNATH JOSHI

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

BHAI GURUNATH JOSHI,

I have your letter. I am glad. It appears that everything is going on well there. I hope that you will fully acquaint yourself with the method we have adopted in Uruli Kanchan and point out any defects that you may notice. I hear that Father is likely to fully recover. If this happens it will be fine. I am enclosing the letter received in this connection.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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141. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SIMLA,
May 6, 1946

Noise is not erased by making greater noise. It can only be stilled by people making mute signs and never pushing forward. Peace and order are necessary at all gatherings, but are especially so at prayer gatherings. People come together for prayers in order to obtain peace, to hear God's name and to recite it. Therefore, those who come should really attune themselves even as they start from their homes. Let them be silent and let their thoughts dwell as they walk, on prayer. Otherwise coming to prayers is useless.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi hoped that, in future, all would try to follow what he had said and thus derive full benefit from attending prayers.

The Hindu, 8-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

142. TOTAL PROHIBITION

National Provincial Governments are now in full swing in India. Happily on the question of prohibition, there can be no differences of opinion between the Congress and the Muslim League. And if all followed a concrete policy and the States too joined in, India would be dry in no time and earn the blessings of lakhs of homes. To the discredit of the Governments under virtual martial law, Governors and their Advisers had the shamelessness to reverse the policy which had been already adopted in some provinces and misappropriate the revenue which was raised by the provinces in question. Let them now take up prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs. Let them, too, not rest content with prohibition legislation. They have to devise methods of educating the drinking public in the harm that drink does and provide them with innocent recreation and health-giving drinks. Every bar or, failing that, a place next door to it, should, so

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "A Simla Diary" in *Harijan*. As Gandhiji was observing silence this was read out at the meeting.

[2] The following paragraph is from *The Hindu*.

far as possible, be utilized as a refreshment and recreation room. If this constructive activity is taken up, it must prove a source of revenue for the State, besides prohibition, benefiting and reconstructing thousands of ruined homes.

Moreover, toddy-tapping should be replaced by *nira*-tapping for the purpose of converting *nira* into *gur*, much to the advantage of the nation which needs cheap sugar. These columns have shown how in some ways *tad-gur* is preferable to cane-*gur*.

These reflections are suggested by the following paragraph from a circular letter addressed by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (Fyzabad Road, Lucknow) to the Press. From it, I take the following items[1] addressed to the students under the heading "What Can Youth Do?"

> 1. Pledge themselves to total abstinence from all intoxicants and habit-forming drugs, which includes tobacco. . . .
>
> 2. Demand a thorough alcohol and narcotic drugs education, to be a part of the school curriculum.
>
> 3. Demand while under training a part in social service, including temperance work, educating the public of the harm done to them through the use of the intoxicants.
>
> 4. Recommend that in the scheme for small savings campaign for rural population, total abstinence from all intoxicants be stressed.
>
> 5. Ally themselves against the awful waste of precious foodstuffs for liquor in breweries and distilleries.
>
> 6. Join up with a temperance society. . . .
>
> 7. Make use of temperance literature. . . .
>
> 8. Holidays, a good time for this service.
>
> 9. . . . to learn the lesson of how much they can give to the country . . .

SIMLA, May 7, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

[1] From which only extracts are reproduced here

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143. LETTER TO EMILY KINNAIRD

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

DEAR MOTHER,

So you will be going back ! Wish you well on the voyage. Let neither your will nor mine but His will be done.

Love.

Your son,
M. K. GANDHI

HON. EMILY KINNAIRD

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

144. LETTER TO HASAN ALI[1]

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

BHAI HASAN ALI,

It is beyond me to answer your letter. Yours is a typical letter illustrating that even things done with the best of motives can be perversely interpreted.

M. K. GANDHI

KARACHI

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

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145. LETTER TO BHAGAVADACHARYA

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

BHAI BHAGAVANDAS,

I have your letter. You were right to point out my error, although I do not quite see it as such.

Ramanama is very dear to me. I can easily give it up if I feel that it is an infatuation.

What you write about *Harijan* is correct. The fault ought to be removed. I am sending on to Jivanji the relevant portion of your letter.

It should not be a subject for complaint that I cannot see the friends from Kathiawar. I am perpetually faced with the question whom I should see and whom I need not.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI BHAGAVADACHARYA
RAJNAGAR SOCIETY ROAD
AHMEDABAD 7

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

146. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI[1],

Your letter. I am still under the impression that there is no [sales tax] on khadi. But whom shall we fight? Now the work is in the hands of the ministers. Whom should I write to? It would be better to ask Annada. He may do as he wishes. Can they not sell Borkamta khadi in Borkamta itself ? Many questions arise. Ask Satis Babu[2] as well. And then leave it to them. I don't want to claim that I have pondered fully over it but I have helped others to think about it.

BAPU

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

[1] Secretary, A. I. S. A.
[2] Satis Chandra Das Gupta

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147. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 7, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi, in his speech at today's prayer meeting, commended the quiet which prevailed after his appeal to the audience on the two previous evenings. He asked them all if they could sing in tune and keep proper time to join in the *Ramdhun*. It was a good habit to cultivate and if they did it from the heart and intelligently they would realize that God's blessings were in it. If they co-operated in a pure thing it would help them to co-operate with their neighbours in all that pertained to the common weal.[1]

Strange rumours had come to him, he said, in regard to his permanent staff having left. Some people were foolish enough to believe that there had been some domestic quarrel. Those who lived with him were not made of such stuff. Others imagined that because his staff had left, the negotiations had broken down. This too was wholly untrue. They left, as Gandhiji had said before[2], because they understood that he wanted to be alone with God as his only help. Even so he was not without help. It had been so throughout his life. In South Africa, too, all kinds of people had helped him including Boers, Africans and Europeans.

The address . . . contained a scathing denunciation of the speculation fever which had seized Simla. He interpreted it as a sign of cowardice. He tried to impress upon them that it arose from fear. He himself was a coward in his early youth. He had learnt to shed his cowardice through the recitation of Ramanama.[3] It was cowards who died many times before their death. Fear of disease killed more men than disease itself. He appealed to newspapermen also not to spread false news. It was their duty to teach people to be brave and not instil fear into them. The Cabinet Mission had come with the blessings of the Prime Minister, who had said they were coming here to part with power whether Indians agreed among themselves or not. It was not right to distrust or disbelieve anyone so long as there was no cause to do so. Were those who had had the courage to put up a non-violent fight against a mighty empire for 25 years going to yield to frustration if the British Government failed to perform its duty today?[4]

[1] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*. What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "A Simla Diary" in *Harijan*.

[2] *Vide* pp. 99 and 101.

[3] *The Hindu* here has: "Gandhiji himself had never known what fear was."

[4] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

That would be unworthy of those who had vowed their all to serve the country. They had said the country was theirs and they were going to make her free. If they had fear in them, freedom could never be theirs. The strength that withstands all fear is derived from God. When Gandhiji said he knew no fear, it was not because he was a *mahatma*. He was not different from any of them. The only difference that there might be between him and them was that he had, perhaps, more faith, more spirit of service, of sacrifice and of renunciation. All these would come to those who believed in Ramanama. Then they too would cultivate the virtues of service and sacrifice and fear nothing, relying solely on God.

The Hindu, 9-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

148. NOTES

Non-violence and Khadi

The Congress Constitution is undergoing a radical change. The supreme change that is desirable for the sake of avoiding untruth and hypocrisy is to remove the words "legitimate and peaceful" from the first article of the Congress Constitution as also the clause about khadi.[1] Experience shows that the people who form the bulk of Congressmen are not wedded either to truth and non-violence or to khadi. As an ardent lover of truth and non-violence and khadi as their symbol, I make bold to suggest that these clauses should go. It will be open to anyone to be truthful and non-violent and to wear khadi if he or she chooses to. Only there will be no deception practised on India or the world. Paradoxical as it may appear we shall be more truthful[2], more non-violent and better khadi-lovers with the suggested amendment than without. It should be remembered that I myself had at one time moved the removal of these clauses. I was glad I was defeated. It was wrong to be glad. I shall be sorry if my suggestion is rejected even now. Let it not be said of us that we prize hypocrisy above truth.

Cocktail Parties

We seem to be on the eve of attaining independence! Should we ape bad European manners and customs and still prize independence? It would be a sad day for India and the world,

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIX, pp. 245 and 247.
[2] The source has "healthful".

if the price we are to pay for independence is cocktail parties and the like. What do the famishing millions know of such parties? Let it not be said of us that our monied men were gay whilst those from whom they made money were famishing for food.

HARIJAN COOKS

A correspondent suggests that at the next session of the Congress all the cooks should be Harijans and to that end a corps of Harijan cooks should be trained in the observance of cleanliness and the art of cooking scientifically and as behoves a poor country like ours. He would have this privilege and duty given to the Congressmen in the province in which the Congress session is to be held. After the session these cooks should be taken over by those Congressmen who can afford it and keep cooks. Any suggestion like this which shows in practice that untouchability is a thing of the past is to be welcomed. I would only add that Congressmen who endorse it need not wait for the session. They should from now take up Harijans not merely as their cooks but have them in all other capacities. What is more, let those who can afford it take Harijans in their families as their own children and give them proper training. All this can only happen if men and women are sincere in their professions and if the truth had gone home that under the garb of religion Hinduism is said to have consigned to untouchability their own kith and kin for no fault of theirs.

SIMLA, May 8, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

149. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. The Congress Constitution makes it incumbent on all its candidates standing for election to be habitual wearers of hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. Does this not imply that they can only use that khadi which is certified by the A. I. S. A.?

A. In my opinion it cannot be otherwise.

Q. Is a dealer in uncertified khadi eligible to hold office in a Congress committee?

A. It is beyond my conception as to how a dealer in uncertified khadi can be a Congressman, leave alone an aspirant for holding office in any Congress committee.

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak* 19-5-1946.

Q. You say that a dealer in uncertified khadi cannot even be a Congressman much less an office-holder. But what about those who are office-holders in the Congress and who deal in mill cloth and even sell foreign cloth ?

A. My answer to the second question is equally applicable to the persons referred to in the third. It is for these very reasons that I have recommended the removal of the relevant clauses from the Congress Constitution.[1] Experience has taught us that we are unable to adhere to the rules in question.

SIMLA, May 8, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

150. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

CHADWICK, SIMLA WEST,
May 8, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

The four Congress delegates[2] had a warm debate over the Cabinet Mission's suggestions[3]. The foremost was that if the delegates accepted it, it was binding on them and its terms were binding on them and therefore the Congress unless the latter repudiated them. The same would be the case with the League. On the strength of what you told me last night[4] I said they were binding on no one. The Constituent Assembly would be free to throw out any of the items and the members of the two delegations were equally free to add to or amend the suggestions before the Constituent Assembly. I added that they were meant only as a scaffolding by means of which the two institutions could be brought to the Constituent Assembly adumbrated in the draft. If you are able to confirm the above and are free to make a public declaration to that effect, the main difficulty would be over.

As to merits, the difficulty about parity between six Hindu majority Provinces and the five Muslim majority Provinces is insurmountable. The Muslim majority Provinces represent over nine crores of the population as against over 19 crores of the Hindu majority Provinces. This is really worse than Pakistan.

[1] *Vide* p. 120.
[2] Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Abdul Ghaffar Khan
[3] *Vide* Appendix II.
[4] For the report of the talk, presumably by Agatha Harrison, *vide* Appendix III.

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What is suggested in [its] place is that the Central Legislature should be framed on the population basis and so too the executive. If this is considered unfair, an impartial non-British tribunal should award on this as on many other matters of difference otherwise incapable of adjustment. If these two points are cleared my way would be clear.[1]

Instead of running down to you, I thought I should send this note, leaving you to decide whether we should meet before the Conference[2] or whether an exchange of letters should suffice. I am in your hands.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 187

151. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

SIMLA,
May 8, 1946

BHAI VIYOGI HARI[3],

I have your letter. I do not remember what I had said. Those who were with me then are with you now; ask them. I do not recollect having said anything about those who get Rs. 50 and dearness [allowance] but there were some who got very little, say, Rs. 15. About them I can say something. It is possible that I am confusing Bhangi Niwas with something else. My memory should not be trusted. Would not Ramdas have written something about himself even at that time?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] To this the addressee replied: "As to your first point the position as I see it is this: If the Congress and the Muslim League delegates agree to a certain basis for the new constitution they will be bound as honourable men to do their utmost to see that the form agreed upon is that adopted by the Constituent Assembly. To do less than that would be to go back upon their word.

As to the second point—equality at the Centre, I appreciate your difficulty though not that 'it would be worse than Pakistan'. If this can be overcome by some form of international arbitration by agreement with the League there is of course nothing whatever to prevent such an agreement."

[2] Which was being held from May 5 to May 12, 1946

[3] Editor, *Harijan Sevak*, 1933-40; Manager, Harijan Udyogshala, Delhi; President, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Karachi, 1946; Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, 1951-59

152. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 8, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said at the outset that as it was Gurudev's[1] birthday he could speak on nothing but him.[2]

A picture of the poet had been put on the dais at the prayer gathering. Drawing the attention of the gathering to it, Gandhiji said that the inscription under it was the motto 'The light that never failed'. Gurudev's body was reduced to ashes but the radiance that had been within him was like the sun which would shine so long as life on this earth lasted. But the light he shed was for the soul as the sun's was for the body.

He was a poet and a literary star of the first magnitude. He wrote in his mother tongue and all Bengal is able to drink deep at the fountain of his poetry. Translations of his works exist in many languages. He was a great writer in English too, perhaps almost without knowing it. He had school education but he could boast of no university degree. He was just Gurudev. One Viceroy had called him the Poet of Asia, a title that no one before him had had. He was also a world poet and, what is more, a *rishi*[3].

He has left us the *Gitanjali*, the poems which brought him world fame. The great Tulsidas left us his immortal *Ramayana*. The renowned Vedavyasa left us a history of mankind[4]. They were not mere poets; they were teachers. Gurudev too wrote not only as a poet but as a *rishi*. Writing, however, was not his only gift. He was an artist, a dancer, a singer, with all the sweetness and purity that art in its finest sense should contain. His creative genius has also given us Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Visvabharati. These breathe his spirit and are a legacy not only to Bengal but to India. Santiniketan has become, as it were, a place of pilgrimage to us all. He was not, in his lifetime, able to make of these institutions what he had dreamed for them. What man

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*. What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's report "A Simla Diary" in *Harijan*.

[3] Seer

[4] Viz., the *Mahabharata*

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can? Fulfilment of man's purpose is in God's hands. But they are monuments to his endeavour and are a constant reminder to us of the passionate love he had for his country and the service he rendered to her. You have just heard the national song he wrote, a song which has found a place in our national life. How often is the inspiring refrain heard from thousands of voices! It is not only a song but is also like a devotional hymn.

Gandhiji ended by exhorting the people to learn the lessons of love of the country, love of the world and selfless service from the noble example which Gurudev had left.

The Hindu, 10-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

153. AYURVEDA AND NATURE CURE[1]

Vaidya Vallabhram, Professor of Ayurveda and Vanaspati Shastra[2] writes:[3]

> Cure through Ayurveda is based on the five elements. . . . *Pathya* (diet cure) is a scientific term of the greatest importance in Ayurveda. Its real meaning is that freedom from disease depends on a proper observance of the laws of nature.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the repetition of Ramanama and pure living are the best and the cheapest preventives of disease. The tragedy is that doctors, hakims and vaidyas do not make use of Ramanama as the sovereign of cures. There is no place given to it in current Ayurvedic literature except in the shape of a charm which will drive people further into the well of superstition. Ramanama has in fact no connection with superstition. It is nature's supreme law. Whoever observes it is free from disease and *vice versa*. The same law which keeps one free from disease applies also to its cure. An apt question is as to why a man who recites Ramanama regularly and leads a pure life should ever fall ill. Man is by nature imperfect. A thoughtful man strives after perfection, but seldom attains it, for he stumbles on the way, though unwittingly. The whole of God's law is embodied in a pure life. The first thing is to realize one's limitations. It should be obvious that the moment one transgresses those limits one falls ill. Thus a balanced diet eaten in accordance with

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946.
[2] Botany
[3] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

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needs gives one freedom from disease. How is one to know what is the proper diet for one? Many such problems can be imagined. The purport of all this is that everyone should be his own doctor and find out his limitations. The man who does so will surely live up to the age of 125.

Vaidya Vallabhram asks whether well-known home drugs and condiments can be included in nature cure. Doctor friends claim that they do nothing more than investigate the laws and act accordingly and that therefore they are the best nature-cure men. Everything can be explained away in this manner. All I want to say is that anything more than Ramanama is really contrary to true nature cure. The more one recedes from this central principle the farther away one goes from nature cure. Following this line of thought I limit nature cure to the use of the five elements. But a vaidya who goes beyond this and uses such herbs as grow or can be grown in his neighbourhood purely for service of the sick and not for money may claim to be a nature-cure man. But where are such vaidyas to be found? Today most of them are engaged in making money. They do no research work and it is because of their greed and mental laziness that the science of Ayurveda is at a low ebb. Instead of admitting their own weakness they throw the blame on Government and public men. Government is powerless to help those who through their own fault become helpless and thereby drag the name of Ayurveda in the mud.

SIMLA, May 9, 1946

Harijan, 19-5-1946

154. HOW CAN VIOLENCE BE STOPPED?[1]

Q. Some time back a military officer in Poona, who is about to return to England, said to me that violence was on the increase in India and would further increase as people were gradually turning away from the path of non-violence. "We in the West", he said, "not only believe in violence but our society is based on it. Several subject races have won their independence through violence and are today living in peace. We have discovered the atom bomb for stopping violence. The last great war is a case in point."[2] Continuing, the military officer said, "Gandhiji has shown your

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 19-5-1946.

[2] The Hindi here adds: "The world has seen how with the help of the atom bomb we stopped the bloody war in no time."

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people the way of non-violence. Has he discovered any such power as the atom bomb which will at once convert people to non-violence and bring about a rule of peace? Cannot Gandhiji's 'atom bomb' stop people from following the path of violence? Ask Gandhiji to exercise his power over the people and tell them to give up all thoughts of violence and adopt his creed. If he cannot wean his people today from the terrible violence that is spreading all over the country, I tell you that he will live a disappointed man and his life's work will be ruined."[1]

A. There is much confusion of thought in this question. The atom bomb has not stopped violence. People's hearts are full of it and preparations for a third world war may even be said to be going on. While it would be absurd to say that violence has ever brought peace to mankind it cannot either be said that violence never achieves anything.

That I shall have to repent if I cannot stop violence does not enter into the picture of non-violence. No man can stop violence, God alone can do so. Men are but instruments in His hands. Here material means cannot stop violence but this does not mean that material means should not be employed for the purpose. The deciding factor is God's grace.[2] He works according to His law and, therefore, violence will also be stopped in accordance with that law. Man does not and can never know God's law fully. Therefore we have to try as far as lies in our power. I hold that our experiment in non-violence has succeeded to a fair extent in India. There is, therefore, no room for the pessimism shown in the question. Finally ahimsa is one of the world's great principles which no power on earth can wipe out. Thousands like myself may die in trying to vindicate the ideal but ahimsa will never die. And the gospel of ahimsa can be spread only through believers dying for the cause.

SIMLA, May 9, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

[1] The Hindi here adds: "I hope you will clear the British officer's doubt."
[2] The Hindi here adds: "Even when it stops while material means are employed it will have stopped by God's grace. Yes, I will concede that God's grace is a conventional phrase."

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155. KHADI SCIENCE SCHOOL IN BOMBAY[1]

Shri Viththaldas Jerajani is one of those who will do his utmost to put into practice what he is once convinced is the right thing to do. When I returned home in 1915 from South Africa after 20 years' exile, he was at that time running a large swadeshi store in Bombay. I explained to him that he was dealing in what was 'swadeshi' only in name. It was not difficult for him to understand that he had been labouring under a delusion but it was not clear to him what he should do. Beyond pointing out the flaw I too was unable to give him practical guidance straightaway. But I could not remain content without making efforts to put into practice what I believed. As soon as possible I threw myself heart and soul into producing khadi and Shri Viththaldas started business in khadi sales. At that time all the khadi that was produced was sold in Bombay. Khadi weavers in the production areas could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The history of the gradual growth of khadi is very interesting but I may not dwell on it here.

Now that it has been realized that khadi merely as a commercial commodity has been a mistake, Shri Viththaldas has taken another step forward. I give below the gist of his account of his doings which he has described in a Gujarati letter to me:

> I have already informed you that two out of the original four Khadi Bhandars in Bombay have been converted into teaching centres. Instead of windows dressed with attractive khadi for purposes of sales, people are treated to look at all the implements of khadi production beginning from cotton right up to yarn. Those who are tempted to gain practical knowledge enter the showrooms and are given instruction should they so desire. Up till now there are 209 pupils and the attendance is fairly good for learning all the processes. Shri Kakubhai has taken up the work with zest and is devoting all his time to it.
>
> For weaving we could only get one place in Andheri where we have put up looms. Owing to the difficulty of procuring accommodation in Bombay, half the shop on Kalbadevi Road has been turned into a weaving centre also. The

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946.

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services of an expert have been obtained. It remains to be seen how far we can progress in this line.

During the war khadi sales mounted high owing to cloth shortage. Today also cloth for everyday needs is hard to get and other cloth has gone into the black market and fetches fantastic prices. Khadi is, therefore, still considered cheap and if it weren't for the fact that yarn currency even to a limited extent is in vogue we simply could not have met the demand nor could have coped with the rush on our stores. The danger of khadi going into the black market might even have been there.

Political awakening has always connoted a *pari passu* increase in the demand for khadi and it is good that those who really believe in it and yet have been lazy about spinning will now have to take to the wheel. Conditions for teaching spinning are therefore favourable.

There is nothing striking about the figures given by Shri Jerajani. Those who think that the world is full of crazy people have every right to say that Bombay has its full quota of such folk. Men of faith believe that the world is the better for them. The man who strives for the impossible may be looked upon as a burden. But the crazy man who is possessed by some special idea is the crazy man who is prized by society. I place Shri Viththaldas in this category. To find even a few people in a pleasure-loving city like Bombay who realize the power of khadi is no small matter for satisfaction. Khadi will grow to its full height of course only when it is manufactured in every village and in every home and used there.

Just as Bombay is the foremost city where giving money in charity is concerned, so it can play a leading part in the difficult task of producing khadi. Who would not like Bombay to hold this coveted position? Shri Viththaldas and his colleagues are working hard for this goal. If they die in the attempt to bring their dreams to fruition their death will be worth while. They must, however, hasten slowly in order to avoid mistakes. If they are watchful and mend their errors at once all will surely be well with their work.

SIMLA, May 9, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

156. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Parting is such a sweet sorrow. I did feel moved to tears when bidding good-bye to you all, but soon calmed myself. My step, however, was perfectly right. I am experiencing its sweet fruits. I have no time to write at length about it.

Personally I would prefer Sita[1] and you going to Bombay. You should now start making preparations. Your dharma is to return to South Africa. If you can but have faith that I am in God's hands, you will not even think about the matter.

I hope you don't find the heat there unbearable. I may know more today about what is going to happen now and how long I shall have to stay here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4948

157. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. I did feel sad to send you back; I did not like it at all, but that was my duty. So what has happened is good. You are sure to pass the examination. Why should you worry about the division? Is not the day for your departure to Kashi drawing near?

How is your health? What is the condition of your foot? It must not get bad. You should see to that. And you can.

How are your studies progressing? Do you read anything? How else do you pass your time?

[1] Addressee's daughter

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You ought to master Urdu.

How is Sushila[1]? Where is she? What are Ila[2] and Arun[3] busy with ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4978

158. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I got your letter. I have had a long talk with Badshah Khan also. If my ordering you about could do any good I would do it right now. I can do no more than offer you advice. If you like it act on it; if you don't do as you please.

You must go to see Amtul. Your brother has died and if you do not go [to her] it would not be right.

Now there is no need for you to go to the Frontier Province. Akbar should go when he is completely free from his work at Samau. Khansaheb says that Akbar should go only when he wants to go. Khansaheb is of course convinced that Akbar can do better work in the Frontier Province. You will write to me when you go to Indore how things stand there. Then I can advise you further.

I have written to you about Borkamata, haven't I ?

Akbar's letters to me and Zohra are enclosed herewith. The envelope was addressed to Zohra. Inadvertently, my assistant here opened it. I read both the letters and gave them to Khansaheb to read. Now pass them on to Zohra.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 514

[1], [2] & [3] Addressee's mother, sister and brother

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159. INTERVIEW TO U. P. I.

SIMLA,
May 9, 1946

As Mahatma Gandhi returned to his camp . . . after his 1½ hours' interview with Sir Stafford Cripps, the United Press of India representative accosted him and asked for news relating to the latest development in the political situation. Gandhiji smilingly pointed to the weather outside and said:

Don't you see there is no more rain ? The sky is clear of clouds and the storm which was raging has stopped.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-5-1946

160. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 10, 1946[1]

Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the audience again on the perfect quiet they had maintained during the prayer hour. He hoped that they would be as disciplined wherever they went, whether for prayer or for any other gathering. If after leaving here they became disorderly, noisy, and quarrelled with each other, then their quiet, he said, was but a mockery.[2]

He told them that the spirit of prayer must abide with them all the twenty-four hours, if it was a heart prayer and came not merely from the lips. The real peace of prayer could come to their hearts only if God entered therein. Then they would be the same outwardly as they were within. They would be honest, they would harbour no enmity against anyone, they would be truthful, they would cheat no one if they were in business.[3]

Relating an incident of his youthful days, Mahatma Gandhi said how as a young man he had once gone into a small shop in Bombay and asked for a penknife. He was shown one priced at Re. 1-8. He thought Re. 1-8 was too much and bought the article at half that price. But on testing it, he found that it was not worth even a pice. He could not even sharpen his pencil with it.

[1] From *The Hindu*

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*. The extracts from *Harijan* are reproduced from Pyarelal's report "A Simla Diary".

[3] The following paragraph is from *The Hindu*.

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If people are dishonest and cheat others in this or in any other way, they do not understand the meaning of prayer.

Gandhiji said he would like more and more persons to come to the prayer gatherings but only if they came in the right spirit and with listening ears, so that they may live up to whatever good they might take from the worship.

It may take time for the recitation to come from the heart even as a seed sown has to be nurtured and bears fruit only in due season. If the desire to have God within us is there, progress, however slow, is bound to be. Man cannot be transformed from bad to good overnight. God does not exercise magic. He too is within His own law. His law, however, is different from the law of the State. There may be mistakes in the latter but God cannot err. If He were to go beyond the limits of His law, the world would be lost. He is changeless, unchanging, unequalled, the same yesterday, today and for ever. His law is written on the tablets of our hearts.

They could become changed men and women, only if they had the desire of reform and if they were prepared for ceaseless endeavour.

The Hindu, 12-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 19-5-1946

161. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

CHADWICK, SIMLA WEST,
May 11, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th instant about salt.[1]

This is a fine instance of how the irresponsible mind works. You were good enough to tell me last Monday[2] when I was silent that the British did not care for credit. When my silence was broken, the Cabinet Mission had come and we plunged into high politics. The corollary to your dictum seems to be that the British would not mind the discredit of any action.

In my opinion the notice[3] you have been good enough to send me is a discreditable affair. The only straight answer from my mind which thinks ever of the masses and is responsible and responsive to them would be to abolish the hateful monopoly and tax

[1] *Vide* Appendix IV(A).
[2] On May 6. For an official version of the meeting *vide* Appendix V.
[3] *Vide* Appendix IV(B).

especially in these days of famine. But according to you this simple act of justice must be left to be done by your successor, the independent Government of India, whenever it comes into being.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 160-1

162. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter after many days. Were you busy or just lazy?

You are again blaming me for your own lack of confidence. If you have grown wise and never cry, if you don't care for what others say, who could stop you from coming here alone? Have you not yourself put the condition, "Who will teach me, and what?" If you have confidence in yourself, why need you ask that question? I do wish, of course, that Jaisukhlal[2] should be with you. I understand your explanation. It is sad that Jaisukhlal should take this view. Why should a person dedicated to public service care for sweet or bitter experiences? It is enough if one's heart is clean.

You may now do what seems best to you. I got J.'s letter about rationing. I am thinking of forwarding it to Bhavnagar.

First send your annual report and then talk about a message.

I am glad that both of you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] In response to this the addressee invited Gandhiji for a talk the same evening at 7 p. m.

[2] Addressee's father

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163. LETTER TO AKBAR CHAVDA

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. AKBAR,

I got your letter. I am enclosing Badshah Khan's letter. If you can find nobody to take charge of the work at Samau, you cannot leave the place. If, however, you think you can do better service in the Frontier Province, and if you have the courage, you should get ready to go there and that as early as possible. Do whatever is proper after taking into account all factors. What has happened to Mridulabehn's idea of deputing somebody ?

Zohra has gone to Sevagram.

Amtussalaam was in Delhi but is now likely to have gone to Indore. Her brother Rashid Khan has expired.

Badshah Khan is with me. He will stay for some days more. The work here is not yet over.

I hope you are keeping good health. Do you find any time to read?

I have sent our entire family back to Delhi. Only Rajkumari is here, for her home is here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3239

164. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I got your letter. Herewith a letter from Badshah Khan.

I had sent two telegrams to Begum Rashid. In my letters to you[1] I referred to her as Amtul. I had an impression that her name was Amtul. What is her name?

I have written to Akbar and advised him that he may go to the Frontier Province when he can free himself completely

[1] Dated May 4 and May 9; *vide* pp. 100 and 131.

from Samau and if he really feels eager to go there. To start with, he should go alone. Afterwards, when he has settled down, he may send for Zohra.

You must have received my letter containing advice about [Begum] Rashid. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 515

165. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. LILI,

Your postcard and letter are lying with me. I could not send you my blessings, for the card came too late. I have your letter of the 6th today, the 11th. I am glad that you sat for the examination. Do not worry at all. Nothing is certain about me. Big people's affairs are always slow. I hope your health is good. All the people have left this place and gone back to Delhi and are awaiting me there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE, LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 1024. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

166. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. The fever seems to have left you completely. If you pass blood, you should take both hip-bath and friction-bath. Apply a mud-pack on the abdomen at night. As regards food, eat green leaves, cabbage, gourd, etc. Avoid *bajra.* Eat *rotlis* made from whole wheat flour and chew them thoroughly. Avoid salt. Eat whatever fruit is available. Avoid ghee and curds.

You may have milk, but must avoid pulses. If you do this, you are bound to get well. Repetition of Ramanama must of course be kept up.

As regards Kanchan, I do believe her complaint to be justified. I clearly see that it is your dharma to settle down somewhere with her. If your self-control breaks, it will be you who will break it. She will neither resist nor tempt you. What more can you desire? What will it profit you to be afraid of yourself?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8393. Also C.W. 7212. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

167. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI[1]

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is bad. Can't you at all write your Gujarati characters?

It is not good that you have no interest in spinning. If you read some literature on the subject you will come to feel that you may not neglect this dharma.

I am glad that you clean the latrines and do other scavenging work. What do you read?

God alone knows when I shall be able to get away from here. No one else does.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

168. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter about the theft. If you suspect Gopalrao take him aside and speak to him. It is certainly good to be independent of all servants but you will not be able to achieve it. After all we cannot carry on like this. The life of an ascetic is not for us. We try to approximate to it. Yes, it was a lapse on your part that you did not carry the key with you. To keep a cash-box and not to carry the key with you is as good as not keeping a cash-box. Hasn't Bhartrihari written that the rich live in fear of being robbed? I do not like your idea of undertaking a fast. It is another thing if we undertake one for our own lapse. But a lapse can be counteracted not by undertaking a fast but by not repeating the lapse. Secondly, the one who undertakes a fast in order to purify another who has committed a theft ought to be absolutely pure. There was no doubt negligence at the root of this incident. Find out what Kishorelal thinks about this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4554

169. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SIMLA,
May 11, 1946

Interpreting the *bhajan* sung by Sucheta Kripalani Gandhiji said :

It is good to sing devotional songs in tune. But if we come to the prayers with the attraction of listening to good music alone we may overlook the meaning underlying the prayer. The best *bhajan* is one that is sung from the heart even if the style of singing is not perfect.

Today's *bhajan* tells us that we are all citizens of the land in which there is neither sorrow nor suffering. You should not imagine that the reference is to heaven. The poet himself says that

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he is singing of the land in which we are living. This does not mean we have to wait for attaining perfection. Every one of us can create such a land within oneself if only one enthrones the God within. The world is after all made up of individuals. True, there are people of different races and colours, speaking different languages. How to live in such a world is exactly what the *bhajan* tells us. I do not know the composer[1] of this *bhajan* but I would advise those who have been truly moved by it to make a copy of the *bhajan* not for singing but to translate its ideas into practice in their own lives.

Those who come to attend prayers ought to carry something with them from here. Yesterday I was hurt to hear the noise created after prayers. It only means that my advice goes unheard. Such noise leads to scuffles and riots. Afterwards I felt that either I should stop speaking after prayers or the prayers should be conducted silently.

Silent prayer is the best prayer. It is only through peace and calm that we can establish communion with God. It was only during my tours in Assam and Bengal that I started speaking after prayers. People ought to contribute generously for Harijans.

Gandhiji asked people not to follow him to his residence for it hampered the task for which he had come there.

What is there to see in places which are all bound to perish. An earthquake may raze a palace to the ground whereas a hut may stand intact. You should remain calm even if others are restless. A person who has the strength of truth and non-violence, need not fear anyone. Peace and discipline alone can suppress unrest.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 13-5-1946

[1] For the text of the *bhajan*, *vide* Appendix VI.

170. A MESSAGE[1]

[Before *May 12, 1946*][2]

India and Ceylon should strive together for each other's emancipation.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 15-5-1946

171. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

CHADWICK, SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

Of course you join me when I leave Delhi. But I would not like you to boil in Delhi.

From the original : C. W. 4215. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7851

172. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I suppose I must count it a favour that you wrote to me after so many days. I understand about Durban. I don't think anything can be done about it.

About marriage my views are definite. A girl must be allowed to study till she attains the age of 20. She may then be married when she feels the desire. If she wants to marry earlier and has grown big enough for her age, we may help her. You may discuss the matter often with Sita and not marry her till she herself wishes to get married. The big mistake parents make is that they do not discuss this matter with their children. I think they should talk with them as with friends. It would be better if she

[1] & [2] Appearing under the date-line "Colombo, May 14", this message was read out by Somavir Chandrasiri "the day before yesterday" at the Indo-Ceylonese Cultural Conference organized under the Ceylonese Poets and Writers Congress.

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draws no lesson from the experience of your family. One must observe and think for oneself. Tari[1] is undoubtedly a devoted worker. It is good that she keeps herself engrossed in that work.

Manilal must have arrived there now. I got his letter as well as Sita's.

A letter from Nagadi [*sic*] is enclosed. Manilal should do the needful about him. I am quite well.

It is not certain when I shall leave this place.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4949

173. LETTER TO MANGALDAS[2]

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I got your cheque for Rs. 100 which I am sending on to Sevagram.

M. K. GANDHI

MANGALDAS
SURAT, B. B. & C. I. [RLY.]

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

174. LETTER TO PIROJSHAH P. DUMRI

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI PIROJSHAH,

I got all that you sent. You know that I have dismissed my family. You could say I am left alone here. Rajkumari is here and some other friends. I see no point in publishing the correspondence regarding prohibition. You may, if you want, write independently.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

BHAI PIROJSHAH PALLONJI DUMRI
BHAVNAGAR

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

[1] Addressee's younger sister
[2] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

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175. LETTER TO BABULAL SHANKARLAL[1]

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI BABULAL,

You will find in *Harijan*[2] the reply to your letter. You must not accept defeat. When you go to collect slivers you can do spinning, carding and sliver-making and bring enough slivers to last a week. Find the rest in my article.

Blessings from
BAPU

BABULAL SHANKARLAL
BOMBAY

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

176. LETTER TO DURGASHANKAR

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI DURGASHANKAR,

Your letter is good. I am sorry that I cannot take your help from Jaora. I know the shortcomings. You will help me if you check the issues and continue to point out the errors to me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA DURGASHANKAR VAKIL
BAR ASSOCIATION
JEEVAN BASERA
JAORA, MADHAYA BHARAT

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.
[2] *Vide* pp. 146-7.

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177. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI BAPUJI ANEY[1],

I have read your pamphlet with great relish and am glad to note your keen love for Sanskrit. Things are getting along fairly well here.

BAPU

SHRI M. S. ANEY, AGENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
11 STANMORE CRESELEY
HAVELOCK TOWN
COLOMBO, CEYLON

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

178. LETTER TO P. N. BAJPAYEE

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI BAJPAYEE,

I have your letter. How can the Boy Scouts work for the Shanti Sangh if they do not have complete faith in non-violence? If we can meet somewhere when I am a little free, we can have a further talk.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI P. N. BAJPAYEE
SCOUTS ASSOCIATION
WANLESS WADI
Via MIRAJ

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

[1] (1880-1968); popularly known as Lokanayak; President, Berar Pradesh Congress Committee, 1921-30; Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, 1941-43; resigned over Gandhiji's fast and Government's refusal to release him; member, Constituent Assembly, 1947-48; Governor of Bihar, 1948-52; member of Lok Sabha, 1959-66

179. LETTER TO CARIAPPA

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI CARIAPPA,

I have your letter. I am not definite where I shall be staying. You will tell me everything whenever you happen to meet me. I hope your health is all right. I hope Veeramma[1] too is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

180. LETTER TO OMKARNATH

SIMLA,
May 12, 1946

BHAI OMKARNATH,

I have your letter and also the cutting about . . . .[2] I shall find out about it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

OMKARNATH
LAHORE

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

[1] Addressee's wife
[2] One word is illegible here.

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181. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

May 12, 1946

Referring to the spate of false rumours which filled the air, viz., that there had been a breakdown in the talks, that the Cabinet Mission were returning home without doing anything and Indian leaders would again return empty-handed as they did from the Simla Conference[2] last time, Gandhiji said that this was not a conference like the one they had last year. If he understood the English language aright, the Cabinet Mission was here to find out how best they could implement their decision to quit, i. e., remove their power from India. It was their duty, if they could, to try to bring about agreement between the Congress and the Muslim League. The Conference was being held for that purpose. If people were united, no power on earth could have ruled over them but the tragedy was that they had their differences. But even if the Conference failed in its purpose, no one need be disappointed. Those who have faith in God must be patient and brave. Supposing they were going to be deceived, they must stand up and face the consequences bravely. Gandhiji said he had no reason to believe that the Cabinet Mission was here to deceive them. They were trying to leave in an orderly manner so that Indians may be able to live in peace. There was no need to worry. Man had to do his duty. God had given him strength and discernment to do so. But results were always in God's hands.

Lest in their anxiety for their own future they might forget their duty towards those whom they had condemned as the lowest of the low, he sent Badshah Khan to visit and report on the conditions of the sweepers' quarters. The report which the latter brought him filled him (Gandhiji) with anger and grief. He would have loved to go there himself. Unfortunately he could not now negotiate hills and therefore could not walk so far to see them himself. He thought it a crime to sit in rickshaws especially for an able-bodied man. He disliked even a motor car. He wanted always to use his legs, the means of locomotion that God had given him. Last night he walked, but the hill seemed unending. It was impossible for him, much as he would have liked to do so, to live in the Harijan Nivas here. He had heard of it before and what Badshah Khan told him confirmed it, namely, that the quarters in which they were forced to live were not fit for animals, much less for human beings. Some of them had been to see

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "A Simla Diary"

[2] Held in June-July, 1945; *vide* Vols. LXXX and LXXXI.

him in the morning with a long tale of woe. It was the bounden duty of the residents of Simla to look into their grievances and have them redressed.

He had heard too that the Khadi Bhandar at Simla might have to be closed down, because the Simla public were too lazy and too ununderstanding to spin the requisite quota of yarn. He told them that he still maintained that swaraj hung on the thread of hand-spun yarn. Even if they got political swaraj, as they were going to, they would never be able to maintain it without khadi which was the truest symbol of non-violence. If they hoped to maintain swaraj through force, they were hopelessly mistaken. Someone stronger would come and wrest their freedom from them. It was in the hands of the public in Simla to keep the Bhandar going and he hoped they would do so. Punjabi women were the first to offer him yarn in the old days. Let them live up to their reputation. For himself, he would rather lose their money and close down every Bhandar, if need be, but swaraj never.

Harijan, 19-5-1946

182. A GOOD REMINDER

An anonymous friend has taken the trouble of collecting apposite extracts from the Book of Job and Psalms. As they are a perpetual reminder to all of us, I gladly give them below.[1] The moral I draw from the sheaf is that since man is only dust and at best grass, he had better pass the few moments he is on this earth in the service of his fellow creatures. I am hoping that the sender has not collected the Biblical verses to show the futility of all work, which is a doctrine of laziness and parasitism.

SIMLA, May 13, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

183. SLIGHTING SWARAJ?[2]

Since the decision that khadi could only be purchased by giving a certain quota of yarn came into being, it has become very hard for a man like myself . . . to find the requisite time for spinning. Nevertheless I have been spinning 1½ hours daily in order to be true to my pledge. I had no slivers left the other day and, therefore, went to the Khadi Bhandar to buy some. I was asked by the Manager either to come to the Bhandar in order to make my own slivers or do the carding there and make the slivers at home. Now it is impossible

[1] The extracts are not reproduced here.
[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-5-1946.

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> for me with my very limited living space to make slivers at home nor has a man like me the time to go and make them at the Bhandar. I said, "Either give me slivers or else I shall have to give up spinning." I was told I was at liberty to do what I considered proper. . . .

The above letter[1] requires an answer. The plight of the writer is the same as that of the many who live in the slums of Bombay. If our people were not so easily satisfied, the landlords of Bombay would not relegate poor families to one small living room each. Lakhs live in this way and thus make it possible for the rich to have their Malabar Hill and Chowpatty.

The spinning-wheel shows us the way to remedy these conditions. If this were not so, it would have no place in my life. A few people may carve out their way by the sword, but the crores cannot. We must not imagine that slums do not exist in London, or Paris, or even New York. They do.

What will be the condition in Russia it is too early yet to say.

What then about the writer's difficulty? He says he finds time to spin 1½ hours daily. A man who spins that much every day can accumulate more yarn than necessary for his khadi needs. It was a mistake on his part to want to buy slivers from the Bhandar. The Manager gave him the correct reply. Where there is room for spinning there is also room for '*tunai*' (new carding method) or '*punai*' (simpler than '*tunai*'). If there is no room for the wheel there is always the *takli*. The *Dhanush takli* too takes up less space. Whatever difficulties apply to the individual apply to all. The way to swaraj lies in not going under but in overcoming them. Necessity is the mother of invention.

Again, why should not the facilities for carding, slivering and spinning offered by the Khadi Bhandar be utilized? The new method of making slivers does not require much space and is not difficult.

The main requisite is for the spinner to have the faith that swaraj hangs on a thread of hand-spun yarn. It will not hurt the country's cause if the man who lacks this faith gives up spinning. Khadi does enable many poor persons to earn their living by spinning and weaving. But this cannot do the work for the crores.

SIMLA, May 13, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here. *Vide* also p. 142.

184. VALMIKIS OF SIMLA[1]

Readers must know that Valmiki is another word for Bhangi. Their living quarters in Simla are deplorable. No one bothers about them. Rajkumari[2] has tried her best for them for years but how much can a single person do? I am unable to get as far and see things for myself, but I requested Badshah Khan who is staying with me to go there. He gives me a piteous account of their hovels. Some of the Valmikis have been to see me and have placed other woeful complaints before me. I feel that if in the first instance their living quarters were rebuilt many of their other complaints too would be put right. It is the bounden duty of the public and the Municipality of Simla to remove this evil as soon as they can from their midst. They can be no cleaner than the least clean among them.

SIMLA, May 13, 1946
Harijan, 19-5-1946

185. TELEGRAM TO SETH GOVINDDAS[3]

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

SETH GOVINDDAS
JABALPUR

MY CONDOLENCE. HE HAS GONE TO REST.

GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 10528

[1] This appeared under "Notes" in *Harijan*. The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 19-5-1946.
[2] Amrit Kaur
[3] This was sent on the death of the addressee's father, Seth Jeewan Das.

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186. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

Your letters show that you are working away. May God crown your efforts with success.

Herewith is a letter for you to get read. You may send an acknowledgment. You will see also an interesting note about mango seed[1]. It seems to be valuable. You may try the thing at once. I have eaten the seed after roasting it. But I never knew that it had the food value attributed to it.

We may leave for Delhi tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

2 Encls.[2]

From the original : C. W. 6517. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9912

187. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Badshah Khan's letter is enclosed herewith. What does he write about Hanif[3]? Sohanlal[4] had met Badshah Khan.

I hope the Begum is all right. I have forgotten her name. Will she continue to live there? Convey my blessings to her.

I hope your health is all right. I may go to Delhi tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 516

[1] *Vide* p. 177.
[2] These are not available.
[3] A khadi worker from the Punjab
[4] A khadi worker associated with the Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh

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188. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SIMLA,
May 13, 1946

Monday is the last day of my prayer gatherings in Simla because I will be leaving for Delhi tomorrow. Yesterday I had told you that even if the Congress and the Muslim League failed to come to an agreement, it would not necessarily mean that all was over. After all, Hindus and Muslims are brothers. Some day they are certainly going to unite. The British Cabinet Mission has declared their intention to withdraw British rule from India. It is my firm conviction that it should and will be withdrawn. There is no cause at all for us to despair. Freedom is our life's breath and no other power can exercise that freedom on our behalf. We must, therefore, prepare ourselves for freedom. How we should do so, I have been telling you in the course of the talks here. So far we have been fighting for freedom with God as sustenance and support. Only with His help can we attain our freedom and preserve it.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi added he knew no other way. Nor had he the desire to know any other. He hoped the people would remain as peaceful and quiet as they had been during these prayer gatherings.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 14-5-1946, and *The Hindu*, 15-5-1946

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

[2] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

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189. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for your letter[1] of the 12th instant and for withholding the notice[2] about salt.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 162

190. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. AMLA,

I got your letter. I am glad that you are happy at Dr. Khan Saheb's. Get fully restored in Srinagar now. I am leaving for Delhi today.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
PARK HOTEL, NAGIN BAGH
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

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

[1] Which read: "As a result of my talk with you I have arranged that the communique about the salt tax should be held up. The Finance Member will inform the trade organizations who have complained, that there is no prospect of the salt tax being immediately abolished, and that they will receive reasonable warning of any such action. He hopes that this may ensure that adequate stocks of salt will still be available."

[2] *Vide* Appendix IV(B).

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191. LETTER TO SHYAMJI MARWARI

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI SHYAMJI MARWARI,

My good wishes on the occasion of the wedding. May the bride and the bridegroom be true servants.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5211

192. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. My blessings to Mohan-Anasuya and to Sushi and her husband. May all four live long and dedicate themselves to service. Bablo[1] must be making progress. I hope Vanamala[2] is keeping good health. Send directly to Dr. Dinshaw the money on her account and write him a nice letter. I hope you are well. I am leaving today for Delhi. I do not know how long I shall have to stay there. What shall I write about the goings on here?

My blessings to all people there.

Sardar is with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The arrangement about the money from Jivram Kothari[3] may be made as suggested by you. That is, give half to the Vidyapith and half to the Harijan Ashram.

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9142

[1] Narayan, Mahadev Desai's son
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Who died in June 1941. *Vide* Vol. LXXIV, pp. 125 and 128.

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193. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. PRABHA,

At last I have a letter from you after many days. I am in God's hands. I have never been so alone before. The health is all right.

I want Jayaprakash to keep himself fit. It would be good if you could tell him that his speech as reported in the papers was not good. I don't want to involve you in this. I will myself write to him if I have the time.

I am leaving Simla today. I may have to be in Delhi for a week. Thence to Poona.

Newspapers have already reported why everybody went to Delhi.

I am well. How about you?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. PRABHAVATIBEHN
C/O SHRI M. R. MASANI
ALTA MONT ROAD
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

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

194. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

After wandering from place to place *Panchoterme* reached me yesterday. I am glad you remembered me. Now that the book will travel with me I hope to look into it.

I expect you are well.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

ACHARYA BALWANTRAI THAKORE
34 CHOWPATTY ROAD
BOMBAY 7

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

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195. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Received your letter and some of the books of the Adabi Board[1]. I have glanced through the books but I can say nothing about them. You will not send copies to all members, will you? Can we not read them at the meeting? If the meeting is called in August I may be able to attend it. You are not likely to call it in Poona or Uruli, are you?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 309

196. LETTER TO MUNSHI ISHWARSARAN

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI MUNSHIJI,

If a change of name can bring about change in work, you may change the name. Work comes first; and then why fuss about the name?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MUNSHI ISHWARSARAN
HARIJAN ASHRAM
ALLAHABAD, U. P.

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

[1] Literary Committee of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha

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197. LETTER TO SUNDERLAL

SIMLA,
May 14, 1946

BHAI SUNDERLAL,

I have read what you sent me regarding the name 'Hindi'. I shall watch what you do.

I leave for Delhi today.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT SUNDERLALJI
37 BAI KA BAGH
ALLAHABAD, U. P.

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

198. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 15, 1946

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Well, I am having a holiday practically. The weather is not very oppressive. We are in the Bhangi Colony. Of course I miss you and do not. Only you must keep well. P[yarelal] will give you what news there is to give. Sudhir had a long chat with me. He will write to you. Agatha too had.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4174. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7810

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199. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
[*May 15, 1946*][2]

Echoing Badshah Khan's words at the end of the prayers, Gandhiji said it was a travesty of true religion to consider one's own religion as superior and others' as inferior. All religions enjoined worship of the One God who was all-pervasive. He was present even in a droplet of water or in a tiny speck of dust.

Even those who worship idols, worship not the stone of which it is made; they try to see God who resides in it.

Similarly it was a libel to call the Parsis fire-worshippers or sun-worshippers. The Parsi hymn which Dr. Dinshaw Mehta had recited corresponded to the *Gayatri*[3] of the Hindus. It was nothing but pure worship of God. The various religions were like the leaves on a tree. No two leaves were alike, yet there was no antagonism between them or between the branches on which they grew. Even so, there is an underlying unity in the variety which we see in God's creation.

Speculation as to the contents of the impending announcement of the Cabinet Mission had reached a feverish height with the return from Simla of the Mission and other members of the Tripartite Conference. Friends had been asking, remarked Gandhiji, as to what the message was likely to contain. He did not know, nor did he speculate. It was no use giving thought as to what it would contain. A man of prayer could not do otherwise. Good or bad, they would know all in another twenty-six hours. It would then be open to them to accept or reject it. Instead of looking outwards let them search inward and ask God what their duty was in either event. For him and them in the meanwhile, it should be enough to know that the Cabinet Delegation had come all the way leaving their hearth and home to find out in what manner British rule was to end and when the last British soldier was to leave India, and not whether or not to leave India. It was necessary for them to find out whether the Congress and the Muslim League could be brought together. British rule had separated them and if they (the Cabinet Mission) failed it was small wonder. They were bound

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to the Cabinet Delegation's announcement being made within 'twenty-six hours'. The announcement was made on May 16, 1946.

[3] A Vedic *mantra* invoking the creative energy of the Sun

to come together soon after the British hold on India had demonstrably ceased. The Cabinet Delegation's concern was to quit India without a moment's delay.

But supposing the reverse happens they will be the losers, not we. We have chosen the path of self-suffering. We rise through our suffering. That is nature's law. He who clings to his sordid self or family interests loses. Man is sent into the world to perform his duty even at the cost of his life if necessary. We must therefore be braced for any suffering that may come in the performance of duty.

All of us, Hindus and Mussalmans, constitute an integral whole. If someone errs all must suffer for it. God has so ordered this world that no one can keep his goodness or badness exclusively to himself. The whole world is like the human body with its various members. Pain in one member is felt in the whole body. Rot in one part must inevitably poison the whole system. Let us, therefore, cease to think in terms of individuals and think in terms of the whole country. We must put faith in God and be careful for nothing. We hold our destiny in our own hands and no one but ourselves can make or mar it.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

200. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Wrote a letter yesterday.[1]

Sudhir is down with fever. Shanti[2] is in attendance. Horace[3] and Agatha are in and out. We shall all know tonight what the mountain in labour has brought forth.

Brailsford[4] and his wife were here at 6 p. m. yesterday and Stevens at 8 p. m. Nothing of any importance.

The weather is not too oppressive today. If you are keeping well, don't try to rush here unless I tell you to. They all need your presence there.

[1] This sentence is in Hindi.
[2] Sudhir Ghosh's wife
[3] Horace Alexander
[4] H. N. Brailsford

Dr. Dinshaw administered an enema. So after dinner, the remaining water involuntarily came out and spoiled my sheet and *dhoti*[1] and my sleep in the bargain.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4175. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7811

201. MESSAGE FOR INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA[2]

[*May 16, 1946*][3]

It is my firm conviction that Indians in South Africa must not submit to the latest social legislation[4] of the Union. They have at their disposal the matchless weapon of satyagraha which was successfully used for the first time in South Africa.

The Pioneer, 4-6-1946

202. NOTE TO SORABJEE R. PARSI

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

CHI. SORAB,

I have no objection if the amount collected in South Africa for the Kasturba Memorial is utilized to set up a maternity hospital in Johannesburg, if the donors so desire.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The source has "dhotar".

[2] & [3] This was sent through Sorabjee Rustomjee Parsi who, according to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-5-1946, met Gandhiji on this date.

[4] Land Tenure Legislation

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203. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have already written and given instructions for sending you the money.

Even if Dhirubhai has to attend to his own affairs from time to time and Paramanand has not settled down to work, [as] his wife remains ill, I hope you will still cling to the place and have confidence that you will be able to manage somehow. Persuade Balkrishna also to consider this.

1. You may give the Trust any name you like. Follow Dinshaw's wishes in the matter.
2. The main activity will remain what it is just now.
3. You need not bother about the future at all.

The budget seems all right. I do not have time to go deeper into it. I have barely been able to find time to write even this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 2727. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

204. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
[*May*][1] *16, 1946*

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I hope you are calm at Indore. Will the Begum stay on there? Will she receive any pension from the State?

I hope you are in good health.

I came here yesterday. I cannot say how long I shall have to stay here. It may be at least for a week. I am quite well.

[1] The source has "April", obviously a slip. From the references to Gandhiji's arrival in Delhi and to Begum Rashid Khan it is evident that this letter was written in May.

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Kanaiyo[1] and Abha[2] are with me. Today Munnalal returned from Harijan Nivas. He has no fever now. He had some quinine.

Dr. Sushila will come tonight. Rajkumari has stayed behind in Simla. She will reach here on Tuesday.

Herewith three letters from the Ashram and one from Zohra from Uruli Kanchan. Did you pass on Akbar's to Zohra?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 509

205. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
May 16, 1946

The after-prayer address on the following day too, was devoted to preparing the people's mind for a just and dispassionate examination of the forthcoming announcement[3]. Gandhiji said he did not propose to say anything about the announcement. It would be in their hands in a couple of hours.[4] He asked the gathering not to allow themselves to be led away by prejudice or hearsay, but to study the document itself carefully and then form their own opinion. He deprecated the habit of borrowing opinions from newspapers.

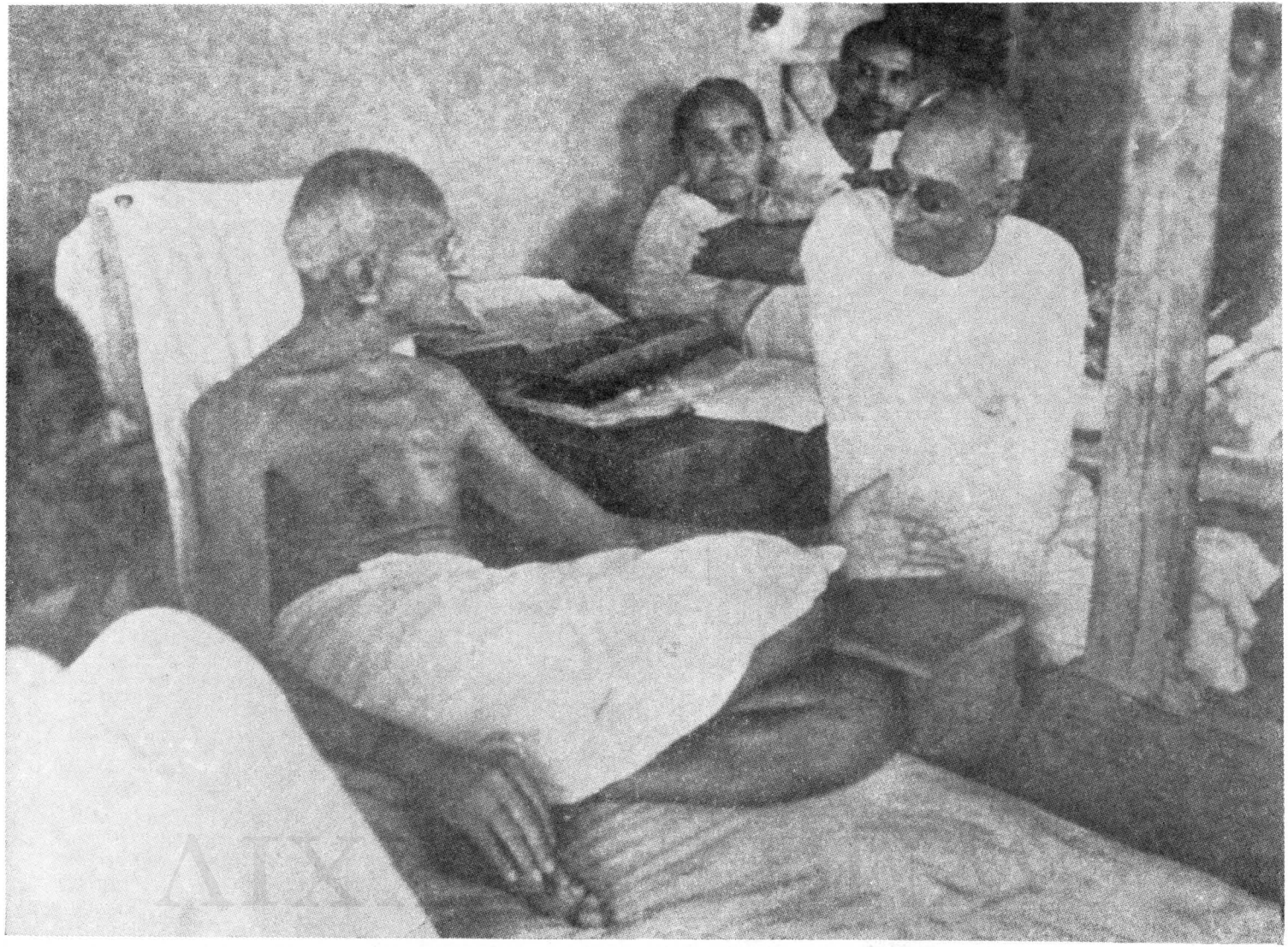
Newspapers should be for the study of facts. They should not be allowed to kill the habit of independent thinking.

The English language, he warned them, was a difficult medium to master. Even he, after his residence for nearly twenty years among English-speaking people, could not claim to have full mastery over it. They should therefore study the document in Hindustani to be able to grasp its full meaning.

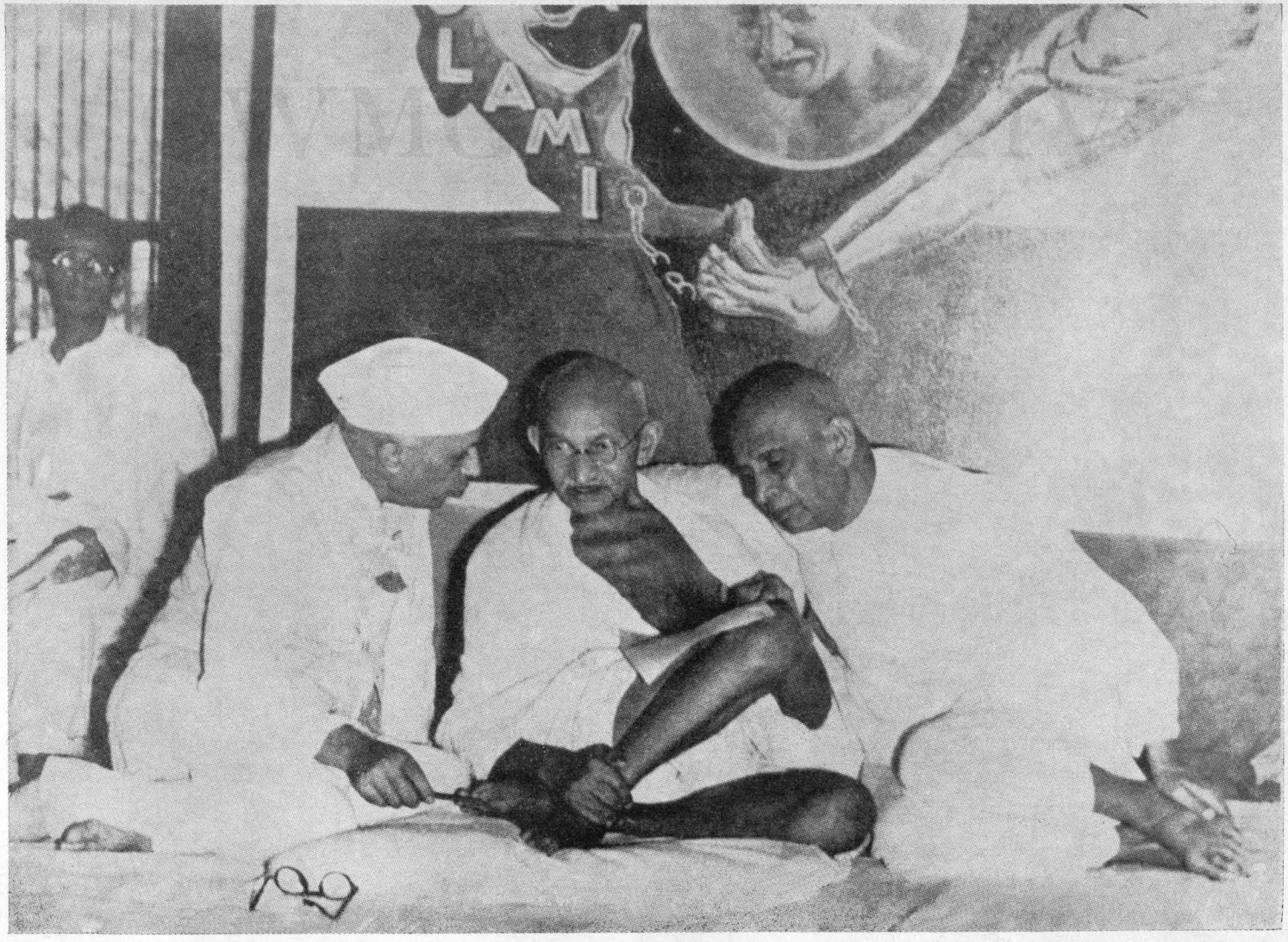
Whether you like the Cabinet Delegation's announcement or not, it is going to be the most momentous one in the history of India and therefore requires careful study.[5]

[1] Kanu, son of Narandas Gandhi
[2] Amrita Lal Chatterjee's daughter, married to Kanu Gandhi
[3] For the Cabinet Delegation's announcement, *vide* Appendix VII.
[4] This and the preceding sentence are from *The Bombay Chronicle.* What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter".
[5] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

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WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI



WITH JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AND SARDAR PATEL

As men of prayer it further behoved them to put themselves entirely in the hands of God and pray to Him to illumine and purify them so as to fit them for understanding the document aright.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 26-5-1946

206. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 17, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

The W[orking] C[ommittee] met today, meets again tomorrow.

Sudhir became very ill yesterday. Today he has been taken to Joshi's Cottage Hospital. Nothing serious as yet. Herewith cutting from *The Statesman*!!!

Hope you are well.

Sushila came in last night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4174. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7812

207. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

May 17, 1946[2]

Taking as his text the song[3] sung by Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani about "the land that was without sorrow and suffering," Gandhiji proceeded to examine the Cabinet Mission's pronouncement in the light of the ideal set forth in that song. How far was Cabinet Mission's pronouncement calculated to enable them to realize that ideal?

The poet says we are citizens of a country in which there is neither sorrow nor suffering. Where is such a country to be found in this world ? I confess, throughout my wanderings I have not come across such a country so far. The poet has later described the conditions for the attainment of that ideal state. It is easy to observe them individually. For one who really and truly is pure at heart, there is no sorrow or suffering. But it is a difficult state for the millions to attain. Nevertheless we want India to be such a country.

He had asked them on the previous day to examine independently of other people's opinions the statement of the Cabinet Delegation when they

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 18-5-1946
[3] *Vide* Appendix VI.

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saw it. They should examine it from the point of view of a country which would be without sorrow or suffering. He would give them his own reactions. He, however, did not want to contradict himself by asking them to follow his ideas if they did not appeal to them. Everyone should think for himself and herself. They were to weigh opinions and adopt only those they had assimilated.

He had glanced at the document casually on the previous night as soon as it was received. He had read it carefully in the morning. It was not an award. The Mission and the Viceroy had tried to bring the parties together but they could not bring about an agreement. So they had recommended to the country what in their opinion was worthy of acceptance by the Constituent Assembly. It was open to that body to vary it, reject it or improve upon it. There was no 'take it or leave it' business about their recommendations. If there were restrictions, the Constituent Assembly would not be a sovereign body, free to frame a constitution of independence for India. Thus the Mission had suggested for the Centre certain subjects. It was open to the Assembly by the majority vote of Muslims and non-Muslims separately, to add to them or even reduce them. And it was open to the Assembly to abolish the distinction which the Mission had felt forced to recognize. Similarly about grouping. The provinces were free to reject the very idea of grouping. No province could be forced against its will to belong to a group, even if the idea of grouping was accepted. He instanced only two things to illustrate this point. He had not exhausted the list of things which seemed to him to be open to objection or improvement.

Subject to the above interpretation, which he held was right, he told them that the Mission had brought forth something of which they had every reason to be proud.

There were some, he proceeded, who said the English were incapable of doing the right thing. He did not agree with them. The Mission and the Viceroy were as godfearing as they themselves claimed to be. It was beneath their dignity as men to doubt a person before he was proved to be untrue to his work.

The late Charlie Andrews was every inch of him an Englishman who had died slaving for India. It would be grievously wrong to doubt in advance every one of his countrymen.

Whatever the wrong done to India by the British rule, if the statement of the Mission was genuine, as he believed it was, it was in discharge of an obligation which they had declared the British owed to India, namely, to get off India's back. It contained the seed to convert this land of sorrow into one without sorrow and suffering.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

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208. INTERVIEW TO U BA PE[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 18, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi in assuring him of help from India said:

India cannot breathe freely if her neighbouring countries like Burma or Ceylon are slave countries.

The Hindustan Times, 20-5-1946

209. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
May 18, 1946

Pursuing the theme of the previous day's song[3], Gandhiji asked . . . how they were to convert India, which was today the home of sorrow and suffering into the ideal country about which the poet had sung. The reply he said was furnished by the song about the sermon of the trees which had just been sung.

In that song one is asked to take the lesson from the trees which themselves suffer the fierce rays of the sun and give shade to those who take shelter under them. To those who throw stones at them, they respond by dropping fruit. That is true philanthropy. To learn that philanthropy we are asked in that song to go to Harijans. Today society has condemned Harijans to a life of filth and degradation. That is not their shame but our shame. Society has treated them as untouchables and condemned them to live in ghettos and yet they continue to render invaluable services to society for a mere pittance. It was open to them to take to more lucrative avocations as some of them

[1] U Ba Pe, member, Burmese Legislative Council, told Gandhiji that at the time of the separation of Burma, the Burmese people were made to understand by the British that Burma would get the same measure of freedom as India would, and that Burma would get it at the same time. He sought Gandhiji's help in Burma's struggle.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[3] *Vide* pp. 161-2.

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have done. The fact that the vast majority of them have chosen not to, resounds to their credit.

If they could show that spirit of service in spite of their ignorance and backwardness, he asked, how much more spirit of selfless service and sacrifice ought the so-called *savarna* classes to show?

He had remarked in his previous day's address that he saw the germs of the realization of the ideal envisaged by the poet in the song that had been sung on that day, in the announcement of the Cabinet Mission. But it was subject to the condition that it meant what it said. He likened that announcement to a promissory note, whose worth depended entirely on its genuineness and validity.

If the promise inscribed on a promissory note is not honoured, the note is worth nothing and fit only to be torn to pieces and thrown away.

Truth meant everything to him. He had said that he would not purchase even swaraj at the cost of truth, because swaraj so purchased would be illusory. It was his hope and prayer, in which he invited the audience to join him, that the announcement of the Cabinet Mission would be finally honoured in letter and in spirit, and that God would help the members of the Mission to discharge their promissory note even as He had done for His devotees in days of old.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

210. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

BETI A. S.,

I have your two letters. I am writing this at 6 o'clock in the morning in the midst of other work.

My advice is, do whatever you think is your duty. You are away from me, so how can I know what is right and what is not? Try and persuade your sister-in-law.[1] Your brother is dead; now do whatever you can about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 517

[1] *Vide* p. 175.

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211. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

May 19, 1946

DEAR LORD,

In order to enable me the better to advise such of those who seek my advice, I venture to put before you my difficulty as follows :

You say in your answer to a question : "If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it if by a majority of each party they desire to do so."[2] You can omit the last portion of the sentence as being superfluous for my purpose.

Even the basis in para 15 of the State Paper[3] is a recommendation. Do you regard a recommendation as obligatory on any member of the contemplated Constituent Assembly? There is such a ring about the quotation. Can those who enthusiastically welcome the Paper but are discerning enough to repudiate, for instance, grouping, honourably seek to educate the country and the Constituent Assembly against the grouping clause ? If your answer is 'yes' does it not follow that the Frontier and Assam province delegates would be free to abstain from joining the sections to which they are arbitrarily assigned?

I know the legal position. My question has reference to the honourableness of opposition to grouping.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 190-1

[1] Along with his letter dated May 18, 1946, the addressee had enclosed "a transcript from the questions and answers" at the Press Conference on May 17.

[2] *Vide* Appendix VIII.

[3] *Vide* Appendix VII.

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix IX, also X and XI.

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212. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I promised to send you a copy of the summary of my speech to the prayer gathering last evening.[1] This I do now herewith. I enclose herewith a translation of the hymn of the previous evening.[2] Of course you will share it with Lord Pethick-Lawrence or whomsoever you like.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 191

213. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have been meaning to write to you for many days, but could not. Today I have decided to dictate a letter. I am dictating this while having warm water and honey. I had a long discussion with Sorabjee. He broke down and cried. He says he can never have, has never had and will never have any share in doing you harm. He looks upon you as a blood-brother. He will, of course, see you. Do what you think best. He wishes that Omar Sheth's son should be taken on the Trust[3]. If you agree, I have no objection at all. He is of the view that it will not look well if there is no Muslim on the Trust. His view does appeal to me. Show him the names which we had considered.

[1] *Vide* pp. 163-4.
[2] *Vide* Appendix VI.
[3] Phœnix Trust

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I have an impression that you had suggested Medh's[1] name and that I had accepted it after some hesitation. Sorabjee says that it will produce a very good impression if his name is not included. He says that Medh's having the spirit of service in him does not mean that he is qualified to be a trustee. Think calmly over this suggestion. Sorab must have left by now. The pressure of work is daily increasing here. The heat is sometimes bearable and sometimes unbearable. The same is the condition of the mind.

I hope Sushila is in good health. Sita, Arun and Ila must be fine. Sita's [examination] result must be out. I am sure it is good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4980

214. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Sushila told me all about you. She said that it was highly desirable that you should go to some hill station for the sake of your health. I should of course be glad. It would be good if you could do some such thing. Go to Panchgani or Almora or Mussoorie or Nainital or Abu. I think you can easily get accommodation in Abu. The air and water there are said to be good. I have had no experience of the place myself. I tell you what I have heard.

I am very busy. I am dictating this. There you have to take up a new task.

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

[1] Surendra Medh

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215. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

BETI AMTUL,

No doubt a misfortunate has befallen you. Forget it and do whatever service you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIBI AMTUL SALAAM
C/O BEGUM RASHID
RASHID MANZIL
INDORE

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 749

216. LETTER TO HOSA RASHID KHAN

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

BETI HOSA,

I have sent you wires in reply to yours. Amtul Salaam says you are brave. I think you cannot add glory to Rashid Khan's name by shutting yourself in; but you can, by rendering service.

Do write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 748

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217. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 19, 1946

Gandhiji said that if they had carefully followed and assimilated Badshah Khan's remarks[2] they would know that the object of prayer was not to please God, who does not want our prayers or praise, but to purify ourselves.

God is omnipresent. There is not an atom in the universe without His presence. The process of self-purification consists in a conscious realization of His presence within us. There is no strength greater than that which such realization gives.

It had pleased him to see so many of them coming to attend the prayers, he said. But it would hurt him if he found that they had come just for fun, or, what would be worse still, to hear his political views. As a rule, politics should not be permitted to intrude upon prayer. He, however, could not avoid referring to current political topics sometimes in the course of his after-prayer discourses because life could not be divided into water-tight compartments. Presence of God had to be felt in every walk of life. If they thought that as soon as they left the prayer ground they could live and behave anyhow, their attendance at the prayers was useless. If that interest in the prayers was genuine, the next day's prayers, he hoped, would be as numerously attended as on the day he spoke, although he would not be speaking on account of his Monday silence.

Harijan, 26-5-1946

218. AN ANALYSIS[3]

After four days of searching examination of the State Paper[4] issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, my conviction abides that it is the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances. It reflects our weakness, if we would be good

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Badshah Khan's theme was that the object of prayer was to purge ourselves of all dross and baseness.

[3] An advance copy of this was sent to Sir Stafford Cripps.

[4] *Vide* Appendix VII.

enough to see it. The Congress and the Muslim League did not, could not agree. We would grievously err if at this time we foolishly satisfy ourselves that the differences are a British creation. The Mission have not come all the way from England to exploit them. They have come to devise the easiest and quickest method of ending British rule. We must be brave enough to believe their declaration until the contrary is proved. Bravery thrives upon the deceit of the deceiver.

My compliment, however, does not mean that what is best from the British standpoint is also best or even good from the Indian. Their best may possibly be harmful. My meaning will, I hope, be clear from what follows.

The authors of the document have endeavoured to say fully what they mean. They have gathered from their talks the minimum they thought would bring the parties together for framing India's charter of freedom. Their one purpose is to end British rule as early as may be. They would do so, if they could, by their effort, leave a united India not torn asunder by internecine quarrel bordering on civil war. They would leave in any case. Since in Simla the two parties, though the Mission succeeded in bringing them together at the Conference table (with what patience and skill they could do so, they alone could tell), could not come to an agreement, nothing daunted, they descended to the plains of India, and devised a worthy document for the purpose of setting up the Constituent Assembly which should frame India's charter of independence, free of any British control or influence. It is an appeal and an advice. It has no compulsion in it. Thus the Provincial Assemblies may or may not elect the delegates. The delegates, having been elected, may or may not join the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly having met, may lay down a procedure different from the one laid down in the Statement. Whatever is binding on any person or party arises out of the necessity of the situation. The separate voting is binding on both the major parties, only because it is necessary for the existence of the Assembly and in no otherwise. At the time of writing, I took up the Statement, reread it clause by clause, and came to the conclusion that there was nothing in it binding in law. Honour and necessity alone are the two binding forces.

What is binding is that part of it which commits the British Government. Hence, I suppose, the four members of the British mission took the precaution of receiving full approval of the British Government and the two Houses of Parliament.

The Mission are entitled to warm congratulations for the first step in the act of renunciation which the Statement is. Since other steps are necessary for full renunciation, I have called this one a promissory note.

Though the response to be made by India is to be voluntary, the authors have naturally assumed that the Indian parties are well-organized and responsible bodies capable of doing voluntary acts as fully as, if not more fully than, compulsory acts. Therefore, when Lord Pethick-Lawrence said to a Press correspondent[1], "If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it, if by a majority of each party they desire to do so," he was right in the sense that those who became delegates, well knowing the contents of the Statement, were expected by the authors to abide by the basis, unless it was duly altered by the major parties. When two or more rival parties meet together, they do so under some understanding. A self-chosen umpire (in the absence of one chosen by the parties, the authors constitute themselves one) fancies that the parties will come together only if he presents them with a proposal containing a certain minimum, and he makes his proposal, leaving them free to add to, subtract from or altogether change it by joint agreement.

This is perfect so far. But what about the units? Are the Sikhs, for whom the Punjab is the only home in India, to consider themselves against their will, as part of the section which takes in Sindh, Baluchistan and the Frontier Province? Or is the Frontier Province also against its will to belong to the Punjab, called "B" in the Statement, or Assam to "C" although it is a predominantly non-Muslim province? In my opinion, the voluntary character of the Statement demands that the liberty of the individual unit should be unimpaired. Any member of the sections is free to join it. The freedom to opt out is an additional safeguard. It can never be a substitute for the freedom retained in paragraph 15(5) which reads:

> Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures and each group could determine the Provincial subjects to be taken in common.

It is clear that this freedom was not taken away by the authors by section 19 which "proposes" (does not order) what should be done. It presupposes that the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly at its first meeting will ask the delegates of

[1] *Vide* p. 165.

the Provinces whether they would accept the group principle and if they do, whether they [would] accept the assignment given to their Province. This freedom inherent in every Province and that given by 15(5) will remain intact. There appears to me to be no other way of avoiding the apparent conflict between the two paragraphs as also charge of compulsion which would immediately alter the noble character of the document. I would, therefore, ask all those who are perturbed by the group proposal and the arbitrary assignment, that, if my interpretation is valid, there is not the slightest cause for perturbation.

There are other things in the document which would puzzle any hasty reader who forgets that it is simply an appeal and an advice to the nation showing how to achieve independence in the shortest time possible. The reason is clear. In the new world that is to emerge out of the present chaos, India in bondage will cease to be 'the brightest jewel' in the British crown, it will become the blackest spot in that crown, so black that it will be fit only for the dustbin. Let me ask the reader to hope and pray with me that the British crown has a better use for Britain and the world. The 'brightest jewel' is an arrogation. When the promissory note is fully honoured, the British crown will have a unique jewel as of right flowing from due performance of duty.

There are other matters outside the Statement which are required to back the promissory note. But I must defer that examination to the next issue of *Harijan*.[1]

NEW DELHI, May 20, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

219. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

DEAR LORD,

As the matters we discussed yesterday morning and the day before were very important and affected and still affect my attitude and corresponding action, I think it worth-while to reduce a summary to writing. You can correct me if there is a misunderstanding. This may even help you wherever necessary.

[1] *Vide* pp. 209-11.

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I may add that I have conveyed to the Working Committee of the Congress the purport, to the best of my ability, of our talks.

With this preface I proceed to give the summary.

1. You were good enough to assure me that you will see to it that European members of Provincial Assemblies, neither voted at the elections of delegates to the Constituent Assembly nor expected to be elected by the electors of non-Muslim delegates.

2. Election of the possible 93 delegates on behalf of the States would be determined by the Nawab Sahib of Bhopal and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In the absence of an agreed solution, there should be no election of delegates on behalf of the States, the function of looking after the interests of the Princes and their people devolving upon the Advisory Committee referred to in clause 20 of the State Paper

3. In view of the fact that there is no machinery in British Baluchistan analogous to the Provincial Assemblies, it should be treated as the special concern of the Constituent Assembly and should be included in the function of the Advisory Committee. Meanwhile it should be the duty of the Interim National Government to set up machinery to bring Baluchistan on a par with the other Provinces.

4. I ventured to suggest that Paramountcy should cease even while independence is at work in fact, though not in law, till the Constituent Assembly has finished its labours and devised a constitution. Sir Stafford saw danger in acting upon my suggestion. I hold the opposite view. Acceptance of my proposal would vivify the people of the States as if by a stroke of the pen. And the Interim Government would be a boon to the Princes who, though the creation of the Paramount Power and dependent on it for the continuance of their existence, still chafed under its heavy hand. The immediate end of Paramountcy would test the sincerity of the Princes and the Paramount Power.

But if this Indian feeling did not find an echo in your hearts, I personally would be satisfied with Sir Stafford's view that Paramountcy which had been admittedly used to protect the Princes against their people in the shape of suppressing their liberty and progress, should for the time continue for the protection and progress of the people. If the people of the States are backward, it is not because they are different in kind from the people of the direct British parts of India but because they have been groaning under a double yoke. I endorsed also the

suggestion that Paramountcy should be exercised in consultation with the National Government.

5. I have written to you on my difficulty on grouping.[1] I need say nothing more on the subject, pending reply to it.

6. Whilst I appreciate your and Sir Stafford's frankness, I would put on record my conviction that independence would in fact be a farce, if the British troops are in India even for peace and order within, or danger from without. The condition of India after the labours of the Constituent Assembly are over will in this respect be no better than now. If the position about the troops persists, "independence next month" is either insincere or a thoughtless cry. Acceptance of "Quit India" by the British is unconditional, whether the Constituent Assembly succeeds or fails in bringing out a constitution. A drastic revision of the attitude is a necessity in every case.

Finally it can in no way be contended that in the face of the troops, there would be natural behaviour in the Constituent Assembly.

7. As to the Interim Government, the more I think and observe, the more certain is my feeling that a proper National Government responsible in fact, if not in law, to the elected members of the Central Legislative Assembly, should precede the summons for the election of members of the Constituent Assembly. Only then, and not before, can a true picture of coming events be presented. The food crisis demands immediate formation of a strong, capable and homogeneous National Government. Without it, deep and universal corruption cannot end, without it the psychological effect will not be produced in spite of the landing on Indian shores of expected grain from outside. Every day's delay in forming such a Government is agony added to the agony of famished millions of India. There can therefore be no question of parity whether the Government is allowed to be formed by the Congress or the Muslim League. The best and incorruptible men or women from India are wanted for the purpose. I was therefore glad to find that the Viceroy was already moving in the matter as quickly as possible.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 193-5

[1] *Vide* p. 165.
[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix IX.

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220. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two notes.

I am glad you are having some well-deserved rest. I still say don't hurry, don't worry. I shall give you timely notice. I do not know when I shall be able to leave; not this week, I fear. While there is opportunity, give ample time to your brothers. Of course you will serve wherever you are. I would like you to be by my side but not at the expense of your brothers or your health and not in this heat so long as it is avoidable. Now you stay with Dalip as long as he wants you. And of course you are free to come whenever you want to.

Sudhir is better. Pyarelal must give you news about the Mission.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If D. does not return, shall I search for someone ?

From the original : C. W. 4177. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7813

221. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

N[EW] D[ELHI],
May 20, 1946

BETI A. S.,

I have your letter. I asked Abha to read it to me while I was having my meal. Pyarelal read it. Now I am destroying it. What is there in it to hide? What harm is there if you take your sister-in-law with you to her village and train her? I would like it. Do what you want to do.

I understand what you say about Hanif.

I do not know how long I shall be here.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 518

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222. SILENCE DAY NOTE[1]

May 20, 1946

When service to the family comes into conflict with public service know that there is something wrong. For true service to the family is never opposed to public service.

I have absolutely no doubt that the sword can never give you the courage that ahimsa does. This is what we learn from experience.

This is what you both have to boldly say at tomorrow's meeting, provided you have faith in it.

I am firm on what I have said regarding the question of monkeys, etc.[2] The monkey has no rationality whereas man, however stupid, is a rational animal and, therefore, we may not kill him but may accept death at his hands. Or, say, I do not have the courage to be killed by a monkey or a snake.

The case of the Sikh brothers is rather complicated. About the incident at Nankana Sahib I had expressed an opinion at the Shrine itself that the true servant and soldier of Guru Govind Singh will be the Sikh who will wield the sword of non-violence.[3]

You may certainly come and stay in the Ashram.

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

223. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[4]

NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

It being my silence day, I only want to say to you that for India it is a day for deep and serious thinking. We should do nothing in haste. For, we are dealing with the destinies of dumb millions. It therefore becomes our bounden duty that, with God as witness, we should think only of the country with its 40 crores of people, not of our petty selves nor of our respective communities

[1] This was addressed to two women.

[2] *Vide* p. 62.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 396-8.

[4] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

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or groups. And whatever we decide we should act upon without fear or shame.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 21-5-1946

224. MANGO SEED KERNEL

A friend has sent me an extract from *Current Science* showing how mango seed kernel is a fair substitute for cereals and fodder:[1]

I have known this use from my early youth. But no one seems to have thought of conserving this seed for food. The mango season is upon us and, though much time has been lost, it will be a good thing if every mango seed is saved and the kernel baked and eaten in the place of cereals or given to those who need it. Every ounce of food saved is so much gained.

DELHI, May 21, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

225. A FAIR HIT

A report from New Delhi dated 16th April, published in *The Times of India* of the 18th says that at a prayer meeting held on Tuesday evening[2] you said:

1. "The machinery and even engineers were all foreign. He had no enmity with machinery. Mills, he said, could not remove the poverty of India, but on the other hand had deprived crores of villagers of their work and practically ruined them. Those Indians responsible for ruining the villages had become foreigners and as such they should live in foreign countries."

How can you reconcile this statement with the gentlemen who form the Board of Trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund, the primary aim of which is to improve conditions in villages? Majority of these gentlemen are industrialists and owners of mills. Can they, who are responsible for ruining the villages, and still continue to ruin them by their mills, be ever capable of sincere help in improving the condition of villagers?

[1] The extract is not reproduced here. It showed how from chemical analysis mango seed kernels had been found to be rich in carbohydrates and fats.

[2] *Vide* p. 13.

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2. You have so often talked and written against the curse of black market. How many of the trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund can lay their hands on their hearts and say they have not dealt in the black market either as buyers or sellers?

This is a fair hit. That mill-owners and such others have joined the Kasturba Trust is a compliment to my ahimsa. Though I express my opinions strongly, there is no sting in them, nothing personal. I have no sense of shame in befriending mill-owners whose business, I hold, should be stopped, not forcibly but by reason. Education of the public could bring about results which no force can. I must say in favour of the capitalist class trustees that they never interfered with the decision of non-capitalist trustees. Indeed, they have always helped by their knowledge. The combination is good and beneficial to the Trust. Their sincerity cannot be questioned; for, they have faith in their capacity and the modern trend.

As to black market, I do not know that any of the trustees have black market dealings. But should I discover any, I should think twice before inviting them to leave the Trust. They have not imposed themselves on the Trust.

DELHI, May 21, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

226. HYPNOTISM OF ENGLISH[1]

The foregoing letter[2] is from a fellow-worker in the cause. He knows what he is writing about. Nor are the facts referred to by him unknown to the Indian public. The question is how to break the spell that the English language exercises over us. It is an essential part of our struggle for swaraj or else we shall have to revise our definition of swaraj. In slavery, the slave has to ape the manners and ways of the master, e. g., dress, language, etc. Gradually he develops a liking for it to the exclusion of every thing else. When the British yoke is lifted and we are independent, this infatuation with the English language will automatically go. In the meantime, let those who have realized the harm that this infatuation has done to the country, make it a point to use Hindustani or their mother-tongue only.

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 26-5-1946.
[2] Which is not reproduced here

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It is a fact that the editors of English newspapers earn ten times as much as the editors of newspapers in the Indian languages. The remedy for it also lies in our hands. The market value of English will find its natural level, once the British empire over India goes, for the simple reason that India cannot afford to pay on a lavish scale. India is a poor country, and so long as the lot of the poorest of the poor remains unameliorated, we have no right to draw fat salaries. The fact, however, is that it rests with the newspaper-reading public to raise or reduce the prestige and price of the Indian languages newspapers. If they will cease to regard English papers as their gospel and transfer their patronage to Indian languages newspapers instead, the proprietors will be compelled soon to take note of the change and adjust their policies accordingly. Something like that is happening already. There was a time when Indian languages newspapers had a poor circulation compared to English. Now the scales are reversed. Indian languages newspapers are increasing both in number and circulation.

But those who are running newspapers in Indian languages also owe a duty in the matter even like the newspaper-reading public. The language of the newspapers in the Indian languages is often poor and the writings appearing in them lack originality. Newspapermen alone can remove these defects.

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

227. *NATURE CURE IN KANCHANGAON*[1]

I settled down and started work in Uruli Kanchan in response to the invitation of the inhabitants there in the hope of making it a model nature-cure centre for the villages of India. The people of the village had promised their co-operation. They were to have provided the land and erected buildings on it. But that has not yet materialized. They have given the money. But that is not enough for buying land and buildings. They have to find the land and erect the buildings on it. Their active interest in it is more important than mere monetary aid.[2]

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 26-5-1946.

[2] The Hindi here adds: "However, what I propose to write is a different thing."

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According to the reports received from co-workers there, the inhabitants of Kanchangaon have begun to understand and appreciate nature cure. And the workers have developed such self-confidence that they won't mind if I do not return there before June. They say that the people are co-operating with them so whole-heartedly that they can well afford to wait till I descend from Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani at the end of the warm season. All this has filled me with hope [1].

Nature cure consists of two parts. Firstly, to cure diseases by taking the name of God or Ramanama and secondly, to prevent illness by the inculcation of right and hygienic living. The report from the village says that the inhabitants are co-operating with them in keeping the village clean. I hold that where the rules of personal, domestic and public sanitation are strictly observed and due care is taken in the matter of diet and exercise, there should be no occasion for illness or disease. Where there is absolute purity, inner and outer, illness becomes impossible. If the village people could but understand this, they would not need doctors, hakims or vaidyas.

In Kanchangaon there are hardly any cows. That is unfortunate. There are some she-buffaloes. But all the evidence that has come to me so far shows that buffalo's milk is no match for cow's in the health-giving quality. The vaidyas specially recommend cow's milk for patients. I, therefore, hope that the people of Uruli Kanchan will keep a herd of cows to ensure a supply of fresh clean cow's milk to all. Milk is an absolute necessity for health.

Then, the sooner the buildings are erected the better. In the first place, it is a question as to how long we ought to go on using Shri Datar's bungalow. Secondly, and that is more important, so long as there is not adequate housing accommodation, proper treatment of patients is not possible. Accommodation for indoor patients is a necessity. I shall always hope that Kanchangaon will become an ideal village. Nature cure implies an ideal mode of life and that in its turn presupposes ideal living conditions in towns and villages. The name of God is, of course, the hub round which the nature-cure system revolves.

DELHI, May 21, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

[1] The Hindi here adds: "and I may conclude that the other villages too will appreciate nature cure."

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228. NATIONAL LANGUAGE OF INDIA

The above article[1] is not in praise of me. What is there to praise if a person performs some service deeming it his duty. Maulana Saheb is a scholar. He knows Persian and Arabic. He, therefore, knows Urdu very well. But he knows that neither Arabic-Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi can be the language of the masses. Therefore, he wants a blend of Urdu and Hindi and speaks a mixture of both. I have requested him to contribute every week a brief article in Hindustani which can serve the readers of *Harijan Sevak* as a specimen of Hindustani. The article in question is the first specimen of this effort.[2]

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-5-1946

229. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Enclosed you will find an advance copy of the article[3] which I wrote for *Harijan* today. If my analysis is wrong in any way you will oblige me by sending your correction. Please don't trouble to read it if you are tired or too busy. Of course you can share it with Lord Pethick-Lawrence.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 192

[1] The article by Abul Kalam Azad is not reproduced here.

[2] The English version of this appeared in *Harijan* 26-5-1946.

[3] The reference is to "An Analysis" which, however, appeared under the date May 20, 1946; *vide* pp. 169-72.

[4] The addressee could not send a personal reply on account of indisposition. Pethick-Lawrence, however, wrote in reply : "I am indebted to you for your friendly remarks about my colleagues and myself and our statement. But you will, of course, appreciate that there are other parts of it with regard to which my views are quite different from your own."

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230. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. You did well in not coming here. Where is the need to meet a person when there is no work?

Aspire to live up to 125 years. Everybody who serves should have this aspiration. Its fulfilment rests with God.

Succeed in your undertaking there and return soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 4808. Courtesy : Shantikumar N. Morarjee

231. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

In the song[2] that had been sung at the prayer gathering Gandhiji stated it was said that since God was known as Redeemer he would redeem us some day.

The orthodox conception of redemption is redemption in the life to come. What I want to tell you is that redemption in that song is promised us here and now, if we fulfil the necessary conditions. They are firstly, self-purification and, secondly, obedience to the Law. It is vain, it is demoralizing to expect that in the life to come God will vindicate His title as Redeemer by saving us while we continue to carry the load of sin on our heads in this life. A businessman who lies and cheats his simple-minded, ignorant customers cannot hope to be saved.

It has been said that to one who is good the whole world becomes good. That is true so far as the individual is concerned. But goodness becomes dynamic only when it is practised in the face of evil. If you return good for good only, it is a bargain

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] Sung earlier by the Harijan girls of the Balika Ashram

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and carries no merit, but if you return good for evil, it becomes a redeeming force. The evil ceases before it and it goes on gathering volume and momentum like a snowball till it becomes irresistible.

So much for the individuals. How could a slave country like India be redeemed?—he next asked. His reply was that a slave country owes the continuation of its slavery to the vices which slavery engenders. The way of self-purification, therefore, is also the way of redemption for a slave country. It was no use putting off hopes for redemption to a future state. If they failed to gain redemption here they would probably miss it in the life hereafter too.

Let us therefore turn the searchlight inward and purge ourselves of all dross. If we shed our petty quarrels and animosities and forget all communal differences and petty distinctions the foreign troops would find their occupation gone and nobody would be able to keep us in servitude for a day.

The Hindustan Times, 23-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 2-6-1946

232. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Whilst I thank you for your prompt reply[1] to my letters, you will let me say that it is unfortunate. It has the old official flavour. Has the cry "independence in fact" no foundation?

I adhere to all that I have said in my letter of the 20th. Your letter is in the best imperialistic style which I thought had gone for ever.

This is from an old friend.

I was deeply grieved to learn about Sir Stafford's illness. Let me hope that he will soon be better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 197

[1] *Vide* Appendix IX.

233. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letters are before me.

I follow what you say about Go. Ra.

It is good that Pushpa has come. She should engage herself in work immediately.

Chimanlal's question has been answered.

I have written about returning the money belonging to Sir Ganga and others.

It had become unavoidable to admit Anna[1] and family. What you wrote is perfectly all right. I am writing to them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4555

234. LETTER TO HARIHAR AND KAMALA SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

CHI. ANNA AND CHI. KAMALA,

I have the letters of you both. I was given to understand that you would do any work that Kakasaheb might give you and would even be prepared to go wherever you were required to go. Of course, if you cannot stay in Kakawadi, you may stay in the Ashram. I have not been able to fully grasp what you now write about the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. If it means that we ought to stay within the Sammelan, I too am guilty. In my opinion, I have only served the cause of Hindi and widened its field by quitting the organization. Write to me again to tell me what you mean. Is my interpretation correct?

Discuss fully the whole issue with Kaka and tell me about the proper course of action. I want you somehow to be at ease.

Krishnachandra is indifferent about you. Talk to him. You have the capacity to mix with people as sugar with milk.

[1] Harihar Sharma, *vide* the following item.

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I am not writing separately to Kamala. It seems it would be possible for me to reach Wardha only in August. I want Kamala and the children to keep well. I earnestly wish that you should both lead an ideal life and through it have a good influence on the lives of others. Service is limited by one's capacity.

What the outcome here would be, God alone knows. Are you both learning the Urdu script? Both of you should write to me. Even if I am unable to reply I would like to know your minds.

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM

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

235. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have all your correspondence. I have read everything about Shri Srinivasan. I do not like it. I suggest that Viththaldas[1] and Lakshmidas[2] should be consulted. If they do not know Shri Srinivasan, they should be fully acquainted with his background and if they agree, you may accept the resignation of Bhai Shyamji and appoint Shri Srinivasan for the Bhandar.

In fact, under our new policy it is not imperative to have an agent. Still, if we find an efficient man who is also devoted to the charkha, we should accommodate him. It is possible that Harihar Sharma, who is now at Sevagram Ashram, knows Shri Srinivasan and we might inquire from him about the whole story. It may be necessary to inquire from Rajaji also. But all this should be regarded as no more than advice. I am agreeable to Shri Srinivasan's appointment. I think finally the matter will have to be referred to the Trustees.

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

[1] Viththaldas Jerajani
[2] Lakshmidas Asar

236. ADDRESS TO I. N. A. OFFICERS[1]

May 22, 1946

Before he began his speech, Mahatma Gandhi asked them for an assurance that they would listen to his advice and the gathering gave a united reply in the affirmative.

Col. Habibur Rehman, who was in the same plane as Subhas Bose when it crashed, described to Mahatma Gandhi with tears in his eyes the last moments of Subhas Chandra Bose. Mahatma Gandhi remarked:

You are a true soldier and you should not shed tears like this.

Gandhiji congratulated the I. N. A. officers on their valour and said that he had been greatly impressed by the courage shown by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the I. N. A. For a long time he had been hoping that Netaji was alive and would be amidst them some day but after what Col. Habibur Rehman had said he felt that he was no more. He added:

But he is living among us in his message and the ideals he placed before the world.

Other friends have placed before me the dilemma which, I am told, faces many of you too. The Congress creed is, of course, that of winning swaraj through non-violent and peaceful means but there are many men outside, and even within the Congress, who have begun to doubt whether that policy of the Congress has not exhausted its purpose and now become effete for the tasks that lie ahead, especially in view of the changed and changing times.

You who have served under Subhas Babu, as veteran fighters have proved your mettle on the battlefield. Success and failure are, however, not in our hands, but in God's hands alone. Netaji told you when bidding good-bye to you that, on your return to India, you must put yourselves under the Congress discipline and act according to its policy. Your object, as I have been told, was only to free India, never to help the Japanese. You failed in your direct objective, i. e., to defeat the British. But you have the

[1] Pyarelal's report from *Harijan* has been collated with the *Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindustan Times* reports. About 60 I. N. A. officers including several members of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian Independence League called on Gandhiji in the morning.

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satisfaction that the whole country has been roused and even the regular forces have been stirred into a new political consciousness and have begun to think in terms of independence. You have achieved a complete unity among the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Anglo-Indians and Sikhs in your ranks. That is no mean achievement. What, however, you realized under conditions of freedom outside India, you have now to sustain and keep alive under Indian conditions. That will be your real test.

If you have imbibed the spirit of non-violence, you will remain free men at heart even here. For instance, no government on earth can make men, who have realized freedom in their heart, salute against their will. If they threaten to kill them they will offer their necks to them, but refuse to submit. The odds are that a soldier's spirit will revolt against such cold-blooded murder. Thus, whether they live or die it will be as free men. They will never be slaves. If you will become free men at heart, the whole of India will be free. They might imprison you. You will welcome it or you can tell them that you will be a corpse before they can put you in prison. Both alternatives are open to a non-violent soldier and both call for bravery of the highest order. Our task is no less than to reinfuse life into the 400 millions of India. We have to dispel fear from their hearts. On the day they shed all fear, India's fetters shall fall and she will be free.

Years ago I said at Nankana Sahib[1]: "Sikhs have given proof of their martial valour. But the consummation of Guru Govind Singh's ideal will be reached only when they will substitute for their *kirpans*[2] the sword of the spirit or non-violence." So long as one wants to retain one's sword, one has not attained complete fearlessness. No power on earth can subjugate you when you are armed with the sword of ahimsa. It ennobles both the victor and the vanquished. Netaji has fired you with a new spirit. That spirit can now be kept alive only through non-violence.

Above all, you must never beg or throw yourselves on anybody's charity. Because you have risked your lives for India's sake and fought for her on the Imphal plain, you must not expect to be pampered in return. If you do that, you will lose all worth like salt that has lost its savour. You should prefer to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow, but refuse to beg or accept charity. In short, you have to show the same degree of

[1] On March 3, 1921; *vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 396-8.
[2] Swords

bravery and courage of the non-violent type as you have done in the use of arms hitherto.

India is a very poor country and we should all work for our living. There is plenty of land available for all. If you want land you will have it. You will clear it and turn it into model farms. You have to overcome the inertia of ages which weighs down our masses. That you will be able to do only by setting an example of industry and hard work. You must be able to wield the bucket and the broom with skill and diligence and not consider the cleaning of latrines as dirty or beneath your dignity. Graduation in this work is more heroic than winning the Victoria Cross.

Then followed questions and answers.

Q. How can one who has spent his whole life in fighting take to ahimsa with success? Are not the two incompatible?

A. I do not agree. Badshah Khan is a Pathan. But today he has become a soldier of non-violence. In his land the sword and the gun are considered essential even for settling private disputes. But he has fully imbibed the principle of non-violence. The whole thing depends upon your attitude of mind. Tolstoy too served in the army. Yet he became the high priest of non-violence in Europe. We have not yet realized fully the power that is in non-violence. If the Government had not arrested me in 1942, I would have shown how to fight Japan by non-violence.

Even at the time of the threatened Japanese invasion, I preached resistance to the enemy through non-violence. The British did not believe me. They thought how could we fight the Japanese non-violently? But I am telling you I have got faith in my ability to fight non-violently.

Q. Surely, it is no breach of ahimsa to use the sword in self-defence?

A. No, it is not necessary to use force. You should be prepared even to lay down your lives.

Even Wavell, Auchinleck[1] or Hitler does not use the sword without necessity. But that does not make it ahimsa. It is *himsa*, whatever its justification.

Q. You cannot take the world along with you if you adopt ahimsa. You have to choose the one or the other.

A. There again I disagree. A reformer has to sail not with the current, very often he has to go against it, even though it may cost him his life. You must not be carried off your feet by unthinking, popular applause. The essential part of your message

[1] Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India

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to the country is not how to wield the sword but how to cease to be afraid of it.

Q. What would you have done if Subhas Babu had returned to you victorious?

A. I would have asked him to make you put away your weapons and stack them before me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1946, *The Hindustan Times*, 23-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

237. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

Gandhiji apologized for the delay in the printing and distribution of the leaflet[2] and twitted the Imperial City for its dilatoriness. He twitted too the printers of the leaflet for their 'greed' in charging for paper and printing. When he was told that nothing had been charged for printing, he twitted them still for charging the price of paper.[3]

Gandhiji had been told that he had been coming to the prayer meeting late. That was not so, he explained. Only his watch was slow and he kept time by it. Unpunctuality was not his weakness. Still less could he afford wilfully to be unpunctual at the prayer gathering where they assembled for the solemn purpose of renewing their covenant with God.

If we have to catch a train, we try to reach the station well in time because the train waits for nobody. That is even more true of God—the wheel of His Law never stops nor slows down.

Coming back to the text of the song that had been distributed, he once again explained in detail the inner meaning of the ideal set forth in it. The conception of a country where there was no suffering and no sorrow, might at first sight strike one as Utopian. Nevertheless, they wanted their country to be such a country and he had even allowed himself to say the other day that the announcement of the Cabinet Mission contained in it the germs of that fulfilment.[4]

The poet in that song, had not only set forth the ideal but also mentioned the conditions for its realization. Those conditions were freedom from illusions and regrets, delusion and desire. Such a country, however, was

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Containing the *bhajan* "Land without suffering and sorrow" sung at the prayer meeting on May 11, 1946; *vide* Appendix VI.

[3] Gandhiji was then informed that the paper also would not be charged for.

[4] *Vide* pp. 161-2.

nowhere to be found on this earth. The poet, therefore, in order to be logical and true, had said that it was within us—it was identifiable with the realm of the spirit within. It connoted swaraj, that is to say, self-rule or rule over self. A person who had perfect mastery over self could realize in his own person the ideal depicted in the song. As he had remarked on the previous day, to a person who is good, the whole world becomes good. If millions did that, the Kingdom of God would be realized on earth. But even if all did not, there was no need for the individual to despair. He could make a beginning with himself straight away in the faith that what he did today the rest would do tomorrow.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

238. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Don't mind Joshi having left. What led to his leaving was, of course, bad. One is bound to have such bitter as well as sweet experiences. The work there seems to be progressing very well. I hardly get any time to write or dictate letters. The work here and the work for *Harijan* is more than enough for me. But "Nobody can harm him whom Rama protects." A *bhajan* has been printed for distribution. I shall send you a copy of it.

The path of *brahmacharya* is as grand as it is difficult. The deeper one reflects over it the more clearly one realizes its grandeur, holiness and purity. I realize that the more important thing is to know how to attain it. After deep thinking I have come to the conclusion that Ramanama is the best thing. But Ramanama must come from the heart and not be pronounced merely with the tongue. It must, of course, go hand in hand with incessant service. One must eat only to keep the body going. And the quantity of food must be moderate. Ramanama is not a substitute for these and other essential conditions. They are, in fact, included in Ramanama. They are even a sign of Ramanama having penetrated one's heart. It is plain, moreover, that unless all attachment vanishes *brahmacharya* is impossible. Deduce the rest from this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 2747. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

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239. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

Munnalal is now prepared to have a separate establishment and live with you. What is your wish now? Would you like to start as soon as possible or are you content that you have the promise? If you keep good health there and the work is going on well you should not mind waiting a little longer. Don't think of what I would like but state your own independent view.

I am not writing separately to Zohra. I hope she is all right. Look after the women there carefully.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8257. Also C. W. 6981. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

240. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I went through the letters you sent. Your reply seems to be correct. I am returning the letters. Who is Naginbhai? What is this you write about Shashikant[1]?

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

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

[1] Addressee's son

241. LETTER TO SURENDRA P. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI SURENDRA,

I had your letter. I am unable to guide you. Please therefore excuse me.

SURENDRA PURUSHOTTAM BHAGWAT
C/O INAMDAR, MINERVA MANSION
373 SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

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

242. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI BHOGILAL,

It pains me that I have not been able to do justice to you. But what can one who wants to be the servant of the people do ? As yet I have absolutely no idea how long I shall have to be here. My heart is in Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani. These two months will fortify me for ten months.[1] Mahabaleshwar is now out of the question; so I shall not be able to have the benefit of your bungalow and your company. I am looking forward to Panchgani, but we can be sure only when it comes off.

You will have got the telegram I sent you.

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

[1] Gandhiji had been advised by his doctors to pass two months of the summer at some hill station.

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243. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

How are you getting along? It would be good if the workers there could manage the land, the buildings and the cows. My feeling is that we cannot fully develop our activity in the absence of the land and buildings. From the point of view of the climate it would seem the place is undoubtedly good.

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

244. LETTER TO DHIRU

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

The report about the two patients is encouraging. It would indeed be very good if they were fully recovered.

True, you had asked me something about natural living and truthful living, but I forgot about it. If we go deep into the subject it will be apparent that the two are one. While you are treating others you are yourself being cured and this is the beauty of nature cure. It is not a pill you can administer to the patient and be satisfied.

URULI KANCHAN
Via POONA

[PS.]

Enclosed please find four letters: for Manilal, Balkrishna, Bhagwat and Kanchanbehn.

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

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245. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. Things are going on well. It is not certain when I shall be leaving this place. I shall see what happens.

Why प्रात्यक्षिक[1]? Is not प्रत्यक्ष[2] enough?

Is प्रात्यक्षिक a Sanskrit word? Or is it used in Marathi only?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : C. W. 2746. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

246. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I forgot to write about Keshu. I do not know to whom I may write. What is wrong in Keshu going home? He may exert good influence there. It will not be wrong to write to him to that effect.

At present Aryanayakum[3] is not there. Who has been making a demand for money? This question arises from Chimanlal's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4556

[1] *Pratyakshika*, adjective derived from *pratyaksha*, used as a noun
[2] Literally 'Before one's eyes', generally used as an adverb
[3] E. W. Aryanayakum, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh

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247. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI NANDA BABU,

You have not yet replied to the letter that Rameshwaribehn[1] wrote to you. A married woman who worked at Kasturba Harijan Balika Ashram in Delhi has left the job on becoming pregnant. She was a very good teacher. Can you think of any such teacher who can instruct through Hindustani, has a knowledge of the crafts and can teach them and also knows and can give lessons in dancing and music? Such an accomplished lady can only be available there. Do let me know if one is available.

My grandson, Prabhudas, has written to Kshitis Babu[2] also.

SANTINIKETAN

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

248. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

Gandhiji ... decided that it[4] should be sold at the fixed price of one pice each copy and on no account at a fancy price. Similarly, he said that he would hereafter insist on the printer receiving his due charge for printing and stationery. He did not want to be greedy. It was a subtle snare in which humanitarian workers sometimes fell. If he charged more for the copy of the *bhajan* than its fixed price, the money would become tainted and would hinder instead of helping the cause of the removal of untouchability. Untouchability could not be eradicated by the expenditure of crores of rupees. But it could be eradicated in the twinkling of an eye without spending a penny if there was a true change of heart among the so-called caste Hindus. That would elevate both the Harijans and the *Savarnas*.

[1] Rameshwari Nehru, Vice-President, Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh

[2] Kshitis Chandra Das Gupta, elder brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[3] The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[4] The printed copy of the *bhajan*. All the copies having been sold out a fresh lot was printed.

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Today the *Savarnas* ride on the backs of the so-called untouchables. That degrades them both. For it is nature's law that one cannot degrade another without degrading oneself.

They should not tempt him, said Gandhiji, by offering fancy prices. If anyone wanted to pay the price for more than one copy of the *bhajan* leaflet, he or she would have to produce a corresponding number of *bona-fide* purchasers. Just as the leaflet would not be distributed free so it would not be sold for more than its fixed price. The way to earn merit was to translate into their lives the teachings of that *bhajan.*

Commenting next on the *bhajan*[1] of the evening "Sabase unchi prem sagai" he said that in that song the poet had sung of the bondage of love or ahimsa. There was no bond higher or stronger than that of love. Under the power of Sudama's love Lord Krishna had accepted the former's gift of broken rice taken out of a dirty rag and had preferred to partake of the simple greens and herbs of Vidura in preference to Duryodhana's rare and luscious fruit. Again, it was in return for Arjuna's loving devotion that he had forgotten his royalty and had become Arjuna's charioteer. We are told that it was the mastery of his art that contributed more to Arjuna's victory than the might of the latter's bow. Service of love was the highest service one could render to another. Such service had to be spontaneous. It asked for no consideration or return.

Love becomes a sordid bargain when it asks for return or compensation; it degrades. Spontaneous service of love purifies and elevates.

The Hindustan Times, 26-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 2-6-1946

249. DR. MEHTA'S INSTITUTION[2]

I have received several questions about Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's institution. Two of them are worth noticing. They are given below:

> In order to make the institution more scientific, more modern and more useful for the public, is it not desirable that some capable enthusiastic nature-cure man or men should be sent abroad for higher studies in nature cure? Would not such experts on their return evolve a system of nature cure suitable for our country and enable it to become popular and stand on its own feet?
>
> You want a simple and cheap method of nature cure for our villages. Can the methods described by Kuhne, Just and Kneip, etc.,

[1] By Surdas

[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-6-1946.

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serve that purpose? Can these methods be useful and suitable for village work?

The clinic at Poona could not serve the purpose of village nature cure in the opinion of the Trustees. Therefore, it was closed down and an experiment in village nature cure started at Uruli Kanchan. There the work is going on satisfactorily, though on a small scale. There is nothing there worth seeing as yet. Even the land has not been bought and no buildings have been built.

Now let us take the main question. The tendency of looking to the West in order to make progress in whatever we do, should be checked. If we have to go to the West to learn nature cure, it cannot be of much use to India. Nature cure is a thing which everyone can practise in the home. The advice of nature-cure experts should not be necessary for all time. It is such a simple thing that everyone can learn it. If we have to go to Europe to learn to recite Ramanama, it simply will not do. Ramanama is the very foundation of nature cure of my conception. Nor should it be necessary to go across the seas in order to learn the use of earth, water, ether, sun and air. This is self-evident. Whatever other knowledge is required in this direction can be had in our villages. For instance, if herbs are used, they must be village herbs. Ayurveda teachers know all about them. If some Ayurvedic physicians are scoundrels, they cannot become good men and servants of the people by going abroad. The knowledge of anatomy and physiology has come from the West. It is very useful and necessary for all physicians. But there are plenty of means of learning it in our own country. In short, whatever useful contribution to knowledge has been made by the West, it has reached everywhere and can be learnt everywhere. I might add here that the knowledge of anatomy and physiology is not essential for learning nature cure.

The writings of Kuhne, Just and Father Kneip are simple, popular and useful for all. It is our duty to read them. Practically every nature-cure physician knows something about them. Nature cure has not been taken to the villages so far. We have not thought deeply and no one has thought of it in terms of the millions. This is just the beginning. No one can say where we shall stand in the end. As in all great and good enterprises, sacrifice and dedication are required to make this successful. Instead of looking up to the West, we should turn the searchlight inwards.

NEW DELHI, May 24, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

250. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
May 24, 1946

DEAR LORD,

The Working Committee passed its resolution[1] this evening. I call it a good resolution. So far as the Congress is concerned, I am free now to leave Delhi. What would you have me to do?[2]

Hoping you are not finding your labours too exacting,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 197

251. NOTE TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ[3]

[*May 24, 1946*][4]

The credit for Janakimai's[5] recovery goes to you. Tell her now that she should not spoil her health again by eating indiscriminately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3059

[1] *Vide* Appendix XII.
[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix XIII.
[3] Eldest son of Jamnalal Bajaj
[4] The letter is written under another of this date.
[5] Addressee's mother

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252. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 24, 1946[2]

A correspondent had written to Gandhiji pointing out how some people superstitiously wrote Ramanama on their clothes so as to wear it "next to the hearts". Others wrote Ramanama millions of times minutely on a piece of paper which they afterwards cut up into small bits and swallowed so that they could claim that Ramanama had entered into them! Another correspondent had asked him whether he had prescribed Ramanama as the sovereign remedy for all ills because Rama was God's anointed and was a descendant of Dasharatha, the illustrious King of Ayodhya. There were people who thought that he was self-deluded and was trying to delude others by adding one more to the thousands of superstitions which filled this superstition-ridden land. He had no answer to such criticism. He only said to himself, what did it matter if truth was abused and fraud practised in its name by others? So long as he was sure of his truth he could not help proclaiming it for fear of its being misunderstood or abused.

Nobody in this world possesses absolute truth. This is God's attribute alone. Relative truth is all we know. Therefore, we can only follow the truth as we see it. Such pursuit of truth cannot lead anyone astray.

He reiterated that Rama whose name he prescribed as the infallible remedy for all ills was neither the historical Rama nor the Rama of those who used the name as a charm or black magic. Rama whose name he prescribed as a cure-all was God, by taking whose name devotees attained purity and peace, and he claimed that it was the one infallible remedy for all ailments whether mental, spiritual or physical. It was, of course, possible to cure physical ailments by going to doctors and vaidyas. But Ramanama enabled one to become one's own doctor or vaidya and to find the elixir of healing within oneself. Even when the ailment could not be cured, because physically it was incurable, it enabled one to endure it with equanimity and peace of mind.

A person who has faith in Ramanama would not run from pillar to post and dance attendance at the doors of celebrated doctors and vaidyas in order to prolong existence anyhow. Nor

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 26-5-1946

is Ramanama meant to be taken only when the doctors and vaidyas have failed. It is meant to enable one to do without them altogether. For a believer in Ramanama it is the first as well as the last remedy.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

253. LETTER TO AKBAR CHAVDA

[On or before *May 25, 1946*][1]

CHI. AKBAR,

I have your letter. I am forwarding your letter to Khan Saheb. He left the day before yesterday. You should do just as he says—that will be the right thing. I understand what you say about your not reading the newspapers. It would be better if some time you sent me your full day's time-table so that I could see from it that you really cannot spare any time at all to read the newspapers.

Are you keeping well? I cannot say how long I shall be staying here. Zohra is in a village called [Uruli] Kanchan. Kanchan also is there. Munnalal is with me. If Vasumati is there who is in the Ashram to do the work? Don't you read even *Harijan Sevak*? Or is it that no one sends it to you?

Blessings from
BAPU

GRAMSEVAK
SAMAU

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

254. SALARY OF M. L. A.S

Q. The monthly salary of an M. L. A. is Rs. 200. He is a mofussil member and, as such, is entitled to a daily allowance of Rs. 15 when the Assembly is in session. Besides that, he may draw a conveyance [allowance] of Rs. 2/8 for any day on which he attends the meeting of the Assembly. Moreover, he is entitled to 'travelling allowance' for his journey from the usual place of residence to the city at the rate of one and a half times first-class fare but he cannot draw 'travelling allowance' and 'daily allowance' for the same day.

1. (a) Should such a person as a representative and servant of the poor draw the salary?

[1] In the source the letter is placed between those of May 24 and 25.

(b) Would he be absolved from the wrong if he gave the whole amount to the local Congress Committee or the institution under which he is working for constructive work?

(c) If so, would it not mean that the end justifies the means?

2. He will have to live in the city when the Assembly is in session and has to incur some other expenditure for discharging his duties and responsibilities as an M. L. A.

(a) In the circumstances, may he, consistently with his ideal, draw the daily allowance to meet the expenses?

(b) If so, and if it be not permissible to draw a part of it, should he draw the whole of it and give the balance to the institution under which he is working?

(c) In that case, may he, consistently with his ideal, spend the balance or part thereof for his family, which will have otherwise to depend upon the charity of friends to make the two ends meet?

3. (a) Should he draw the conveyance allowance (meant for his conveyance inside the city for attending meetings) when the daily allowance will be more than sufficient to cover all his expenses including the conveyance?

(b) Should he avail of costly conveyance for attending meetings, if he usually travels in tram-cars and buses?

4. If such a member travels third class on principle, what should he do regarding drawing 'mileage allowance' if it is not permissible to draw at lower rate than one and a half first-class fares?

A. In my opinion, the salary and allowances drawn by the gentlemen of the various Assemblies are out of all proportion to the services they render to the country. The scales fixed are on the English pattern, not at all compatible with the income of this country—the poorest in the world. Therefore, the answer I suggest is that the Ministers should, with the consent of the Assemblies, reduce the whole scale in accordance with requirements and, in the meantime, either the amount taken should be handed to the party to which the member belongs, drawing what the party has fixed or, if that be not possible, drawing what his conscience thinks just for himself and his family and devoting the balance to some items of the constructive programme or some such public activity. The money allowed has to be drawn but nobody is obliged to use it for [him]self except to the extent needed. No question here arises of the end justifying the means.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

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255. *RIDICULING RAMANAMA*[1]

Q. The Ramanama bank in Benares and wearing clothes printed with Ramanama is, in my opinion, a caricature of Ramanama. Don't you think that under these circumstances your telling the people to take to Ramanama as a sovereign remedy for all ailments is likely to encourage ignorance and hypocrisy?[2]

A. You are right. There is so much superstition and hypocrisy around that one is afraid even to do the right thing. But if one gives way to fear, even truth will have to be suppressed. The golden rule is to act fearlessly upon what one believes to be right. Hypocrisy and untruth will go on in the world. Our doing the right thing will result in their decrease, if anything, never in their increase. The danger is that when we are surrounded by falsehood on all sides we might be caught in it and begin to deceive ourselves. We should be careful not to make a mistake out of our laziness and ignorance. Constant vigilance under all circumstances is essential. A votary of truth cannot act otherwise. Even an all-powerful remedy like Ramanama can become useless for lack of wakefulness and care, and become one more addition to the numerous current superstitions.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946
Harijan, 2-6-1946

256. *NATURE CURE FOR THE POOR*[3]

Q. Is it not a cruel joke to ask the poor villager to live on orange juice when he cannot afford even ordinary diet? He has to work throughout the day to feed his wife and children. His land and his children mean more to him than life itself. Nature cure is meant for the rich who have plenty of money and time at their disposal.

If you really wish to serve the villagers through nature cure, you should see that the right type of nature-cure homes are started everywhere. At these homes the patients should get free food, clothing and

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.
[2] Only an extract is reproduced here.
[3] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.

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bedding. And, if the patient happens to be a wage-earner, arrangements should be made to support his family.

You have said nature cure means reorientation of the way of living. Is it not necessary that education in that direction should form a necessary part of nature-cure treatment?

A. The question betrays the correspondent's ignorance. He has not taken the trouble to read carefully what I have written on the subject. Nature cure implies that the treatment should be the cheapest and the simplest possible. The ideal is that such treatment should be carried out in the villages. The villagers should be able to provide the necessary means and equipment. What cannot be had in the villages should be procured. Nature cure does mean a change for the better in one's outlook on life itself. It means regulation of one's life in accordance with the laws of health. It is not a matter of taking medicine free from the hospital or for fees. A man who takes free treatment from the hospital accepts charity. The man who accepts nature cure never begs. Self-help enhances self-respect. He takes steps to cure himself by eliminating poison from the system and takes precautions against falling ill in the future.

The central feature of nature-cure treatment is Ramanama.[1] But it must come from the heart, if it is to be a remedy for all one's ailments.[2]

Orange juice is not an essential part of nature-cure treatment. Right diet and balanced diet are necessary. Today our villages are as bankrupt as we are ourselves. To produce enough vegetables, fruits and milk in the villages is an essential part of the nature-cure scheme. Time spent on this should not be considered a waste. It is bound to benefit all the villagers and ultimately the whole of India.

It is true that nature-cure homes of the right type should be opened in the villages and the cities. God willing, this will be done. The individual should rest content by doing his own duty leaving the rest to God.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946
Harijan, 2-6-1946

[1] The Hindi here adds: "A man feels secure with Ramanama."

[2] The Hindi here adds : "And the observance of the laws becomes imperative for Ramanama to come from the heart. In such a situation man becomes free from all ailments. It involves neither any expenditure nor any discomfort."

257. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. KANAM[1],

I have your postcard. I was pleased. You are learning a great deal from Bhansalibhai[2] and Vinoba. Keep up the progress.

I am very glad that you also take part in the Ashram work now and observe the rules.

It will soon be decided now when I shall be leaving Delhi. If I go to Panchgani come there.

When will you learn the Gujarati script? If you but make up your mind, you will be able to learn it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 9521. Courtesy : Kanu Gandhi

258. LETTER TO BODHANPRASAD SHRIVASTAVA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

BHAI BODHANPRASAD,

I got your letter and the towel through Mathura Babu, as also all the news. I am gratified to know that you all love me so much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 9301

[1] Son of Ramdas Gandhi
[2] J. P. Bhansali

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259. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your letter. You will see the reply in the *Harijan* issue of the 2nd.[1] To sum up, accept what you get from the Assembly and keeping aside whatever you need for yourself and your family give away the rest for public work.

Now I learn that you are taking Vina[2] and her husband to Bengal. I am not able to understand all these things. How do you happen to have all this money, and time too? How can one who volunteers to become a servant of India get involved in such activities? It only means that one follows one's own inclination. How can one of us become an exception to this rule?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : C. W. 10415. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

260. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,[3]

I have your letter. I have already written everything. Do everything you can for Roshan[4]. It will certainly be better if you go to settle in the countryside along with Hosa.

Again you are spoiling your health. This is not good. I have written to Hosa[5]; I hope she got the letter.

Here the work is going on very slow. God alone knows what will happen in the end.

[1] *Vide* pp. 200-1.
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] The superscription and the subscription are in Gujarati.
[4] Roshanara, Rashid Khan's daughter
[5] *Vide* p. 168.

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Whatever you do, take it as though it were a command from me.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi : G. N. 579

261. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter and the mangoes. Why did you send them? What is the point in sending eatables from Sevagram? The loss is obvious. It shows lack of thought to send a thing from a place where it is very useful to another where it is not needed. And we ought not to do anything without fully thinking over the matter. I ate the mangoes, they were good. But all the fruits that can be had anywhere in India are made available to me. In this situation why the mangoes from Sevagram? Now I hear you send leafy vegetables from there. If you have not sent any, don't do it. What an amount of time is taken up by this? The time we have really belongs to the people. And why should we be obliged to the railways for such things? All this is not meant as a rebuke but should be taken only as a caution.

For the last six days Hoshiari[1] and Gajraj[2] have been here. I had told them they ought not to have come here. It was a waste of time and Gajraj has suffered a loss also. She says she will return today.

The programme about my stay here is likely to be settled today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Hoshiari has left.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 1971

[1] & [2] Addressee's niece and her son

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262. LETTER TO LABANYALATA CHANDA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. LABANYALATA,

I got your letter. I have talked to Satis Babu and Profulla Babu regarding the hospital at Abhaya Ashram[1]. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

CAMP BALRAMPUR

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

263. LETTER TO D. M. BURADE

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

BHAI BURADE,

I have kept back your letter of 20-4-1946. I had thought of publishing it but later decided that it would serve no purpose. Continue silently to influence society through your pure life. The whole account has indeed given me pleasure. May you all live long and remain pure for the rest of your lives.

I expect the work at Gopuri is going on fairly well.

Blessings from
BAPU

D. M. BURADE
GOSEVA SANGH
NALWADI

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

[1] In Comilla

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264. LETTER TO NARAYANAMURTI

[*May 25, 1946*][1]

BHAI NARAYANAMURTI,

I have talked to Dr. Pattabhi[2]. You should approach the Provincial Congress Committee. If the book is good, why should they not publish it ?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

ANAKAPALLE
VIZ[AGAPATTAM]

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

265. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946[4]

Gandhiji explained the conditions under which alone Ramanama could become an effective remedy for the three-fold malady, to which man was subject. The first condition was that it should come from the heart. What did that mean? People did not mind going to the ends of the earth to find a cure for their physical ailments which were much less important than the mental or spiritual.

Man's physical being is after all perishable. It cannot, by its very nature, last for ever. And yet man makes a fetish of it while neglecting the immortal spirit within.

A man who believed in Ramanama would not make a fetish of the body but would regard it only as a means of serving God. And for making it a fit instrument for that purpose, Ramanama was the sovereign means.

To install Ramanama in the heart required infinite patience. It might even take ages. But the effort was worth-while. Even so success depended solely on the grace of God.

[1] In the source the letter is placed among those of this date.

[2] Pattabhi Sitaramayya (1880-1959); Member, Congress Working Committee; President, All-India States People's Conference, 1936; President of the Congress, 1948; Governor of Madhya Pradesh, 1952-57

[3] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[4] From *The Hindustan Times*, 26-5-1946

Ramanama could not come from the heart unless one had cultivated the virtues of truth, honesty and purity within and without. Every day at the evening prayers they repeated the *shlokas* describing the man with steadfast intellect. Every one of them, said Gandhiji, could become a *sthitaprajna*—the man with steadfast intellect—if he kept his senses under discipline, ate and drank and allowed himself enjoyment and recreation only to sustain life for service. If one had no control over one's thoughts, if one did not mind, for instance, sleeping in a hole of a room with all doors and windows shut, and breathing foul air or drinking dirty water, recitation of Ramanama was in vain.

That, however, did not mean that one should give up reciting Ramanama on the ground that one had not the requisite purity. For, recitation of Ramanama was also a means for acquiring purity.

In the case of a man who repeats Ramanama from the heart, discipline and self-control will come easy. Observance of the rules of health and hygiene will become his second nature. His life will run an even course. He will never want to hurt anyone. To suffer in order to relieve others' sufferings will become a part of his being and fill him with an ineffable and perennial joy.

Let them therefore, said Gandhiji, persevere and ceaselessly repeat Ramanama during all their waking hours. Ultimately, it would remain with them even during their sleep and God's grace would then fill them with perfect health of body, mind and spirit.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

266. VITAL DEFECTS

Intrinsically and as legally interpreted, the State Paper[1] seems to me to be a brave and frank document. Nevertheless, the official interpretation would appear to be different from the popular. If it is so and prevails it will be a bad omen. During the long course of the history of British rule in India, the official interpretation has held sway. And, it has been enforced. I have not hesitated before now to say that the office of the law-giver, judge and executioner is combined in one person in India. Is not the State Document a departure from the imperialistic tradition? I have answered 'yes'.

Be that as it may. Let us try to glance at the shortcomings. The Delegation, after a brief spell in Simla, returned

[1] *Vide* Appendix VII.

to Delhi on the 14th instant, issued their Statement on the 16th, and yet we are far from the popular government at the Centre. One would have thought that they would have formed the Central Government before issuing the Statement. But they issued the Statement first and then set about the search for the formation of the Interim Government. It is taking a long time coming whilst the millions are starving for want of food and clothing. This is defect No. 1.

The question of paramountcy is unsolved. It is not enough to say that paramountcy will end with the end of British rule in India. If it persists without check during the interim period, it will leave behind a difficult legacy for the independent Government. If it cannot be ended with the establishment of the Interim Government, it should be exercised in co-operation with it and purely for the benefit of the people of the States. It is the people who want and are fighting for independence, not the Princes who are sustained by the alien power even when they claim not to be its creation for the suppression of the liberties of the people. The Princes, if they are true to their professions, should welcome this popular use of paramountcy so as to accommodate themselves to the sovereignty of the people envisaged under the new scheme. This is defect No. 2.

Troops, it is declared, are to remain during the interim period for the preservation of internal peace and protection against external aggression. If they are kept for such use during the period of grace, their presence will act as a damper on the Constituent Assembly and is more likely than not to be wanted even after the establishment of independence so called. A nation that desires alien troops for its safety, internal or external, or has them imposed upon it, can never be described as independent in any sense of the term. It is an effete nation unfit for self-government. The acid test is that it should be able to stand alone, erect and unbending. During the interim period we must learn to hop unaided, if we are to walk when we are free. We must cease from now to be spoon-fed.

That these things are not happening as we would wish is to be accounted as our weakness, be the causes whatever they be, not the cussedness of the British Government or their people. Whatever we get, will be our deserts, not a gift from across the seas. The three Ministers have come to do what they have declared. It will be time to blame them when they go back upon the British declarations and devise ways and means of perpetuating the British rule. Though there is ground for fear, there is no

sign on the horizon that they have said one thing and meant another.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946
Harijan, 2-6-1946

267. FLAGS AND UNIFORMS

A correspondent writes:

> During the recent election meetings I was astonished at the number of flags—not to speak of the special uniforms worn by the Congress volunteers for the occasion. In these days of cloth shortage, is not the use of cloth for flags and special uniforms a criminal waste?

Flags and uniforms are in order when they are in their time and place. They are easily an abomination when they take the place of bread. Satisfaction of hunger has precedence over everything. Similarly, flags and uniforms cannot replace cloth for wear. Hence, if the correspondent is right, Congressmen and others will have to be strictly economical in the use of flags and uniforms for demonstrative purposes.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946
Harijan, 2-6-1946

268. QUESTION BOX

PEACEFUL STRIKES[1]

Q. How should a strike be conducted so that hooliganism and violence are avoided?

A. A strike should be spontaneous and not manipulated. If it is organized without any compulsion there would be no chance for goondaism and looting. Such a strike would be characterized by perfect co-operation amongst the strikers. It should be peaceful and there should be no show of force. The strikers should take up some work either singly or in co-operation with one another, in order to earn their bread. The nature of such work should have been thought out beforehand. It goes without saying that in a peaceful, effective and firm strike of this character, there will be no room for rowdyism or looting. I have known of such strikes. I have not presented a Utopian picture.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-6-1946.

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WHY DOCTORS?

Q. Why do you go to the doctors for examination and diagnosis and not to the vaidyas?

A. The vaidyas do not possess the knowledge of the human body as the doctors do. The basis of diagnosis in Ayurveda is the theory of *tridosh*[1]. They have not got to the bottom even of that. The doctors are ever carrying on research and making new discoveries. One either goes forward or backward. Nothing remains static in the world. Those who become static, become lifeless. God alone is static, but amazing as it may sound, He is described both as motionless and full of motion.

Moreover, doctors and vaidyas are my friends. The doctors have clung to me. One[2] of them has become more than my own daughter. One's own daughter can leave her father; how can one who has chosen to become a daughter? The vaidyas themselves use, though indifferently, the methods of diagnosis used by the doctors or else they advise the patient to go to the doctors for it. The vaidyas possess the knowledge of certain drugs which they use effectively.

But the doctors, vaidyas and hakims all slave for money. They do not take to the profession purely from a spirit of service. That some of them have that spirit does not contradict my statement. Nature cure is the only thing which has come into existence purely from the point of view of selfless service. Today even that has become a means of making money. Thus money has taken the place of God. The doctors examine me, but I depend on none but God. He is the Master of every breath I take. If He wills it, He will keep me up to 125 years. If not, He might carry me off any moment, leaving the medical friends staring as helpless spectators.

NEW DELHI, May 26[3], 1946

WHO IS RAMA?[4]

Q. You have often said that when you talk of "Rama" you refer to the Ruler of the universe and not to Rama, the son of Dasharatha. But we find that your *Ramdhun* calls on "Sita-Rama", "Raja-Rama", and it ends with "Victory to Rama the Lord of Sita". Who is this Rama if not the son of the king Dasharatha?

[1] The three disorders in the human system, viz., gas, bile and phlegm

[2] Sushila Nayyar

[3] As in *Harijanbandhu*; *Harijan*, however, has "27".

[4] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.

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A. I have answered such questions before. But there is something new in this one. It demands a reply. In *Ramdhun* "Raja-Rama", "Sita-Rama" are undoubtedly repeated. Is not this 'Rama' the same as the son of Dasharatha? Tulsidas has answered this question. But let me put down my own view. More potent than Rama is the Name. Hindu Dharma is like a boundless ocean teeming with priceless gems. The deeper you dive into it the more treasures you find. In Hindu religion God is known by various names. Thousands of people doubtless look upon Rama and Krishna as historical figures and literally believe that God came down in person on earth in the form of Rama the son of Dasharatha, and that by worshipping Him one can attain salvation. The same thing holds good about Krishna. History, imagination and truth have got so inextricably mixed up, it is next to impossible to disentangle them. I have accepted all the names and forms attributed to God as symbols denoting one formless omnipresent Rama. To me, therefore, Rama described as the Lord of Sita, son of Dasharatha, is the all powerful essence whose name, inscribed in the heart, removes all suffering, mental, moral and physical.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946
Harijan, 2-6-1946

269. LETTER TO MARGARET BARR

NEW DELHI,
May 26, 1946

DEAR MARGARET,

Yours of 9-4-1946, I have kept long for use. I have read and reread it. So long as you give rewards you will be giving prizes. The line of distinction is thin. The whole system of examinations has to go before prizes do. The ancient system of saying which teacher taught you and how much was the only right thing. But in this age of competition, this reversion won't answer till people are tired of the thing. Let us silently pray, work and wait. I destroy your letter.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARGARET BARR
MALKI, SHILLONG

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

270. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
Sunday, May 26, 1946

Gandhiji in his discourse after the prayers informed the gathering that he would be leaving for Mussoorie day after tomorrow (Tuesday). He had been advised by his doctors to spend two months of the hot weather at some hill station to enable him to build up sufficient reserve for the rest of the year. He could not do so this year for reasons they all knew. He had decided to go to Mussoorie in preference to Panchgani or Simla, as it was nearer. He would come back when the Congress President or the Cabinet Mission might require him.

Gandhiji said that they had been coming to the prayer gatherings daily in order to join him in reciting Ramanama or rather in learning how to do so. Ramanama could not be taught by word of mouth. But more potent than the spoken word was the silent thought.

A single right thought can envelop the world. It is never wasted. The very attempt to clothe thought in word or action limits it. What man has ever succeeded in expressing fully thought in word or in action? Then, why not go into perpetual silence, one might ask. In theory that is possible. But it is very difficult to fulfil the conditions by which silent thought can wholly replace action.

He for one could not claim to have attained the requisite intensity or control over thought. He could not altogether keep out useless or irrelevant thoughts from his mind. It required infinite patience, vigilance and *tapash-charya*[2] to attain that state.

He was not indulging in a figure of speech, he continued, but had meant it literally when on the previous day he had told them that there was no limit to the potency of Ramanama. But in order to experience that, Ramanama had to come from a heart that was absolutely pure. He himself was striving to attain that state. He had envisaged it in the mind but had not fully realized it in practice. When that stage was reached, even the recitation of Ramanama would become unnecessary.

He hoped they would continue to recite Ramanama in their homes severally and in company during his absence. The secret of collective prayer

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[2] Penance

was that the emanation of silent influence from one to the other could be of help in their spiritual striving.

The Hindustan Times, 27-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 2-6-1946

271. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Indian Deputation[1] from South Africa have made a great stir in India. They propose to approach the U. N. O. with a view to enlisting the latter's sympathy. But the legislation is going through. The Indian High Commissioner will be withdrawn as he should be. What little aid he can render is nothing compared to the indignity of representing a country whose inhabitants are to be treated as an inferior race. This new caste is worse than the ancient but dying institution of India which has some redeeming features, even while it is dying. But the new civilized edition has none. It shamelessly proclaims that white civilization requires the erection of legal barriers in order to protect itself against Asiatics and Africans. The Indians in South Africa are bearing a heavy burden which they are well able to discharge. Satyagraha, the mightiest weapon in the world, was born and bred there. If they make effective use of it, it will be well with the sacred cause they are handling. It is not one of making it easy for a handful, to be permitted to live and trade there if they wear the badge of inferiority called years ago by an Englishman of South Africa "dog's collar". The cause is the cause of the honour of India and through her of all the exploited coloured races of the earth, whether they be brown, yellow or black. It is worth all the suffering of which they are capable.

NEW DELHI, May 27, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

[1] Lead by Sorabjee Rustom; *vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 352-4.

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272. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I got your touching letter yesterday when I was busy writing for *Harijan*. Though I read it as soon as the visitors who had dropped in, had gone, I could not before now spare the time to write.

I am returning your letter, as it is marked "very confidential". However I see nothing in it which the world may not see, if it is curious.

I entirely agree with you [on] what the State Paper demands and commends[1] to us and yet it like everything coming from the British evokes nothing but distrust. And I am sorry to confess that what has happened since the publication of the document has somewhat shaken my trust which the document by itself commanded and still commands. The interpretations put upon it and the declarations since on independence, paramountcy, troops and the proposed disposal of the Baluchistan election, the uncertainty about the European vote and above all, the waiting policy and the interminable delay about the Interim Government make me wonder whether a satisfactory Interim Government will ever be formed and whether the Constituent Assembly will ever meet. Has even the cry of independence *in action* vanished into thin air?

But I shall hope against hope and work for the success of the Mission even in spite of itself, though not hiding from them or the public honest doubt. Trust put on is worse than useless. Trust felt is the thing that counts. Anyway, why worry about trust. Trustworthy action will dispel all mistrust or distrust as the sun dispels the morning mist.

This is not to disturb your rest. I would have refrained from writing to you, if your letter had not required a fairly full answer.

I am sending an advance copy of my article[2] for the next issue of *Harijan*.

Do be well quickly. 'Be careful for nothing.'

[1] The source has "commands".
[2] *Vide* pp. 209-11.

If you want me to do anything, do not hesitate to send a messenger to me. I leave for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. I had to finish writing for *Harijan*, before leaving. As I do not want to inflict my writing on you, I am asking Rajkumari to copy this for me. Of course you are at liberty to share this with your colleagues or whomsoever you like.

I am sending a copy of my article to Lord Pethick-Lawrence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 199-200

273. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

DEAR LORD,

I send you herewith an advance copy of my article for *Harijan*. I hope everything will go well with the Mission.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 198

274. A NOTE

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

All Sikhs should realize that the Congress cannot and will not desert those who have stuck to it. They are quite safe with it. But they are not bound to be with the Congress, if they do not wish to. To coquet with one party and then another is bad. They should learn to be staunch and true. Loyalty to the Congress is loyalty to independence. If they do not want it, it is another matter.

From the original : C. W. 4225. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7861

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275. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

How are you? And how is the naughty boy? Does he let you have any peace of mind ?

I am writing this only to let you know that I am sending a naturopath there to help you. Use his services. For some time I shall have to stay around here. Let us see what happens.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10067. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

276. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

How many Urdu copies do you sell? Do you have anybody there who can write the Urdu script? What facilities do you have for translating articles into Hindustani? Are English articles correctly translated into Gujarati now? How much matter, at the minimum, do you want from here? And what do you want? Will it do if I send only English articles ?

Does the office run smoothly ? I do receive complaints which indicate that persons who ought to get copies do not receive them. We want our work to be perfect. If it is not perfect we should know [what the deficiencies are] and do our best to overcome them.

I am leaving for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. I shall get about twelve days there. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9967. Also C. W. 6941. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

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277. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I read your letter. It is painful. In my opinion Viramma was not raped. Whatever took place must have been with her consent. She might have gone over willingly. I do not find fault with her. How can a poor Harijan girl differentiate between morality and immorality? It seems she has been leading a loose life.

I believe there must be no privacy. It would be good to do away with the partitioning. But it cannot be. We cannot keep the passionate away from passion with the help of external rules. We should so conduct ourselves that contact with us affects their inner self. We are not like that. Accepting this we should not admit other women. Before admitting them, we should tell them what we are and yet what we expect of them. This does not mean that we should not have any rules.

Cariappa appears to be liberal-minded.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4557

278. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA

May 27, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

It is interesting to know what Chi. Prabhudas says about the building at Okhla. If what he says is true, even if it is free it will prove costly. But it seems Bapa, Rameshwaribehn[1] and you need to understand this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C. W. 8079. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* pp. 222-4.

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279. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946[2]

God willing I will be leaving for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. Riots have broken out in some places in India. What should a man of prayer who has faith in the supremacy of God and who recites Ramanama do under such circumstances? It is obvious that one cannot go to all the places where the riots may break out. But one can refuse to encourage them by word, deed or thought. If riots should break out before one's eyes, one should try to prevent them even at the risk of one's life, but never by taking the life of another. As I said yesterday[3], more potent than the spoken word is the pure thought. Do you believe it ? And if so, will you act according to your belief ?

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy : National Archives of India

280. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN DUBE

MUSSOORIE,
May 28, 1946

BHAI RAMNARAYAN DUBE,

I have your postcard. I shall try to read the book. What do you do? Where did you learn nature cure? Is what you write in the book based on your own experience or culled from other books ? Who runs the nature-cure clinic ? Please tell me all about Paramahansa Pandit Bhavanishankar Maharaj. I mean that it would be better if I learnt a few things from you before I can safely recommend to anybody the treatment advocated in your book since the reading of it is likely to take some time. A number of books on sale are found to be practically worthless. The

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out.
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*
[3] *Vide* pp. 214-5.

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price of the book is indeed very high, which arouses suspicion. Do not worry about my massage. It is being done regularly.

I shall read about the *shatavari*[1] oil.

C/o SHRI HOTILALDASJI
MOTOR PROPRIETOR, ETAH

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

281. LETTER TO M. S. ANEY

[*May 28, 1946*][2]

BAPUJI,

I have your letter. Since nothing has yet happened there is no need to hurry. Vallabhbhai will write. He said he would.

Vandemataram
BAPU

BAPUJI ANEY
11 STANMORE CRESELEY
HAVELOCK TOWN
COLOMBO, CEYLON

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

282. LETTER TO VASUDEV V. DASTANE

[*May 28, 1946*]

BHAI DASTANE,

Bapa writes that you have started Harijan work in your area in right earnest and are likely to make a success of it. I do hope you will.

I expect everything else is all right there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VASUDEV DASTANE
BHUSAVAL

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

[1] Asparagus racemosus

[2] In the source this and the following letter are placed among those of this date.

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283. LETTER TO JEHANGIR C. PATEL

[*May 28, 1946*][1]

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

I have your letter. I welcome your suggestion. I am glad that you like the work at Uruli. We can induce others only after the tenements at Uruli Kanchan are ready.

I had to leave Bhai Dinshaw at Delhi. I came here today. All is well. I may stay here for about ten days.

SHETH JEHANGIRJI PATEL
PATEL COTTON COMPANY
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

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

284. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
May 28, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I have your three letters which are all very good. You are doing the Agency work[2] efficiently. I like what you write about the building. What will it cost? Will it be all right if the Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Fund advances the whole amount on nominal interest? I see nothing wrong in offering money for the building but the parent body cannot make an exception, so I feel that the problem can perhaps be solved by offering the money as a loan. Discuss the matter with the people there and let me know what they say. It should not be difficult to clear the debt in ten or fifteen years. The period of the loan may be extended so long as the interest is being paid and in default of interest-payment, the loan will have to be paid up or the custody of the building transferred to the Trust. I shall be able to decide

[1] In the source the letter is placed between those of May 28 and 31. Gandhiji arrived at Mussoorie on May 28, 1946.

[2] Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

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further after I have your reply. In the meanwhile I am sending your letter and a copy of my reply to Bapa.

Now your second letter. What you write about the Assembly is correct, namely that in course of time my views will be appreciated. This is not an opinion I have recently come to; I have been holding it from the beginning. True workers will not enter the Assembly.[1] Keir Hardy was such a person. He commanded respect in the House of Commons. He said that an honest man could not remain a member of the House. And it is true. Morley[2] had to suffer a fall. The situation in South Africa was no different. It deserves to be noted that there was a great scramble for membership and the candidates spent huge sums. But I don't wish to discuss this matter. After all, what you write in the concluding part of your letter is true. It is good to exercise one's franchise to contact the mass of voters, to show them the right path and to give for this as much time as one can. For me it is enough that for some years the Agents should stay out and devote their time to their work. Until now you have not even touched the villages.

Now your third letter. The problem of Bhangis is a complex one. It is all right to say that they should go on a hunger-strike after having done their work or even while doing it but one cannot work on an empty stomach. What I have suggested[3] is that society or say, city-dwellers, should strike against the municipalities—they should go on a hunger-strike also. They can do whatever they want to do. The only condition is that they should do it non-violently. It will have its impact on the municipality as well as on the Bhangis and society will have done its duty. There is also another way. The Bhangis should not strike for accommodation or for wages but they may serve a notice of giving up the occupation. If the Bhangis strike for accommodation or for wages, it may be that in the end the townspeople may themselves take up the scavenging work. I admit that if nobody does anything and the Bhangis do not get justice, then they ought to have the right to strike work. I have explained what the Bhangis, as city-dwellers, should do.

[1] *Vide* pp. 34-5; and Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 341-2.
[2] Viscount John Morley, Secretary of State for India, 1905-10
[3] *Vide* pp. 8-9.

While dictating this I get your fourth letter. It is 8.30 p. m. The wire can go only tomorrow. I think your not being on the Food Board is not going to have any adverse effect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8009

285. LETTER TO NYALCHAND M. SHETH

[On or after *May 28, 1946*][1]

BHAI NYALCHAND,

I have your letter. Maybe I shall write something in *Harijan* about your question[2]. I very well remember the questions asked by Raichandbhai, but since then I have certainly encouraged the killing of snakes and I have not stopped people from killing them. I am realizing every moment that it is not a simple matter to distinguish between what is dharma and what is not.

Blessings from
BAPU

NYALCHAND MOOLCHAND SHETH
HEMKUNJ
PALACE ROAD
AMRELI

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

286. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[On or after *May 28, 1946*]

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your postcard. It will not do for you to get tired. Impatience is certainly not going to pay. Sweet is the fruit of patience. It is not worth coming over here. No one knows when we may have to leave this place. I shall be in Mussoorie for a few days only, so by all means go to Sevagram if you wish to

[1] In the source this and the following letter are placed between those of May 28 and 31.

[2] *Vide* pp. 230-2.

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go there and join me when I set out for Poona. Anyway you have got to finish your studies. You must not take your mind off your studies. Many people have successfully completed their studies at your age. अजरामरवत् प्राज्ञो विद्यां अर्थं च चिन्तयेत् It means that a wise man should ever go on accumulating the wealth of knowledge.[1] I am getting along well. The heat in Delhi is no doubt severe but I could withstand it. The Mussoorie hills are certainly cool but the weather is absolutely unpredictable. After the 5th we shall come down any day.

Blessings from
BAPU

ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

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

287. TALK WITH A FRIEND[2]

[After *May 28, 1946*][3]

An English friend posed to Gandhiji, during his stay at Mussoorie, the question whether the very frightfulness of the atom bomb would not force non-violence on the world. If all nations were armed with the atom bomb they would refrain from using it as it would mean absolute destruction for all concerned. Gandhiji was of the opinion that it would not.

The violent man's eyes would be lit up with the prospect of the much greater amount of destruction and death which he could now wreak.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] Obviously Gandhiji is interpreting the *shloka* in his own way. The purport of the *shloka* is: In pursuing knowledge and wealth a wise man should think that he would never grow old and die; in pursuing dharma he should act as though death had him by the hair.

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "The Nightmare"

[3] From the reference to Mussoorie where Gandhiji reached on May 28, 1946.

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288. TALK WITH PRESS CORRESPONDENTS[1]

[After *May 28, 1946*][2]

Your khadi, handicrafts and rural economy programme will have a great appeal for an agricultural country, as for instance, the Balkans. . . . But to many of us, as indeed to many of your countrymen, it appears as a brake on progress. Most people think planning and industrialization on a wide scale to be necessary.

How does my programme interfere with the progress of India? India is mainly rural, consisting of 700,000 villages.

The visitor . . . argued that this was unfair to the cities. "What about the big cities like Bombay and Calcutta?" he asked.

On the contrary, the boot is on the other leg. I regard the growth of cities as an evil thing, unfortunate for mankind and the world, unfortunate for England and certainly unfortunate for India. The British have exploited India through its cities. The latter have exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built. I want the blood that is today inflating the arteries of the cities to run once again in the blood-vessels of the villages.

The initial mistake having been made, you do not mean to suggest that all those steps should inexorably be retraced even though it might involve pulling down what has already been built.

Why not? Once we discover that a mistake has been made, the only course open to us is to recognize our error, retrace our steps and begin anew.

Somehow, the belief prevails in the modern world that retracing one's steps in this respect would be incompatible with progress.

What do you do when a ship loses her course on the sea? She does not continue to follow the wrong course. She at once retraces her course and then starts afresh. How often must

[1] Reporting this in "Some Mussoorie Reminiscences", Pyarelal says that during his ten days' stay at Mussoorie a few foreign correspondents were able to have talks with Gandhiji during his morning walks.

[2] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 225.

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Columbus have done that or else he would have remained a derelict all the time.

Does that mean that you would depopulate the cities and send all the city-folk back to the villages?

I would not do that. All I want is that they should readjust their lives so as to cease to sponge upon the poor village folk and make to the latter what reparation is possible even at this late hour by helping to resuscitate their ruined economy.

What would you do if you were made a dictator of India for one day?

I would not accept it in the first place, but if I did become a dictator for one day I would spend it in cleaning the stables of the Viceroy's House that the hovels of the Harijans in Delhi are. It is disgraceful that under the very nose of the Viceroy such poverty and squalor should exist as there is in the Harijan quarters. And why does the Viceroy need such a big house? If I had my way I would turn it into a hospital.

And he gave the instance of President Kruger whose residence was not even as good as Birlaji's 'Hermitage' in which he was staying.

"Well, sir, suppose they continue your dictatorship for the second day?" Gandhiji replied amidst laughter:

The second day would be a prolongation of the first.

They next talked of several other things—the national language of India, the place of English, the administrative problems that would face an independent India, the future of Indo-British trade relations. They then came to non-violence.

"What will be the relations of India with Russia for instance? What if Russia were to attack India?"

Under my dictatorship Russia would find its occupation gone. It will not find it profitable to stay on, even if it came. But, of course, it is too rich a dream to be realized in a day.

The best men in the old generation had their education in England —you for instance. Would you have India, when she becomes independent, send her sons there for study as before?

No, not just now. I would advise her to send them there only after, say, 40 years.

It means depriving two generations of the benefits of contact with the West.

Why two generations? 40 years or even 60 is not too much even in an individual's life. If there is right living we need not grow old at 60 as unfortunately many do in this country.

I repeat that they should go there only after they have reached maturity. Because, it is only when they have learnt to understand the good that is in their own culture that they will be able to truly appreciate and assimilate the best that England or America has to give them. Imagine a boy of seventeen, like myself, going to England—he will simply be submerged.

Then we may expect you in England some time, queried the friend. Gandhiji replied amid general laughter:

Oh, yes, you may.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

289. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[After *May 28, 1946*][2]

"You have brought us to the threshold of independence, Gandhiji," remarked another privileged friend who had a talk with him on an evening, "and we cannot feel too grateful for it. You will, of course, give entire credit for it to ahimsa—that being your pet child. But we feel that we have derived more strength from truth than from your ahimsa."

You are wrong in thinking that in my partiality for ahimsa I have given to truth the second place. You are equally wrong in thinking that the country has derived more strength from truth than from ahimsa. On the contrary, I am firmly convinced that whatever progress the country has made, is due to its adoption of ahimsa as its method of struggle.

I mean the country has not understood your ahimsa but it has understood truth and that has filled it with strength.

It is just the contrary. There is so much of untruth in the country I feel suffocated sometimes. I am convinced, therefore, that it must be the practice of ahimsa alone, however faulty, that has brought us so far.

Moreover, I have not given truth the second place as you seem to think.

He continued and described how at a meeting at Geneva[3] he had flabbergasted everybody by remarking that whereas he used to say that God is Truth, he had since come to hold that Truth is God.

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's report "Some Mussoorie Reminiscences". Gandhiji reached Mussoorie on May 28, 1946.

[3] The meeting was held at Lausanne; *vide* Vol. XLVIII, pp. 404-5.

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"Nevertheless, your emphasis is always on ahimsa. You have made propagation of non-violence the mission of your life," argued the friend.

There again you are wrong. Ahimsa is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing truth in human relationships except through the practice of ahimsa. A steadfast pursuit of ahimsa is inevitably bound to truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by ahimsa. Truth came naturally to me. Ahimsa I acquired after a struggle. But ahimsa being the means we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is ahimsa, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

290. MORE SUGGESTIONS

It is a good sign that food shortage is taxing many minds. Suggestions for meeting it come in from all quarters. A friend, who knows what he writes about, sends the following:[1]

> (1) A substantial saving in cereals should be possible by reducing the ration of cereals to non-vegetarians to the extent that it is possible to supplement equal nutrition value by non-vegetarian food.
>
> (2) I expect that a large number of men who do manual work find difficulty in satisfying hunger with the reduced rations. . . . It, therefore, follows that to the extent that cereals are reduced to non-vegetarians, animal food, having equal nutrition value, should be substituted and that also for the same cost as that of the cereal reduced.
>
> (3) There is a large damage to crops by deer, rabbit, boar, pig and pigeon . . . . Non-vegetarians tell me that these can be used for food. . . . Incidentally, destruction on a large scale of these would be reflected in reduced destruction of field crops.
>
> (4) To save food in order that it will be available for famine areas under the present system of ration appeals to very few. . . . There would be a good psychological appeal if the foodgrains saved are collected and guaranteed to be sent to the famine areas.

Whether the authorities act up to the first or not, it is one which those honest meat-eaters who draw full vegetarian rations can. They can easily part with a portion of their cereals for the benefit of those in need. Mutual aid is the swiftest way of reaching relief to the needy in such cases.

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

The second follows from the first.

The third is contentious. In a country where all life is largely held sacred and even when it is not, habit has made people reluctant to take any life, the suggestion may be difficult of adoption even by non-vegetarians. But a confirmed respecter of all life though I am, I have no difficulty in recommending for acceptance by meat-eaters the suggestion that the correspondent's wisdom has dictated. I hope to examine an argument in *Harijanbandhu* advanced against the taking of even noxious life without any connection with food.[1]

The fourth suggestion, though sound, is not likely to produce any tangible result because of the ruling corruption and the inefficiency and irresponsibility of the Government. The difficulty will only be met when there is a national government which is responsible to the people and to which the people may look forward with confidence. It has been long coming. Will it ever come?

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

291. RELIGION v. *NO RELIGION*[2]

A correspondent writes:

> In the *Harijanbandhu* of the 5th May you have written that your non-violence contemplates destruction of animals dangerous to mankind, such as leopards, wolves, snakes, scorpions, etc.[3]
>
> You do not believe in giving food to dogs, etc. Several other people besides the Gujaratis look upon the feeding of dogs as a meritorious act. Such a belief may not be justifiable in times of food shortage like the present. Yet we must remember that these animals can be very useful to man. One can feed them and take work out of them.
>
> You had put 27 questions to Shri Raichandbhai from Durban. One of these questions was: "What should a seeker do when a snake attacks him?" His answer was : "He should not kill the snake and, if it bites, he should let it do so."[4] How is it that you speak differently now?

I have written a lot on this subject in the past.[5] At that time the topic was the killing of rabid dogs. There was much

[1] *Vide* the following item.
[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946.
[3] *Vide* p. 62.
[4] *Vide* Vol. I, pp. 127-8 and Vol. XXXII, pp. 593-602.
[5] For the articles under the title "Is This Humanity?" *vide* Vols. XXXI and XXXII.

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discussion on the subject but all that seems to have been forgotten.

My non-violence is not merely kindness to all living creatures. The emphasis laid on the sacredness of subhuman life in Jainism is understandable. But that can never mean that one is to be kind to this life in preference to human life. While writing about the sacredness of such life, I take it that the sacredness of human life has been taken for granted. The former has been over-emphasized. And, while putting it into practice, the idea has undergone distortion. For instance, there are many who derive complete satisfaction in feeding ants. It would appear that the theory has become a wooden, lifeless dogma. Hypocrisy and distortion are passing current under the name of religion.

Ahimsa is the highest ideal. It is meant for the brave, never for the cowardly. To benefit by others' killing and delude oneself into the belief that one is being very religious and non-violent, is sheer self-deception.

A so-called votary of non-violence will not stay in a village, which is visited by a leopard every day. He will run away and when someone has killed the leopard, will return to take charge of his hearth and home. This is not non-violence. This is a coward's violence. The man who has killed the leopard has at least given proof of some bravery. The man who takes advantage of the killing is a coward. He can never expect to know true non-violence.

In life it is impossible to eschew violence completely. The question arises, where is one to draw the line? The line cannot be the same for everyone. Although essentially the principle is the same, yet everyone applies it in his or her own way. What is one man's food can be another's poison. Meat-eating is a sin for me. Yet, for another person, who has always lived on meat and never seen anything wrong in it, to give it up simply in order to copy me will be a sin.

If I wish to be an agriculturist and stay in the jungle, I will have to use the minimum unavoidable violence in order to protect my fields. I will have to kill monkeys, birds and insects which eat up my crops. If I do not wish to do so myself, I will have to engage someone to do it for me. There is not much difference between the two. To allow crops to be eaten up by animals in the name of ahimsa while there is a famine in the land is certainly a sin. Evil and good are relative terms. What is good under certain conditions can become an evil or a sin under a different set of conditions.

Man is not to drown himself in the well of Shastras but he is to dive into their broad ocean and bring out pearls. At every step he has to use his discrimination as to what is ahimsa and what is *himsa*. In this there is no room for shame or cowardice. The poet has said that the road leading up to God is for the brave, never for the cowardly.

Finally, Raichandbhai's advice to me was that if I had courage, if I wanted to see God face to face, I should let myself be bitten by a snake instead of killing it. I have never killed a snake before or after receiving that letter. That is no matter of credit for me. My ideal is to be able to play with snakes and scorpions fearlessly. But it is merely a wish so far. Whether and when it will be realized I do not know. Everywhere I have let my people kill both. I could have prevented them if I had wished. But how could I? I did not have the courage to take them up with my own hands and teach my companions a lesson in fearlessness. I am ashamed that I could not do so. But my shame could not benefit them or me.

If Ramanama favours me I might still attain that courage some day. In the meantime, I consider it my duty to act as I have stated above. Religion is a thing to be lived. It is not mere sophistry.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

292. *HARIJAN WORK IN BHUSAWAL TALUKA*[1]

Shri Thakkar Bapa writes:[2]

> It has been decided to carry on sound and extensive Harijan work in the Bhusawal Taluka. . . . The circumstances are favourable.

What Bapa says is true. By favourable circumstances, Shri Thakkar Bapa probably means the establishment of a Congress Ministry. That does not mean that henceforth reforms will be imposed upon the people. There is the least room for the use of force in such things. An evil like untouchability which has found its way into the very marrow of the people's bones, and that too in the name of religion, cannot be removed forcibly. But an alien government uses its influence to further suppress the suppressed by force. And when it tries to help them from a motive, pure or

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946.
[2] Only an extract of the letter is reproduced here.

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selfish, that too is done by the exercise of force. The Congress has not established its position through force. It is a purely democratic organization. Therefore, it is hoped that the Congress ministers will educate public opinion and win popular support for all its progressive measures. This should result in an impetus to reforms like Harijan work in their provinces and the forces standing in the way of such reforms would automatically disappear. Moreover, intensive work in the limited area of the Bhusawal Taluka is likely to prove very fruitful. We cannot reach the whole of India at one and the same time. Wherever the workers have the requisite ability and influence, the work will proceed at a quicker pace. Sound work in a small area is therefore likely to be copied by others and thus lead to an early success. Let us hope that will be the result of the work which has been started in Bhusawal.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

293. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. What can one do if in spite of putting in a full day's labour, one cannot get enough to eat?

A. The labourer is worthy of his hire. This law is as old as the hills. All useful labour ought to bring in the same and adequate wages to the labourer. Till that time comes, the least that should be done is to see that every labourer gets enough to feed and clothe himself and his family. A government that does not ensure this much is no government. It is anarchy. Such a state should be resisted peacefully. Looting of grain-shops and rowdyism is not the remedy. It leads to needless loss and death. Even if the authorities give in out of fear, it does not really help them or the people. It does not remove anarchy and things remain as they were. A look round the world will confirm what is here stated.

If, in spite of the collections of food grain in the depots, the hungry cannot get it, they can offer peaceful satyagraha. They should not take by force what has not been given to them. They can go on a fast unto death and thus secure relief for

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946.

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themselves and for others. If they have patience, the method suggested by me is sure of success.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946[1]
Harijan, 9-6-1946

294. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

MUSSOORIE,
May 29, 1946

When he saw some dirty looking boys sitting in front of him, Mahatma Gandhi remarked:

To wear torn and dirty clothes is a sure sign of laziness.

Turning towards the Harijans attending his meeting, Mahatma Gandhi remarked that he was a Harijan himself, and they had come to see him as he was one of them. Mahatma Gandhi further added that he became a Harijan of his own accord, and if more people became Harijans, there would be so many more of them and the blot on Hinduism would be removed. He had come to the conclusion that caste system was very harmful to Hinduism.

How could he feel at home amidst the endless saturnalia of fashions that is Mussoorie?

Gandhiji recalled his previous visit to Mussoorie,[3] which was in connection with the Congress work. This time he had come purely on his own.

As you know I am not even a four-anna member but only a humble servant of the Congress like the unnamed crores who are not on its rolls but serve it all the same humbly and quietly to the best of their capacity without expectation of name or reward. And why? Because the thirst for freedom has taken possession of their souls. They do not know how it can be won. But they have heard that the Congress is the one organization that has for the last sixty years been fighting the good fight that would bring freedom to all without distinction. That is why they are devoted to it. I have come to Mussoorie as one of them, a humble, private individual.

He did not want anyone to be bothered with taking care of him.

[1] *Harijanbandhu*, however, has "Mussoorie, 27-5-1946", evidently a slip.
[2] *The Bombay Chronicle* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan* wherein he writes : "A deep note of resignation, sadness and introspection ran through Gandhiji's first public utterance at the evening prayer gathering."
[3] In October 1929; *vide* Vol. XLII.

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God alone is my Protector. How can puny man, who is not sure even of his own tomorrow, presume to protect another? I am content to be under God's care. He may protect or destroy. I know He sometimes even destroys to protect.

He had been told before, and again since his arrival at Mussoorie, of the life of the fashionable rich in Mussoorie. Like other Himalayan hill stations, Mussoorie was no place for the poor.

The poor slave for you. They draw your rickshaws. It hurts me, and it ought to hurt you too, that a fellow human being should pull the rickshaw of a healthy and able-bodied person. I say this not to criticize you but to remind you of those whose very existence you are otherwise apt to forget, but who nevertheless are India. It is up to you to think of them and enter into their lives.

I long for the day when Ramanama would save me from the necessity of having to go to hill stations during the summer. Crores cannot go to the hill stations. They are born to live and die on the plains.

I have not come here for pleasure but only under medical necessity so that I might be able to serve you the more. Give me your blessings and let me have a little quiet so that I can attend to my work and commune with the Maker undisturbed.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi advised the local rich men to build dharmashalas for the benefit of the poor and the Harijans as was done in Panchgani hills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

295. MESSAGE FOR N. R. MALKANI[1]

[Before *May 30, 1946*][2]

That sterilization of lepers is sinful as the disease is not a hereditary one, is the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhiji says:

If the Congress Party[3] was in favour of sterilization of lepers it would be a wrong decision.

The Hindu, 1-6-1946

[1] This was communicated through Amrit Kaur.
[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Karachi, May 30".
[3] In Sindh

296. *FAITH CURE* v. *RAMANAMA*

Here is fine banter from a friend:[1]

> I have read your "Confession and Cure" in *Harijan* of 17-3-'46.[2] I wonder whether this nature cure has any close relation to what is being called faith-cure. . . . For smallpox . . . no treatment is given but it is considered Divine Play. We do *pooja* to Goddess Mariamma and it is almost miraculous to see most of the cases come out successful. For stomach pain, even chronic cases, many make vows before the deity at Thirupathi . . . my mother had the same pain and after her visit to Thirupathi she is now free from that disease.
>
> Will you kindly enlighten me on this and may I ask why people should not have such faith in nature cure also . . .?

The examples that have been quoted are neither nature cure nor yet Ramanama which I have included in it. But they do show how nature cures without any treatment in many cases. They are undoubtedly cases which show the part superstition plays in Indian life. Ramanama which is the centre of nature cure is the enemy of superstition. Unscrupulous men will abuse Ramanama as they will any other thing or system. Mere lip recitation of Ramanama has nothing to do with cure. Faith-cure, if I know it correctly, is blind cure, such as the friend describes and thereby ridicules the living name of the living God. The latter is not a figment of one's imagination. It has to come from the heart. It is conscious belief in God and a knowledge of His Law that make perfect cure possible without any further aid. That law is that a perfect mind is responsible for perfect health of the body. A perfect mind comes from a perfect heart, not the heart known by a doctor's stethoscope but the heart which is the seat of God. It is claimed that realization of God in the heart makes it impossible for an impure or an idle thought to cross the mind. Disease is impossible where there is purity of thought. Such a state may be difficult to attain. But the first step in the ascent to health is taken with its recognition. The next is taken when the corresponding attempt is made. This radical alteration in one's life is naturally accompanied by the observance of all

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 217-9.

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other nature's laws hitherto discovered by man. One cannot play with them and claim to have a pure heart. It can be said with justice that possession of a pure heart should do equally well without Ramanama. Only, I know no other way of attaining purity. And it is the way trodden by the sages of old all over the world. They were men of God not superstitious men or charlatans.

If this is Christian Science, I have no quarrel with it. The way of Ramanama is not my discovery. It is probably much older than the Christian era.

A correspondent questions whether Ramanama avoids *bona-fide* surgical operations. Of course, it does not. It cannot restore a leg that is cut off in an accident. In many cases surgical operations are unnecessary. Where they are required they should be performed. But a man of God will not worry if a limb is lost. Recitation of Ramanama is neither an empirical method nor a makeshift.

MUSSOORIE, May 30, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

297. EXCESSIVE PRAISE

Thus an army officer to a friend:[1]

It is not a matter for pity if it is true that in all democratic countries politicians are uninterested in the army. The pity of it is that they are wrongly interested in it. The democracies regard army men as their saviours. They bring wealth and subjugate other countries and sustain authority in times of civil disturbance. What is, therefore, to be wished is that democracy, to be true, should cease to rely upon the army for anything whatsoever.

What has the army done for India? It is for that army that the writer pleads. I fear that in no sense has it served India's interest. It has kept millions of inoffensive and disarmed people under subjection. It has impoverished them. It is an army of which the sooner the British part is sent away and better employed, the better for both India and England, and the world. The sooner the Indian part is turned away from its destructive purpose and its talent employed for constructive purposes, the better it will be for democracy in India. It will be a poor democracy that depends for its existence on military assistance.

[1] The extract is not reproduced here.

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Military force interferes with the free growth of the mind. It smothers the soul of man. Thanks to years of foreign domination brought about by the "highly efficient" army, India, in spite of the efforts of the Mission, might have to pull through a long or short civil war which, I shall hope, will bring to an end all infatuation for armed forces. They are a brutalizing process after you have isolated discipline which should be common for any social order. If free India has to sustain the present military expenditure, it will bring no relief to the famishing millions.

MUSSOORIE, May 30, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

298. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter written from Indore before you left for Bombay. As long as you rely on anybody except God, there will be nothing but darkness around you. We have not heard of the blind leading the blind. It is an error and ignorant attachment to say that a particular person guides one. That all of us let ourselves be guided, up to a point, by somebody is one thing and to rely upon one person in all matters is another. I see this every moment, and more clearly in your case. My test has no meaning at all. I do not test anybody, nor do I wish to do so. Really speaking I do not know how to test anybody. You can, therefore, stay in Bombay. Kafi Khan can guide you best and you can guide him. After all you are brother and sister and there would be nothing unusual in your guiding each other. Nor is there anything unusual in your trying to help Rashid Khan's widow. If your advice is not accepted in all matters, you should not feel offended. However, how can I fully know the position in your family and its affairs? I am sure, therefore, that you should do what seems best to you. What I have said above concerns the members of the same family. But you have looked upon the Ashram as your family. You may draw from it whatever consolation you can. You need not ask me even for that. You know all the members of that family. You may, therefore, take from each, whatever service you can easily get from him or her. You need not ask me to help you in that matter. You

may go to the Ashram whenever you wish to and leave it whenever you feel inclined to do so. When you go to the Ashram, observe its rules during the time you remain there. After leaving it you may follow whichever you can. The others do the same. There is no benefit in carrying with oneself wherever one goes what one finds a burden.

In Borkamata you have created your own family. I did not know about it. Whether to go there or not also rests with you. If I have forbidden you, I withdraw my prohibition. If anything happens there or somebody does not respect your wishes, do not seek my help. I do not even know everybody there.

You have by now written a good many letters. Since you had lost a dear brother, I felt that I should share your sorrow and, therefore, wrote to you despite pressure of other work. You should not take improper advantage of that now. If you need to write to me on some special business, that would be a different matter. Make your way in life truthfully and with ease and do everything with God alone as witness. Give up your attachment to me. To rely on one human being in all one's affairs is nothing but attachment.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I got Hosa's letter just now. . . .[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 520

299. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

I was pained to read about your health in Manilal's letter. Since I recommend this to everybody, why should I not to you? You believe in God not merely with the intellect but with the heart. If this is quite true, instal Rama in your heart and know Him. He will cure you of your disease and, if He does not wish to do that, He will give you peace of mind and your restlessness will disappear. If He alone is to be one's true help, the condition, I believe, is that one may seek no other help except what one gets from pure and moderate food and the five elements. You

[1] A line following this is illegible.

are, of course, not bound to do a thing merely because I say so. I have written what my heart prompted me to write. Do only what your heart accepts. You need not reply to me. Nor need you take the trouble of dictating a letter. I shall ask Sushila, who is accompanying me, to write to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 211. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

300. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of both of you. I have written to Mathuradas. I am glad that Sita has passed.

I understand what you say regarding Sorabjee. Between your experience and my inference, experience is always the better guide. You may, therefore, do what you have decided.

You also say that it would be better if some Muslim gentlemen from South Africa could be included. But think over it for yourself.

Your plan that all of you go away leaving Sita at Banaras is also good. I feel somewhat concerned at your departure being repeatedly delayed. But in this matter, too, you should do what you two desire. One should attach no importance at all to separation from one's family. It matters little where one's body is. So long as the hearts are one, the body may be anywhere. In the absence of union of hearts, the bodies being even in the same house means nothing.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now that Sita has passed, why would she care to write ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4981

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301. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After *May 30, 1946*][1]

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I shall be happy if you get well completely. After that you may engage yourself in any service you like. My eagerness to press my advice on you has left me, but my love remains the same as it ever was. I am trying to overcome my *moha*. You can deduce the rest from the above.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 599

302. WHOLESALE RELEASES[2]

Responsible Ministries in the provinces have naturally meant wholesale releases of political prisoners. These include convicts sentenced for murder, arson, robbery, etc. Correspondents ask how far these releases should be acclaimed by the public as of heroes and martyrs.

It is one thing to release, for a variety of reasons, persons who were convicted of such crimes. It is wholly another thing to praise the acts as of heroes to be received with every mark of honour. I have no doubt that it is thoughtless and wrong. If I am in need of money for a public purpose and commit robbery I do not cease to be a robber, because the robbery committed by me is for public use. This indiscriminate praise of every crime, so long as it is dignified by the name of patriotism, is a boomerang bound to return with redoubled force to the nation which will have to pay heavily for it. Independence though it includes the freedom even to commit a crime, may easily prove a curse, if it does not carry a voluntary rigid restraint. The public approbation referred to is wrong education of the people and a harmful preparation for the independence that is coming much sooner than many of us expect.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

[1] In *Bapuke Patra–8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam* this letter is placed after the letter dated May 30, 1946; *vide* pp. 238-9.

[2] This appeared under "Notes".

303. MINISTERIAL SALARIES

I have to pay heavily for the caution with which I wrote the other day the paragraph in *Harijan*[1] in regard to increase in ministerial salaries. I have to go through long letters bewailing my caution and arguing with me to revise my view. How can ministers make large increases in their own original fat salaries when the poor *chaprasis* and clerks get an increase which hardly meets the occasion? I have reread my note and I claim that the short note includes all that the various correspondents desire. But, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, I expand my meaning.

I have been twitted for not referring to the Karachi Resolution. The lower scale of ministers' salaries rests on much higher ground than the authority of a resolution. In any event, so far as I am aware, the Congress has never varied that resolution. It is as binding today as it was when it was passed.

I do not know that the increase in the salaries is justified. But I must not offhand condemn the increase without knowing the case of the ministers. Critics should know that I have no authority over them or anyone else except myself. Nor am I present at all the meetings of the Working Committee. I attend only when required by the President. I can only give my opinion for what it is worth. And, if it is to have any weight, it must be well-conceived and based on ascertained facts.

The question of the hideous inequality between the rich and the poor and the lower services and the higher is a separate subject requiring drastic and well-thought-out method and could not be merely incidental to the lowering of the salaries of the few ministers and their secretaries. Both subjects require to be dealt with on merits. The question of salaries could be and should be easily disposed of by the ministers concerned. The other is a much vaster subject requiring a thorough overhauling. I would any day agree that the ministers should tackle the subject in their own provinces without delay and that the lower ranks should before everything else have their salaries fully considered and increased wherever necessary.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

[1] *Vide* pp. 5-6.

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304. QUESTION BOX

Is Lying Ever Justifiable?

Q. What do you say to the following from Bertrand Russell? "I once in the course of a country walk saw a tired fox at the last stages of exhaustion still forcing himself to run. A few minutes afterwards I saw the hunt. They asked me if I had seen the fox, and I said I had. They asked me which way he had gone, and I lied to them. I do not think I should have been a better man if I had told the truth."

A. Bertrand Russell is a great writer and philosopher. With all respect to him I must dissent from the view attributed to him. He made the initial mistake of admitting that he had seen the fox. He was not bound to answer the first question. He could even have refused to answer the second question unless he deliberately wanted to put the hunt off the track. I have always maintained that nobody is bound always to answer questions that may be put to him. Truth-telling admits of no exceptions.

Addresses and Floral Tributes

A correspondent complains:

In many of the provinces there are Congress ministries, and the public is proud of the fact. So when any minister visits any place, the local bodies or local institutions show their respect by presenting addresses of value. In almost all the cases, these things become the property of the minister. This practice, in my opinion, is not good. Either this system of receiving addresses must be stopped or the things presented should go, say, to the local Congress Committee. There should be some definite policy regarding the garlanding of the ministers or the Congress leaders. I have seen several cases where these ministers have been honoured with flowers costing not less than 300 to 400 rupees. This is mere waste of money.

A. The complaint is valid. No public servant should receive for his own use addresses of value or costly floral tributes. These things have become a nuisance, if they are not much worse. The argument is often trotted out that costly frames and flowers put money into the pockets of artisans. The latter are well able to take care of themselves without the aid of ministers and the like. These gentlemen do not travel for pleasure. Theirs are business tours undertaken often for listening to what the people have to say. The addresses presented to them need not extol

their virtues which are their own reward. They should express accurately local wants and grievances if any. In these times the ministers and their secretaries have a hard task before them. Public adulation instead of being a help will become a hindrance.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

305. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your postcard. It is a postcard and you write "private" on it, and that in an obscure corner! It is so private indeed that one realizes what is private only after reading it! What is private in it? I have done all I could, and am still doing, to help you two to live together. Munnalal has even agreed.[1] I think the sooner you start living together, the better for your health. Mind is the chief cause of illness in all cases. It is particularly so in your case. If Munnalal has to stay with Mirabehn, you also will stay with her. If he goes there merely to inquire after her health, there is no point in your accompanying him. If I can help, I will not let go a single opportunity. Keep your mind calm, therefore.

Can you get a house in Uruli Kanchan in which you two can live by yourselves? Would you yourself like that? Or would you prefer to stay somewhere near Sevagram? If you write frankly to me I may be able to help you better. There is no cause for embarrassment at all. For the decision that you will live together has already been made and it will be implemented at the earliest opportunity. Have you realized the power of Ramanama? Do you get *Harijanbandhu* there? Do you get any other journals? Do you read any? How silly of you! How strange that, apart from writing about yourself, you give no other news! I shall be leaving this place in about eight days. I shall go to Delhi.

I am sending your letter to Munnalal. I have asked him to stay on there so that he may know whether or not he should go to Mirabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8256. Also C. W. 6980. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* p. 191.

306. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Herewith Kanchan's postcard. I have sent her a reassuring reply. I have told her that you two will be living in a separate house of your own. You also should write to her and reassure her.

You ought not to write bitter letters to her. All her illness comes from the mind. If she had faith in Ramanama she would not need consolation from anybody else. But the difficulty is that for Kanchan the only Ramanama is yourself. You have, therefore, no choice but to play that part. Even in doing that, however, you will need the support of Ramanama.

I expected a letter from you yesterday, but none arrived. Have you received no reply from Mirabehn as yet? I hope that your mental condition is good, and so also your health.

I may stay here up to the 8th or 9th. There is a pleasant nip in the air.

Has Omprakash left for Sevagram?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8416. Also C. W. 5617. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

307. LETTER TO HOSA RASHID KHAN

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. HOSA,

I have your letter. I like it. I am not happy that Amtul Salaam has left. I know that she can be a great comfort to you. May God grant you peace.

Why did you write to me in English? Do you not know

Hindustani? You could have written to me either in the Devanagari or in the Urdu script.

Blessings from
BAPU

BEGUM RASHID KHAN
RASHID NIVAS
INDORE, C. I.

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

308. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Why does your health suffer so often? I have had a lot of correspondence in connection with your case and have also thought at length over it.[1] Devdas feels that something bordering on untruth has crept into your reply. It is not enough to say that they may proceed against you if they want. Is there any proof that you were in the Fort at Delhi?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

309. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. It is good that you asked for money from your brother. Do whatever you think right regarding the servants.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4558

[1] The addressee who was arrested during the Quit India Movement of 1942 had alleged that he was brought from Nagpur to Delhi "handed over to military custody at the Red Fort . . . and subjected to torture". G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated March 28/30, 1946 had informed Gandhiji that "after a very thorough examination" it was found that the whole story of Prabhudayal Vidyarthi was completely false. *Vide* "Letter to Prabhudayal Vidyarthi", 8-6-1946; also Vol. LXXXII, pp. 114-5, 180 and Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 156 and 275.

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310. INTERVIEW TO NORMAN CLIFF[1]

May 31, 1946

In answer to the criticism that Gandhiji was even more tender towards capitalist exploiters than towards their victims, he told Norman Cliff that if his non-violence was made of that stuff it should be suppressed.

Of course capitalists are among my friends and I take pride in the fact that they accept me as a friend. But I fight them when I feel there is need and no one fights them harder. I fought the mill-owners as I suppose nobody had fought them and successfully.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Book I, Vol. I, p. 63

311. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

Speaking after prayers, Mahatma Gandhi expressed regret that yesterday due to inclement weather the audience had to be satisfied with *Ramdhun* only. He was also sorry that some had to sit or stand on wet grass. It would be good if there was a proper ground where everybody could go and pray in comfort.

He again suggested that Mussoorie should have a place where the poor could come and avail themselves of the benefits of the hill climate whenever necessary.

I myself have become a Harijan by choice. I would love to be in a place where Harijans too can come and dwell. A Harijan by birth may repudiate his *varna* but how can I who have become a Harijan by choice? I have not hesitated to suggest to caste Hindus that today they have all to become *atishudras*, if the canker of caste feeling is to be eradicated from Hinduism and Hinduism is not to perish from the face of the earth.

[1] Of *News Chronicle*, London

[2] The report in *National Herald* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

If there were such a place in Mussoorie itself, where even Harijans would be welcome, he would rather stay there if ever he came to Mussoorie again. In answer to a similar suggestion at Panchgani, the people there were planning to have a place of that type. He was glad to inform the gathering that there was some talk already of a committee of the citizens of Mussoorie being formed for that purpose.

What, however, exercised his mind even more was the impending famine. He reminded his fashionable audience of the coffin at their feast. As a matter of fact the famine was already in the land. Crores were not getting enough to eat. Rich people were perhaps ready to give money, but no one could eat money. There was not enough food in the country. Whatever there was could not be transported quickly to the deficit areas. Such was the bankruptcy of the Government. Then again there were places where people went hungry in spite of the fact that the food was stored on the spot. The reason was all-round corruption and the greed of our own people. He appealed to those who were well-off and could afford to get somehow whatever they wanted, to spare every grain of foodstuffs that they could. If the people co-operated and there was no black marketing and corruption, possibly there was enough food in the land to enable them to tide over the crisis. There were some who did not agree with him and maintained that if we did not get food from other countries we could not avoid starvation and death. He was not of that opinion. When other countries sent them supplies it would take time for the supplies to reach India in the first instance and even after they were landed in the ports, it would take about six weeks to transport them to the needed areas. The only real remedy was self-help and co-operation among all and disappearance of corruption. He appealed to the well-to-do men and women of Mussoorie to save every grain they could for the famishing people. If all voluntarily restricted themselves absolutely to what was needed for their health, they would be well able to tide over their difficulties.

National Herald, 2-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

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312. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[On or after *May 31, 1946*][1]

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Only now am I reaching your letter of February 26. Your suggestion that rations, etc., should not be allowed to people whose income exceeds a certain amount is, I am afraid, fraught with danger. Now that there are Congress Ministries they can adopt whatever measures seem necessary. I think something can be done if they have the will and the competence.

I write this much with great effort. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM

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

313. LETTER TO BHANUBHAI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI BHANUBHAI,

I have your letter. Is this your own handwriting? What do you do? How proficient are you? What is your income? Maybe, as you say, one drastic remedy might be to quit the place where you have to face insults. I can understand that those who can put up with such insults and preserve their self-respect can stay on. I have passed through such an ordeal. In South Africa all Indians are regarded as untouchables. It is a different thing that people swallow all the bitter draughts when their sensibilities are blunted and they pursue selfish ends. I shall write to you if anything particular suggests itself to me after I get the further details I have asked for.

BHANUBHAI
HARIJAN ASHRAM
WADHAWAN

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

[1] In the source this and the following six letters are placed after those of May 31, 1946.

314. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. It appears to me that your friend erred in undertaking the fast. There is no restriction to fasting undertaken to ward off an illness. It accords with the need of the occasion. Then, you mention no reasons. Unless I know and fully comprehend the reason I don't see what remedy I can suggest. For nature-cure treatment there is not—nor should there be—any need to run around. In nature cure, as I conceive it, Ramanama enjoys the pride of place. It is the focal point. But it is something that needs to be grasped. It is useless for those to whom it does not appeal. Does your friend sleep in the open air? Does he breathe through the nose? Does he take an early morning sun-bath? Does he have hip-bath and friction-bath? You do know both these baths. Does he have abdominal mud-packs at night? Dr. Dinshaw has not yet been able to take up personally the work for the poor and the work he was conducting at Poona has since been suspended. He is himself contemplating reorganizing the activity. But I shall consult him only after I have further details about your friend's case.

Enclosed you will find a letter for Bhanubhai. How do you help him and others in similar circumstances? Since a man like you is available there, it ought to be within your power to dispose of individual cases like this one. Please pass on Bhanubhai's letter to him after going through it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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315. LETTER TO BACHHRAJ T. DOSHI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI BACHHRAJ,

I have your letter. It does not seem likely that I shall be able to reach Panchgani before the 15th of June. Everything is in confusion. Mahabaleshwar is of course out. I am dictating this at Mussoorie. Mussoorie is at a higher altitude than Panchgani. The air is pretty cold. I have nothing to do in Delhi till the 9th or 10th June. So I am staying on here. I came here on the 28th.

If some house is available which can be used as a dharmashala I ought to take up residence there and stick to the place. If no such house has been secured and if the arrangement is to be postponed till my arrival, I should like to stay at Preston because Gulbai[1] used to live there. But surely it is not for me to make the choice. I would put up at any place which would be convenient and where a party of ten or twelve people could be accommodated. You may take it that whatever is convenient to you will be convenient to me.

I would naturally want to go to Poona direct from Kalyan. I might be inclined to visit Uruli Kanchan for a day or two if it is convenient. It will be enough if you see me only at Poona. For the present you may regard all this as merely a wish. It is in God's hands whether or not it will materialize.

Since Pattanisaheb[2] is himself staying in the Panchgani Castle the thought of putting up there must be given up. Even otherwise there is always the possibility of members of his family or those of one Prince or another coming to stay. This is another reason why we should give up the idea of Panchgani Castle.

SJT. BACHHRAJ DOSHI
PANCHGANI

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

[1] Wife of Dinshaw Mehta
[2] Anantrai Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar State

316. LETTER TO M. B. GODBOLE

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI GODBOLE,

Your letter is good. You will find the reply in *Harijan.*

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

DR. M. B. GODBOLE
NATURE-CURE SPECIALIST
LAKSHMI ROAD, POONA

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

317. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI GOPALASWAMI,

Your letter to Bapa was passed on to me for perusal. You have advised him to refuse help to Soundaram[1]. I don't like it. You should have been more charitable. This is the first experiment of entrusting responsible jobs to women. You should give all assistance to the venture. I can say nothing if it is beyond your power; but why is it so? How can a devotee of Rajaji do such thing? Rajaji is well known for his charitable disposition; he makes friends of foes and does not forsake friends even when they turn enemies. I know of instances of both the types. Devotion can never mean that we may not emulate the object of our devotion. Devotion bereft of any attempt at emulation is no devotion at all. Sometimes the views of our seniors do not agree with our own but we do not leave them for that reason. Why should you be unhappy if Kamalabehn has not been appointed an Agent? The office of an Agent is not for prestige but for service. Cannot one serve without being an Agent? Subbulakshmi was never promised anything. I do not like all that is going on. You also admit that Soundaram is a worthy worker and in addition is a doctor. Her husband also is a worker—

[1] Wife of G. Ramachandran

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enlightened and hard-working. On her appointment, as an Agent therefore, she deserves to be congratulated by you. Let us see what happens now. Do whatever is possible independently. The field [of service] is wide enough to accommodate all.

Blessings from
BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
MADRAS

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

318. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BAPA,

Herewith a copy of my letter to Gopalaswami[1] which will acquaint you with my views. You will see that I have not asked him to do anything against his wishes. I have tried to point out to him what I thought was a flaw in his thinking. I expect that if Soundaram conducts herself in a mature way — and I trust she will — everything will end well. You may send a copy to her if you think it right.

SERVANTS OF [INDIA] SOCIETY
POONA

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

319. INSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATION ON KHADI[2]

A khadi worker writes:

I give below a recent conversation between the manager of a Khadi Bhandar and some customers. Should khadi be sold to such persons?

Q. "Is this yarn spun by you?"

A. "No. I have bought these eight hanks for Rs. 10."

Q. To a second customer: "Are you able to spin all this yarn?"

A. "No. This is spun by my daughter. We sell yarn too at the rate of 12 annas per hank."

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-6-1946.

Q. To a third : "You cannot buy khadi unless you produce the requisite quantity of yarn."

A. "It does not matter. So long as I cannot get the yarn, I will buy uncertified khadi."

Q. To a fourth: "Why do you buy khadi?"

A. "Because it is easy to procure."

Q. To a fifth : "You are not a regular wearer of khadi. What will you do with what you have bought?"

A. "Today khadi is looked upon as being in the fashion."

Q. To a sixth : "You do not spin yourself. From where then comes this yarn?"

A. "A good friend of mine always provides me with yarn."

Q. To a seventh : "Why do you always wear either silk or wool khadi?"

A. "Because I do not have to give yarn for these."

Q. To an eighth : "You have bought a large quantity of khadi. What will you do with it all?"

A. "This will last me two or three years. After that it will be seen whether I can get any or not."

The above questions and answers are revealing. If the new policy in regard to khadi is correct and khadi customers are of the above nature, it proves the necessity for the abolition of the khadi clause from the Congress Constitution. It is worthy of note that the questions and answers concern eight persons. The Charkha Sangh need not cater for the needs of a single one of them. The Spinners' Association exists only for the poor. Those who wear khadi, do so either for the sake of the poor or for winning swaraj or both. The eight customers mentioned above are concerned with neither. If the Charkha Sangh is to prove the rightness of the ideal for which khadi stands, then its workers must be loyal enough to the new policy and not fear even the closing down of the sales bhandars. They must have the strength to bear any consequences in order to set right the mistakes of the past.

The above conversation also holds a warning to the managers of the bhandars to be wide awake. They should become experts in the science of khadi and be prepared to teach customers the inner meaning of khadi with patience and humility. This may take time but it is worth while. If there is faith in the power of khadi I have no doubt that we shall remain steadfast and thereby inspire others with the belief also. But if workers themselves lack faith then the claim for khadi will fall to the ground.

I have taken for granted that the conversation has been truly reported.

MUSSOORIE, June 1, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

320. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

DEAR LORD,

I had thought that your kind letter of the 27th ultimo did not require any answer. But I now see that I must write.

You "look forward" to my return and that of the Congress Working Committee to Delhi before the end of next week. Maulana Saheb was with me yesterday and he told me that it was very difficult to recall the members of the Working Committee before the 9th instant as many of them had appointments, he knew, which they could not very well cancel. He is, therefore, calling the meeting for the 9th instant. I wonder if I might also leave here on the morning of the 9th so as to reach Delhi about 10 a. m. This would not permit me to keep appointments before 2 p. m. that day. Will this do or will you want me before the 9th? If you do I would leave here on the 8th morning.

I hope that you are keeping well and that Sir Stafford is regaining his lost strength day by day.

The weather here is naturally very cool.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 200

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321. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Have just got yours of the 25th ultimo.

I do not know that I have kept any letter of yours unanswered except one which demanded no answer.

Your first para is irrelevant. I am neither saint nor sinner. I am just one among millions or milliards, no more, no less. And being mere man, I do not distrust the men of the Mission. When and if they prove unworthy of trust, they will lose, not I. Those who never had any trust may lose nothing. Their gain will be to be able to say 'we-told-you-so'.

The constructive programme never stops. It is no makeshift.

I am writing this in Mussoorie, where I have an exceptionally quiet place.

Love.

BAPU

KHURSHED NAOROJI
BHUJ, CUTCH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

322. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have gone through what you have written about the *asanas*, etc. I had not asked about the number of people that benefited by the treatment. What I want is a clean and concise account of the methods of treatment which you have yourself tried, so that anyone could try them himself. The practice of *Hathayoga*[2] is an ancient one. I have read a book

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.

[2] A system of yoga for gaining control over the physical body and breathing

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on *Hathayoga* in Gujarati. The man who practised it is no more. His later life was not worthy of emulation.[1] The description of *Hathayoga* exercises is fascinating. Your account of the *Khechari*[2] posture is exaggerated. I do not mean to say that *Hathayoga* exercises are something to be shunned but their usefulness is limited. It is essential to understand its true limits otherwise it will do nothing but harm. *Rajayoga*[3] is regarded as the opposite of *Hathayoga*. For my part, I do not regard the two as opposed to each other. All that is to be found in *Hathayoga* is already included in *Rajayoga*, besides a lot more which is its speciality. An aspirant to *Rajayoga* may have recourse to *Hathayoga* in the initial stages. I call *Rajayoga* by another name, viz., Ramanama.

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

323. LETTER TO GURUNATH JOSHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

BHAI GURUNATH JOSHI,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote, no matter what. In my opinion, you have been guilty of a serious lapse from the moral point of view. This is the one thing that has disgraced many a profession. In theory all professions are supposed to be altruistic, i. e., they are to be pursued with a religious attitude. Pecuniary consideration has no place in a religious attitude. If one pursues any calling in a religious spirit one is sure to earn enough for one's maintenance. But even that is not always necessary. Even if one cannot earn enough one has to keep up one's religious attitude. *Vritti* in this connection should be understood to mean *drishti*, i. e., point of view. You swerved from such an attitude and succumbed to the temptation of injections, etc. Ganeshshastri Joshi, your guru, who initiated you in the Ayurvedic system, has himself told me about the guiding principle of Ayurveda, viz., that Ramanama forms the basis of the system. And utilization of the five elements is symbolic of the permanence of Ramanama. You forgot this lesson. I had told you that in [Uruli] Kanchan village, you had

[1] The source is not clear here.
[2] A yogic exercise which is supposed to enable one to fly in the air
[3] One of the various systems of yoga

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to forget your knowledge of the Ayurvedic medicines, i. e., you were not to make use of them. Your first job was to teach Ramanama. Only those who have spontaneous faith in it and are inspired by it in all their actions can testify to the wonders of Ramanama. For, as I have said, Ramanama is the unfailing remedy for all the three kinds of afflictions. Like the arrow of Rama which is said to have never missed its target, the name of Rama too never fails. All our actions should be inspired by this principle. Lure of wealth is also a kind of affliction for which again Ramanama is the cure. Having yourself failed to imbibe this, how can you expect to treat others by naturopathy? Never mind what has happened; if you now want to come to Uruli Kanchan village, use the great rejuvenating herb that Ramanama is wherever you are. Give up the merest wish of earning wealth through it. Come and see me in Uruli Kanchan village when I go there after you have completely rid yourself of your infatuation with wealth and have simplified your way of life. Read this letter again and again. Write to me if you don't follow any expression. You can show this letter to Ganeshshastri Joshi and do as he says.

May you always come to good. Forget Veergaon. It is enough to be inspired to . . . .[1]

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

324. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

CHI. PARNERKAR,

Bhai Burade has sent me an article[2] of yours. Datar Singhji has said the same thing that your article says. Our purpose will not be served by repeating the same thing in different words. Our work will make headway only when we produce results. Therefore, my comments on Rishabhdas's article apply here also. We ought to keep in some big city a sufficient number of dual-purpose cows and prove that this is not only proper but also beneficial. The question of interest does not arise. Our success can be demonstrated by showing that it does not entail loss. If

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] On *Sarvopayogi Gai*, the 'All-purpose cow'

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we fail to show even this much success our work is never going to make any real progress. We shall achieve nothing by contributing nice articles beautifully written in all the languages of India and by giving them wide publicity. This is universal experience. Today the cow is facing death. That cow's milk is not being appreciated only proves the helplessness of all those 'protectors' of the cow. For this let us not blame the British, nor the Muslims. You may still show me why your article deserves to be published. I shall then consider it again. I think Datar Singhji is doing our work as best as he can. It remains to be seen how far he will be able to go or how long his faith will stand firm.

Bhai Burade writes to tell me that two more articles were sent to Sushila Pai. Being unwell she is in Bombay. I have not looked up the *Harijan Sevak* files. I cannot lay my hands upon the articles. I am writing to Sushilabehn.

I hope you are keeping good health. Your work also, I expect, is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

325. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946[2]

Addressing the meeting, Mahatma Gandhi said that it had given him much pleasure to come there for prayers. He had been told the poor and labouring classes to which he himself belonged lived round about the place and it was difficult for them to come to where he was staying. So he had agreed to hold the prayer meeting in the grounds of Silverton Hotel. He would have loved to walk up to the place of prayer but that was not possible and much against his wish he had to motor down to the place.

The benefit one derived from community prayers had to be experienced rather than described, added Mahatma Gandhi. He said that his experience of nearly 50 years had made him a confirmed advocate of community prayers. The work done by two men together was more than the sum of

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

[2] From *Hindustan*, 4-6-1946

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the output of each separately. Similarly, the benefit derived from community prayers was incalculable.

Gandhiji reminded them about what he had said on the need for having a place for the poor people in Mussoorie. He did not expect them to build palatial buildings, but they should be clean and well planned, so that even a man like him could come and stay there. He could not stand dirty clothes, dirty houses and surroundings and dirty lavatories. There was no reason why the poor should have to put up with dirt.

Their lavatories should be as clean as a bedroom or a library. Defecation was not a dirty process. It was a necessary physiological action of the body as was eating and they should have proper and clean places for it.

There should not be a trace of dirt or foul smell in it. You might think that I am speaking with my tongue in my cheek. The fact is that a meticulous sense of cleanliness, not only personal but also in regard to one's surroundings is the alpha and omega of corporate life. We in India have made a ritual of cleanliness. But we have yet to make good our claim that we possess the sanitary instinct. I have seen how we foul the banks of our holy rivers. The Ganges water is regarded by us as holy, capable of washing off our sins. The idea is symbolical. Just as water washes the body clean, a devotee prays and hopes for the cleansing of the heart by the water of life. But if we contaminate our holy rivers as we do, how can their water effect inner cleansing?

He had heard that the living conditions of the labourers in Mussoorie were deplorable. They lived in small, overcrowded, dirty and evil-smelling rooms. No one could afford to overlook that. All life was one. If they cleaned their own homes and neglected their neighbours' they would have to pay the price in the form of epidemics and the like. In the West they had been able to rid their countries of plague. He himself had witnessed in South Africa[1] how by prompt and energetic action the Johannesburg Municipality was able to arrest the outbreak of plague so effectively that it never came back. But in India it returned again and again —it had become almost endemic.

The remedy lies in our own hands. We must not only observe the rules of health and hygiene in our own persons but we must see that our poor neighbours do so too. To neglect to do so is a sin for which we cannot escape the penalty. I do not grudge the rich their riches provided that they do not forget the poor and share their riches with them and provided their

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 236-7.

riches are not gained at the expense of the impoverishment of others.

The Hindustan Times, 3-6-1946 and 4-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

326. URULI KANCHAN[1]

My co-workers from Uruli Kanchan inform me that patients from far distances are coming there for treatment. I have already written in *Harijan Sevak*[2] that up till now there is nowhere any permanent arrangement for anyone to live and no room for in-patients. I have just heard that some land has been made available but the work of building huts on it remains. There is no house available in the village either where patients from outside could be taken in and, in any event, it has never been the intention to turn a village into a city. The real aim is for every village to have a nature-cure clinic to adorn it just as it should have a school.

Readers should bear in mind that my co-workers in Uruli Kanchan are unable to guide patients through correspondence. Persons who live far away can carry out their own nature-cure treatment. Who cannot recite Ramanama in his own home? It is also possible for everyone to have sitz baths, etc., wherever he is.

MUSSOORIE, June 2, 1946
Harijan, 9-6-1946

327. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

AMTUSSALAAM
CARE CUROTRADE
BOMBAY

NO COMING DELHI. HOPING LEAVE DELHI ABOUT FIFTEENTH.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 521

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-6-1946.
[2] *Vide* pp. 179-80.

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328. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I am glad that you got the land at last. If all the land has been entered in my name, that is not right. There is no objection, however, if I have been described as a Trustee. I suppose you can easily see the difficulty that you will face if the land has been entered in my name and I suddenly die. In case, however, such a thing does happen, you may use this letter and end any dispute that may arise, telling the people concerned that the land was not my private property but was intended for schemes for helping the people of Uruli Kanchan to preserve good health and for purposes connected with such schemes. After me the Trustees will be Dinshaw Mehta and Jehangir Patel or Balkrishna.

I am returning by registered post the plans received from you. I accept the modifications suggested therein. I see no objection to all the lavatories being fitted with good septic tanks, if that is possible. I suppose you know that if such tanks have not been made carefully or if we do not use them properly, they can be a source of grave danger. Let Dr. Bhagwat and Bhai Datar meet and discuss this matter further. Balkrishna also knows about both the dangers. I am not happy about the vagueness of my suggestion, but I have not been able myself to come to a definite decision. I discussed the matter with some friends who have experience in this field, but they also could not help me to come to a decision, so [complicated][1] is the problem. For the present, therefore, abide by the decision of the three persons I have mentioned.

I shall positively have returned there in July. If you have not been able to make much progress by that time, I will take it up when I come there. I shall be in Delhi up to June 15 at any rate. I may [possibly][2] remain there even up to the 21st. I shall . . .[3] be going to Panchgani thereafter. I must return to Sevagram in August. I am, therefore, afraid that I [shall get][4] at the most the month of July [in Uruli Kanchan][5]. My only consolation [is that you people][6] are doing excellent

[1],[2],[3],[4], [5]&[6] The source is damaged here.

work there, so much so that I sometimes fear whether my presence there might not hamper the modest but beautifully progressing work that you are doing. But I dismiss the fear from my mind with the thought that I will do as God prompts me.

By a fortunate accident both Kanchan and Zohra happen to be there. But they might leave that place any time. The best thing would be that some local woman or women should get trained and start working.

Carry out the modifications in the plan for the building which you have suggested. Personally I like the change in the doors from three feet to four feet, for narrow doors cannot afterwards be widened. I myself have experienced the advantage of wide doorways, namely, that patients' beds, etc., are easy to move in and out through them. But the best course would be to follow Dr. Bhagwat's advice. Everybody has a right to point out to him the advantages and disadvantages of all things but in case of a difference of opinion it is best, in my absence, that his view should be carried out. I cannot from this distance come to any more definite conclusions about the [suggested][1] modifications. I understand what you say about the cow.

I will reply to whatever questions you ask me about *brahmacharya*. But you should attach importance only to what your heart spontaneously suggests. Vinoba's articles are, of course, fine. But for the person who has unquestioning faith in the power of Ramanama there is no other support but that, for when one has faith in its power Ramanama ceases to be a matter of reason and becomes solely a matter of the heart. I feel every moment that for such a person Rama is the only King of his heart, and he who has Rama as his Lord cannot waste a single moment of his time. And violation of *brahmacharya* even in thought means for that moment at least the man's attention had wandered, and that, therefore, that moment was wasted.

I am not writing separately to Dhiru today. This is to save time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 2745. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

[1] The source is damaged here.

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329. LETTER TO VINOD[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. VINOD,

I have your letter. I take it that you folks don't mean to cheat me. Fulfil therefore all the promises that you have made. You may get away from there only if you can be relieved without difficulty. There is no place where one can find all the circumstances favourable to one.

What you write about staying in Uruli Kanchan is correct. The right thing will be for you to decide about staying at Uruli Kanchan only if you can conveniently get away from your present post and after you have had some experience there in my company. Perhaps the current season will have passed before you are ready. I am myself still held up near Delhi. I shall be able to get away only by the end of this month. I must reach Sevagram by August.

Please convey my blessings to Chi. Kaku.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

330. LETTER TO ASHABHAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI ASHABHAI,

It is good that you wrote. Discuss the matter also with Sardar. I have already written about it. I can think of nothing more that I should do. Datar Singhji once told me that the *roze*[2] could be domesticated. Even if it were true, I don't think

[1] This and the following two letters are in the Devanagari script.

[2] Bovine animals in wild state which move in herds and are a constant menace to crops

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one can keep whole herds of them. Give the matter some more thought.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

331. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. SHANKAR,

I have your letter. If you could regularly write such letters *Harijan* [journals] would go on making the improvements you desire. I accept most of your criticism. I don't have the time to answer that part of it which I do not accept. I admit the Gujarati is not as good as it ought to be; and often it is of a very low standard. You may take it that it is the same about your other criticisms.

I do cherish the desire that the Gujarati should at least be of the standard that I have achieved. But we cannot cope with all matters. What we cannot very well cope with we ought to leave alone. I know this will be the first wise step. But since people want to know my views in however inadequate a language I rest content with doing or getting others to do what is possible.

I am glad that you are all well. I have an impression that Manubhai had come to pay me a visit.

Often time solves complicated problems, if only we have the patience. In what sense do you regard yourself as an ignoramus?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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332. LETTER TO BHATE

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI BHATE,

I have your letter. I had drawn but a vague likeness of Bhai Datar; I cannot delineate it clearly.[1] I have approved of the amendments suggested and left the final decision to the Doctor, because from this distance I do not want to interfere. Besides, my knowledge is limited.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

333. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. The work is going on well. I think I have already mentioned in *Harijan* the suggestions which you have sent; if I have not I shall do so.[2]

I sent a telegram about the building. Your decision must be acted upon in my absence. Listen to everyone. But the final decision should be yours. I do not know enough—nor do I wish—to decide from this distance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : C. W. 2744. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

[1] This sentence is not clear in the source.
[2] *Vide* p. 261.

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334. LETTER TO NARDEV SHASTRI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI NARDEV SHASTRI,

I was glad to have your letter. I am sorry to know that your health is poor. I am likely to be here for six days. Can you come so soon? Why take the trouble?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

335. LETTER TO RAMSHANKARLAL

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI RAMSHANKARLAL,

I have your letter. Faith that expects reward is no faith. Ramanama is its own reward. Those who have doubts about it have not realized it with their heart. The greatness of Ramanama lies in that it leaves a man content although he may not get what he desired. How do we know that death did not come to your son as a release? Life and death are not in the hands of man.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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336. LETTER TO PUSHKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI PUSHKAR,

I have your letter. I do not wish to write anything about Bharatpur. Every good action is its own reward. Have this faith and go ahead.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

337. TALK WITH AZAD HIND DAL VOLUNTEERS

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

Seeing about 100 Azad Hind Dal volunteers in uniform who came to salute him . . . Mahatma Gandhi expressed pleasure and said they looked very smart.

When apprised of the working of the Dal in the district the Mahatma asked the volunteers:

Do you want to ask any questions?

A volunteer . . . said, "Sir, . . . please tell us when we are getting swaraj." Mahatma Gandhi laughed heartily and replied:

There is no doubt that we are getting swaraj but when, it is difficult to answer. Anyway it would not be much longer, hence we are eager to establish swaraj as early as possible and trying to do it.

Another volunteer . . . asked, "Do you still hold the same opinion which you expressed recently regarding the Cabinet Mission's declaration?"

Yes, because the Mission's object is good, its members' hearts are sincere and their plan is a sincere attempt to evolve a workable scheme of Indian independence out of the conflicting interests and party aims. This I say in spite of what the Delegation said. I am primarily concerned with their main plan. We fail

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to appreciate the plan because we do not recognize our own weaknesses and failings. We must be bold enough to confess our weaknesses and incompetences.

Another boy . . . said, "If you think that we are still incompetent for swaraj on account of our shortcomings, then the British people will never give it and we will never have it, they being very clever and diplomatic. What is the remedy in that case?"

I do not say we are quite incompetent for independence but whatever I say about our own shortcomings is based on the reading of the mental working and behaviour of a few of our own people.

There are vast numbers, in fact crores, of our people of whom we know nothing. We don't know what they may say or do at a particular moment. Freedom is not a matter of gift nor has the Delegation come here to give us freedom.

It would be too much to expect from them. We have to evolve freedom from amongst ourselves rather out of our own divergences and differences and this is the crux of the matter. They certainly have not come to deceive us this time. This is how I take it.

What is the meaning of your "Do or Die" slogan of 1942[1] ?

It was taken out of the context. I had also said that we should work for swaraj and die in the attempt for it.

The last question was regarding non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi said it was in 1920 that non-violence was deliberately adopted as a method of obtaining swaraj but we could not translate it into practice nor could we stick to it steadfastly. We only have the non-violence of the coward and not of the brave. We have not been non-violent all through. The discussion had finished when one of the volunteers fainted and fell down. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi remarked : "You have asked too much and let us finish for today", and left to see the boy.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-6-1946

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXVI, pp. 392 and 403.

[2] Ramprasad Gorkha, captain of the volunteers, requested Gandhiji to do something for the twelve Gorkhas who were court-martialled and sentenced for mutiny in the Gorkha lines.

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338. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

Gandhiji congratulated the audience on the exemplary behaviour at prayer time and thanked workers for excellent loudspeaker arrangements. He reminded them of the debt the Hindu society owed to the Harijans. A sin committed in the name of religion was doubly bad, he added. The least that they could do for them was to subscribe money for their cause. He also asked them to contribute liberally for building better quarters for the labourers and a Harijan dharmashala. He, however, warned them against an enthusiastic beginning and a poor ending.

Ramanama is not for the few; it is for all. He who takes His name lays by a rich store for himself, and it is inexhaustible. The more you draw upon it, the more it increases. It is infinite. As the Upanishad says, you take infinite out of infinite and infinite remains behind.[2] It is the unfailing panacea for all the ills, physical, mental and spiritual to which man is subject. Rama is only one of the numerous names of God. In fact there are as many names of God as there are human beings in the world. You may substitute Krishna for Rama or you can substitute for it any of His countless names and it will make no difference.

He himself had got the *mantra* of Ramanama, he said, from his nurse[3] when he was a child.

I used to be frightened of ghosts and evil spirits in the dark. My nurse told me, "If you repeat Ramanama all the ghosts and evil spirits will vanish." I accepted her advice with all the unquestioning faith of a child. That cured me of my cowardice.

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[2] The invocatory *mantra* in *Svetasvataropanisad* reads:
"That (the Brahman) is whole.
This (the Universe) is whole.
From the Whole has come out the Whole.
When whole is taken away from the Whole.
What is left is Whole."

[3] Rambha; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, p. 31.

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If that was the experience of a child, how much more would the grown-ups stand to gain by it if they repeated Ramanama with understanding and faith, he asked.

But the condition was that it must come from the heart.

Do evil thoughts possess you, or are you tormented by lust or greed? Then there is no charm against it like Ramanama. Supposing you are tempted to amass a big fortune by some easy and dishonest means. If you have faith in Ramanama you will say to yourself, 'Why should I amass for my wife and children riches which they might squander away? Why not leave them a legacy in the shape of sound character and sound education and training that will enable them to earn their living by honest industry and body labour ?' Ceaseless repetition of Ramanama will dispel your delusion and false attachment and the living realization will dawn on you that you were a fool to hanker after millions for the sake of your dear ones instead of offering them the priceless treasure of His name which frees one from all bondage and wanderings. Filled with the joy of that realization such a person will tell his wife and children, 'I have not brought for you the treasure I had set out for but something infinitely richer.' 'Where is it, show it to us?' they will say incredulously. 'It is the Name which is richer than all treasures' he will reply, 'because it quenches the thirst for all riches. It is enshrined in my heart.'

The Hindustan Times, 5-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

339. ITS LANGUAGE[1]

A correspondent writes:[2]

> It would be fitting if our constitution were to be drawn up in our national language. But one difficulty will be that few, if any, of the judges of our High and Federal Courts know Hindustani. They will, therefore, have to have an English translation for their use.
>
> The other question that will arise is whether the members of the Constituent Assembly will know enough Hindustani to grasp its essentials.

This letter appeals to me. Why should our constitution be in English? It should certainly be in an Indian language and,

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946, under the date June 4, 1946.

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

in my opinion, that language can only be Hindustani which crores can easily understand. In addition such an act will electrify the masses. As circumstances are, it is right that the Constituent Assembly should make an English translation of the document and, indeed, there should be translations also in every one of the provincial languages.

The second point raised by the writer is also apt. But since the members of the Constituent Assembly will be chosen by the present legislative bodies, it will be open to the latter to elect, so far as possible, only those persons who are conversant with Hindustani and thus act on the correspondent's letter.

MUSSOORIE, June 3, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

340. URDU, THE LANGUAGE OF BOTH?[1]

1. You are making strenuous efforts to get every Indian, particularly Hindus with whom you naturally come most in daily contact, to learn Urdu. Similarly, is any Mohammedan striving to induce Muslims to learn Hindi? If not, will not the result of your labours be that Urdu will become the language of both and Hindi will remain the medium solely for Hindus? Will not this be a disservice to Hindi?

2. The Urdu equivalent of the Hindi word is invariably given in brackets in the Hindustani Prachar publications, but the converse is not done. Does that not signify a desire to teach Urdu by force to Hindus?

3. There are any number of Persian and Arabic words used in these publications. Do you think they are understood by the general run of people? For example *adab*[2], *adab*[3], *etakad*[4].

4. If Hindustani is in fact a language, why in your educational readers is there such a difference in terminology in the Urdu and Hindi editions?

5. My fear is that the lakhs of Southern Indians who have so far been trying to learn Hindi will be so scared of the Urdu script that they will learn neither and in the end the work hitherto done by the Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be completely wiped out.

1. Efforts are being made that those who are unacquainted with the Urdu form should learn it and *vice versa* with those

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946.
[2] Politeness, literature
[3] Respectful greetings
[4] Faith

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who do not know the Hindi form. It is true that my contacts are more with Hindi-knowing Hindus. But that does not worry me. Hindus are not likely to forget their Hindi. In fact I believe that their Hindi will be enriched by their knowledge of Urdu. The majority of Indians whether Hindus or Mussalmans, generally know best the languages of their provinces which contain a large number of Sanskrit words. I myself have neither the fear nor the desire that everyone will, as a result of my efforts, learn the Urdu form to the exclusion of Hindi. Desire or no desire, whatever is natural will happen. The attempt to have a wise blending of the two forms for a national tongue is, in my opinion, a good venture in every way.

2. I have not read all the publications of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. It is commendable if the Urdu equivalents of some Hindi words are given in brackets. This only means that in the opinion of the writers of the books these words are not commonly known. That the Hindi equivalents are not given signifies that those Urdu words have become current coin in Hindi. It is a pity that a learned person like the correspondent should have such suspicions. Suspicion is not an attribute of learning.

3. This does not seem to be a correct charge. And even if it were true, what harm can there be? The introduction of new words into any language enriches it. The words of Latin origin that came into the English language after the Norman conquest added to its virility. Whatever was not good or unnecessary or forced did not remain. The words given by way of example by the correspondent are known to all Hindi lovers in the North and have taken their rightful place in Hindi. It is true that they are new for Southern Indians and therefore their Sanskrit equivalents should be and are given. The truth is that the Hindustani Prachar Sabha has neither antagonism towards one nor partiality towards the other. Both forms are there and will remain and these should not present any difficulty. But, of course, if there is jealousy and antagonism between the two, Hindustani will never come into being. And such an eventuality will be a bad thing for India.

4. Hindustani existed at one time. The present effort is directed to revive it through a wise mixture of Hindi and Urdu and let it grow thereby. Neither Hindi[-lovers] nor Urdu-lovers should sorrow over this. Hindi and Urdu are sisters. What harm, therefore, if they mix with each other? It cannot be a matter of surprise that in this transition stage there should be a difference of terminology in Hindi and Urdu books.

5. My experience is quite contrary to that of the writer. I have not known anyone who has given up learning either script because of the insistence on the Urdu script. Nor do I fear that this will ever be so.

My appeal to the writer is to divest himself of his prejudices.

MUSSOORIE, June 3[1], 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

341. LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

I quote the following letter[2] for the benefit of colleagues working in *Harijanbandhu*, after omitting the author's name.

If I had the time, I would have given a detailed reply to this letter in *Harijanbandhu* itself. But I have no time for that. I am interested in language as such. What I mean is that whatever language one may speak or write one's pronunciation should be clear and the grammar perfect. I have not been able to reach this ideal in the case of any language. Gujarati being my mother tongue, naturally, I have love for it. But everyone knows how imperfect my Gujarati is. My grammar is weak, my spelling indifferent. What need I say about my Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani ? Yet I have allowed myself to be the president of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I spent years running after English and lived for many years in the country of Englishmen. The English language is glorious in its own place. It is an international language. I am also fond of it. But I am conscious that my knowledge of it is also imperfect.

What could be the reason for such lack of organization? It is obvious. Language too has its own place like everything else.

Language is an adornment in its proper place. It is a vehicle for thought; and not *vice versa*. It is the thought contained in it that adorns the language. Language does not have that power independently. Realizing this I run after ideas and drag the language behind. If the ideas are clear, grammar, spelling, etc., will come round automatically or maybe the reader will generously put up with the looseness of language.

At present it is not possible for me to take up this dual responsibility. I can be responsible for my ideas. But if I wait

[1] From *Harijan Sevak*. *Harijan*, however, has "4".

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent had complained of indifferent translation, incorrect transliteration into Gujarati and incomplete rendering of Sanskrit quotations in *Harijanbandhu*.

to adorn my language, *Harijan* would suffer. I manage with the existing means. If I were to examine [my work] from the point of view of the language I would envy so many journals. Not one issue of *Harijan* would stand comparison with some other journals. I should be happy if the language of all the issues of *Harijan* was chaste. This is the reason why I have published the foregoing letter. Writers and translators of *Harijanbandhu* should read and ponder over it to polish their language with due perseverance and render their versions and translations as perfect as possible. The criticism made by the writer is friendly and the readers should take it in the same spirit and make whatever improvements they can.

A well-wisher like this correspondent should not rest content with criticizing the work but should from time to time offer suggestions from which others can learn. The late Sastriar had done it and I had published his article.[1]

In the end I should like to say that an incorrect translation of a Sanskrit quotation must not go. But sometimes though the original may be quoted the purpose is better served by including a Gujarati rendering at the same time. I could not find time to examine whether it was so in the present case[2].

The correspondent should be tolerant of the pronunciation of foreign languages. Where the spelling does not correspond to the pronunciation, the translator would follow the spelling and this should be the normal practice. If it were not so the translator would be overburdened. As regards proper names, utter chaos prevails. When they are transliterated either into Gujarati or into any other Indian language the safest way seems to be to conform the pronunciation to the spelling.

MUSSOORIE, June 3, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 16-6-1946

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIII, pp. 399-402.

[2] The correspondent had criticized the English rendering of the Sanskrit quotations in Sushila Nayyar's article "Meeting Sastriar" published in *Harijan* 28-4-1946.

342. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I am repeating what I have said. Make yourself fit in body and mind. Know that Ramanama is the supreme remedy for this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[C/o] SJT. SURESHWAR ACHARYA
SHRI NRISINHA ASHRAM
BHOOTADINO JHANPO
VADODARA

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

343. LETTER TO MANKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

BHAI MANKAR,

I got the news of Sheth Lallubhai's passing away from your letter. He did much work of compassion for animals. Sooner or later we shall all pass away. Let us hope God will send someone worthy to fill his place. In the meanwhile you for your part should go on pursuing your dharma and add lustre to the work.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

JIVADAYA MANDAL
148 SARAF BAZAR
BOMBAY 2

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

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344. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I got your letter only today. I had been waiting for it. It is good that Sir Stafford is all right. I think now there is no point in your coming here. We are to reach there on the 8th or the 9th. At the most you would get two days or three. Moreover, how can you leave Sir Stafford? Today I am observing silence and so am writing this myself. I assume you will be able to make out my handwriting.

Why does Gulbehn have to wait for money? I do not like the idea of the Trust spending [money] on the land or the building at Simhagarh. I would like you to run your own affairs smoothly. But I shall be agreeable to whatever is agreed upon by you and Jehangirji. I would not regard it as wrong if you took what you needed for Gulbai. We will discuss this further when we meet.

I am returning the papers.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

345. LETTER TO BRIJMOHAN

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

BHAI BRIJMOHAN,

I could reach your letter only today. The letter and the rejoinder will appear in *Harijan Sevak*[1] without your name.

Why this fear?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BRIJMOHAN, PH. D.
P. O. BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 272-4.

346. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

I am glad to learn that the question of improving the living conditions of labourers and of building a dharmashala for the poor is engaging the active attention of some of the prominent residents of Mussoorie. But I am sorry to hear that even in a matter which should be common concern there is party feeling. If this news is true the work will never succeed. On one pretext or the other there will be increasing strife but I sincerely hope that the news is quite incorrect. In my opinion the work should be entrusted to a committee composed of influential persons who can command public confidence and are above party strife. Such persons are to be found everywhere and Mussoorie should be no exception to the rule. I hope such a committee will soon be appointed and it will bring the good work to fruition.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 5-6-1946

347. MINDFULNESS, THE REMEDY

The realization that the mere desire for truth and non-violence is not sufficient to make people non-violent made me think that . . . a way must be taught, which would enable people to rebuild themselves fundamentally. . . .

External observances like prayers, handicrafts, etc., are not the efficient means for truth and kindness. . . . Only by inner and well directed effort can a man rebuild himself. . . . I have in mind the way of mindfulness, recommended by Buddha. . . . He has gone to the point of saying that this way can bring a man to perfection in seven days. . . .

The way of mindfulness consists in being constantly observant, conscious, attentive, watchful, awake, uninterruptedly aware of the mental and emotional content of our consciousness and of its expressions through the body. . . .

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

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> You can easily try it out on yourself. Within a week you will be convinced that Buddha has left with us a tool of unparalleled efficacy for rebuilding ourselves truly and permanently. . . .

Thus writes Mr. Frydman[1], better known to the public as Bharatanand. I reproduce it for what it is worth. I have not fallen in love with it because this too has not caught on. If it was a seven days' work, why is it that it has so few witnesses in the world today? In so far as it is an aid, it is in general vogue and takes its place among the other remedies, whether it is called mindfulness, vigilance or meditation. It does not take the place of prayer or the *mala*[2], or any other outward practice. It is in addition to these outward observances so long as the latter are not for show. Indeed, prayer is purely an inward act. Those who found in Ramanama the talisman knew mindfulness and found by experience that Ramanama was the best of all the remedies adopted for the practice of Truth and Non-violence.

MUSSOORIE, June 4, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

348. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Mr. Herbert Fischer, a German of Friends' Settlement, Itarsi, is known to me. He was for some time in the Village Industries Association in Wardha. His wife is a lady of Jamaica but in India, also of Friends' Settlement. I understand that Mr. Fischer and his wife are due to be sent to Germany in virtue of some plan. Mr. Fischer is now in a concentration camp in Satara. I wonder if it is possible for him to meet me before being sent to Germany.[3]

I wonder, too, if this matter falls within the Viceroy's department or whether I should write to some other [authority].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 84

[1] Maurice Frydman. Only extracts from his letter are reproduced here.
[2] Rosary
[3] Herbert Fischer and his wife were allowed to meet Gandhiji before leaving for Germany.

349. LETTER TO ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI AIYER

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR SIR ALLADI,

Rajaji has sent me your opinion which I have read with the attention it demands.

Hope you are gaining by your stay in Bangalore.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI
TATA SILK FARM AREA
NEAR SOUTH END ROAD
BASAVANGUDI, BANGALORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

350. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letter with enclosure. I drink in all you say or send. There are obvious difficulties. But I am hoping that they can be got over.

I have sent a short note to Sir Alladi.

How is your son? What is or was the matter with him?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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351. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. You are doing good work. Why do you not do spinning? You ask me to send you the list of books. When you read the books available on the khadi science you will learn many new words, you will learn Gujarati and Hindi technical terms and you will also learn how much meaning is contained in khadi.

Show this letter to Vinoba and Bhansali and listen to what they say about khadi and ponder over it. We should voluntarily and strictly follow the rules of an institution where we go, whether as guests or inmates. That is what discipline means. The term for discipline in Gujarati and Hindi is *shista*, which however does not convey the full meaning of the English word. Work done without discipline, even if it is on a massive scale, is washed away. The way the planets go round the sun is discipline. If any planet, out of mischief, were to start going faster or rush too near to the sun, it would not only burn up but would destroy the whole solar system. From this you may estimate the value of discipline.

It is certainly good that the Chimur people[1] have been released. They deserved to be released. But to commend all that they did would amount to commending violence. It would mean that we accepted it. Now that they have all been released, uncle Bhansali should understand this and make our Chimur friends understand.

I believe I shall be going to Panchgani after the 15th of this month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Kanu Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Who were convicted for the Ashti-Chimur disturbances during the 1942 movement and whose death sentences were commuted to transportation for life.

352. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You must have returned from Samastipur. I got Mirabehn's letter yesterday in the evening. It is clear from it that it is no longer necessary for you to go to her Ashram. She says she does not need anybody now.

You must have received Kanchan's letter to me which I had sent to you. As I was dictating these lines, I was given your letter received yesterday. I am of the view that you should go to Uruli Kanchan. It should not be difficult for you to secure a house at Uruli separately. You will have *satsanga*[1] there. Balkrishna is already there. Kanchan has been rendering very good service there. If you go there and if you can exercise control over yourself, she may work with redoubled zeal. But I do not wish that you should go there purely with that aim. I am not very eager that she should go on with the work she is doing. My only desire is that you should start living together and lead a happy and exemplary life. For this, you may stay where you like and do what work you like. I do wish, of course, that both of you, living together, should associate yourselves with any one of my activities. I would certainly like that. But my wish and approval is a secondary consideration. I shall reach there by the 9th at the latest. But you need not wait for me. I would rather that you went to Kanchan by the first train. I can fully realize Kanchan's agony. I am returning your letter.

I do not think it is your duty to visit Balvantsinha's village; but you should go there if you do not go to Kanchan immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosure : 1 letter

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8397. Also C. W. 7215. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Association with good persons

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353. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. It was good you discharged your responsibility in regard to the buildings. But I am constantly approached for help in building houses. Why should you find a job tedious if you know it? I don't want to assign the job to you if it hurts you. What other work would you yourself like to have?

I see that both of you have a great responsibility in the case of Jivaram[1]. It is quite all right that you make him sit in cold water. Do you keep his feet out [of water]? Do you give him friction-bath? If you can do it the benefit may be miraculous. It is described in Kuhne's book which we have there. It might perhaps be better to put a mud-pack on his head instead of applying a wet bandage.

I shall reach Delhi on the 9th or earlier.

SEVAGRAM

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

354. LETTER TO SARALABEHN A. SARABHAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The case of the late Manibehn indeed evokes sympathy. As long as ignorance persists such cases are bound to happen in the world. Our duty is only to remove the ignorance. By this I don't mean mere knowledge of the letters, but improvement of the mind. I should welcome book knowledge to the extent it is incidental to such improvement.

I do not feel like writing anything in this regard in *Harijan*. All the same I have it in mind and if anything strikes me I shall write.

While staying in Gulmarg do whatever work you can.

[1] Addressee's son

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Neither I nor anybody else had ever expected you to devote your whole time to the Kasturba Trust[1], or stay on in Gujarat for that purpose. For me it was—and is—enough that you do what you do thoughtfully, carefully and effectively.

I hope you are getting full benefit of the air at Gulmarg, and that it is not affected by the commotion in Kashmir.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SARALABEHN
HUT NO. 46, GULMARG
KASHMIR

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

355. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. That you have realized your mistake regarding the mangoes is enough.[2] Vigilance alone will enable us to lead a good life.

Hoshiari wrote that after her brother's marriage she would go to the Ashram. I could have no further talk with her. At Delhi I did not get time even to lift up my head. I could hardly talk to her about Gajraj. I asked her to shake off the tendency to run after me. As a result she went home. I feel she can make little progress in the Ashram. If she returns to the Ashram, it should be with the idea of not leaving it and of reforming Gajraj. I have observed that Hoshiari has herself spoiled Gajraj. The poor girl knows no better. What could she do? Gajraj meanwhile is being spoiled more and more.

It is very good that you make your strings locally. And Anantramji writes that you are also improving the garden.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 1972

[1] The addressee was Agent of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust in Gujarat.

[2] *Vide* p. 206.

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356. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your postcard. You may certainly stay on for your brother's marriage. There is no absolute duty to return to the Ashram. But if you want to go now, you must not return home. You will progress only if you go with the intention of inculcating in Gajraj the habit of sleeping separately, so that he studies well. If you cannot do this, live in your village, serve your parents and learn what you can. Make a good farmer of Gajraj.

Your brother may come only after I reach Delhi. I shall reach there in two or three days.

C/O SHRI BALVANTSINHA
KHURJA

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

357. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

BHAI GOVINDLAL,

I got your letter. It is good. It will be published in *Harijan Sevak* without your name.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SADAN
15 NARAYAN DABHOLKAR ROAD
MALABAR ROAD
BOMBAY

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

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358. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MUSSOORIE,
[*June 4, 1946*][2]

Gandhiji spoke of the poor rickshaw-pullers and load-carriers there. They should be everyone's concern. They made life possible for the wealthy and yet the latter, while willing to take from them even the inhuman service of rickshaw-pulling, did not care to see where and how they lived, what they ate and what they earned. He had heard that these poor men lived in tiny rooms without adequate light and air; they did not want to reveal how many herded together into one room lest they should be evicted or fined. They were dirtily clad as could be seen from the little crowd of them that had come to attend the prayers that evening. But perhaps they had not the wherewithal to afford a change of clothes. They might be like the woman in Bihar, when he first went there, who, when asked to wash herself and her clothes, said to Ba: "How can I bathe when I have not another sari to put on?" It was the bounden duty of those to whom God had given more than their needs to spend the extra money on those who were in want. He had been told that the Congress Government was now in power and would see to it that labour quarters everywhere were rebuilt. If they did so it would be a good thing. It would be no more than their bare duty. That would not, however, exonerate rickshaw-riders from their duty. Doctors had told him that these poor people pulled these vehicles for four years or so and the work was so hard that they died soon after of lung and heart trouble. How could the users be so callous as not to see that rickshaw-pullers were properly housed and sufficiently paid and clothed and not overworked.

Harijan, 16-6-1946

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] The source reports this after the speech of June 2 and before that of June 5.

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359. HINDUSTANI CRITICIZED

Shri Jivanji Desai has sent me samples of some criticisms of the edition in Urdu script of *Harijan Sevak* from both Hindi and Urdu newspapers. They have made fun of its Hindustani. Hindi critics opine that the articles are deliberately filled with unnecessary Urdu words and Urdu critics complain of the use of Sanskrit words which Muslims cannot understand.

I am glad of these criticisms. Thus, why should the paper be called *Harijan Sevak* instead of *Harijan Khidmatgar*? Why *Sampadak* and not 'Editor' or *Mudir* and so on? Lovers of Urdu believe that Hindustani and Urdu are synonymous. Lovers of Hindi feel the same conversely even when it is written in the Urdu script. Presumably they hope that this criticism will go home and make me give up the Urdu script in sheer despair. But the hope is not likely to be fulfilled. In fact neither Urdu nor Hindi is to be termed Hindustani. Though not in vogue today Hindustani is a wise mixture of the two. If newspaper and other critics will exercise a little forbearance they will presently see that it is not difficult to understand what is Hindustani as distinguished from Hindi and Urdu. I admit that those who write for *Harijan Sevak* are still struggling but they are determined to reach the desired goal. Readers must bear kindly with what may today seem a hotch-potch of the two forms. If God spares my life I hope to prove to the readers of *Harijan Sevak* that Hindustani can be as sweet as either Urdu or Hindi. The seeming quarrel of today will shortly disappear when it is realized that the two forms are sisters and that through their joint effort will come into being a stately language which will serve the crores of India.

In the interim, I hope, critics will point out what to them may appear as mistakes. Taken in a friendly spirit such criticism will help to improve the language of *Harijan Sevak*.

MUSSOORIE, June 5, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

360. TRUE BUT NOT NEW[1]

Maulvi Hamidullah Sahib of Lucknow came to see me in Mussoorie and handed two of his pamphlets. They are an attempt to prove the necessity of making obligatory up to the high school standard a knowledge of both Hindi and Urdu and the Nagari and Persian scripts, whether for boys or girls. The idea appeals forcibly to me. My effort has always been directed to this end. Time was when Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Babu Purushottamdas Tandon were working for the same objective but alas! we did not meet with success. Nevertheless, I neither abandoned hope nor effort and the result was the creation of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. The Maulvi Sahib's request, therefore, is nothing new for me.

If the U. P. Government is able, with the general consent, to make the attempt, they will have rendered a great service. I am of the opinion that in all the provinces where Hindi or Urdu is the mother tongue, a knowledge of the other should be made compulsory. I have no doubt that the natural outcome of such a step will be the easy birth of Hindustani, in which the two will blend into one. The present controversy between the two sisters will then cease. Another advantage that will accrue is that tuition up to the high school will be in the national language instead of English.

MUSSOORIE, June 5, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

[1] This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946, under the date June 6, 1946.

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361. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter of the 3rd instant.

In accordance with your advice I am staying in Mussoorie until the afternoon of the 8th, reaching Delhi about 11 p.m. that night. This enables me to have the next morning's treatment without bustle and hurry so as to be ready for the Working Committee meeting the same afternoon.

This will be given to you by our mutual friend, Horace Alexander.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 201

362. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

June 5, 1946

Going there[1] would of course create problems and you would, therefore, have to think carefully [before coming to a decision]. But if you are at peace with yourself and are happy, I need not advise you anything. I will go to the plains from here on the 8th so as to keep myself ready for the 9th. God knows what is to happen. As I prescribe Ramanama for you, so is it the sovereign remedy for myself and for all others. It works unfailingly. But only he who knows its working can benefit from it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 212

[1] Gandhiji had suggested to the addressee to go to the hills; *vide* p. 167.

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363. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. It is good that you acquired the bungalow[1]. I take it that Sjt. Shantilal will pay for the repairs. How will you meet the expenditure on its upkeep and repairs already undertaken? I would prefer also that you and Bachhraj[2] suggested who should be the trustee. I can, if you ask me, choose a name from amongst those you may suggest, otherwise I see nothing wrong in the two of you deciding upon someone and implementing your decision. I don't want to add this one to my many tasks. It is a different thing that I may do it if I can without special effort. Now that the bungalow has been acquired, if I can spend part of the season at Panchgani I ought to stay in the place, oughtn't I? The chief consideration, however, should be that really poor people, Harijans or others in similar condition, should be able to utilize it. Think of a policy which will make this possible and have the rules formulated. I should like to make use of the building whenever I come but the really needy should be constantly using it. I am of the opinion that middle-class people should have no place in it. Please send me a plan of the premises and a description of its surroundings.

I am enclosing a copy of this to Bhai Bachhraj.

MOHANLAL MOTICHAND SHAH
GADHADA
KATHIAWAR

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

[1] For the proposed dharmashala at Panchgani
[2] Bachhraj Tribhuvandas Doshi

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364. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

The representation by the workers of the firm of Mukund has just reached my hands. I am sending it to you. Is there any truth in it? They have also sent me a wire. I have paid no attention to it. How can I study all this? I don't have the time either. But is there any truth in what they say in the notice?

Janakibehn should now be perfectly all right. It seems this task has been well accomplished.

BACHHRAJ [&] CO.
MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY

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

365. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I had Sir Datar Singhji's article[1] on dual-purpose cows revised. As it is now I do not find any cause for complaint. I have even sent the thing for printing. If in some places they have single-purpose cows I see no harm in it. Think over what I have written to Rishabhdas. I have written something to this effect to Parnerkar[2] also; see that.

Dadiji is still going strong. Can Anasuya[3] help you in cow-protection work or is it that you cannot spare her from household work?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 9129

[1] The article was published in *Harijan*, 23-6-1946, under the title "Development of Dual-Purpose Cattle in India".
[2] *Vide* pp. 258-9.
[3] Addressee's wife

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366. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. A farmer has to face Nature's vagaries. Even then he is the mainstay of the world. So I am glad that you both[1] are working together. Nobody can compete with Balvantsinha in hard work. I have often seen it.

For your peace of mind now I can think of no other remedy except Ramanama. It has been proved by experience. There are two conditions to it.

(1) It should proceed from the heart.

(2) The rules that I have enunciated for its repetition should be observed.

They are so simple that they can be observed easily. It is all given in a *Harijan* issue.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 132

367. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I am enclosing a letter from Dr. Brijmohan about Hindustani. You will find my reply to it in *Harijan Sevak*.[3] But it will be better if you write to him because you are likely to have much information which I don't have.

I am sending herewith a copy of my article.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 310

[1] The addressee had been assisting Balvantsinha in farm work at the Ashram.

[2] *Vide* pp. 236-7.

[3] *Vide* pp. 272-4.

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368. SILENCE-DAY NOTE

June 5, 1946

Is he here today?[1]
Is the machine there?

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10522

369. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946[3]

His remarks[4] were taken to heart by one of the workers who was in charge of the meeting. On subsequent inquiry Gandhiji learnt that the information which he had received was of doubtful authenticity. As a satyagrahi he felt he had fallen from grace in accepting a statement made to him without full scrutiny and by basing his public remarks thereon. Making a public confession of his mistake in his address after the prayers on the following day, he stressed the importance of speaking only when necessary and uttering every word after the most careful thought.

A satyagrahi cannot afford to be credulous or to be careless in his speech. There is a Sanskrit verse saying that not to begin is the first sign of wisdom, but once you begin a thing you should do it well.

It would have been best not to have made use of the unsifted information. But having done so I should end it well by making the admission that on inquiry I found that the accusation could not be supported.

There is a great piece of sculpture in Japan depicting three monkeys. One of them is shutting his mouth with his hands, the second is shutting his ears and the third is shutting his eyes.

[1] S. M. Iyengar had come, with a letter of recommendation from B. C. Roy to show Gandhiji "his new method of spinning and the wheel he had devised".

[2] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[3] The source reports this before the speech of June 7, 1946.

[4] Made during the previous day's speech when it was reported to Gandhiji that some rickshaw-pullers were turned out of the prayer gathering because of their dirty clothes.

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The lesson of the first one is not to speak unless absolutely necessary and then too, to weigh every word before speaking. The message of the second is not to hear evil things, of the third not to let one's eyes wander here, there and everywhere.

Therefore, when going along the road, one should either contemplate the beauty of nature or else fix [one's] gaze on the ground before one. He carried about the three gurus with him wherever he went and he advised them all to bear their instructions in mind.

Harijan, 16-6-1946

370. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

The enclosed has been sent to Gandhiji by the father of the interned writer[1].

Gandhiji wishes me to ask you if from your exact knowledge of the working of the administration you can say whether anything can be done to enable the young man to fulfil what appears to be his laudable wishes?[2]

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 85

371. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I shall be glad if Jaisukhlal and you come. If both of you can live happily away from me and you get educated and become wise there is nothing special to be gained by coming to me. If there has been any misunderstanding the fire of time will melt it away provided we let it do so. From your

[1] Dr. Suresh Chandra, who was interned in Germany

[2] In a letter dated July 27, 1946, C. W. B. Rankin replied that the internee, released in the middle of May, had been asked whether he wished to be repatriated to India and a reply from him was awaited.

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doings[1] there which you describe it seems that you are spending your time well. By goondas you seem to mean the bad boys you have come across. Your way of dealing with them may be said to resemble partly that of Draupadi. The method worth emulating is that of Sita. Though, of course, both have been counted among the [five] *satis*[2]. It is worth thinking over why Draupadi, though she had five husbands, was and is regarded as a *sati*. But I leave that question aside. If your answer to the goonda meant nothing more than what you did, if your heart was full of anger, then you may be said to have replied to the goonda with violence on your part. If you think over the meaning of whipping out the sandal from your foot and throwing it at him or striking him a few times with the sandal in your hand and the goonda becoming cowed down, you will realize what you did. Since you resorted to physical force in a crowded square the other people also would take courage and the goonda being a coward at heart, would be cowed down and run away. If taking off the sandal was a sign of compassion on your part then I would regard even your hitting the man with it as an act of ahimsa. Ahimsa has its roots in the heart. And its result should be that the other person submits, not to physical force, but to soul-force because he is overwhelmed by the power of compassion behind the physical punishment. I will give you an instance of this from my own life. Miss Schlesin[3] in her folly started smoking a cigarette in my presence. I slapped her and threw away the cigarette. For the first time she cried before me and apologized and wrote to me afterwards saying that she would never do such a thing again and that she had recognized my love. I have narrated this incident in my autobiography.[4] There have been many other similar incidents in my life. Others also may have similar experiences about which we do not know. Did the goonda recognize the love in your heart? Do not be deceived by the admiration of the people. Know your own heart and decide whether your action was inspired by violence or non-violence. Ordinarily whipping out sandals is no sign of culture or ahimsa. It is a sign of impulsiveness, that is, of lack of culture. But in your case, the action may have been a sign

[1] The addressee had punished a boy who was teasing girls.

[2] Ideal wives; the most well-known in tradition are Anasuya, Parvati, Savitri, Sita and Draupadi.

[3] Sonja Schlesin, Gandhiji's assistant in South Africa

[4] The incident, however, is not reported in the *Autobiography*; *vide* Vol. XXXIX.

of ahimsa. Still you alone can testify which is the truth; or, may be God. However, after analysing your action in such detail, I only wish to compliment you. For I do not mind even if your action was violent. It is enough for me that you were not cowed down. I assume that you wish to cultivate ahimsa, and therefore, even if it was an act of violence, you will try and learn ahimsa from it. I, therefore, gladly gave your letter to everybody to read. Akha Bhagat[1] has said: "Live as you like but realize Hari anyhow." Accordingly, if you learn to practise pure truth and pure ahimsa even while living there I will believe that you have learnt more than what you would have by staying with me and learning them under my guidance.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

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

372. LETTER TO LAKSHMI M. SHARMA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI[2],

You are now a widow. If you have learnt anything from me, there is no difference between a wife and a widow, truly understood, for sooner or later everyone has to die. The soul does not die. Marriage is not of bodies, and if it is [regarded as such] it is wrong. If one could marry a body, why don't we marry a dead body or, say, a stone? A marriage takes place between two souls and the soul never dies.

Moreover, you have your children. You should bring them up with care and lead an absolutely chaste life. If you conduct your life with restraint you will not feel any loss. In fact you will have gained something through the loss.

Lakshmidasdada[3] has asked you to go and live in the Harijan Ashram. Do as he says. In it lies your highest good. If you live in the Ashram it will be like being among your own family. Surrounded by them you will always be protected. You are a good girl, so if you will wisely devote yourself to the

[1] Saint-poet of Gujarat

[2] A Harijan girl whom Gandhiji had adopted as his daughter, when he was at the Sabarmati Ashram

[3] Lakshmidas Asar

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work of service that you have taken up you will shine and do good to many others. You yourself once wrote to me, didn't you, that with the Sardar's help you had acquired a house of your own. If so, make all arrangements about it as Lakshmidasdada advises, so that you will have nothing to worry about. What are your liabilities? What has Maruti[1] left you? Who are your friends, men as well as women? You did write something about your sister Mani, but I have forgotten it. Let me have all the information in detail.

I take it that you are calm. Don't give yourself up to grief. Be cheerful at heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

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

373. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. It seems Maruti passed away suddenly. You did right in having asked Lakshmi to come to the Ashram. It will be very good if she goes and lives there and then she should also participate in the training. I shall know more when your letter comes. I have written a letter to Lakshmi. I am enclosing it.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

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

[1] Maruti Sharma, addressee's husband

374. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. The handwriting does not look like yours. If it is I will say you have improved it a lot.

I don't remember anything about any freedom I might have given you in regard to your mode of life there. If I did, you should have asked me to give it in writing. Human memory has ever been infirm. And [mine] has now become quite weak. I do remember, however, that whatever I might have said I qualified it with the condition that whatever you did should be with the consent of Chimanlal or Krishnachandra. That is because I do not have, nor do I want to have, any exclusive right. How could I then make any concession independently? Whatever I might have said earlier, make a note of what I am now writing and conduct yourself accordingly. I only wish your good. Now indeed you have realized that your upbringing had not been perfect. Whatever might have been the cause, you are now saved and you have become aware of things. You cannot therefore behave irresponsibly on the strength of your wealth. Besides, the money that you have should be regarded as a sacred trust and spent accordingly. At the Ashram it would become you to live in poverty as the others do; only then can you be accommodated. You cannot spend your money in such a way that it corrupts others. I cannot tolerate it, nor should the Ashram. You should therefore sit down with Chimanlal and Krishnachandra and organize your life as they advise and make yourself one with the Ashram as sugar dissolves in milk. Only then will you be happy, and make your children happy too. It would not befit you to behave in any other way. Although Ratilal is alive, I am sure you never let yourself forget that you are as good as a widow. If you cannot act in this way, if you are made of an altogether different stuff, you had better leave promptly; go and live where it suits you.

As I don't know when I shall be reaching there, I have written at length. I know yours is a difficult task.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

375. LETTER TO SAMBHAJI

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

BHAI SAMBHAJI[1],

Manjulabai and others whose land Government has acquired for the main road to the Ashram ought to be exempted from land-tax pertaining to that portion and the amount inadvertently paid ought to be refunded. There can be no doubt about it. If you will see to it, I need not spend my time on it. If the job is beyond your power, do write to me and also tell me if what I believe is correct.

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM

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

376. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. What you say is quite correct.[2] We should not underrate the gravity of the situation. He who abstains from doing a thing merely because it does not seem important enough eventually fails to accomplish anything at all. You have to fulfil the promise you have given.[3] I am herewith making a beginning to do what needs to be done. Enclosed you will find a letter to Sambhaji[4]. Read it and if you find it all right send it on to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen p. 378

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj's agent in Sevagram
[2] Sevagram was faced with scarcity of foodgrain.
[3] To obtain help from Jamnalal Bajaj's firm
[4] *Vide* the preceding item.

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377. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have your letter. I think you are now out of the wood. It is therefore my greatest desire that you should forget me. I shall be happy if you follow the example of Kunvarji[1] and others who do not come to me for comfort but who do come and see me when I am in the neighbourhood. You should also do the same thing.

Men do have ups and downs in their health and this will always be so. I was not therefore surprised that you fell ill. Everything will be well if you but see Rama in everyone. I am not writing separately to Kunvarji. It is he who has become your real relation.

Blessings to you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDASBHAI
C/O SHRI KUNVARJIBHAI
ADARSH DUGDHALAYA
MALAD, BOMBAY, (B. B. & C. I. RLY.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 2722

378. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I will not reply at length. You may ask what you please when we meet. I assume that Sita's problem will be solved.

[1] Kunvarji Parekh, son-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

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I think I shall leave Delhi before the end of this month. Everything may be over even before the 15th.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
KHIMJI JIVA SANATORIUM, BLOCK NO. 6
BANGANGA, WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4982

379. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. It is quite interesting. It will save your time if you don't take so much pains over writing letters now. If you send to the newspapers a report with the kind of particulars you have given me, or if you send me a copy of any such report appearing in a newspaper, I will know what is happening. Even your quarrelling pleases me. You may, therefore, quarrel but should go on doing your work and learn from me whatever I may have to teach.

Why did you get your letter-heads printed in English?[1] Why not in the Devanagari and Urdu scripts, or, if you do not like that, in Devanagari only. For whom did you get them printed in English?

I am surprised to learn that Manibehn Nanavati[2] refused to give you the details. Shall I ask Manibehn about it?

After Delhi my programme is to go to Poona and, if possible, to Panchgani from there. Wherever I may be you are free to come and see me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10447. Also C. W. 6886. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

[1] The addressee had a few letter-heads printed in English for addressing heads of some institutions which she wanted the camping girls to visit.

[2] Who ran a Khadi Bhandar in Bombay for a number of years with the help of women

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380. LETTER TO HUSSAIN

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BHAI HUSSAINBHAI,

I have your letter of May 22, 1946.

You are needlessly worried. Why should such a large and educated community as the Shias feel helpless?

Your son had been to see me in Delhi. I appeased him by exchanging a few pleasantries. More when we meet some time.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT
ALL-PARTIES SHIA CONFERENCE
BOMBAY

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

381. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BAPA,

I got your postcard dated 2-6-1946. Can I help agreeing with you? You have fixed for the 25th and at the Bharat Sevak Samaj—I shall be present there. You will not send for me before 2 o'clock, will you? I do have a hope that I shall be leaving Delhi towards the middle of this month. But it is all in God's hands.

"Bharat Sevak Samaj" sounds quite appropriate. You should therefore have your letter-heads, etc., printed in India's sovereign language, Hindustani, i. e., in the Urdu and Devanagari scripts. You may if you like have them in English for foreign countries. Have a rubber-stamp for the stationery that has already been printed in English. You cannot do this all by yourself.

Do it if you can carry your co-workers with you. If not, whatever Gokhale's[1] fate decrees.

Blessings from
BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
POONA 4

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

382. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I know Ratnamayidevi very well. I have no objection to your taking her in. I do not know myself who is a Gandhian. Gandhism is a meaningless word for me. An ism follows the propounder of a system. I am not one, hence I cannot be the cause for any ism. If an ism is built up it will not endure, and if it does it will not be Gandhism. This deserves to be properly understood.

I like your work, it is neat and clean. It is you who have built up the Balika Ashram, you conduct it and I would be pleased if Ratnamayidevi gave you full satisfaction.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8010. Also C. W. 3110. Courtesy : Rameshwari Nehru

[1] Gopal Krishna Gokhale, (1866-1915); the most outstanding of the moderate leaders; President, Indian National Congress, 1905; founder of Servants of India Society, 1905; member of the Imperial Legislative Council, 1902-15

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383. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. All your questions are such that you should find the answers there itself. For example, the problem of Harihar Sharma. What should I—or could I—do about it from here? I realize it was a mistake on my part to have invited him to the Ashram. Even then I have included in my letter[1] to him all that you wrote. If you approve of this letter, pass it on to him. It was all right that you gave him coffee. Continue to give him some. If, however, we are required to give to all whatever is given to one, it will lead to the break-down of the Ashram. Why, I should myself disband it. It is our duty to offer things according to a man's needs. I have often said that the Ashram should be like a hotel. The difference is that the boarders in a hotel can ask for anything they like and on payment they get it. Whatever we would give a person taking into consideration his bodily needs should be in the nature of a medicine. If we give quinine to one man, can everyone ask for it? We must not regard quinine and coffee from different angles. We have to offer rice to a South Indian, bread to a Punjabi, fish to a Bengali, beer and beef to an Englishman. It is another thing that we may not give meat and fish even as medicine, generally not even rice. But if we admit such persons then it becomes our dharma to let them have [what they need]. But we may not offer all the four things to all four of them at the same time. Now meat and fish are out of the question, but how can we refuse to give wheat, rice, coffee, tea, etc., which we have once given? Think over all this and do as you deem proper.

As for prayers, everywhere I am sticking to the old order, but if you think it right to have some change at the Ashram you may make it. For that consult the old colleagues like Chimanlal, Balvantsinha, etc., or postpone it till I reach there.

[1] *Vide* pp. 184-5.

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I have written to Champabehn.[1] I understand what you say about mango seeds, and also about dogs and mice.

Do what is proper about wood.

I propose to reach there in the beginning of August.

If Lilavati is there tell her that if she wants to abide by my word she has my permission. If she wants to act within the limits imposed by time, she hasn't much time, has she? She will have to think over all this herself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4559

384. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL NEHRU,

I have your letter to Pyarelal. What I want to know is mentioned in the third paragraph, viz., what treatment, tried by you, do you suggest for the ailment? I shall be glad to have something on this so that I can understand things better.

Blessings from
BAPU

1 WARRIS ROAD
LAHORE

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

385. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

Apologizing for the delay in his address at the end of the prayers, Gandhiji told the audience how pleased he was that Kanu Gandhi had started the prayers without waiting for him.

It should be the general rule that prayers must not be delayed for anybody on earth. God's time never stops. From

[1] *Vide* p. 298.

[2] The report in *National Herald* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan.*

the very beginning the wheel of His time has gone ceaselessly on. As a matter of fact there is no beginning for Him or His time.

God is not a person. No one knows what His watch is like. No one can describe Him as no one has seen Him. He is the Law and the Law-giver combined into one. The author of the Vedas, after the profoundest search has described Him as *neti*, *neti* (not this, not this). He moves all and yet no one can move Him. Not a blade of grass moves without His will. For Him there is no beginning and no end.

Everything that has a beginning must end. The sun, the moon and the earth must all perish one day even though it might be after an incalculable number of years. God alone is immortal, imperishable. How can man find words to describe Him? How can anyone afford to miss the time of offering prayers to Him whose watch never stops?

Kanu Gandhi knew all that and knew that any waiting for him would hurt him. So he had started the prayers on time. Gandhiji had felt ashamed of disturbing the meeting by walking up to the dais when the prayer was going on. If others came late during the prayers he inwardly fretted : why did they not stand at the far end of the gathering instead of walking in and disturbing the meeting? He would have liked to wait outside but he knew that people were waiting for him. They might feel worried over his absence. Therefore, he had dared to walk to the dais and take his seat there though not without trembling. His car had not failed him. But he could not rudely tear himself away from his visitors.

He wanted them all to learn a lesson from the incident. If they kept the time for the prayers the habit would be reflected in all that they did.

A man who works regularly in a systematic fashion never feels overworked or tired. He knows his limits and is able to do in fair time, all that he undertakes. It is not hard work that kills a man, but irregularity or lack of system.

National Herald, 8-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

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386. DURING MUSSOORIE SOJOURN

During the prayer meetings in Mussoorie I suggested that the gay people of the place might well think of the poor among them, and make their living comfortable, clean and hygienic as also enable the poorest of all classes to find an abode where it would be possible for them to receive the benefit of the hill climate. Both the suggestions have been taken up with enthusiasm. An influential committee has been formed to carry out the idea of a dharmashala or *musafarkhana.* I write this note to suggest that much the most important thing would be to have a committee of workers or even one worker who would make it his business to run the guest house in a becoming manner. Seeing that the place will be free of rent it will be no small task to choose the guests who may occupy the premises. Care will have to be taken to exclude those who are at all able to pay a reasonable rent. The visitors must be those who have nothing wherewith to pay. If the place is to be kept absolutely clean, there will have to be rules to be rigidly enforced in the interests of the visitors themselves. And yet the occupants will have to be treated with perfect courtesy. They must never be allowed to feel that poverty is a crime. Every third-class traveller knows that the poor receive rough treatment in the railway carriages and at railway stations. It is a sad commentary that in this poor country where according to books poverty carries with it a certain dignity, in public places the poor are treated almost with contempt and they are made to pay for receiving it. It is in this unfortunate atmosphere that this guest house is to be built. Let the committee seek out from now an ideal caretaker who will answer the requirements of the office which are undoubtedly onerous. If such a person is found, the project is bound to be a pattern for all such places on hill stations.

MUSSOORIE, June 8, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

387. TAKE CARE OF PENNIES

I have discovered honourable members of Assemblies using most expensive embossed note paper even for private use. So far as I know, office stationery cannot be used for private purposes such as writing to friends or relatives or for letters from members of Assemblies to constituents outside matters of public business. So far as I know, this is a universal objection in every part of the world.

But for this poor country my objection goes deeper. The stationery I refer to is too expensive for us. Englishmen belonging to the most expensive country in the world and who had to flourish on the awe they could inspire in us introduced expensive and massive buildings for offices and bungalows requiring for their upkeep an army of servants and hangers-on. If we copy their style and habits we will be ruined ourselves and carry the country in this ruin. And what was tolerated in the case of the conquerors will not be tolerated in ours. There is, too, paper shortage. I am of opinion, therefore, that all these expensive habits should be given up. Hand-made paper with ordinarily printed letter-heads in Nagari and Urdu should be used. The embossed stationery already printed can easily be cut up and put to better use, and should not be used up under cover of economy. Surely village products cannot be made to wait till the expensive and possibly foreign stuff is used up. Popular Governments should signalize their advent by adopting popular measures and inexpensive habits.

MUSSOORIE, June 8, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

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388. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 8, 1946

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL

I have your letter. You must produce some proof of your having been in the Delhi fort.[1] It baffles me to see a poor man getting away after telling a big Government "to do as it likes". You are a votary of truth. Think over it again. If you have for some reason been guilty of untruth, there is no harm in admitting it. What more can I say?

You may certainly go to Basti if you must.

I do not consider it necessary for you to stay with me in connection with your case. I shall not send my final reply to the Government till I hear from you. I am thinking of writing only after having your reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

389. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MUSSOORIE,
June 8, 1946[2]

Mahatma Gandhi held his last prayer meeting in Mussoorie this evening. He told the audience about the work that has been done in connection with two points raised by him, namely, erecting a dharmashala for the poor and building better quarters for the coolies.

As regards the latter, it had been decided that the project was too big for individual effort and that the U. P. Government should be approached. There were plenty of rich people in Mussoorie; it was their duty to see that the coolies had better quarters.

As for the dharmashala, a committee had been formed and money collected. When the dharmashala would materialize rested with them, Gandhiji

[1] *Vide* p. 246.
[2] From *The Hindustan Times*, 10-6-1946

added. He had suggested that the dharmashala should be such that a person like him could stay there without any hesitation. All that was required was a clean well-ventilated building. He would much rather stay in a place built for the poor. Such a building would be an inducement for him to come to Mussoorie again. Someone had taken exception to the word dharmashala. The critic said it meant a place for the Hindus only. That was not his conception. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews—all should be able to come and stay there provided they were poor. They would have to cook their own food. And as for Harijans, for him everybody was a Harijan. He had said that a religion which made distinctions of high and low was no religion. He had suggested that all of them should become Harijans voluntarily and among Harijans too, Bhangis. Lord Shiva was called *Bhangi*[1] because he had the intoxication of the good of the creation. Therefore by becoming Bhangis, they would become servants and lovers of humanity. The service rendered by the Bhangis was the most useful for humanity. So there could be no discrimination against Harijans in the dharmashala that was contemplated. Another friend had written to him that there were already several dharmashalas in Mussoorie, one for Arya Samajists, one for Sikhs and so on. Why add another when even those in existence lay vacant for most of the time because they were meant for one sect or another? The dharmashala of his conception would be open to all without any discrimination of caste, colour or creed. If they were not prepared for that, he would advise them to dissolve the committee and return to their respective donors the money that had been collected.

Friends had warned him against coming to Mussoorie, the seat of fashion and frivolity, Gandhiji continued. He did not grudge the amusement provided it was innocent. If their enjoyment was tainted, they would never be able to build the kind of place that he had suggested and keep it up. As such, they would have no time to think of the poor. The management of such a dharmashala would be even more difficult than building it. They would have to be ever watchful so that it served the purpose for which it was built. Otherwise, he would feel sorry for the money wasted. They had attended the prayers for several days. If they had really come to hear Ramanama in their hearts, they could certainly do what he had asked in the name of Rama and His creation. He also expected them to offer prayers in their own homes regularly, morning and evening. There was no need for them to learn the Sanskrit *shlokas* if they did not wish to; *Ramdhun* was enough. The essence of all prayers was to establish God in their hearts. If they succeeded in doing that, all would be well with them, with the society and the world.

The Hindu, 10-6-1946

[1] One who partakes of *bhang*, an intoxicant

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390. NOTES

No Publicity Required[1]

A Brahmin correspondent asks me to publish the fact that he has become a Harijan and wants to eliminate his name as a caste Hindu from the census too. This is a sequence to my having asked all caste Hindus to look upon themselves as Harijans of the so-called lowest stratum. But what is the point in giving publicity to an inner change? The real proof is for the convert to practise the change in his daily life. He will, therefore, mix freely with Bhangis and take an active part in their life. If possible, he will live with them or get a Bhangi to live with him. He will give his children in marriage to Harijans and on being questioned he will say that he has become a Harijan of his own free will and will register his name either as a Harijan or Bhangi in the census when he has to classify himself. But having done so he will on no account arrogate to himself any of the rights of Harijans as, for example, he will not enter his name as a voter on their list. In other words, he will undertake to fulfil all the duties of a Harijan without seeking any of the rights that pertain to them. So long as separate voting lists are maintained he will cease to be a voter.

New Delhi, June 9, 1946

Petrol and the Black Market[2]

A correspondent writes as follows:

> Owing to lack of time it is not always possible to do all the necessary touring by rail. Workers have, therefore, to travel long distances by car. As petrol is rationed and the required quantity is not available recourse is had to the black market. It is either bought through someone or the taxi-driver is commissioned to obtain it from the black market and payment per mile is given to him according to the price paid for the petrol.
>
> Is it right for workers to use a car under these circumstances?

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946.
[2] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 16-6-1946.

It is possible that if they do not, they will have to cut down their touring which will seemingly be harmful to the work. Am I right in believing that there is no alternative?

I am of opinion that the worker who believes in truth should not use a car under these conditions. Even if he is not a believer but tries to render service thoughtfully he should not do so. If he does, he knowingly encourages black marketing and nothing but harm can come of such action. I go further and say that to use a car at all times for service is wrong in itself.

NEW DELHI, June 9[1], 1946

DECIMAL COINAGE

It seems that I inadvertently allowed to be printed in the last paragraph of Shri K. Mashruwala's article[2] on this subject the statement that a second instalment would follow showing how, if at all, decimal coinage without loss to the poor could be promulgated. As a matter of fact I do not think the time has come for a serious consideration of the contemplated reform. I am quite clear that however attractive any scheme of decimal coinage may be, it should not be considered before there is an independent national government. Therefore the publication of any such scheme is wholly premature. There are many more pressing, urgent problems occupying the best minds of the country. Surely the country can easily wait for a more fortunate moment for a proper understanding of a scheme before legislation on the subject is undertaken. If England has waited for years and is still waiting, why should poor famishing India have a radical reform in coinage sprung upon it without the man in the street being instructed in the pros and cons of the subject? It is not a matter which has nothing to be said against it. It will certainly not add one grain of corn to the existing stocks. Whether a rupee is to contain 100 cents or 64 pice is a problem that can await solution for a happier day. Democracy demands patient instruction on it before legislation. Hence I intended to erase the announcement of the second article in order to avoid raising a hope I had no desire to satisfy.

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

[1] *Harijan*, however, has "10".
[2] For Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide* p. 95.

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391. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Is it you and your people who have given the name "Nijadham"[1] or is it really the name of Shri Datar's bungalow?

Do you collect mango seeds and utilize the kernel or do you throw them away?

We do not have a magic wand which will put a stop to drinking, gambling, prostitution and gangsterism. But I do believe that if we have the required strength of character, even these things will come to an end. You should keep a track of those who drink and then do whatever you can in the matter. You should also inquire carefully who comprise the drinking party, where the drinks come from, etc. I think something can be done if you examine the facts closely, for example, who are the gangsters, what do the gamblers bet upon, whether there are regular houses of ill fame or what other arrangement there is and all other things.

I understand what you say about the building. Do whatever is possible. The time for my return to that side is drawing near. Would it be all right if I pay only a flying visit to Uruli Kanchan? I think I should not at present interfere with the good work that all of you are doing. Think over this and other factors and let me know.

We arrived here from Mussoorie at 1 a. m. today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 2743. Courtesy : Manibhai Desai

[1] Literally, 'one's own abode', in the sense of the abode of God

392. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

DELHI,
June 9, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your two letters. The first frightened me. The second is good. I presume that the latter is final. We are sweating in the heat here. You are breathing cool air there. We shall now shortly reach Poona. So be patient and go on doing your work. I shall be happy only when you start living with Munnalal. I shall go there first if Manibhai so desires; otherwise I shall arrive *via* Panchgani. If this is not possible, you may come to Poona where we can talk. Others do not give the news which you have conveyed in your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8255. Also C. W. 6979. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

393. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1946

I have been in your midst for several weeks with short breaks. It hurts me that you have not yet learnt to observe perfect silence without being requested. It is an indication that Ramanama has not gone to your hearts. There is no power greater than God in the world.

You would expect me to say something. I too wish to tell you something, but just as a cook never puts half-cooked dishes before guests, I too would not place before you things that are still half-cooked. This, however, I may tell you, that you must not give up hope till the last. We must realize that if we achieve nothing ultimately it is because of our own shortcomings. Nobody can prove himself right by pointing to others' faults.

[1] The report in *Hindustan* has been collated with the version in *Harijan Sevak*.

We can improve ourselves by acknowledging our own faults. If I realize that I am crooked, I shall become straight. It will only be false pride if I fancy that I am straight and the entire world is crooked. That is why I say that, if we achieve nothing, it will be because we do not deserve it. We have been carrying on this fight through non-violent means, but we could not generate enough power to induce others to play straight with us.

We—Hindus and Muslims—I must say have been quarrelling amongst ourselves and if we look to the British to unite us it will be a great blot on our civilization. Who is a Hindu? Who is a Muslim? Why this distinction? Let us all pray to God that wisdom may dawn on us so that we may be united. If this happens we shall easily arrive at some settlement with the British. You must remember that this is being said today by the same man who had told you that, so long as the British remained, unity between the two of us would be difficult to achieve. But that was only a proclamation of our weakness. I fail to see why we have become so mad, why we have become so uncivilized. But let us not despair. Leave it to God. Let destiny take its course. All will be well if God helps us.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 10-6-1946, and *Harijan Sevak*, 23-6-1946

394. THE UNKNOWN

Some learned men describe Him as Unknowable, some others as Unknown, yet others as 'Not This'. 'The Unknown' is good for the present purpose.

When yesterday (9th June) I said a few words to the prayer audience, I could say nothing more than that they should pray for and rely upon the strength and the guidance that this big X could give. There were difficulties to be overcome by all parties in the great Indian drama that was being enacted before them. They were all to rely upon the Unknown who had often confounded man's wisdom and in the twinkling of an eye upset his tin-pot plans. The British party claimed to believe in God, the Unknown. The Muslim League did likewise. They delighted in saying *Allah-o-Akbar*[1]. The Congress naturally had no single equivalent cry. Nevertheless, if it sought to represent the whole

[1] God is great.

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of India, it represented the millions of believers, no matter to what compartment in the House of God they belonged.

At the time of writing, in spite of my irrepressible optimism, I am unable to say decisively that at least in political parlance, the thing is safe. All I can say, therefore, is that if, with the best efforts of all the parties, the unsafe happens, I would invite them to join with me in saying that it was as well and that safety lay in unsafety. If we are all children of God, as we are, whether we know it or not, we will take in good part whatever happens and work with zest and confidence for the next step whatever it may be. The only condition for that zest is that each party does its honest best for the good of the whole of India. For that is the stake and no other.

NEW DELHI, June 10, 1946
Harijan, 16-6-1946

395. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, June 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

This[1] for the ensuing *Harijan*. I thought you and Sir Stafford would like to see a copy.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 202

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix XIV.

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396. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am desired by Gandhiji to send you the enclosed copy of a cable[1] just received from South Africa.

Gandhiji hopes that the information is wholly unfounded.[2]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 89

397. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I read your letter. I understand what you say regarding your sister-in-law's domestic problems. You are right when you say that I also am a human being and cannot know anybody's heart. Perhaps I do not know my own. God alone knows what is in anybody's heart. That is exactly why I told you to do what seemed best to you.[3] After all I don't know your sister-in-law. I don't know Amtul nor Kafikhan and others. You know them all. You may, therefore, go wherever you like. That you have spoiled your health again shows that you have not accepted God as your guide. What, then, can be done?

[1] From Sorabjee Rustomjee. According to the source "The Government of India had . . . decided to apply economic sanctions against South Africa. In pursuance of it they had given notice terminating the trade agreement with South Africa after June 26, 1946. It was . . . reported . . . that in anticipation of the termination of the trade agreement South Africa was trying to obtain from India hessian and gunny bags in excess of the quota sanctioned under the trade agreement and that a special steamer was being chartered for this purpose."

[2] *Vide* p. 352.

[3] *Vide* pp. 238-9.

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I am well. I am hoping to go to Poona in two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 522

398. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

Silence Day, [*June 10, 1946*][2]

I have no news to give even today. As I had told you yesterday, so long as we believe that whatever happens is God's doing, we shall have no cause for worry. The only condition is that, whatever we do, we should do with God as our witness. It is He who runs the world and we reap the consequences of our actions. Therefore, ours is only to obey His law and then be indifferent as to the result.

[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 23-6-1946

399. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1946

Expressing his regret for the delay in attending the prayers Gandhiji said:

Unfortunately owing to Maulana Saheb's illness the Congress Working Committee meeting which was to be held here was held at his place. On momentous occasions like this it is necessary that as many members as possible should attend the meeting. Maulana Saheb's presence, he being the President of the Congress, was absolutely essential. In order that we may not be deprived of his advice the meeting was held at his residence. I could not, in spite of all efforts, disengage myself in time and was ten minutes late. Since the Divine Clock stops for no one's sake, I am glad that the prayers were begun according to schedule without waiting for me.

[1] & [2] In his "Weekly Letter", from which this is translated, Pyarelal states that it being his silence day Gandhiji's written message was read out at the meeting. The silence day fell on June 10.

[3] The meeting was attended among others by Sir Stafford Cripps and Lady Cripps.

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I am sorry that even on the third day I cannot give you any definite news whether the talks[1] on the British proposals have broken down or not. All I can say is that the Congress Working Committee[2] is striving its utmost to prevent a breakdown.

As long as there is life there is hope too. It is easy to destroy but to build is a slow and laborious process. Besides, the prestige of the Cabinet Mission is at stake. They cannot afford a breakdown. If the aim of all the three parties, the Congress, the Muslim League and the Mission is the same, viz., the independence of India, the present dialogue should not end in failure. But we must be patient. The independence of 400 millions is no conjurer's trick. The fact that the Congress Working Committee even at this stage is giving it the most serious consideration shows how anxious it is to avoid a breakdown, if it is humanly possible without sacrificing honour or the interests of India's dumb millions. If, however, in spite of our efforts to avoid it the talks in the end do break down, we should not despair. Those who have faith in God will leave the result to Him. In the event of a breakdown I shall report it to you without reservation and in the plainest of words.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 12-6-1946

400. TALK TO A FRIEND[3]

[Before *June 12, 1946*][4]

A nameless fear has seized me that all is not well. As a result, I feel paralysed. But I will not corrupt your mind by communicating my unsupported suspicions to you.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] For an official version of the interview as recorded by Lord Wavell, *vide* Appendix XV.

[2] *The Hindustan Times* report here has "the three parties concerned".

[3] & [4] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in which this is reported before the speech of June 12, 1946.

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401. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

From you, almost straight away, I went to the Working Committee which, owing to his illness, was held at Maulana Saheb's quarters. I gave them the gist of our conversation, told them that I gladly endorsed your suggestion about the parties meeting to fix up names subject to the proviso that no party should talk of parity,[1] you should invite them simply to submit to you a joint list of the Cabinet of the Provisional Interim Government which you would approve or, if you did not, you would invite them to submit a revised list bearing in mind your amendments, that the list should represent a coalition Government composed of persons of proved ability and incorruptibility. I suggested too that in the place of parity there should be active enforcement of the long-term provision in your joint Statement[2] that in all major communal issues there should be communal voting to decide them. I suggested also that in the event of absence of agreement between the parties in spite of all effort, you should examine the merits of the respective lists of the two parties and accept either the one or the other (not an amalgam) and announce the names of the Interim Government but that before that final step was taken you should closet yourselves until a joint list was prepared. I told the

[1] In his letter to Lord Wavell dated June 8, M. A. Jinnah had claimed that the Viceroy had given him "the assurance that there will be only twelve portfolios, five on behalf of the League, five Congress, one Sikh and one Christian or Anglo-Indian". During the meeting with the Cabinet Delegation on June 8, the Viceroy said that "he had given no assurance to Mr. Jinnah" but he thought that "the 5 : 5 : 2 ratio as the most hopeful basis of settlement" and that he was working on that basis. He told them that M. A. Jinnah "had taken a very strong line about the Interim Government and had said that the Muslim League would not be prepared to come in except on the basis of 5: 5: 2 distribution of portfolios, between the Muslim League, the Congress, and the minorities". This parity between the Congress and the Muslim League was wholly unacceptable to the Congress.

[2] Of May 16, *vide* Appendix VII.

Working Committee that you had seemed to endorse my suggestions.

I told them further that, so far as I knew, it was a point of honour with Congressmen that there could be no joint consultation in which Maulana Saheb was not associated with the talks. You said it was a sore point with Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah and I replied that the soreness was wholly unwarranted and that the Congress could not be expected to sacrifice its faithful servant of twenty-five years' standing whose self-sacrifice and devotion to the national cause had never been in question. But I told you that your great experience and ability to handle delicate matters would show you the way out of the difficulty.

Finally, I told the Committee that I drew your attention to the fact that the European vote which was being talked of was unthinkable, in connection with the Constituent Assembly, and nothing but a public declaration by the European residents of India or one by you on their behalf could make possible the formation of the Constituent Assembly. I gathered from you that the question was already engaging your attention and that it should be satisfactorily solved.

Probably you have already moved in the matter of the joint talk. Nevertheless, I thought that I owed it to you and the Working Committee to put on record what I had reported about our talks. If I have in any way misunderstood you, will you please correct me?

I may say that the Working Committee had its draft letter ready but at my suggestion it postponed consideration of it pending the final result of your effort adumbrated in this letter. The draft letter takes the same view that I placed before you yesterday on parity and the European vote and their election as members of the contemplated Constituent Assembly.

I close with the hope that your effort will bear the fruit to which all are looking forward.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 204-5. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, pp. 877-8

402. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL[1]

18 HARDING AVENUE,
NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1946

DEAR LORD WAVELL,

I am sorry for the slight delay in answering your letter[2] of today's date. Your invitation to me to see you today at 5 p. m. in order to confer with you and Mr. Jinnah about the Interim Government placed me in a somewhat difficult position. I would gladly meet you at any time, but our official spokesman in regard to such matters is naturally our President, Maulana Azad. He can speak and confer authoritatively, which I cannot do. It is therefore proper that he should be in charge on our behalf of any authoritative[3] conversations that might take place. But since you have asked me to come I shall do so. I hope, however, that you will appreciate my position and that I can only talk[4] without authority, which vests in our President and the Working Committee.[5]

From a facsimile : *Reminiscences of the Nehru Age*, p. 35. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, p. 886

[1] The draft of the letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to Lord Wavell bears corrections in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] In which the addressee had written: "It is not my intention to discuss any question of principle such as "parity" or otherwise, but to concentrate upon what I know to be our common objective, that is, to get the best possible Interim Government drawn from the two major parties and some of the minorities. . . ."

[3] This word is added by Gandhiji.

[4] What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[5] During the interview Jawaharlal Nehru presented a list of 15 names with the following composition: 5 Congress, 4 Muslim League, one non-League Muslim, one non-Congress Hindu, one Congress Scheduled class, one Indian Christian, one Sikh and one Congress woman.

M. A. Jinnah, in response to a similar invitation, had expressed the desire to see the Viceroy "alone".

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403. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

[*June 12, 1946*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I promised to send you a copy of Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy's address[2]. I do so herewith.

I have not yet traced Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's address referring to the way the Interim Government, if formed, would work.[3] But I have got the Muslim League Council's resolution[4]. I send a cutting of it herewith. It speaks volumes for me.

On top of this comes the interview given by the President of the European Association.[5] I spoke last evening at the prayer meeting without knowing anything of the latter which I hold to be a dangerous statement. It fills me with distrust of the future well-being through the proposed Constituent Assembly.

I suppose the *Statesman's* leading article today represents the general British attitude in India. The article is headed "Slow Motion". "Deliberation, wariness, sobriety in an approach to great decisions are proper; but not swither and loquacity or delays due to mere tactical manœuvring." All this is a prelude to what I consider an unwarranted attack on the Congress. If you of the Mission and the Viceroy share the view, you should really have no dealings with the Congress, however powerful or representative it may be. Naturally you should be the sole judges of what the Congress has appeared to you to be like.

[1] From the contents this letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji's interview with the addressee in the evening on June 12, *vide* Appendix XVII. This is also confirmed by the reference to this letter in the letter to the addressee dated June 13, 1946; *vide* pp. 329-30.

[2] Against grouping of Assam with Bengal in Group C under the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946

[3] Presumably the reference is to M. A. Jinnah's statement, viz., that he would use his position in the Interim Government to "water the seeds of Pakistan". Gandhiji had referred to it in his talk with the addressee, *vide* Appendix XVII, also pp. 329-30.

[4] Passed on June 6, 1946; for the text, *vide* Appendix XVI.

[5] *Vide* footnote on p. 325.

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For my part, as a detached observer, as I hold myself to be, I think that the Congress has not been procrastinating. It has been extraordinarily prompt in its dealings in connection with the work of the high mission which you are shouldering. But my purpose in writing this letter is to tell you that it will be wrong on my part if I advise the Congress to wait indefinitely until the Viceroy has formed the Interim Government or throws up the sponge in despair. Despair he must, if he expects to bring into being a coalition Government between two incompatibles. The safest, bravest and the straightest course is to invite that party to form a government which, in the Viceroy's estimation, inspires greater confidence. Then there is a possibility within 24 hours of forming a National Government. If, however, no party inspires confidence such a declaration should be made and the Viceroy should run the Government in the best way he knows. But the Congress Working Committee should not be delayed indefinitely. As for me, I would gladly stay behind if you want me to. But I feel that I shall be a useless adviser. I can only advise out of the fulness of trust. I become paralysed when distrust chokes me.

I am sorry to send you this letter. But I would be an unworthy friend if I disguised my feelings. You should know me as I am. Hence these tears.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 209-10

404. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 12, 1946

Gandhiji began his after-prayer address by introducing Khwaja Abdul Majid to the audience as an old and dear friend of his. He recalled how during the Khilafat days he had once stayed at Khwaja Saheb's house. Swami Satyadevji was with him. He was an orthodox Hindu and would not eat or drink from a Mussalman's hands. Khwaja Saheb had employed a Brahmin to render all those services to him. It had affected Swamiji

[1] Finally, however, on the advice of friends this letter was not sent; *vide* pp. 329-30.

[2] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

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deeply. Khwaja Saheb was one of the earliest to join the nationalist movement and take to khadi and he had stuck to it ever since. There were many such great men in the various communities. This treasure of goodness did not lessen by exercising goodness in all walks of life.

Referring to the political situation he said he was still not ready to say anything. There was, however, one thing to which he was free to draw their attention. He had called the Cabinet plan good and he still held to his opinion with the interpretation he put upon it.

The Constituent Assembly has to be formed by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. The Government of India Act of 1935 has given a number of seats in the Legislatures to the Europeans. For instance, in Bengal alone there is a solid block of 25 Europeans. In Assam there are 9. Quite a number of them are multi-millionaires or their representatives. They are foreigners, members of the ruling race. As such they can have no place in the Constituent Assembly as candidates, nor can they as voters return members. The Cabinet plan has said clearly that Indians are to form India's constitution.

Lawyer friends had told Gandhiji that if the matter were taken to a law-court the verdict would surely be against the Europeans. But from the papers he had gathered that they intended to exercise the right, which they thought they had.[1] Till now they had used their vote to uphold the British power and acted as a wedge between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He appealed to them, therefore, apart from the question of legalities, to abstain from interference. No Congressman would wish to drag them to the law-court. They should recognize the signs of the time and make a voluntary declaration that the newspaper report was wrong and that they had no wish to interfere in the affairs of Indians which ought to be settled by Indians themselves and that they would not exercise their votes for the selection of candidates for the Constituent Assembly, nor would they stand

[1] C. P. Lawson, M. L. A. (Central), President, European Association, was reported to have said : "Europeans are not intransigent . . . they would consider favourably any proposal accepted by both the major political parties to amend or alter the effect of the Cabinet Mission's plan in respect of the European voters.

No approach has been made to the European organizations by either of the major political parties with a view to amending or altering the effect of the Cabinet Delegation's plan in respect of the European voters. I understand that the Europeans in Bengal would be prepared to accept substantial reductions on this understanding. The Europeans believe that they have obligations and contributions to make in Constitution-making, but if they participate they will be bound by no communal considerations."

as candidates. They should no longer impose themselves upon India. Whatever they might have done in the past, they should alleviate communal bitterness, not accentuate it. They should wish India to win her freedom as early as possible. Such a statement would be graceful for the Europeans.

It was up to the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy, concluded Gandhiji, to see that this foreign element was not used to affect the elections in any way whatsoever.

The Hindustan Times, 13-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

405. MUCH IN LITTLE

In Mr. Mahadev Desai's book on the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation, I find your speeches made in several places in Travancore. You have spoken of the *Ishopanishad* and said that if the first verse alone survived and all the rest of the Hindu scriptures were destroyed, it would alone save religion from extinction. Perhaps you know that that verse was a turning point in the life of Devendranath Tagore, the Poet's father. Young Devendranath was in a mood of great depression when his father died leaving the family estate highly encumbered. One day while in this mood a piece of printed paper was wafted by a passing breeze to where he was sitting, he picked it up. It was in Sanskrit which he had not learnt then. He took it to the family pundit who read it out. It was the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. "Nectar poured into my soul," says the Maharshi in his autobiography.

The phrase about enjoying by renunciation puzzled me for long. One day (or night to be correct) it flashed on me that the phrase but expressed a daily experience. What greater enjoyment is there than renouncing something one values to one—person or cause—which one holds dear.

The above letter from Shri K. Natarajan was received by me about three months ago. I had hoped to deal with it in these columns much earlier but could not. Nothing, however, is lost, for the subject-matter of the letter is an evergreen. I try to the utmost of my ability to live the meaning that, in my ungrammatical way, I have ascribed to the *shloka*. Not being a reader of books, I never knew the instance that Shri Natarajan quotes from Maharshi Devendra's life. It fortifies my belief that the first *mantra* of *Ishopanishad* is all that undiluted Hinduism—in other words, for me, religion—can have to give. The recitation of the 18 chapters of the *Gita* is finished in one week at the morning prayer and so it has gone on now for some years from week to week. The *Gita* is a commentary on

the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. And I feel, not without diffidence, that the interpretation that flashed on Shri Natarajan's mind reveals but the partial truth. As I understand it, his interpretation is only the well-worn doctrine of self-sacrifice which is undoubtedly a common enough experience. Take only one instance. Many a mother sacrifices all for her children. But the *mantra* referred to here was not revealed to confirm the truth of that practice, well known even during the remote times when it is said to have been given. To live up to that verse means the new birth enunciated in the New Testament, or *Brahmasamarpana* (dedication to God) as taught in Hinduism. The verse, therefore, seems to me to mean only one thing. Recognize that everything you fancy you have is God's and from God and take only what you really need for life. In other words, in the language of the *Gita* it teaches the doctrine of uttermost detachment. Then only is life worth living.

NEW DELHI, June 13, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

406. QUESTION BOX

A correspondent writes:

> Supposing that in a Government or private godown foodgrains are being allowed to rot while people are starving because none are available in the market, what are workers to do? Would it be permissible to resort to something in the nature of your Dharasana salt raid in order to save the people? Otherwise, what alternative is there to either looting or dying like dumb cattle, of both of which you disapprove?

A. It should be common cause that looting in itself can never do any good. Wherever it is claimed to have done so, the good consisted only in drawing the attention of the authority to a crying want. The way of voluntary fasting that I have suggested[1] is the most efficient because it is good in itself and good also as an effective demonstration. It is good in itself because the people who voluntarily fast exhibit strength of will which saves them from the pangs of hunger and wakes up public conscience as also that of the authority, assuming that the latter can have any conscience at all.

[1] *Vide* pp. 233-4.

So far as the Dharasana salt raid[1] is concerned, apart from the fact that there were, according to my conception of it, several mistakes made, it was a perfect thing of its kind and a heroic struggle in which the sufferings undergone were bravely borne. But the distinction between it and loot should be clearly borne in mind. The Dharasana Salt Works were conceived to be national property. The intention there was not to seize the property by force. The fight was to assert the right of the nation to the possession of all salt yielded by land or sea in India. If the raid had succeeded, that is to say, if the Government had yielded, they would have done so to the nation's sufferings which the raid and the like involved. And, as a matter of fact, the sum total of the sufferings undergone by the people on a nation-wide scale did result in what is known as the Irwin-Gandhi Pact[2]. Thus it will be seen that between the loot that the correspondent has in mind and the Dharasana raid there is no analogy whatsoever.

June 13, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

407. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Lord Lawrence conveyed your thanks to me last night when he invited me to see him.[3]

Please believe me when I say that I have never been guilty consciously of doing anything for thanks. "Duty will be merit when debt becomes donation" and why thank at all when my advice is not followed out? You are a great soldier—a daring soldier. Dare to do the right. You must make your choice of one horse or the other. So far as I can see you will never succeed in riding two at the same time. Choose the names submitted either by the Congress or the League. For God's sake do not make an incompatible mixture and in trying to do so

[1] The reference is to the Salt Satyagraha of 1930. *Vide* Vol. XLIII.
[2] Of 1931; *vide* Vol. XLV, pp. 432-6.
[3] *Vide* Appendix XVII.

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produce a fearful explosion. Anyway, fix your time limit and tell us all to leave when that limit is over.

I hope I have made my meaning clear.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 206. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, p. 910

408. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you a long letter yesterday[1], partly in fulfilment of my promise to send you a copy of the Rev. Nichols-Roy's address and, if I could trace it, Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's address. I have not been able yet to lay hands on the reference I told you I had heard read to me. But I got the Muslim League Council's resolution[2] which speaks volumes, at any rate, for me. Both these things, without my letter, I handed to Sudhir Ghosh to be given to you.

The letter I withheld at the instance of Agatha Harrison, Horace Alexander and Sudhir Ghosh who thought that it was likely to produce an effect contrary to what I had expected. I did not share their view because we have known each other for so many years. I lay no stress upon the fact that we have known each other for such a long time for we have had no contact for years after our meeting during the stirring days of the Suffragette Movement.[3] The bond that was then created could not, I felt, be easily snapped and so I presumed to write frankly to lay bare my mind to you. That I felt was due to you if I was to be a friendly adviser to the Mission which you are leading. Nevertheless I yielded to the advice of the three

[1] *Vide* pp. 323-4.

[2] *Vide* Appendix XVI.

[3] Gandhiji had come to know the addressee through Lady Pethick-Lawrence whom he had met at a Suffragette meeting during his visit to England in 1906. *Vide* Vol. LXXXII, p. 64.

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friends. I have told them that they are at liberty to describe to you the whole of the conversation between them and me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 208-9

409. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Sudhir told me something of the storm that is brewing within you. I met your good wife the day before.

I would ask you not to worry. You are handling the most difficult task of your life. As I see it the Mission is playing with fire. If you have courage you will do what I suggested from the very beginning. Even when the Parliamentary Delegation came[1] before you I said then, "You will not be able to have your cake and eat it. You will have to choose between the two—the Muslim League and the Congress, both your creations." Every day you pass here coquetting now with the Congress, now with the League and again with the Congress, wearing yourself away. [This] will not do. Either you swear by what is right or by what the exigencies of British policy may dictate. In either case bravery is required. Only stick to the programme. Stick to your dates even though the heavens may fall. Leave by the 16th whether you allow the Congress to form a coalition or the League. If you think that the accumulated British wisdom must know better than these two creations of yours I have nothing to add. But I have fancied that you are not cast in the mould. If so, keep to your passage for the 16th and take your poor wife with you to England and bury yourselves in private

[1] The British Parliamentary Delegation, consisting of Prof. Richards, Lord Charley and Reginald Sorenson had arrived in India on December 5, 1945 and met Gandhiji on January 23 and 24, 1946 at Madras. *Vide* Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 30-1.

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life unless the brave British announcement made is fulfilled to the Indian hope. A word to the wise.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 207

410. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

Remarking on the size of the prayer gathering on Thursday evening, which was larger than usual, Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech asked whether it was due to the fact that he had spoken on a political topic on Wednesday and they had come in the expectation of satisfying their curiosity as regards the political situation. If that was so, it was wrong. The only urge which should prompt people to come to the prayer gathering was the desire to know the Maker and attune themselves with Him.

On Wednesday, Gandhiji said, he had criticized the conduct of the European Group for wanting to exercise a right which did not legitimately belong to them, but today he proposed to say something in criticism of "our own conduct and behaviour". He had been telling his audiences what their duty was in this hour. As a firm believer in the utility of community prayer, he had been making them sing *Ramdhun* in the mass. But were they following it in their daily lives? To repeat Ramanama and to follow the way of Ravana in actual practice was worse than useless. It was sheer hypocrisy. One might deceive oneself or the world but one could not deceive the Almighty.

Today, in the West people talk of Christ, but it is really Anti-Christ that rules their lives. Similarly, there are people

[1] In reply the addressee wrote the same day: "I am afraid you, like some others of us, are feeling somewhat impatient! But I always remember you advised me to show 'infinite patience' in dealing with these difficult matters. Certainly I shall never put my desire to return home and rest before my determination to leave nothing undone which may help a solution of the difficult problems here. I can assure you neither I nor my colleagues lack courage to act but we want to temper that courage with prudence. I still have great hopes that before we leave India, we may have helped towards a settlement of the problem."

[2] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

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who talk of Islam but they really follow the way of Satan. It is a deplorable state of affairs.

We are afraid of people professing religions other than our own. We think that they will crush us, forgetting that no one can crush us if we have made God our refuge. The hymn that has just been sung describes how God has redeemed sinners. How much more, then, would He do for His devotees? But they must be devotees of God in the true sense of the term.

If people followed the way of God, continued Gandhiji, there would not be the corruption and profiteering that were seen in the world today. As it was, the rich were becoming richer and the poor poorer. Hunger, nakedness and death stared one in the face. These were not the marks of the Kingdom of God but that of Satan, Ravana or Anti-Christ. They could not expect to bring the reign of God on earth by merely repeating His name with the lips. Their conduct must conform to His ways instead of Satan's.

The Hindustan Times, 14-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

411. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said that he still could not tell them what was taking place behind the scenes. But he wanted to say that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy were working away at it from morning till night. They were attempting what could well be considered impossible.

I have often written that true Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be expected while the third party is there. The slaves and their master are both in an unnatural state. They cannot act and think naturally.

But suppose a mother sees that her child is dying, still she does not give up hope. She keeps on trying the prescriptions of vaidyas or hakims till the last moment.

Similarly the Mission does not wish to give up striving. They are trying to bring the Congress and the League together. They are striving with the Europeans to do the right thing. The Europeans have said they are going to exercise their right, which is not theirs at all. But if the Congress and

[1] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

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the League appealed to them they might consider their request. There is no question of going to them with the beggar's bowl. They have no place in the Constituent Assembly according to the legal interpretation of the Cabinet Mission's paper.

To enslave another country is unnatural. Merely by making up a pious resolve they will not get off India's back. The British cannot succeed in doing so. Corresponding action is required. They are striving and there is no reason for India to doubt their *bona fides*. Their task is difficult. The Congress, the League and the British are all labouring under unnatural conditions.

The Hindustan Times, 15-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

412. HALLUCINATION[1]

We are afflicted by many superstitions, obsessions and hallucinations. They are entirely the creation of the mind, but so long as they are not exorcized they continue to afflict us. We may take for a snake a piece of rope and dislocate our wrist in striking at it. Similarly, we may take a non-poisonous snake for a poisonous one and lose a friend by ignorantly destroying it. Who has not heard stories of people mistaking a respectable citizen for a thief and killing him in a paroxysm of fear? Instances of Harijans being foolishly held responsible for the outbreak of plague in villages and being lynched for it are unfortunately not uncommon. In the same way I would regard it as the height of superstitious ignorance for educated people or students to refuse admission in hostels to Harijans. In this connection I would particularly invite the attention of all students and superintendents of hostels to the leaflet issued over the signatures of Shris Parikshitlal Majmudar and Hemantkumar Nilkanth for their careful perusal, reflection and action. In that leaflet they seem to have made an exception in the case of hostels which are specially reserved for certain castes and sub-castes. In my opinion, even in these hostels Harijans ought to be freely admitted if only to prove that those castes or sub-castes have banished untouchability from their minds for good.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-6-1946, under the date June 16, 1946.

413. WHAT HAS THE CONGRESS DONE?[1]

A Harijan from Gujarat writes:

> The elections have made it clear that only two parties count in India today, the Muslim League and the Congress. The elections have also shown that most of the Harijans are with the Congress. The Ambedkarites have won very few seats. What is the place of Congress Harijans in the Congress? Why are not Harijan candidates made to stand for election to the various committees of the Congress? When they do stand, why are caste Hindus allowed to oppose them? Is it right to keep Harijans out on the plea that the caste Hindus are more capable? The Congress has been working for the Harijans for a long time. Why has it not yet succeeded in educating them sufficiently and making them capable?

There is ignorance and sting in this letter. They are excusable. We should understand the spirit behind it. The very fact that the Congress has won so many Harijan seats shows that it must have served them to win their confidence. They form an indivisible part of Hindu religion and Hindu society. If this part breaks or leaves the Hindu religion or Hindu society, the latter would perish. What the writer wants to say is that the caste Hindus have not done their duty towards the Harijans to the extent that they should have. If the caste Hindus would become Bhangis of their own free will, the distinction between Harijans and caste Hindus would automatically disappear. There are various divisions amongst the Harijans too. They should all go. All should be of one caste, that is, the Bhangi. A Bhangi is the servant of the whole of humanity, not only of the Hindus. When we become Bhangis of this description all divisions would disappear. Who can be master where all are servants?

But today it is a mere dream, it is an objective. But no society can exist on mere dreams or objectives. It must be solid work. The Congress makes no distinction of caste and creed. It must pull up those who are down in the dumps and those who are up in the air must come down. Thus the golden mean would be found. People cannot live in the bowels of the earth

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-6-1946.

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or in the sky. They all must live on the fair earth. Equality of all is the Congress pledge. Congress has not fulfilled it as yet. The columns of the *Harijan* show that so long as it is not fulfilled the Harijans would have every cause to complain.

To the correspondent I would say this. To whom does he owe the ability to write this letter in a good hand? Which organization has done more for the Harijans than the Congress? It is true that the Congress has not done all it should. Much remains. Equally true is the fact that none has done as much as the Congress. Therefore, the Harijans must be patient. There is no doubt that there is a limit to one's patience. But the limit has not been reached.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

414. ANIMAL SACRIFICE[1]

A correspondent writes:[2]

If what the writer says is true, it is indeed, in one sense, a matter of shame for every Hindu. But no sin can be wiped out by mere condemnation by word of mouth. Nor does the guilt of the whole body absolve the individual from his duty. Therefore, in my opinion, the responsibility of working for the reform rests, in the first instance, on the correspondent, secondly on the people of the place where the animal sacrifices are held, then on the Ruler of the State and his people and after them in turn on Karnataka, Madras Presidency and the whole of India. Only if all, in their respective places, take up the work systematically—and systematic work can only succeed if run on the basis of non-violence—can the evil that has been handed down through the ages be wiped out of existence.

Therefore, it is the correspondent who must make the beginning. I have written enough previously as to how the work of reform should be undertaken.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 23-6-1946.

[2] The letter, not reproduced here, informed Gandhiji about the animal sacrifices in Mysore by Harijans as well as priests who also indulged in drinking and beef-eating on such occasions.

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415. QUESTION BOX

Bhangi Strikes

The same writer, who has asked the question about the propriety of looting,[1] asks also what the poor sweeper is to do when everything else fails. He indignantly asks:

Is the Bhangi to continue his service on starvation wages, living in dirt and squalor?

A. The question is appropriate. I claim that in such cases the proper remedy is not a strike but a notice to the public in general and the employing corporation in particular that the Bhangis must give up the sweeping service which consigns those reserved for that service to a life of starvation and all it means. There is a wide distinction between a strike and an entire discontinuation (not suspension) of service. A strike is a temporary measure in expectation of relief. Discontinuance is giving up of a particular job because there is no expectation of relief. Proper discontinuance presupposes fair notice on the one hand and prospect of better wages and freedom from squalor and dirt on the other. This will wake up society from its disgraceful slumber resulting in a proper scavenging of the overgrowth that has smothered public conscience. At a stroke the Bhangis will raise scavenging to a fine art and give it the status it should have had long ago.

Unlawful Peep Beyond

Q. "Ah, Christ that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be."
What would you say?

A. The poet expresses in the above the cry of many an anguished heart. Nevertheless the truly detached mind does not care to know the beyond. In other words, it is wrong to have the desire. Therefore, the following from the well-known hymn of Cardinal Newman represents the reality:

[1] *Vide* pp. 327-8.

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"I do not ask to see the distant scene,
One step enough for me."

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

416. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

His Excellency I have no doubt has seen from the papers that the passive resistance movement on the part of the Indians there has commenced against the Anti-Asiatic Act recently passed by the South African Union Legislature. Is it too much to expect His Excellency to support and express his approval of the movement, as did Lord Hardinge[1] on a similar occasion in South Africa during his Viceroyalty ?[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 95

[1] On November 24, 1913; *vide* Vol. XXIX, p. 251.

[2] The addressee's reply dated June 18, 1946, *inter alia* read: "The Government of India have already given notice of the termination of the Trade Agreement with South Africa, and have called back their High Commissioner for consultation; they have also decided to refer the dispute to U. N. O. H. E. agreed with all these decisions.

H.E. has every sympathy for the Indian case and has done all he can to support and further it, but he thinks it would be a mistake for him to make any public declaration on the subject, and that it might do more harm than good to the cause of Indians in South Africa."

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417. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

BHANGI NIWAS, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have your questions. I began to write down the answers but realized that I could answer them only light-heartedly. Writing for the sake of fun is beyond the scope of *Harijan*. Let us not therefore have the kind of fun for which neither of us cares. There can be no place for such questions in the kind of selfless work that you are doing. Anything that has intrinsic worth would not look up to the State.

You are slow in sending me what I asked from you.[1] This irks me.

It would be better if you presented *Hathayoga* based on your experience.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

418. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

The Sikh Conference held at Amritsar has resolved to raise a united voice as also to support the Congress. The Sikhs have elected Niranjan Singh Gill as their leader. I learnt the lesson of unity while I was out of India and I believe that whatever religion we may profess we are all Indians. I want to repeat what I had told the Sikhs at the time of the Nankana Saheb tragedy that the greatest bravery lies in non-violent satyagraha. Experience has only confirmed this belief of mine.

[1] *Vide* pp. 256-7.

[2] A deputation of Sikhs which had come to have talks with the Congress Working Committee attended the prayer meeting in the evening. Prof. Jodha Singh sang a *bhajan* of Guru Nanak.

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The Bhangis in India are free legally to reside wherever they like. In South Africa all the Indians in the eye of the law are untouchables. Our compatriots in South Africa have begun their battle of satyagraha. What savarna Hindus are doing in India is being done through the laws in force in South Africa. That is why I say that although we have God's name on our lips in actual practice we ignore Him. This is true in the political field also. I, therefore, appeal to you to reform yourselves whatever others may do. If the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians live peacefully as brothers in the Kingdom of God I would not mind whether the Constituent Assembly comes into being or not. If we can only do so the rest will follow on its own.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 16-6-1946

419. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

DELHI,
June 16, 1946

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard of the 11th. You did well in not coming just for a couple of days.

I am glad that you have passed your examination. I have no doubt that if you work with the same confidence you will succeed right through your finals. You can then serve to your heart's content.

Blessings from
BAPU

PAREL
BOMBAY

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

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420. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1946

Gandhiji looked cheerful and in answer to a question by a correspondent said:

Go to the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He will be able to give you news.

The Hindustan Times, 17-6-1946

421. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said that in the announcement[2] that he had sent invitations to 14 individuals by their names to help him to form his Cabinet, His Excellency the Viceroy had stated that his attempts to bring the two major parties together having failed he had to devise some way of removing the deadlock.[3] The failure was nothing to be surprised at.

What is surprising is that instead of following the democratic procedure of inviting the one or the other party to form a national government, the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission have decided to impose a government of their choice on the country. The result may well be an incompatible and explosive mixture. There are, however, two ways of looking at a picture. You can look upon it from the bright side or you can look upon it from the dark.

Gandhiji has declared that he believes in looking at the bright side and has invited others to do likewise.

[1] Gandhiji had a 30-minute interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence in the afternoon before attending the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. For an official report of the interview, *vide* Appendix XVIII.

[2] For the text of the Statement, *vide* Appendix XIX.

[3] This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

Thus regarded, what appear to be blemishes in the Viceregal statement, would be seen to be really its beauty.

It might however be, that there was no bright side. Then the Mission would stand exposed. They would lose nothing by trusting. He had suggested to the Working Committee some[1] tests by which the Statement might be tested.[2] He held the view firmly that fulfilment of those conditions was essential for the Congress acceptance. But he could not say whether they would be agreeable to either party. It was, therefore, very difficult to say with certainty what the Congress Working Committee would decide. One thing, however, he could say without hesitation. At no stage had the Congress showed any dilatoriness. It was a democratic organization and could not carry things by an executive fiat like the Viceroy for instance. It could proceed only by consulting and satisfying even the weakest minority whom it claimed to represent.

You should bear with the Mission too. They have inherited the traditions of Imperialism which they cannot outgrow all at once. And poor India has to suffer. We must not blame them, however, for not throwing it overboard overnight. Let us trust their *bona fides*. Let us not act upon mere suspicion. But let us all join in the prayer that God may bless all the parties with wisdom and cleanness of heart.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

422. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL[4]

[*June 17, 1946*][5]

The League being avowedly a Muslim organization could not include any non-Muslim representative in its list; (2) the Congress as a nationalist organization must have the right to include a Congress Muslim in its list; (3) the League could not have any say in the selection of any names outside those belonging to its quota of five Muslims. This would mean that, in the event of a vacancy occurring among the seats allotted to the minorities, the Congress alone would have the right to

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* here adds "internal".

[2] *Vide* p. 344.

[3] Gandhiji then introduced Khan Abdus Samad Khan, President of the Baluchistan Anjuman-e-Watan, as also the Chief of the Namdhari Sikhs.

[4] & [5] After reporting the prayer speech of June 16 Pyarelal introduces this as follows: "At night [Gandhiji] woke up at half past one and dictated for the Working Committee the draft of a letter to the Viceroy."

select names to fill up the vacancies as it claimed to represent all sections by right of service; and (4) in action, the Interim Government should be regarded as being responsible to the elected representatives in the Assembly.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 219

423. THE EUROPEAN VOTE

No less a person than the President of the European Association has exhibited the lion's paw.[2] That seems to be the naked truth. That the Europeans will neither vote nor offer themselves for election should be a certainty, if a Constituent Assembly worthy of the name is at all to be formed. The British power in India has four arms—the official military, the official civil, the unofficial civil and the unofficial military. So when the ruling class speaks of the unofficial European as not being under their control, it is nonsense. The official exists for the unofficial. The former would have no work if the latter did not exist. The British gunboat came in the wake of British commerce. The whole of India is an occupied country. We have to examine in this light the exploits of the European President. In the intoxication of power he does not seem to have taken the trouble to ascertain whether the State Paper has provided for the legal power for his community to vote or be voted for in the proposed Constituent Assembly. For his and his constituents' edification I have secured the opinion from the leader of the Bar in Delhi. It will be found in these columns.[3]

Did the President condescend to inquire of the Mission what his moral and legal position was? Or, did he hold them cheap because he represented the real Imperialism which the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy representing British Labour were struggling to discard?

It is the straw which shows the way the wind is blowing.

[1] The Congress Working Committee, however, in its afternoon session next day put Gandhiji's draft "practically into cold storage". On June 18 a tentative decision accepting the scheme of the Interim Government was taken by the Congress Working Committee but it was not communicated to the Viceroy.

[2] *Vide* footnote on p. 325.

[3] Appearing under the title "Legal Opinion on the European Vote" it stated: "that paras 18 and 19 are subject to the statements as to formation of Constituent Assembly made in paras 3 and 16 which give the right of making the constitution to Indians alone and not to those who are not Indians."

This unseasonable performance of the European Association is to my mind the greatest disturbing factor to shake the faith in the reality of the Mission work. Has the Mission come before its time? Will the gun-protected Europeans of India silence their guns and stake their fortunes Andrews-like, purely on the goodwill of the masses of India? Or, do they expect in their generation to continue the imposition of foreign rule on India?

How can they say they "are not intransigent"? The statement reeks of intransigence. They have a loaded communal franchise, glaringly in Bengal and Assam. What right had they to be in the Assemblies at all? What part have they played in the two Assemblies save to embarrass the people of Bengal and Assam by dividing the communities? This 'load' was not imposed upon them. It would have redounded to their honour if they had repudiated it. Instead, they welcomed the 'white man's burden'. And even now, at the hour of the dawn, they would graciously contribute to constitution-making! ! ! Not everyone who says 'I am not intransigent' is really so; he only is who says nothing but lets his deeds eloquently speak for themselves.

They have been made to look so foolish in their latest statement[1] as to say that they would refrain from voting for themselves but would use their vote for electing their henchmen wearing the Indian skin! They would, if they could, repeat the trick which has enabled them, a handful, to strangle the dumb millions of India. How long will this agony last! Do the Mission propose to bolster up this unholy ambition and yet expect to put to sea the frail barque of their Constituent Assembly? Indians cannot perform the obvious duty of the Mission for them.

NEW DELHI, June 17, 1946
Harijan, 23-6-1946

[1] Presumably the reference is to the statement of June 16, 1946 which *inter alia* read : "The European party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly announce today that they will not nominate for election to the Constituent Assembly and will not vote for an European to sit in the Constituent Assembly. They will agree to use their votes in accordance with any agreement reached between the two major parties."

424. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
June 17, 1946[1]

You have to conceal nothing. Tell him he has surpassed himself (which I feel I did) in trusting against himself the Mission's word and looking at the bright side wherever it was not dark on the face of it. He put before the packed prayer audience the brightest side and asked them to trust till trust would be folly if not crime. And relate the three easy tests of which the first was for Badshah Khan for the moment to decide.[2] The two demanded immediate redress from them. They[3] would not tolerate removal of a non-League Muslim and even then a man like Zakir Hussain, nor could they allow Sarat Babu's name to be removed without the Congress being satisfied of the correctness of removal.[4] The Viceroy could not be allowed to act imperiously at the very threshold. Do this only if he opens the subject. If he talks only gossip you will talk a few minutes and come away. In no case will you talk without mastery of what you may talk. You can also say that they must hasten not slowly but quickly if they want to avoid the railway strike which evidently a truly national government can avoid if anybody at all can.

From the original : C. W. 4228. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7864

[1] From a note by the addressee which read: "Delhi, 17-6-46. Before going to see Lord Pethick-Lawrence."

[2] Regarding the inclusion of Abdur Rab Nishtar's name in the Muslim League's list

[3] Congress Working Committee

[4] Sarat Chandra Bose's name in the list suggested by the Congress was rejected by the Viceroy on the ground that he had been in touch with the Japanese during the war, and was replaced by that of Hare Krushna Mahtab. On the insistence of the Congress, the Viceroy however agreed to accept it during an interview with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru on June 18.

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425. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1946

Gandhiji regretted that he could not as yet give any definite news to the people. He could not say whether the conditions[2], which according to him were necessary for accepting the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, would be fulfilled or not. He was definitely of the opinion that the fulfilment of those conditions was essential for the acceptance of the proposals by the Congress. But he could not say whether the Congress would be in agreement with those conditions or not.

Whatever happens, I hope, ultimately it will be all for the good.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 18-6-1946

426. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1946

Congress is a national organization and it should not give up its national character. In view of that character it must have a right to put forward its claim to suggest names of six Congressmen in the list of fourteen. Amongst the Congressmen there must be one nationalist Muslim and one woman.

In my opinion no [healthy] precedent can be established so long as the communal ratio is insisted on in [forming] the Cabinet. If the Congress asks for representation for six of its members it has every right to do so. Congressmen will not be joining the Cabinet in their individual capacity.

In conclusion I can only say that the Congress will lose its prestige if it ceases to have a national character.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 19-6-1946

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

427. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1946

The expectant crowd that attended Mahatma Gandhi's evening prayer today was again sorely disappointed when he told them that he had nothing decisive to tell them as to the result of the talks Maulana Azad had with the Cabinet Mission.

A man of prayer must, however, know no disappointment because he knows that the times are in His hands who is the Arch-planner and does everything in His good time. A man of prayer, therefore, waits in faith and patience always.

Making the theme of his after-prayer discourse the song that had been sung at the prayers, he explained how that song gave the allegorical story of the struggle between the elephant king (Gajendra) and the Graha (the alligator).

It is taken from the classical episode of "Gajendra Moksha" from the *Bhagavata*. The original is a piece of rare poetical merit, combining as it does the melodious music of verse with loftiness of the sentiment which it embodies. That is the test of all great pieces of art. It must combine beauty with use. Cattle might be satisfied with filling their bellies with fodder but man likes his food to please the eye as well as provide nourishment.

In the allegory of Gajendra and Graha the elephant king is seized unawares by the crocodile as he goes to have a drink of water in the river and is dragged down. The more he struggles the deeper he sinks. A stage is, however, reached when despairing of his physical prowess he throws himself on God's grace entirely and invokes his aid and the Lord of Dwarka comes in the twinkling of an eye and rescues him.

The moral of the story is that God never fails His devotees in the hour of trial. The condition is that there must be a living faith and the uttermost reliance on Him. The test of faith is that having done our duty we must be prepared to welcome whatever He may send—joy as well as sorrow, good luck as well as bad luck. We will be like King Janaka who, when informed that his capital was ablaze, only remarked that it was

no concern of his.[1] The secret of his resignation and equanimity was that he was ever awake, never remiss in the performance of his duty. Having done his duty, he could leave the rest to God.

And so a man of prayer will in the first place be spared mishaps by the ever merciful Providence, but if mishaps do come he will not bewail his fate nor lay the blame on God but bear it with an undisturbed peace of mind and joyous resignation to His will.

The Hindustan Times, 19-6-1946

428. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

Bapu gave a final notice to the Working Committee today that if they agreed to the non-inclusion of a nationalist Muslim and the inclusion of the name of N. P. Engineer, which the Viceroy had foisted upon them, he would have nothing to do with the whole business and leave Delhi.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

429. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

If I were appointed dictator for a day in the place of the Viceroy, I would stop all newspapers.

He added with a smile and a wink:

With the exception of *Harijan* of course.

Incidentally he remarked that if he had to rename his weekly he would call it not *Harijan* but "Bhangi" i. e., sweeper, that being more in tune with his present temper and the need of the hour as he understood it.

Deprecating these reports[3] as irresponsible and mischievous, he reminded the fraternity of the Press of Cardinal Newman's hymn: "Lead Kindly Light", the Gujarati rendering of which was sung at the prayers. Contrary to the teaching of that hymn they always hankered after the "distant scene", letting

[1] मिथिलायां प्रदीप्तायां न मे दह्यति किंचन — *Mahabharata*, *Shantiparva*, Ch. 178, 2

[2] *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[3] In the Press about what was supposed to be taking place in the Congress Working Committee

their fertile imagination supply what was beyond their ken of knowledge. As an illustration of the infinite harm that might result from such irresponsible journalism, he remarked that, if the people were to believe what had been appearing in the Press about his part in the deliberations of the Working Committee, Hindus would be right to execrate him as the enemy of their interests. It was further being made to appear, he observed, that his was the only intransigent voice in the Working Committee. He wanted them to dismiss all that as pure imagination. He appealed to newspapermen to put a curb on their pen. Failing that it was up to the public to shed their craving for 'potted' news and to cease to patronize papers that purveyed it or at least cease to be misled by what might appear in them.

Gandhiji remarked that it was wholly untrue that the delay in arriving at a final decision was due to divisions in the Working Committee. Differences of opinion were inevitable in a living organization. He himself did not know what the final decision of the Working Committee was going to be. It was but natural that there should be more Hindus on the Congress register than Muslims, as the Hindu population preponderated in India. But the Congress could not by any stretch of imagination be called a Hindu organization. Its President Maulana Azad had occupied the Presidential chair for a longer period than any other in the Congress history. He was held in equal respect by all those who claim to be of the Congress. The Congress had constituted itself into a trustee, not of any particular community, but of India as a whole. In an organization like that it always became the duty of the majority to make sacrifices for the minorities and backward sections, not in a spirit of patronizing favour, but in a dignified manner and as a duty.

In the eyes of the Congress, Hindus and Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and Sikhs are all Indians and therefore equally entitled to its care. The Congress has no sanction except that of non-violence. Unlike the Viceroy, who has the entire armed force of the British Empire at his back, the Congress President can rely only on the united and whole-hearted co-operation of all the communities and classes to give effect to India's will to independence. The Working Committee is, therefore, anxious that we should accept responsibility at the Centre only with the unanimous goodwill of all the communities. That is why they were giving such anxious thought to all the various interests which they claim to represent. They have to adjust conflicting claims and interests and that is a ticklish job. They do not want to make the Interim Government an arena of unseemly quarrels among themselves or with members of the Muslim League.

The Hindustan Times, 20-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 30-6-1946

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430. MESSAGE TO AMERICAN PEOPLE[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

I have never been to America but give my love to the American people.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1946

431. INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS[2]

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1946

Bapu again urged upon him that the Cabinet Mission must choose between the one or the other party, not attempt an amalgam; the Cabinet Mission were pursuing a wrong course. Cripps was apologetic. It would be difficult to begin anew after having come so far; Jinnah would not listen, and so on. In the end Bapu told him that in that case the Cabinet Mission could go the way they liked; he would have nothing to do with it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

432. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
[*June 20, 1946*][3]

Much as he would have liked to share with them all that was taking place in the Working Committee and in the course of his talks with the Cabinet Mission, he was not free to do so, said Gandhiji. When there was anything worth knowing he would tell them. They should not run after 'potted'

[1] Dr. E. Stanley Jones and Dr. R. D. Bisbey, American Missionaries, called on Gandhiji after the evening prayer. Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who was leaving for America the next day, asked for a message for the American people.

[2] For a note by Sir Stafford Cripps on this interview, *vide* Appendix XX.

[3] The source reports this under "Tuesday", i. e., June 18. Exhaustive reports of the speech of June 18, which appeared in the papers the next day, have the *bhajan* with Gajendra and Graha as its theme. The *bhajan* referred to in this speech is different and since there are no other reports of the discourse given on this date, it is likely this was delivered on June 20.

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news served by the commercialized daily Press. There were two kinds of curiosity, he remarked—healthy and unhealthy. One should always be curious to know one's duty at every step. But the itch for news was a kind of mental dissipation debilitating to the mind and spirit, unless it was properly curbed.

Commenting upon Mira's song which was sung at the prayer he said that in that song the devotee asks the soul to drink deep of the nectar of God's name. Physical food and drink result in satiety and if over-indulged in illness. But the ambrosia of God's name knows no such limit. The deeper one drinks of it the more the thirst for it grows.

But it must sink deep into the heart. When that happens all delusion and attachment, lust and envy, fall off from us. Only one must persevere and have patience. Success is the inevitable result of such effort.

The Hindustan Times, 21-6-1946

433. NOTES[1]

Imitation

Q. You have averred that a person who gives up eating meat in mere imitation of you cannot be said to be doing the right thing. Are you not wrong in holding this view?

A. I see nothing wrong in what I have said.[2] If a person may change his practice in imitation, it is equally possible for him to revert to the original practice in imitation.[3] The gist of what I said was that nothing should be done without being well weighed and thought out and without deep conviction. Thoughtless imitation is the sport of little minds and may lead a man into a ditch with disastrous results.

Harijan Collections

Q. You collect funds for Harijans wherever you go. According to Press reports, you sometimes receive large sums for that purpose. What is the total amount that you have collected? How is it spent? Are the accounts inspected or audited by anyone? I do not mean to suggest that the funds are being misused, but it ill becomes you to keep the people in the dark about these things.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1946.
[2] *Vide* pp. 230-2.
[3] The Gujarati here adds: "Such a person can be said to belong neither here nor there."

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A. The question hardly calls for a reply. But there must be many uninformed people like the correspondent. By itself the question is legitimate. The answer is simple. All Harijan collections made by me are handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Shri Thakkar Bapa is the guardian of the fund. It is spent according to the direction and with the sanction of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Some of it is spent according to my instructions, but it has to be for the service of the Harijans only. Similarly for other funds, donations are sent to be spent at my discretion. Strict account is kept of every pie and the income and expenditure accounts are duly audited and certified from time to time.[1]

Why This Antipathy?

Q. Simple-minded Jains take you for a Jain, and you are not ashamed to be regarded as such. And yet, you seem studiously to shun the very mention of Mahavira in the columns of *Harijan*. Is this becoming for a Mahatma like you?

A. The above is the gist, in my own words, of a correspondent's question. The reader can infer from it what the original must be like. I plead guilty to the charge of not being a Jain. But possibly I am a better informed devotee of Mahavira than many who claim to be Jains.[2] If, however, I am not a devotee of Mahavira Swami, he or his devotees stand to lose nothing thereby. I alone will be the loser.[3] I suggest that we merely betray our weakness when we resent the indifference of our neighbours about those whom we revere and idolize.

New Delhi, June 21[4], 1946
Harijan, 30-6-1946

[1] The Gujarati here adds: "All this is published from time to time. I think no further clarification is possible."

[2] The Gujarati here adds, "and daily visit their places of worship".

[3] The Gujarati here adds: "Nothing more need be said in answer. In fact what I have said above is also only to open the eyes of the blind followers."

[4] From *Harijanbandhu*; *Harijan* however has "25".

434. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

You will remember the case of Shri Haridas Mitra of Calcutta.[1] His death sentence was commuted by H. E. and notified to me in Sir Jenkins' letter of 1st November, 1945.

Many things have happened since. As would appear from Mr. Carden Noad's petition dated 4th June, 1946, his incarceration has now become an anachronism.[2]

Shri H. Mitra's wife, a niece of the late Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, writes to me about his incarceration. I wonder if his continued imprisonment can be justified when other similar imprisonments have been cancelled.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 52-3

435. LETTER TO R. N. BANERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

DEAR SHRI BANERJEE,

Thank you for your D.O. No. 459-46/PA.[3] of the 18th June which I read out to Gandhiji. I shall be grateful if you will be kind enough to let me know what the monthly quota of hessian and gunny bags exported to South Africa is and when it is to be stopped. In spite of the economic sanctions adopted by the Indian Government do arrears have to be made good?

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 91

[1] *Vide* p. 14.
[2] *Vide* p. 374.
[3] Which *inter alia* stated: "The stocks of hessian and gunny bags, referred to in the telegram, are not in excess of the quota which can be exported to South Africa up to date. The stocks may contain some arrears of previous quotas, but do not contain any quantity in excess of such quotas." *Vide* also p. 317.

436. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

Bapu's draft[1] was again discussed in the Working Committee. Bapu warned the members that they would not gain anything by entering on their new venture on bended knees. He reiterated his opinion that if the Cabinet Mission did not accept their conditions, it would be better to let the Muslim League form a national Government at the Centre during the interim period.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

437. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

Bapu told the Sardar that negotiations for the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Cabinet should be conducted not by the Maulana Saheb but someone else as the Maulana Saheb being himself a nationalist Muslim might feel it embarrassing to carry the insistence to its logical end.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 223

438. DRAFT REPLY TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[2]

[*June 21, 1946*][3]

I and all are of opinion that your presence here is essential above everything else. Remember that you are under an organization

[1] *Vide* pp. 341-2.

[2] & [3] Jawaharlal Nehru along with Asaf Ali had proceeded to Kashmir to arrange for the defence of Sheikh Abdullah, President, Kashmir National Conference and his colleagues, who had been arrested by the State Government for demanding a democratic set-up. At Kohala, on the border of Kashmir State, an order was served on Jawaharlal Nehru prohibiting his entry into the State. On his refusal to obey the order he was arrested and detained in a dak-bungalow.

In response to Abul Kalam Azad's urgent summons to return to Delhi the addressee on June 21 replied: "In view of the grave discourtesy offered

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which you have adorned so long. Its needs must be paramount for you and me. Remember also that your honour is ours and your obedience to the Congress call automatically transfers to it the duty of guarding your honour. The Committee is also solicitous equally with you about Sheikh Abdullah's case and the welfare of the Kashmir people. Therefore I expect you to return in answer to this. You will tell Maharaja Saheb that as soon as you are freed by the Congress, you will return to Kashmir to retrieve your honour and fulfil your mission.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 346

439. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
Friday, June 21, 1946

The rule should be that during the prayers everyone should sit with closed eyes and think of nothing but God. There should be an atmosphere of solemnity during the prayer time, but no moroseness or gloom. Prayer should make them forget their troubles and they should all feel cheerful.

I cannot tell you about the Working Committee's deliberations even today. You should forget about it. The only curiosity worth having is to know God and have real knowledge.

You must be all anxious to have news of India's Jawahar (jewel) and of the treatment meted out to him in Kashmir. Some say he has been injured, some say he has been insulted and so on. You should believe none of these reports. A telegram has been received during the session of the Working Committee today saying that he is well and cheerful. I am not yet in a position to give my estimate of the situation arising out of the action taken by Pt. Jawaharlal or the Kashmir Government. For that I must meet and hear Pt. Jawaharlal first and know the story of the Kashmir Government's doings.

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to me ... I am ... unable to return until full liberty of movement ... is accorded to me. I request the Working Committee to proceed without me."

In reply to it Gandhiji drafted this on behalf of Abul Kalam Azad.

Presumably this was the reply referred to by Gandhiji in his speech at the prayer meeting as having been sent telegraphically; *vide* the following item.

[1] The Hindi report in *Hindustan* has been collated with *The Hindustan Times* report.

Though now a prisoner of the Kashmir Government Panditji is certainly under the Congress discipline. He is a member of the Congress Working Committee and the President-elect of the Congress. His name is on the list of the proposed cabinet to be formed by the Viceroy for the interim period. Therefore, his presence in Delhi is most essential at the present juncture. The Working Committee cannot take the momentous decisions on the problems with which it is faced in his absence, if his presence could be secured. The pillar of the Congress is held up in Kashmir. What can Maulana Azad do? He does not control the army or the reins of the government. He has no authority except being a prime servant of the Congress. The Congress President has, therefore, sent Pandit Nehru a wire through the Kashmir Government to return to Delhi. The Maulana Saheb has also sent a message to the Viceroy to put him in telephonic communication with Panditji and, if permitted by the Kashmir Government, also to make arrangements for his quickest return to Delhi. The Viceroy has already contacted the Resident in Kashmir with instructions to send Panditji to Delhi. His arrival is awaited for taking decisions of far reaching consequences.

The Working Committee is anxious to come to a decision on the formation of the Interim Cabinet as soon as possible after thoroughly considering all the pros and cons. If the Congress were to help the Viceroy form the proposed Government which is suicidal to its interests what would be the worth of its 60 years' standing? Short of committing suicide the Congress is offering every possible co-operation in the formation of the Interim Government.

News has come that the railway strike has been put off for the time being. It is wrong if the railwaymen think that the Congress has stood idly by during the crisis. The Congress has been active behind the scene.

Referring to the start of the passive resistance struggle of the Indian community in South Africa, Gandhiji described how some white people there had taken the law into their own hands and were harassing the passive resisters who were fighting for their self-respect and the honour of India.

The Union Government seems to be just watching while the whites commit mischief. It is wrong. It is bad enough to pass an unjust law, but it is worse to let white people take the law into their own hands. They ought to realize that Indians are in no way inferior to them. The latter cannot submit to segregation. The only way open to them to obtain redress is through

satyagraha. They are offering it against the offending law by setting up tents in the prohibited areas. Some white men have vowed vengeance against them. They have been daily raiding their tents, and terrorising them. Some women are also among the resisters. But they have bravely told the men that they will stand by them and share their vicissitudes. It is no small thing in South Africa. The movement is being led, according to the papers, by Dr. Dadoo and Dr. Naicker. It was the duty of the Government to stop this hooliganism of the whites. They can take action against the passive resisters according to law. What is taking place there today is worse than martial law.

I do not say these things to incite you to anger against the whites of South Africa. If you do that you will be unworthy to take part in the prayers. I want you to go home and pray that God may give strength to our brethren and sisters in South Africa, who are fighting for the honour of India, to face all hardships bravely, secondly that He may show light to the whites so that they may cease to inflict inhuman atrocities and the eyes of the Government there may be opened so that they may treat Indians as fellow human beings. The whites of South Africa too are our brethren, being children of the same God.

When we have the control of India's affairs in our own hands such things will become impossible. A free India wedded to truth and non-violence will teach the lesson of peace to the inhabitants of South Africa. But it is for you and the Congress to decide whether a free India will follow the path of peace or the sword. It is bad enough that the small nations of the earth should denude humanity of its precious heritage. It would be awful if a sub-continent of some four hundred millions were to take to gunpowder and live dangerously.

The Hindustan Times, 22-6-1946, and *Hindustan*, 22-6-1946

440. LETTER TO LAKSHMI M. SHARMA

DELHI,
June 22, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have your letter of the 17th. Your dharma has now become clear. What is destined cannot be averted. It remains for us to think what we must do now. I cannot see very clearly what it should be. And in any case for that I should have you with

me, which at the moment I am not in a position to arrange. Lakshmidasdada is already there. The Sardar is also sure to go there. I should like you to place yourself in Lakshmidasdada's care. In my view you should now have no need for land. You should regard the Ashram as your place, your home. The responsibility for maintaining you and bringing up your children and educating them should rest with the Ashram. You should serve by engaging yourself in the Ashram activities as much as you can. Then it will not be for you to bother about the expenses and other things. But for this to happen you ought to observe the Ashram rules. You should merge yourself in the Ashram as sugar dissolves in milk, you should act according to Lakshmidasdada's advice.

Show this letter to Lakshmidasdada so that he can guide me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMI MARUTI
SABARMATI ASHRAM

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

441. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 22, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi announced to the gathering that as a disciplined soldier of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal had decided to return from Kashmir immediately in obedience to the Congress President's instructions, reserving to himself the freedom to go back to Kashmir later.[1] His honour, said Mahatmaji, was the honour of the Congress.

He was glad to tell them, Mahatmaji continued, that according to the latest reports received from South Africa, the police there had surrounded the camping ground of the satyagrahis, and had given notice to the white population that baiting of the passive resisters[2] would not be allowed. The passive resisters were not criminals but respectable citizens. They were fighting for the vindication of their rights. As self-respecting people they preferred imprisonment to segregation in ghettos. They would resist injustice and oppression with their last breath.

It was open to the South African Government to visit them with the penalty of law or to abrogate the Segregation Act that was contrary to the

[1] *Vide* pp. 353-4.
[2] *Vide* pp. 354-6.

dictates of humanity. But it would be a dark blot on the history of the white civilization if lynch law was allowed to have its course in South Africa. He hoped that the South African Government and the civilized conscience of mankind would not allow that. The whites outside South Africa should not allow themselves to be carried away by any misleading propaganda, but should exercise a restraining influence on the South African whites.

Repeating the advice he had given yesterday about keeping the eyes closed during the prayers, Gandhiji recommended the practice of giving rest to the eyes by keeping them shut at times. It would invigorate the eyesight and help them too to turn the gaze inward. He deprecated the craze for the outward scene which had made the modern man convert night into day.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle Weekly, 23-6-1946

442. YARN EXCHANGE[2]

Shrimati Annapurna Devi[3] sends me the following account[4] of work carried on by her in Madhi, near Bardoli :

> I should like to tell you about the hank shop which we started over a year ago with a view to popularizing the idea of yarn currency. . . . We have been selling articles of daily use such as soap, oil, salt, *gur*, chillies, ground-nut, etc., in exchange for yarn. The stock of hanks increased from 43 in May to 233 in September. . . .
>
> Children of 10 years of age who attend my school run this shop. . . .

NEW DELHI, June 23, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

[1] Gandhiji kept his eyes closed during the 15 minutes he spoke.

[2] This appeared under "Notes". The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1946.

[3] Annapurnadevi Mehta

[4] From which only extracts are reproduced here

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443. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

[*June 23, 1946*][1]

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

Chi. Chimanlal writes and tells me that you are having prolonged fever. If so, you should rest and go for a change of air. Sevagram may perhaps suit you. I hope to reach there on or before the 7th [August][2]. I will go to Poona on the 28th.

I hope Sharda and Anand are fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10085. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

444. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

In the Working Committee meeting in the afternoon Bapu put forth his emphatic view that the Congress should keep out of the Interim Government but go into the Constituent Assembly as it was purely an elective body whose representative character was admitted even by the British Government. The Viceroy could not interfere with its working—he could not even sit in it as a matter of right. If the worst came to the worst, it could be turned into a rebel body. . . . In the alternative, he saw no possibility of giving a fight, as the requisite atmosphere of non-violence was not forthcoming. Personally, he could not even think of launching civil disobedience, etc.

While he was proceeding in this strain, Rajendra Babu read out a telegram which he had received from Assam[3].

[1] From the postal cancellation mark

[2] *Vide* pp. 262-3.

[3] Drawing attention to the form which the Viceroy's Reform Office had issued to the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly. Among other things it required the candidates to declare that they would be "willing to serve as representatives of the Province for purposes of paragraph 19 of the statement" of 16th May of the Cabinet Mission. A similar message was received from Bombay. *Vide* also the following item.

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... On reading the text Bapu exclaimed:

Even the Constituent Assembly plan now stinks. I am afraid we cannot touch it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 223-4

445. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

In his remarks after the prayers, Gandhiji told the gathering that they would all be happy to learn that Pandit Jawaharlal—thanks to the assistance of the Government—had returned from Kashmir last night and that the reports about his having received bayonet wounds and so on were unfounded.

He was also happy to inform them that 16 passive resisters in South Africa had been arrested by the South African Government. A satyagrahi breaks laws repugnant to his self-respect and invites the penalty, which he faces cheerfully. Prison-going is not a matter of sorrow to him but of joy. A satyagrahi does not expect preferential treatment in prison, but he does expect humane treatment. At the same time he must be prepared to face the worst. He hoped that the passive resisters in South Africa would prove themselves to be ideal satyagrahis in every respect.

Referring to his previous statements about the State Paper of May 16, that it was the best document that the Cabinet Mission could produce under the circumstances, if it bore the interpretation he gave it, he said that he adhered to that view so far as that Paper was concerned.

But as an old maxim says, the corruption of the best is the worst. A single drop of poison can convert a pot of nectar into a fatal draught.

He had commended the State document because of its voluntary character. But he had only an hour ago made a discovery which had come to him and the members of the Working Committee as a rude shock. A telegram from Assam had drawn attention to the fact that under Rules of Procedure for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly that had been issued from the Viceroy's office to the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies, no one could stand as a candidate unless he signed a declaration that he would abide by clause 19 of the State Paper of May 16. As they all knew, clause 19 referred, among other things, to grouping.

It was true that there was no legal sanction behind the document and therefore if anyone signed that declaration and afterwards did not abide by

[1] It being a Sunday a big crowd attended the evening prayers.

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it he did not incur the penalty of law. Nevertheless, the undertaking would be morally binding and its breach would amount to bad faith, and those who were prepared to sacrifice honesty would make sorry architects of India's future.

It grieved him to see that the Constituent Assembly was being killed by the underlings of the very people who had given it birth. He exculpated the authors of the State Paper unless he found that they had known that such instructions were issued.

No one, not even the framers, had any right to interpret the State Paper in their own way, said Gandhiji. It could only be interpreted by a properly constituted court of law. The document had to be interpreted and applied as a whole. He still clung to the hope that it was only an error, and would soon be rectified. Then and then alone would it be possible to decide whether the Constituent Assembly was worthy of the name. If they participated in it, it would be for the sake of gaining India's independence. If they decided against it, it would still be in the same cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-6-1946

446. NOTE TO SUDHIR GHOSH[1]

June 24, 1946

As you have been go-between I suggest that you too should be present if they don't mind. Ascertain from them.

From a facsimile : *Gandhi's Emissary*, between pp. 212 and 213

447. INTERVIEW WITH CABINET DELEGATION[2]

June 24, 1946

. . . Gandhiji was observing his silence. . . . I read out what he wrote. . . . Cripps explained briefly what he had told me the previous day; on the first piece of paper Gandhiji said:

I understood from Sudhir something quite *different*. I understood that you proposed to scrap the whole plan of Interim Government as it has gone on up to now and consider the situation *de novo*.

. . . I had to intervene to explain that Sir Stafford was not really saying anything different. Sir Stafford himself explained at some length that what they meant was that if the Congress accepted the long-term plan of Constitution-making, even if it was unable to accept the short-term plan of

[1] This was written before Gandhiji went to see the members of the Cabinet Delegation along with Vallabhbhai Patel at 7 a. m.

[2] As recorded by Sudhir Ghosh, who accompanied Gandhiji.

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an Interim Coalition Government, then what would remain was the acceptance by both the Congress and the Muslim League, of the Constitution-making plan and, in terms of the commitment made by them, a Government representative of both would be got together—at a suitable date; if the Congress rejected both then Mr. Jinnah could ask them to go ahead with a Government representing those who had accepted the 16th May (Constitution-making) proposal, i. e., only the Muslim League.

. . . Gandhiji wrote down. . . .

Then if you say that you will form a Government out of the acceptances it won't work, as far as I can see. If you are not in a desperate hurry and if you would discuss the thing with me, I would gladly do so after I have opened my lips, i. e., after 8 p. m.[1] Meanwhile you should have, if you do not mind, the (Congress) Working Committee['s] letter of rejection of the proposal contained in the Viceroy's letter[2] of 22nd instant. In my opinion that letter puts a new appearance on the Interim Government. The object of the Working Committee so far as I know is to help the Mission, not to hinder it except when its project results in the Working Committee committing suicide. Sudhir's talk led me to see light through the prevailing darkness. But is there really light?

As to the Constituent Assembly, I was quite clear up to yesterday afternoon that the Congress should work the Constituent Assembly to the best of its ability. But the rules I read yesterday have revolutionized my mentality.[3] There is a serious flaw. I accuse nobody. But a flaw is a flaw. The three parties must not work with three minds and hope for success.

Sir Stafford Cripps explained that it was the Mission's intention to rectify the "flaw" as Gandhiji called it. Thereafter Gandhiji wrote:

Then you should not isolate a particular section from the whole. Why not say 'under the State Paper as a whole'?

Sir Stafford Cripps said that clarification could certainly be made.[4] Gandhiji scribbled his last remark:

However, I would gladly discuss this question also with you in the evening. I am sorry to cause you all this trouble. I only hope that you perceive my object in all this effort.

Gandhi's Emissary, pp. 171-3, and from facsimiles, between pp. 212 and 213

[1] Gandhiji met the members of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy again at 8 p. m. For an official report of the interview, *vide* Appendix XXI.

[2] *Vide* Appendix XXII.

[3] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 359.

[4] For the demi-official statement regarding this, *vide* Appendix XXIII.

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448. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL–I

June 24, 1946

After the meeting[1], ... on the way the Sardar asked Bapu: "There is a meeting of the Working Committee; what am I to tell them?" Bapu answered that he was not satisfied with the talk with the Cabinet Mission. The Sardar was irritated. "You raised doubts as regards para 19. They have given a clear assurance on that. What more do you want?" Bapu scribbled in reply:

During our meeting when Cripps said to me that if we were apprehensive about the wording of the instructions issued by the Reforms Office they could delete the reference to para 19 and substitute in its place the words "for the purpose of the declaration of the 16th May", Lord Pethick-Lawrence immediately intervened and said : "No, that presents difficulty."

The Sardar dissented. Bapu asked Sudhir. Sudhir confirmed Bapu's version but added that his own impression was that they were prepared to concede what Bapu had asked for.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 225-6

449. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING–I

June 24, 1946

The Sardar said that they were under a promise to give their decision to the Cabinet Mission that afternoon. Bapu dissented. In a series of scribbled slips he suggested that they should postpone their decision till he met the Cabinet Delegation in the evening and obtained further clarification from them. Finally he scribbled:

There is no question of my feelings being hurt. I am against deciding this issue today but you are free to decide as you like.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 226

[1] With the Cabinet Delegation; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] At noon someone from the Viceroy's House rang up ... to say that the Working Committee's reply should be sent at once. ... Bapu on being informed of it drafted a short interim reply to be sent straight away and suggested that the Cabinet Delegation should be informed that a detailed letter would follow. For Gandhiji's draft, *vide* the following item.

450. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL[1]

June 24, 1946

I have just received the telephone message sent on your behalf asking me to communicate immediately the decision of the Congress Working Committee in regard to the proposals for the Provisional Government.[2] The decision was in fact taken yesterday but we felt that it would be better if we wrote to you fully on all aspects of the proposals made by you and the Cabinet Delegation. The Working Committee have been sitting almost continuously and will be meeting at 2 p. m. again today. After full consideration and deliberation they have been reluctantly obliged to decide against the acceptance of the Interim Government proposals as framed by you. A detailed and reasoned reply will follow later.

The Indian Annual Register, 1946, Vol. I, p. 173

451. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING–II[3]

June 24, 1946

Their recommendation will remain in their mouths or on the printed paper. We shall have no authority even to order a constable if there is a row in the Constituent Assembly. This is a dangerous situation. There must be the imprimatur of the Parliament and real power in the Central Government before we can make anything of the Constituent Assembly. The imprimatur of the Parliament would clear the way for the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly (by making the issue adjudicable) in case he wants to refer a point of major importance to the Federal Court for decision.

[1] Gandhiji drafted this on behalf of the Congress President; *vide* footnote 2, p. 363.

[2] Afterwards it was learnt that the overzealous official who had sent the telephone message, had acted without authority.

[3] The meeting of the Working Committee was held in the afternoon. Gandhiji asked Pyarelal to read out the note he had written for the Congress Working Committee.

In the course of the discussion that followed, the Sardar pressed with great vigour his view that the explanation given by the Cabinet Mission in regard to the form issued by the Reforms Office was quite adequate and the Congress could not postpone giving its decision forthwith without damaging its prestige. Bapu scribbled.

My mind is in a fog. . . . It centres round the insertion of reference to para 19 . . . and the meaning of "scrapping the whole plan" (of the Interim Government).[1]

I have asked Rajen Babu and Sarat Babu as lawyers whether the candidates, after acting according to the instructions given to Governors, can afterwards disregard them.[2]

If the answer is yes then my mouth will be shut although I find a great danger in joining [the Constituent Assembly].

You examine all the instructions. There are other things in it which irk me. Now I think the point will also be raised that the State Paper should bear the imprimatur of the Parliament.[3]

Whatever the Cabinet Mission may say or write it will remain in their mouths or on the printed paper. They have opened here a Reform Office. Whatever they do and the interpretation they put will be final. The Government office not being in your hands you cannot have control over it. You should consider all this. You should do nothing in haste. I shall be meeting them today or tomorrow after which I shall be able to enlighten you as I shall be better informed. Today's interview has not produced a good impression on my mind. Because of my silence I could not myself ask questions. So I do not blame these people. I am in a very delicate position. I see darkness where four days ago I saw light.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 226-7, and from a facsimile of the Hindi, between pp. 288 and 289

[1] The following four paragraphs are from a facsimile of the Hindi which, it would appear, were scribbled by Gandhiji in the course of the discussion that followed.

[2] According to the source "the opinion of Sarat Bose was that reference to para 19 in the instructions did not take away from the members liberty of action since their acceptance of the State Paper was subject to the legal interpretation of the clauses in dispute. Rajendra Babu's opinion was that para 19 did not make grouping compulsory. It only gave Provinces freedom to form groups as was clear from the language of the document itself."

[3] Regarding this Jawaharlal Nehru "felt that it would be a 'limiting process' and restrict the scope of interpretation".

452. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1946

News has been received from South Africa that hooligans have attacked the satyagrahis again. A reverend English clergyman tried to dissuade them but without success. No satyagrahi was seriously hurt. The police, according to Reuter, have not arrested any of the hooligans. Let us put up with these things patiently. It is also reported that the satyagrahis have not retaliated. This is pure satyagraha. If the satyagrahis remain firm till the end they are sure to come out victorious.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 25-6-1946

453. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL–II[2]

June 24, 1946

On returning from there the Sardar again asked Bapu : "Were you satisfied?" Bapu replied:

On the contrary my suspicion has deepened. I suggest that hereafter you should guide the Working Committee.

The Sardar replied: "Nothing of the sort. I am not going to say a word. You yourself tell them whatever you want."

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 227

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

[2] Introducing this the source says: "At 8 p. m. when Bapu's silence ended, he and the Sardar met the Viceroy and the members of the Cabinet Delegation." For an official report of the meeting, *vide* Appendix XXI.

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454. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS[1]

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 24, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

My whole heart goes out to you and Lady Cripps. I would far rather not write this note. But I must. In spite of the readiness, as it seems to me, of the Working Committee to go in for the Constituent Assembly I would not be able to advise the leap in the dark. The light that Sudhir enabled me to see through the prevailing darkness seems to have vanished. There is nothing but a vacuum after you throw all the commitments on the scrap heap, if you really do intend to do so. I could not very well press for fuller information at our talk.[2] The instructions to the Governors, innocuous as they have proved to be, have opened up a dreadful vista. I, therefore, propose to advise the Working Committee not to accept the long-term proposition without its being connected with the Interim Government. I must not act against my instinct and shall advise them to be guided solely by their own judgment. I shall simply say that [the] conversation gave me no light to dispel the darkness surrounding me. I shall say I had nothing tangible to prove that there were danger signals.

I am sorry to send you this letter. But I just thought it was my duty to put before you my feeling before sharing it with the Working Committee which meets at Maulana Saheb's house tomorrow at 6.30 a. m.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 212

[1] According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book I Gandhiji wrote this at 10 p. m.

[2] Earlier in the evening

[3] *Vide* p. 368.

455. TRIBUTE TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN[1]

[Before *June 25, 1946*]

Jayaprakash is an outstanding general in India's fight for freedom. Any country will be proud of such jewels among men. Like Jawahar and Subhas, he too is impatient to a degree, but this is a virtue considering the prevailing circumstances. I adore Jayaprakash.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 25-6-1946

456. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

I admit defeat.[2] You are not bound to act upon my unsupported suspicion. You should follow my intuition only if it appeals to your reason. Otherwise you should take an independent course. I shall now leave with your permission. You should follow the dictates of your reason.[3]

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 227-8

[1] This was sent to Rashtriya Vidyalaya, Panchmarhi, which was bringing out a Jayaprakash number of its handwritten journal.

[2] Earlier Gandhiji had asked Pyarelal to read out the note which he had written to Sir Stafford Cripps last night. *Vide* p. 367.

[3] According to the source a hush fell over the gathering. Nobody spoke for some time. Abul Kalam Azad then asked, "What do you desire? Is there any need to detain Bapu any further?" Everybody was silent. Gandhiji returned to his residence.

The Working Committee met again at noon and addressed a letter to the Cabinet Mission, rejecting the proposal for the formation of the Interim Government at the Centre and accepting the long-term plan with its own interpretation of the disputed clauses. On request from its members Gandhiji attended the afternoon session of the Working Committee. At noon the Cabinet Delegation invited the members of the Working Committee to meet them.

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457. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

You could not come. Even if you had managed to come, you could only have had a glimpse of me from a distance. What would have been the virtue in that? I approve of your returning soon[1]. What seems to be happening is excellent. You should participate in it whole-heartedly. Do not worry about the children. I understand that Sushila is staying back for the present. You should plunge [in the struggle] with the faith that God is her real guardian.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANILAL GANDHI
C/O BACHHRAJ & CO.
MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
BOMBAY (FORT)

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4983

458. LETTER TO DINANATH

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

BHAI DINANATH,

I shall never forget the services you all rendered me and my companions with such single-minded devotion regardless of whether it was day or night. God will reward you all for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] To South Africa

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459. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946[2]

Gandhiji drew attention to the demi-official statement[3] that had appeared in the Press that the instructions issued for the election of candidates for the Constituent Assembly did not bind them to anything in clause 19 of the Statement. This was clear in the declaration quoted in the papers. He was sorry, said Gandhiji, that he had not seen it before he made his Sunday's speech.[4] He was glad to say that his fears on that score had proved groundless. He felt he owed it to the Delegation to own his mistake, however *bona fide* it was.

He referred to the report of the deliberations of the Working Committee that had appeared in the newspapers. It was true that the Working Committee had decided to reject the proposals put before them for the formation of a provisional government for the interim period. But they had decided to go into the proposed Constituent Assembly. There were several flaws in the proposal for the Constituent Assembly, he said, but the Working Committee had reasoned that after all, it would consist of the elected representatives of the people. So, after considering every aspect of the question, they had decided that it should not be rejected.

The papers had also reported, proceeded Gandhiji, that the Working Committee's decision had been taken in the teeth of his opposition. That was a misleading statement to make. The fact was that for the last four or five days his mind had been filled with a vague misgiving. He saw darkness where he had seen light before. He knew that darkness indicated lack of faith in God. One whose whole being is filled with God, should never experience darkness.

Be that as it may, said Gandhiji, the fact remained that he did not see the light just then. What was more, he could not explain or give reasons for his fear. He had, therefore, simply placed his misgiving before the Working Committee and told them that they should come to a decision independently of him. Those whose function was to give a lead to the country could not afford to be guided by another's unreasoned instinct. They

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-6-1946
[3] *Vide* Appendix XXIII.
[4] *Vide* pp. 360-1.

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could not guide the destiny of the country unless they had the capacity to think for themselves and convince others by reason. The members of the Working Committee, he concluded, were the servants of the nation. They had no other sanction except the willing consent of the people whom they tried to serve. The latter would remove them whenever they liked. His advice to the people, therefore, was to follow the lead given by the Working Committee. He would tell them when he saw the light. But so long as darkness surrounded him in anything, nobody should follow him in it.

Harijan, 30-6-1946

460. WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

According to Reuter picked Indians, men and women, headed by Dr. Naicker, commenced satyagraha (in South Africa popularly known as passive resistance) on June 14th in respect of the Segregation Law of the Union Parliament of South Africa. The same agency further reports that neither the Government nor the Municipality had taken any action against the passive resisters but that some 'whites' of Durban had taken the execution of the law into their own hands by raiding the camp at night, cutting down tents swiftly and carrying them away. "A band of 100 young white men broke through the cordon of 50 Indian passive resisters, pulled down the tents and dragged them away torn. Some camp stretchers were smashed and blankets and pillows removed. Two women resisters were involved in the melee. They are stated to have been kicked but not injured.

The papers report that after three days of hooliganism the Borough police had posted themselves near the scene of passive resistance and warned the hooligans against molesting the resisters and terrorizing them into submission. This is heartening news. Let us hope that it can be taken at its full value and that the protection means fullest protection against lawlessness, sporadic or organized. Organized popular lawlessness is known as lynching, so shamelessly frequent in America.

Before the Segregation Law was passed, white men, known to be respectable, had carried anti-Asiatic agitation to the point of frenzy. Not satisfied with their triumph in having legislation compelling segregation passed probably beyond expectation, the more advanced section among the agitators have become the executioners of their own laws. They do not know that they are thereby defaming the white man's name! ! !

My appeal to the white men and women who have regard for laws for which they have voted is that they should create public opinion against hooliganism and lynch law.

Passive resistance is aimed at removal in a most approved manner of bad laws, customs or other evils and is designed to be a complete and effective substitute for forcible methods including hooliganism and lynch law. It is an appeal to the heart of man. Often reason fails. It is dwarfed by self. The theory is that an adequate appeal to the heart never fails. Seeming failure is not of the law of satyagraha but of incompetence of the satyagrahi by whatever cause induced. It may not be possible to give a complete historical instance. The name of Jesus at once comes to the lips. It is an instance of brilliant failure. And he has been acclaimed in the West as Prince of passive resisters. I showed years ago in South Africa that the adjective "passive" was a misnomer, at least as applied to Jesus. He was the most active resister known perhaps to history. His was non-violence *par excellence*. But I must no longer stray from my main subject. It is the resistance of the Jesus type that the white hooligans are seeking to thwart. Let us hope that our countrymen's heroic resistance will not only shame the hooligans into silence but prove the precursor of the repeal of the Law that disfigures the statute book of South Africa. In concrete form, what pure suffering, wholly one-sided, does is to stir public opinion against a wrong. Legislators are, after all, representatives of the public. In obedience to it they have enacted a wrong. They have to reverse the process when the same public, awakened to the wrong, demands its removal.

The real 'white man's burden' is not insolently to dominate coloured or black people under the guise of protection; it is to desist from the hypocrisy which is eating into them. It is time white men learnt to treat every human being as their equal. There is no mystery about whiteness of the skin. It has repeatedly been proved that given equal opportunity a man, be he of any colour or country, is fully equal to any other.

Therefore, white men throughout the world and especially of India should act upon their fellow men in South Africa and call upon them not to molest Indian resisters who are bravely struggling to preserve the self-respect of Indians in the Union and the honour of their motherland. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." Or, do they take in vain the name of Him who said this? Have they banished from their hearts the great coloured Asiatic who gave to the world

the above message ? Do they forget that the greatest of the teachers of mankind were all Asiatics and did not possess a white face? These, if they descended on earth and went to South Africa, would all have to live in the segregated areas and be classed as Asiatics and coloured people unfit by law to be equals of whites.

Is a civilization worth the name which requires for its existence the very doubtful prop of racial legislation and lynch law? The silver lining to the cloud that hangs over the devoted heads of our countrymen lies in the plucky action of Rev. Scott[1], a white clergyman, and his equally white fellow-workers, who have undertaken to share the sufferings of the Indian resisters.[2]

NEW DELHI, June 26, 1946
Harijan, 30-6-1946

461. DR. LOHIA'S CHALLENGE

It would appear from newspaper reports that Dr. Lohia[3] went to Goa at the invitation of Goans and was served with an order to refrain from making speeches. According to Dr. Lohia's statement, for 188 years now, the people of Goa have been robbed of the right to hold meetings and form organizations. Naturally he defied the order. He has thereby rendered a service to the cause of civil liberty and especially to the Goans. The little Portuguese settlement which merely exists on the sufferance of the British Government can ill afford to ape its bad manners. In free India Goa cannot be allowed to exist as a separate entity in opposition to the laws of the free State. Without a shot being fired, the people of Goa will be able to claim and receive the rights of citizenship of the free State. The present Portuguese Government will no longer be able to rely upon the protection of British arms to isolate and keep under subjection the inhabitants of Goa against their will. I would venture to advise the Portuguese Government of Goa to recognize the signs of the times and come to honourable terms with its inhabitants rather than function on any treaty that might exist between them and the British Government.

To the inhabitants of Goa I will say that they should shed fear of the Portuguese Government as the people of other parts

[1] Rev. Michael Scott
[2] An advance copy of this was sent to Lord Wavell.
[3] Ram Manohar Lohia

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of India have shed fear of the mighty British Government and assert their fundamental right of civil liberty and all it means. The differences of religion among the inhabitants of Goa should be no bar to common civil life. Religion is for each individual, himself or herself, to live. It should never become a bone of contention or quarrel between religious sects.

NEW DELHI, June 26, 1946
Harijan, 30-6-1946

462. LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1946

DEAR MAJOR RANKIN,

I got your letter last evening and am sending you a copy of the memorial in the case of Haridas Mitra.[1]

Mr. Carden Noad in his letter to Gandhiji of the 7th instant says:

"I enclose a signed copy of the new memorial. A signed copy has been sent to the Viceroy."

It must have been lost in the post. He has been wired today to send a copy direct to H. E. also. In the meantime please put the one I send you before the Viceroy.[2]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 54

463. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,
June 26, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I understand your hesitation in writing it. It was justified. However, when it becomes absolutely necessary to write you need have no compassion [for me]. I will

[1] The addressee had stated that Carden Noad's petition had not been received "in this office nor in any of the Departments concerned". *Vide* p. 352.

[2] G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated June 28, 1946, replied that "the memorial submitted by Mr. Carden Noad is under consideration".

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remember the two things you have mentioned and try to write about them in *Harijan*.[1] Send me if you have a list of the persons who wear khadi made from their own yarn or who have agreed to do so. Let me also know the result of the appeal to be issued this time.

You say in the statement that, with God's grace, the scheme will be fulfilled, but I have deliberately scored out these words. There are two reasons: one, that you have not indicated the criterion of its success. And when you make a positive statement without indicating such a criterion, who can know what you mean by success? And secondly, even if we are entitled to make such a positive statement we should forgo that right. If you have in your mind a criterion of success, you should indicate it in your statement and say as under:

'God willing, this resolve will be fulfilled.'

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8633. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

464. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

DELHI,
June 26, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter of the 15th three days ago. But I am able to reply to it only today. After discussing the courage that you had displayed you asked me whether I would call it violence or non-violence. I should advise you not to bother about that question.

If we go on reflecting over the meaning of ahimsa, we shall but act non-violently when the occasion arises. We should not mind whether other people regarded it as non-violent or not. The effect of such action depends not on what others think about it but on what is in our minds. We do not know our minds ourselves, but, assuming that we do, if the mind says that in abusing or slapping a person we acted non-violently, it would be for us a non-violent action. Whether in fact it was non-violent God alone can know. The other party and the

[1] *Vide* pp. 381-2.

spectators also can judge it from the effect of the action on the former.[1] But why need you go into all such subtleties? And why should I take you into them? You did right in not publishing my letter. It ought not to be published. There is no harm in your having shown it to the *Nagarsheth*[2]. The important thing is to watch the effect of the work that you are doing there. If you persevere in it I shall regard it as part of your education.

I am glad that Umiya's[3] suggestion has been accepted. I do not know who is the Principal of the Science College at the Banaras Hindu University. Even if I knew I would not write to him. The Birla brothers have played an important part in establishing the University and they know many persons there. If Shankarlal writes to him the work will be done. If you experience any difficulty regarding the expenses, write to me. I am returning the wire received by you.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

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

465. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

DELHI,
June 26, 1946

BROTHER MAHMUD[4],

I had a fairly long talk with Rajendra Babu about you. Some poisonous propaganda is going on in the newspapers. He told me it is particularly in the *Dawn*. All this troubles me. My advice is that you should issue a public statement. In that you should point out that all of you are like one family, that all are under the Congress discipline and the Chief Minister as well as the other ministers are also under the Congress, and that other ministers are responsible to the Chief Minister. As long as you are in the Ministry no Hindu-Muslim problem can come up in Bihar, much less in the Ministry. It does not mean that there is no difference of opinion but it does not take the form of Hindu-Muslim quarrel. You have to be in the Ministry

[1] The boy who was punished later turned up to apologize and promised to behave. *Vide* pp. 294-6.
[2] Leader of a town's business community
[3] Addressee's elder sister
[4] Minister, Development and Transport, in the Bihar Ministry

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come what may. The fact is that we should all be large-hearted. This letter is not written in the presence of Rajendra Babu. He is going today. I have only given my opinion. Only Rajendra Babu can do the right thing. In the end do as he says.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu : G. N. 5096

466. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1946

Gandhiji asked about the rumours of war with Russia. I said there was a good deal of talk about war but perhaps it was only talk. "You should turn your attention to the West," I added. He replied:

I? I have not convinced India. There is violence all around us. I am a spent bullet.

Since the end of the Second World War, I suggested, many Europeans and Americans were conscious of a spiritual emptiness. He might fill a corner of it.

But I am an Asiatic. A mere Asiatic.

He laughed, then after a pause:

Jesus was an Asiatic.

The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 454

467. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

[*June 26, 1946*][2]

The Working Committee have come to a decision after much deliberation. Their one concern is the good of India. I want you to deduce from it that you should have faith that whatever is done in good faith will ultimately result in good. The last sixty years' unbroken record of the Congress service warrants such faith on your part.

A man or woman who serves India with all his or her heart stands on a par with the tallest Congressman. In God's

[1] Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to Congress Working Committee's decision regarding the proposals of the Cabinet Delegation, which was taken on June 25, 1946.

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eyes the service of the humblest will rank equal with that of the highest in the Congress organization provided there is the uttermost dedication to the cause.

Harijan, 7-7-1946

468. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Gandhiji has asked me to send you copies of two cables[1] received today from Durban. Please be kind enough to place them before His Excellency.

We leave for Panchgani tomorrow evening, I hope. It will, as you say, be nice to have a "breather".

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 97

469. LETTER TO JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

CHI. JALBHAI,

I have your letter of the 7th. I got the cheque and the letter from Mr. Doull both of which I am returning with my endorsement. I expect it will clear all of Sorabjee's[2] dues and I hope no further debt will be incurred. Both of you brothers should now lead a simple life and prove your worth and also be worthy of Sheth Rustomjee[3].

I have been daily saying something about what is happening there at present. And I am also doing whatever I can. Our brothers and sisters who are offering satyagraha will remain steadfast to the last and will bring credit to the Indians there as also to India.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

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

[1] *Vide* Appendix XXIV.
[2] Addressee's brother
[3] Parsee Rustomjee, addressee's father

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470. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

June 27, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I got your letter. I intend to leave here tomorrow evening. I reach Poona some time on Saturday. A telegram will be sent to Dinshaw. Enquire at his place. I hope you are both happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

471. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

The South African satyagraha was again the theme of Gandhiji's talk after the prayers today. The whites there were becoming more and more frenzied in their hooliganism and seemed to be determined to cow down the satyagrahis who were behaving in a calm and dignified manner. The Indians in South Africa were a little over two lakhs only. They were a mere handful in the midst of the overwhelming majority of white men and Negroes.

Imagine what it must mean for men like Doctors Naicker and Dadoo to be required to live in special locations. I want you all to continue your prayers to God to enable our brethren to remain steadfast till the end and to vouchsafe wisdom to the whites. Let me repeat that prayer from the heart can achieve what nothing else can in the world.

Two months' mountain air[2] seems to be necessary to keep me going for the rest of the year. It is surprising, the difference it makes. But I am not altogether sure whether it is not Ramanama really that is responsible for the marvellous result.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 7-7-1946

[1] The report in *The Bombay Chronicle* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[2] Gandhiji was to leave the following evening for Panchgani.

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472. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1946

Gandhiji paid tribute to the courage and suffering of the passive resisters without retaliation in the midst of the hooliganism which was daily increasing. He was born in India but was made in South Africa of which he knew practically every province. He had passed there twenty years of his life at its meridian. He knew the white men of South Africa. He loved them as well as his countrymen. He felt ashamed, he said, of the hooliganism of some of them. He had the fear that this hooliganism had the sympathy of the mass of the white men of the Union. Hooliganism would not flourish without such silent sympathy. He fondly hoped that as the white men realized the deep strength and sincerity of satyagrahis, they would begin to respect them and transfer their sympathy to the suffering passive resisters. He asked the gathering to offer their heartfelt prayers for God's mercy on the hooligans. He did not want them to send money to their countrymen. Money could not give them victory. They had money enough. But a time might come when it would be their duty in India to offer non-violent resistance of the purest type for the sake of their brethren. He could not tell how. India was fast becoming the storehouse of the honour and dignity of the human race. It would be in the fitness of things if it fell to their lot to help the struggle of the gallant resisters of South Africa. But for that the way must be clear before them. He felt that he would know when it was clear. Meantime he invoked the sympathy of the Viceroy and the white men and women of India to do their portion of duty.

Taking stock of his nearly three months' communion with them (with only two breaks) he asked them to preserve and enlarge the most precious part of what he was leaving behind, viz., the practice of common prayer. He did not mind whether they recited the prayer verses or not. What was absolutely necessary was that all the members of their families should daily assemble at a convenient time and observe at the most five minutes' silence with concentration on God within.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-6-1946, and *Harijan* 7-7-1946

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473. KHADI MAD[1]

The Rajkot Rashtriyashala appeal about the Charkha Jayanti of this year is as follows[2]:

Narandas Gandhi is khadi-mad. There are two ideas governing my conception of a yarn bank. First, that all yarn in whatever quantity, of whatever quality and from wheresoever it comes, should be collected in one place. From there it should be sent to the weaver in such a condition as will enable him to weave it with the same speed as he weaves mill yarn. For this purpose all yarn has to be doubled and twisted. Yarn that has not been subjected to this process should not really be reckoned as yarn. There will thus be two kinds of yarn, one doubled and twisted and one single. The former will have a higher value. It will, of course, take time to achieve this desideratum. In the meantime, yarn will have to be separated and the single thread doubled and twisted and then woven into cloth at the yarn depot or wherever it may be suitable.

The second thing to remember is that just as gold and silver emerge as coins from a mint, so khadi alone should emerge from a yarn bank. Not until such time as this happens will the defects in hand-spun yarn be removed and the quality of khadi improved beyond expectation. This work cannot be accomplished by compulsion. Khadi workers must be selfless, true and of a scientific mind for the easy, quick and voluntary achievement of this noble end.

To achieve it is the real goal of the Charkha Sangh. It will not matter if, in working up to this end, all the sales bhandars have to be closed and khadi-wearers reduced to a handful. Even so, there will be no shame attaching to the endeavour. On the other hand, if khadi is sold as a symbol of hypocrisy and untruth it will drag the names of both the Charkha Sangh and the Congress in the mud and khadi will no longer be able either to deliver swaraj or be the mainstay of the poor. Unbelievers will ask: 'Then why take so much trouble over khadi?

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946.

[2] The appeal by Narandas Gandhi is not reproduced here. It exhorted people to celebrate Gandhiji's birthday, Bhadrapad Vad 12 according to the Vikram calendar, by contributing yarn.

Why not let it remain as one of the many occupations of village India, instead of being a fad of non-violence?' Those who are khadi-mad must learn the secret of the science of khadi and be prepared even to die for it and thereby prove that it is the true symbol of non-violent swaraj.

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA, June 29, 1946
Harijan, 7-7-1946

474. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA,
June 29, 1946

MY DEAR MALKANI,

In English for your sake. Sterilization is a dreadful process. I share Jagadisan's opinion[1]. Therefore the dropping is good for whatever cause induced. Study the subject well and follow your own opinion.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 946

475. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 29, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

Can I point out a mistake when I see one? I had ordered you to do what you wished. You acted on the advice and I observed what you did. I showed my dislike of your engaging in gossip.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 730

[1] T. N. Jagadisan, who had been supervising the Kasturba leprosy work since May, 1945, had strongly criticized the proposed bill in the Sind Assembly for sterilization of lepers as "both unintelligent and harsh" and had suggested that the only way to control leprosy was to segregate infective cases of leprosy.

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476. TALK WITH NORMAN CLIFF[1]

June 29, 1946

CLIFF : Discussions are now over. Can you talk about them?

GANDHIJI : Off the record—yes. If you want at any time to give anything to the Press you will, of course, let me see it first.

CLIFF : Are you feeling happy about the result as developed so far?

GANDHIJI : I cannot say that I am either happy or unhappy. But I am not satisfied. It is an indefinable feeling and I therefore asked the Congress Working Committee not to be guided by my instinct. While I have no distrust of the four actors (three Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy) I have a distrust of the way things have gone. It has all been artificial and unnatural. My feeling is not by way of underrating the greatness of their task. I have great regard for their industry in prosecution of the ideal they have set out for. And yet I see that what I said at the very threshold of their career has proved true. I told them they were unaware of the difficulties they would have to surmount. They do not even know them now. It is no fault of theirs. They have done a faithful job and yet a bad one. They themselves are not satisfied. They are still probing. They do not know how to handle things. They have been brought up in one school of thought. With the greatest stretch of honesty they cannot think otherwise.

CLIFF : Can any Englishman then understand?

GANDHIJI : Yes, for example Andrews who realized that though he had the greatest measure of success he could not quite reach there. His success lay in knowing his limitations. He copied everything Indian in order to become Indian. Curiously enough and yet not curiously he shared his innermost thoughts with me and not with Gurudev. Such was his love and reverence for the Poet that he remained Gurudev for Andrews throughout. I first met Charlie in South Africa. He was a scholar. I am

[1] Norman Cliff sent to Sir Stafford Cripps a report of this talk, which took place on the train. The latter wrote to Gandhiji on July 20, 1946, regarding certain points mentioned in this talk. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* Vol. LXXXV, "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 7-8-1946.

none. My knowledge of English literature is nil. He was a philosopher—unlike me, a man of action—and yet I took to him as perhaps I have not taken to any Indian. One day he asked for a gift. It was that I should call him Charlie and that I should allow him to call me Mohan. I readily agreed but told him that it would be harder for me to fulfil my part of the contract as I had always kept a respectable distance from friends! Andrews found in me not only a live Hindu but a live Christian. That was the secret of his nearness to me. He shared with me his innermost thoughts on religion. And he said that he must at bottom remain a true Christian if he was to be a true Hindu and Muslim.

The Mission, I have said and I repeat, have done their best. But the best falls far short of India's needs or India's best. Take the food problem. I claim to know more than anyone about it for I have sunk myself in the masses. But the English do not understand what they should do if the masses that are sinking may live. India is being robbed of millions of pounds by Britain. An economist has only today written that the Congress ministries want to do things for village India but cannot. India should never remain naked for want of cloth. She grows enough cotton for her requirements. But it is a money crop and therefore exported. And the same in other things too. All is taken from the villages for rich city people and Britain.

CLIFF: For this very reason, do you not see independence in taking over power at the Centre in the Interim Government?

GANDHIJI : It looks nice and sweet put like that. But where is the power in the Interim Government as proposed? The dice were so heavily loaded against the Congress that it was impossible for them to come in. If I could form a live Central Government and thereby serve the masses I would seize the opportunity. A pure Muslim League Government would have been better than the so-called coalition they tried to form. I do not know what happened. But things seemed to go from bad to worse. Was it the secret force of the I. C. S. as before working in order to torpedo everything? The Simla Conference broke down last year. The Viceroy admitted that the Congress acted on the square. He took the blame on himself then. All the minorities were in tune with the Congress. If the League were not willing to shoulder the burden I advised giving it to the Congress. I consider it was sound advice but it was not accepted and hence the mess that we now are in. You should know that the League is today what the Congress was at one time. All their leaders are

titled men. It has not yet been through the pain and travail that the Congress has been through before it could call itself the people's representative.

But even so I am still working to make things a success. I cannot today support my instinct with reason. I own my defeat. And yet I must tell the truth. I may not hide my innermost feeling, if I am to be a friend and adviser to either or both sides.

CLIFF: Don't you feel it is natural that the members of the Mission might find your attitude a little difficult to understand?

GANDHIJI : I have accepted my defeat before them too. I said to them, "I struggle to lay bare my whole soul before you." I am still advising. But I am filled with misgivings. I have to walk with the utmost caution. For failure now will be a great human tragedy.

CLIFF: Success or failure of the Constituent Assembly will surely depend on the spirit of those who go into it. Will it not?

GANDHIJI : Yes. But it may be that one or [the] other party or none goes into it. I would have you remember that a Mussalman does not become a non-Indian by changing his religion. It is [a] most fantastic claim. My son became a Muslim for a little time for purely sordid reasons[1]. Did he lose his nationality? I am perhaps a better Mussalman than many a Hindu convert to Islam. This whole idea is wrong *au fond*. The British, imagining that they can bring the League and [the] Congress together, are attempting the impossible.

CLIFF: I am surprised that you with your boundless faith in human nature believe that the above is an impossibility. All things are possible with God.

GANDHIJI : If you think deeply enough, you will see that I am quite consistent. My faith in human nature is quite consistent with my holding that men with diametrically opposite views cannot coalesce. I have called Pakistan a sin. Can I cooperate to make sin a success? God cannot belie Himself. Truth cannot work for untruth. That all things are possible with God cannot be used to make God break His law.

I have said and I think rightly that the connotation of independence of India as meant by the British, the Muslim League and the Congress is different. The Muslim League independence means splitting India first and independence after.

[1] In 1936; *vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 461-2, and Vol. LXIII, pp. 5-7.

The Congress stands for immediate unconditional independence for the whole of India. If the Constituent Assembly is to be worthy of its name, it must be a sovereign body with the right thing as well as the wrong. It may not be hedged in with conditions.

CLIFF: But you do recognize and respect the British concern for minorities?

GANDHIJI : I do not admit its claim to do so. It is an unconscious relic, if you like, of Imperialism. You had independence even when you heaped disabilities on Roman Catholics. Which outsider dared to interfere with your independence? What right have the English rulers who have deliberately sown the seeds of discord and brought about these interminable dissensions into our structure now to concern themselves with our differences so called? Not until and unless you discard this 'white man's burden' notion will you be able truly to assist India.

CLIFF: It is very difficult for us everywhere, e. g., in Egypt.

GANDHIJI : You will find greater and greater difficulty as time goes on. The British Labour Party has my full sympathy. Of course, if the mind of the English people in general has been changed as Laski[1] and others tell us and Britain will be content to be dubbed 'little England' and get off the backs of others, it may be different. Otherwise the Labour Party will throw itself into the arms of Churchill for whose courage and resourcefulness I have the utmost admiration.

I do not want Britain to leave India because of her helplessness. I flatter myself that we have come thus far through even our limited non-violence. I do not look with equanimity to India coming into her own by brute force. If Britain would play her part nobly, the growing hatred may give place to friendship.

CLIFF: Can there be a future step in London?

GANDHIJI : Of course. My only fear is that the imperialistic character of the Labour Government will prevent them from doing right at any cost. They want to please all parties. This is an impossible task. They have to dare to do the right even though they displease some. This cannot be done in the imperialistic way.

CLIFF: Surely then there is all the more reason for settling things in India for our own no less than for your sakes?

[1] Harold Joseph Laski

GANDHIJI : You are right. How to do it in the right way is the question. My fear is that they may fail in spite of themselves.

CLIFF: Cannot a *via media* be found?

GANDHIJI : They are struggling. I am struggling. My helping hand is still there in spite of misreading by them of the situation here. But I confess I am just now at sea and darkness surrounds me.

CLIFF: Your misgivings are not due to a fundamental distrust of Britain doing the right thing?

GANDHIJI : No. But I have a fundamental distrust of their doing it *at any cost.* I said that the statement they issued[1] was the best they were capable of but it was not intrinsically the best. Then at the outset it bore three interpretations. The Congress put one, the League another and the authors a third one. That makes it a dangerous document.

CLIFF: But why not interpret it only as they do? They are the best judges of what they meant.

GANDHIJI : The law rightly does not accept the intention of the framer of a law outside what the text bears.

CLIFF: Could not the document be reworded in order to make the intention clear?

GANDHIJI : That is impossible. It would mean perpetual changing and chopping.

CLIFF: Would you submit to legal interpretation?

GANDHIJI : Yes, of course.

CLIFF: Would not interpretation in spirit be better than in letter?

GANDHIJI : All these are questions for the court to decide.

CLIFF: Am I right in thinking that the immediate problem is still the Interim Government and that the main obstacle there is the rejection of Congress' right to nominate a Nationalist Muslim?

GANDHIJI : Yes. But the question of a Nationalist Muslim is a side-issue now that a far more general right has been conceded to the Quaid-e-Azam.[2]

[1] On May 16, 1946

[2] In his letter to M. A. Jinnah dated June 20 Lord Wavell had *inter alia* stated:

(1) Until I have received acceptance from those invited to take office in the Interim Government, the names in the statement cannot be regarded

CLIFF: Would the issue not be solved if the Congress' right to nominate anyone were conceded but they were asked not to exercise that right?

GANDHIJI : A right is negatived if it cannot be exercised at the crucial moment. The Congress is reduced to a caste Hindu body according to Jinnah's wholly wrong appraisement of it. Such an admission belies all its past history.

CLIFF: Isn't self-denial one of your fundamental beliefs?

GANDHIJI : (Roaring with laughter) Satan also quotes the scripture!!!

All I want is that what I have said should go deep enough into your soul so that you may be able correctly to interpret me.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 363-7

477. MARRIAGES BETWEEN HARIJANS AND NON-HARIJANS[1]

A friend from Patidar Ashram, Surat, writes to Shri Narahari Parikh:[2]

> If Harijan girls are to marry caste Hindus it should be on condition that the couple will devote their lives to the service of the Harijans. . . . If caste Hindu girls live amongst Harijans as Harijans, Harijan sisters will be able to learn a lot from them.

If an educated Harijan girl marries a caste Hindu, the couple ought to devote themselves to the service of Harijans. Self-indulgence can never be the object of such a marriage. That will be improper. I can never encourage it. It is possible that a marriage entered into with the best of intentions turns out to be a failure. No one can prevent such mishaps. Even if one Harijan

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as final. But no change in principle will be made in the statement without the consent of the two major parties.

(2) No change in the number of 14 members of the Interim Government will be made without the agreement of the two major parties.

(3) If any vacancy occurs among the seats at present allotted to representatives of minorities, I shall naturally consult both the main parties before filling it.

(4) (a) & (b). The proportion of members by communities will not be changed without the agreement of the two major parties.

(5) No decision on a major communal issue could be taken by the Interim Government if the majority of either of the main parties were opposed to it.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946.

[2] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.

girl marries a caste Hindu with a high character it will do good to both the Harijans and caste Hindus. They will set up a good precedent and if the Harijan girl is really worthy, she will spread her fragrance far and wide and encourage others to copy her example. Society will cease to be scared by such marriages. They will see for themselves that there is nothing wrong in them. If children born of such a union turn out to be good, they will further help to remove untouchability. Every reform moves at the proverbial snail's pace. To be dissatisfied with this slowness of progress betrays ignorance of the way in which reform works.

It is certainly desirable that caste Hindu girls should select Harijan husbands. I hesitate to say that it is better. That would imply that women are inferior to men. I know that such inferiority complex is there today. For this reason I would agree that at present the marriage of a caste Hindu girl to a Harijan is better than that of a Harijan girl to a caste Hindu. If I had my way I would persuade all caste Hindu girls coming under my influence to select Harijan husbands. That it is most difficult I know from experience. Old prejudices are difficult to shed. One cannot afford to laugh at such prejudices either. They have to be overcome with patience. And if a girl imagines that her duty ends by marrying a Harijan and falls a prey to the temptation of self-indulgence after marriage, the last state would be worse than the first. The final test of every marriage is how far it develops the spirit of service in the parties. Every mixed marriage will tend in varying degrees to remove the stigma attached to such marriages. Finally there will be only one caste, known by the beautiful name Bhangi, that is to say, the reformer or remover of all dirt. Let us all pray that such a happy day will dawn soon.

The correspondent must realize that even the best of my wishes cannot come true on the mere expression. I have not succeeded in marrying off a single Harijan girl to a caste Hindu so far after my declaration. I have a caste Hindu girl who at her father's wish has offered to marry a Harijan lad of her father's selection. The lad is at present under training at Sevagram. God willing, the marriage will take place after a short time.

[On the Train to] Poona, June 30, 1946
Harijan, 7-7-1946

478. SELF-RESTRAINT IN MARRIAGE[1]

The same correspondent[2] from the Patidar Ashram, Surat, who put a question to Shri Narahari Parikh, has also asked the following:[3]

It is deplorable that the correspondent seems to take it for granted that the main thing in marriage is the satisfaction of the sexual urge. Rightly speaking, the true purpose of marriage should be and is intimate friendship and companionship between man and woman. There is in it no room for sexual satisfaction. That marriage is no marriage which takes place for the satisfaction of the sex desire. That satisfaction is a denial of true friendship. I know of English marriages undertaken for the sake of companionship and mutual service. If a reference to my own married life is not considered irrelevant, I may say that my wife and I tasted the real bliss of married life when we renounced sexual contact, and that in the heyday of youth. It was then that our companionship blossomed and both of us were enabled to render real service to India and humanity in general. I have written about this in my *Experiments with Truth*.[4] Indeed this self-denial was born out of our great desire for service.

Of course, innumerable marriages take place in the natural course of events and such will continue. The physical side of married life is given pre-eminence in these. Innumerable persons eat in order to satisfy the palate but such indulgence does not therefore become one's duty. Very few eat to live but they are the ones who really know the law of eating. Similarly, those only really marry who marry in order to experience the purity and sanctity of the marriage tie and thereby realize the divinity within.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The question is not reproduced here. The correspondent had maintained that "one cannot expect anything other than hypocrisy in the guise of celibacy in marriage". Adverting to Indumati and A. G. Tendulkar who were married earlier he stated "it is good that the particular bridegroom made it clear later on that he could not deny to his wife the right of motherhood".

[4] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, p. 222.

The correspondent does not seem to be conversant with the full details of the Tendulkar-Indumati marriage. The vow of sexual restraint was an outcome of mature deliberation. The text was written in Hindustani.[1] The papers put in their own English translations of it. The original provided for sexual intercourse if the wife desired progeny. This much is certain that both desired to observe restraint even after marriage. The union was for promotion of joint service. They had known each other for many years. Shri Indumati's parents gave their consent to this marriage after much testing. Then jail life prolonged the agony. Both parties as well as their elders were keen that the ceremony should take place in Sevagram Ashram, where Shri Indumati had lived for some time and derived solace. I am unaware of their whereabouts today. I have no reason to suspect hypocrisy in the transaction. But even if it is discovered, it would not prove that the vow of *brahmacharya* in married life is at fault. The fault lies in hypocrisy. An English poet has well said, "Hypocrisy is an ode to virtue."[2] Wherever there are true coins, counterfeit ones will also be found. Where there is virtue there will be hypocrisy, i. e., vice masquerading as virtue. How tragic and surprising that a virtuous action should be sought to be stopped because of the fear of hypocrisy!

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA, June 30, 1946
Harijan, 7-7-1946

479. WHY KILL? [3]

The following suggestion has been received from Aligarh:[4]

> You write: "We have to kill monkeys, birds and animals which ruin the crops, or else keep someone who will kill them for us." My uncle has been able to keep monkeys off his field by using strong electric light at night. Why cannot this method be given a wider trial?

At first sight the suggestion seems attractive but on deeper thought one finds that it won't work. I might be able to protect my own field in this manner, but what of those round about?

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXI, Appendix II.
[2] Duc de la Rochefoucauld : "Hypocrisy is the homage paid by vice to virtue."
[3] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 7-7-1946.
[4] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

It will not be right for me selfishly to save my crops at the cost of others. That will be violence in the name of non-violence. For instance, we will throw a snake or rubbish from our own yard into that of our neighbour without compunction. True ahimsa demands that if we must save the society as well as ourselves from the mischief of monkeys and the like, we have to kill them. The general rule is that we must avoid violence to the utmost extent possible. Non-violence for the society is necessarily different from that for the individual. One living apart from society may defy all precaution, not so society as such.[1]

June 30, 1946
Harijan, 7-7-1946

480. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

POONA,
June 30, 1946

Addressing the gathering which had come to attend the prayers today, Gandhiji told them it was wonderful how he had been able to maintain his health in spite of the extremely heavy work in the broiling heat of Delhi. He attributed it to the miraculous power of Ramanama.

Again, it is through the grace of God that I am with you today. An accident had taken place in the middle of the night, while I was fast asleep. Some persons had placed boulders on the rails between Karjat and Neral and but for the presence of mind of the engine driver, the train would have been derailed and no one could say who would have survived to tell the tale.[3] But no one can kill you unless God wills it.

This is perhaps the seventh occasion when a merciful Providence has rescued me from the very jaws of death. I have injured no man, nor have I borne enmity to any. Why should anyone have wished to take my life is more than I can understand. But there it was. Such things happened in every country. Why not in India too? But the world is made like that. Man is

[1] The Hindi here adds: "It is one's supreme duty to think carefully on every occasion, at every step. Keeping to the beaten track without thinking stops all progress."

[2] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[3] On alighting from the train Gandhiji personally thanked the engine-driver, L. M. Pereira and the guard.

born to live in the midst of dangers and alarms. The whole existence of man is a ceaseless duel between the forces of life and death. Even so, the latest accident strengthens my hope to live up to 125. Ramanama is my only strength and refuge. You should join me in reciting His name and install Him in your hearts if you want me to continue to serve you. God makes crooked straight for us and sets things right when they seem to go dead wrong.

The Hindu, 2-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 7-7-1946

481. A REMARK[1]

[On or after *June 30, 1946*][2]

I see now how splendid I shall look when I am dead. I have already known how I shall look before my death. Such is this lucky age!

From a facsimile of the Gujarati : *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 176 and 178

482. ATOM BOMB AND AHIMSA

It has been suggested by American friends that the atom bomb will bring in ahimsa (non-violence) as nothing else can. It will, if it is meant that its destructive power will so disgust the world that it will turn it away from violence for the time being. This is very like a man glutting himself with dainties to the point of nausea and turning away from them only to return with redoubled zeal after the effect of nausea is well over. Precisely in the same manner will the world return to violence with renewed zeal after the effect of disgust is worn out.

Often does good come out of evil. But that is God's, not man's plan. Man knows that only evil can come out of evil, as good out of good.

That atomic energy, though harnessed by American scientists and army men for destructive purposes, may be utilized by other scientists for humanitarian purposes is undoubtedly within the realm of possibility. But that is not what was meant by

[1] & [2] On the night of the accident while the repairs were being carried out for over two hours, unaware of the mishap Gandhiji slept peacefully. He wrote this remark on his photograph taken while he was asleep. *Vide* the preceding item.

my American friends. They were not so simple as to put a question which connoted an obvious truth. An incendiary uses fire for his destructive and nefarious purpose, a housewife makes daily use of it in preparing nourishing food for mankind.

So far as I can see, the atomic bomb has deadened the finest feeling that has sustained mankind for ages. There used to be the so-called laws of war which made it tolerable. Now we know the naked truth. War knows no law except that of might. The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied arms but it resulted for the time being in destroying the soul of Japan. What has happened to the soul of the destroying nation is yet too early to see. Forces of nature act in a mysterious manner. We can but solve the mystery by deducing the unknown result from the known results of similar events. A slaveholder cannot hold a slave without putting himself or his deputy in the cage holding the slave. Let no one run away with the idea that I wish to put in a defence of Japanese misdeeds in pursuance of Japan's unworthy ambition. The difference was only one of degree. I assume that Japan's greed was more unworthy. But the greater unworthiness conferred no right on the less unworthy of destroying without mercy men, women and children of Japan in a particular area.

The moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter-bombs even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence. Hatred can be overcome only by love. Counter-hatred only increases the surface as well as the depth of hatred. I am aware that I am repeating what I have many times stated before and practised to the best of my ability and capacity. What I first stated was itself nothing new. It was as old as the hills. Only I recited no copy-book maxim but definitely announced what I believed in every fibre of my being. Sixty years of practice in various walks of life has only enriched the belief which experience of friends has fortified. It is however the central truth by which one can stand alone without flinching. I believe in what Max Muller said years ago, namely, that truth needed to be repeated as long as there were men who disbelieved it.

POONA, July 1, 1946
Harijan, 7-7-1946

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483. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am engulfed in work. Yesterday I started silence at 9. I have seen the Ministers.

Jawaharlal is coming here on the 4th. He still insists on my attending the meeting[1]. Aruna[2] had already been to tell me. I sent her on to Maulana. If I must come I should be put up only in the Bhangi quarter. It had better be the same locality where I was taken earlier. I hesitate to say 'the same house'. The people of the house must not be driven out. Please consider all this and do what is proper. You may also consider whether I must come and let me know.

I did not like what you said to me. I questioned Pyarelal and told him to write down what he said and send it to you. He did not read in anything I said the meaning that you do. He said what he said from his own observation. But what I said had—and still has—a more profound import. It was nobody's fault. The fault lay with the circumstances. What can you or I do about it? You have to go by your experience, I by mine. You know I have not been able to understand certain things you have done—for instance, the expenditure on the election. This is an old issue, but I feel things went too far this time. This I. N. A. business also I did not relish and I do not like the way you lose your temper in the Working Committee. Then on top of it we had this affair of the Constituent Assembly. I am not complaining, but I can see that we are heading in different directions. Why should I grieve? I certainly shall not complain. But we must see things as they are.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 306-7

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee and A. I. C. C., scheduled to be held in Bombay from July 5

[2] Aruna Asaf Ali, member of All-India Congress Socialist Party

484. LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI MORARJI[1],

I was somewhat alarmed on hearing about [the incidents at] Ahmedabad.[2] I was aware of the *Rath-yatra*[3] day. They must have anticipated a skirmish. Why did the police not take precautionary measures? Does not the police now belong to the people? Why did they not seek the people's co-operation before hand? Our real defence force ought to be the people. Why call the military for such tasks? The people ought to have been forewarned that they would not get the help of the military. The State too may not rule with the help of the military. This could not be. Now realize your mistake and start afresh. Withdraw the military if you can. If you find it risky to withdraw the military immediately let them do policing. They may not carry rifles, and if they carry bayonets these should be used sparingly. Don't mind if a few have to die. They have been trained to act like monkeys. Under your administration they should cease to be monkeys and become human beings. Think about all this. Don't do anything only because I am saying it. Do what you are convinced about. Remember one thing, viz., the [British] Government's rule will take deeper root the more use you make of the military. Till now it has only been shaken, it may soon entrench itself securely. Well, "a word is enough for the wise."

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MORARJI DESAI
POONA

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

[1] Minister of Home and Revenue in the Government of Bombay
[2] Communal riots had broken out in Ahmedabad on July 1.
[3] *Ashad Sud* 2, on which day images of gods are taken out in a procession

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485. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

POONA,
July 1, 1946

CHI. SUMI,

Your letter shows lack of thought and reasoning. I cannot fulfil your desire. Bhulabhai was a brilliant man. He became a lawyer of eminence here itself. Bal went to the U. S. A. after completing his studies here. I have sent no one abroad as you suggest. Lilavati is a widow. On growing older she thought of becoming a doctor. Others helped her while I only gave my approval. Let us see when you prove your worth. So far you have only shown your ability for cramming. There is nothing to becoming a barrister. Do whatever you can here itself and assimilate it. How many like you are able to go to England? Your father cannot provide the money and it is not right that he should beg for it. From every point of view I am against your going to England, and I shall not ask anyone for money for your sake. I advise you to restrain this desire of yours. Make whatever progress you can while remaining here. What more shall I write?

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

Show this to Ramdas and Nimu. I am returning your letter. Let them see that too.

From the Gujarati original : Sumitra Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

486. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I do not like to preside over any meeting. I am now tired of these things. I have already explained this to you. Invite Bapa or somebody else. Please excuse me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

487. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

POONA,
July 1, 1946

Gandhiji said that it grieved him to tell them that the hooliganism of the white men of South Africa was daily growing worse. The relieving feature, however, was that the courage and renunciation of the satyagrahis was rising to the occasion. One of the sisters, Dr. Goonam, had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. The trying Magistrate had reduced the term to four months. Dr. Goonam had objected to it saying that she wanted no favour on the score of her sex. Her offence, if it could be so called, was exactly the same as that of the men satyagrahis. But the Magistrate would not listen to her objection. Satyagrahis were being recruited in large numbers. He hoped and prayed, said Gandhiji, that the satyagrahis would continue to be strong and firm and that their struggle would be crowned with success.

Concluding, he asked them never to forget that God was the sole rock and refuge of a satyagrahi.

The Hindu, 3-7-1946

488. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

POONA,
July 2, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter of May 27, 1946. If I started writing private letters to everyone there would be no end to it. Besides, why the insistence on privacy? If you have any mental weakness some day it is bound to come out. Or you will become a hypocrite.

The Ashram is not intended for comfort. For that you should go to some other place. I personally do not run the Ashram. For the present, therefore, there is nothing for you but to do as Krishnachandra says or leave the place.

[1] It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

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You need not become an ascetic but at least become like an ordinary human being who does not make a show of his wealth. Otherwise, forget your relationship with me.

I have been noticing for a long time that you yourself are the cause of your frequent illness. You ought to know that you have no business to eat rice and *mung*. The diet for you is milk, boiled vegetables, fruit and curd. About the rest you may speak to me if you are still at the Ashram when I come there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8760

489. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 2, 1946

God is not a person. He is the all-pervading, all-powerful spirit. Anyone who bears Him in his or her heart has access to a marvellous force or energy as effective in its results as, say, electricity, but much subtler.

In explaining the significance of Ramanama was he propagating a species of superstition, he asked. "No" was his reply. Mere repetition of Ramanama possessed no mysterious virtue as such. Ramanama was not like black magic. It had to be taken with all that it symbolized. Rather, it was like a mathematical formula which summed up in brief the result of endless research. Mere mechanical repetition of Ramanama could not give strength. For that one had to understand and live up to the conditions attaching to its recitation. To take God's name one had to live a godly life.

Mahatma Gandhi said that the outbreak of communal riots in Ahmedabad had pained him deeply and he had told Mr. Morarji Desai, Bombay's Home Minister, who had come to see him before his departure for Ahmedabad, that he (Mr. Desai) must go to meet the flames under the sole protection of God, not that of the police and military. If need be, he must perish in the flames in the attempt to quell them as the late Mr. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi had done.[1]

Two Hindu workers and a Muslim worker set out to quell the riots and died in the effort. I am not unhappy at their death. I do not weep for them. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi laid down his life similarly in the Kanpur riots. Friends had

[1] In March, 1931. *Vide* Vol. XLV, pp. 353-4, 374 and 402.

The following paragraph is translated from Pyarelal's Gujarati article "Three Pure Sacrifices" in *Harijanbandhu*.

warned him: "Do not go in to the riot-affected area. The people there have gone mad. They will kill you." But Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was not to be daunted. He was confident that his going would stop the riots. He went there and died at the hands of those who had gone mad. I was happy at his death. I do not say all this to excite you. I want to make you understand that if you but learn how to die all will be well. If enough young men like Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Vasantrao[1] and Rajab Ali[2] came out, riots could be banished for ever.

Gandhiji also stated that the Congress Ministry in the Province was there to serve all the communities, but the Ministers could not serve them unless they had the willing co-operation of the people.

In Ahmedabad, went on Gandhiji, the pride of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, where he had rendered yeoman's service to the Municipality, Hindus and Muslims had always lived together in peace. But of late, they seemed to be dehumanized.

Today Hindus and Muslims have gone mad and are stabbing each other. How shameful and tragic it is! If one of the communities gives up the madness the conflict will cease immediately.[3]

All the deaths in Ahmedabad were not the result of firing. Many were the results of stabbing and the like. It was a shame that they had to call for the help of the police and the military to prevent them from flying at each other's throats.[4]

But you must realize that by seeking the help of the police and the army we become their slaves. If we want to have true independence, we should stop relying on them and relying solely on God should learn how to die. That is all we have to do. Many people know how to die after killing others but we have to die without killing anyone.

If one side ceased to retaliate, the riots could not go on. What did it matter if even a few lakhs were killed in the right manner out of the 40 crores of Indians? If they could learn the lesson of dying without killing, India which was celebrated in legend and history as *Karmabhoomi*—the land of duty—would become a virtual Eden, the image of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

The Hindu, 4-7-1946, and *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1946

[1] Vasantrao Hegishte
[2] Rajab Ali Lakhani
[3] This paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*.
[4] The following paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*.

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490. *DISTINCTION BETWEEN HINDI AND URDU*

Shri Ram Naresh Tripathi is well known to me. One day he came to see me at Mussoorie. I had feared that he would reproach me for my propagation of Hindustani. But when I talked to him I found the reverse. He told me that if I cherished the hope that Hindustani would emerge from a blending of Hindi and Urdu, Urdu would be of more help. Only I should become as fully aware of the attempts to distort Urdu by giving it a new look as I am of the attempts to distort Hindi. Hindustani would then come of itself. I asked him to give me illustrations to help me understand what he meant. When he tried to think he found some difficulty in doing so. I then asked him to explain in writing. The result was the following letter which he wrote to me:

Pujya Bapu,

You had asked me to explain to you the structural difference between Hindi and Urdu. But it seems to me a matter of experience. I cannot clearly define it. I can venture a suggestion though. Get a paragraph from *Harijan* translated into Hindi and Urdu by two competent writers. You will know the difference between the structures of the two languages.

I had told you that day that Urdu was more refined than Hindi. I will give you an example. Here is a sentence from a well-known Hindi writer: समझमें न आने से घबराहट-सी होने लगती है।

In Urdu लगती cannot be used. It is either होती है or पैदा होती है. No good Urdu writer will ever use an incorrect idiom. If he does so he has to be prepared to engage in a stiff battle. There is no movement for refining Hindi. But rather than such a movement being started it would do Hindi much more good if Urdu books and writings were published in the Devanagari script. In this way Hindi would be benefited by the struggles of the Urdu writers and poets over the last several centuries to improve and polish Urdu. This would automatically transform it into Hindustani.

This letter deserves consideration. I am a lover of languages but I am not a linguist. My knowledge of Hindi is barely satisfactory. I did not learn Hindi from any books. I did not have the time for that. My son Devdas who, with my

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encouragement and my blessings, went to Madras to learn Hindi, knows it far better than I do. There are many others also whom I can name. My knowledge of Urdu is even less than my knowledge of Hindi. I have known the Nagari script from my childhood. I have learnt the Persian script with considerable effort. As I have not had the practice, I am able to read it only with some difficulty. I manage somehow to write it. Thus my knowledge of Urdu is very rudimentary. What I do have is love and an impartial attitude. Therefore, if God wills it and if I get help from scholars of the two languages, my venture will succeed. I published Tripathiji's letter only with the idea that he and others would help me in this effort.

Another lover of Hindi also tells me that hardly has there been such work done for Hindi as there has been for Urdu. If only people would not indulge in a tug of war but would realize that the two languages have a common root in the speech of the millions of our villagers and that it is for this that our scholars and poets have to work, we could quickly march forward.

POONA, July 3, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 14-7-1946

491. LETTER TO C. R. ATTLEE[1]

POONA,
July 3, 1946

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I wonder if you can remember an Indian being introduced to you by the late Mr. MacDonald[2]. That was the present writer. On the strength of that slight acquaintance, I make bold to introduce to you my young friend Shri Sudhir Ghosh. He makes a reliable and steady bridge between Great Britain and India. He loves both passionately. He has made wide British connections. And he made himself a willing instrument in the hands of your Mission. At their instance he goes to England. I have wished godspeed to his self-imposed mission. He

[1] The letter was forwarded by the India Office to the addressee on August 3.

[2] James Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of Britain, 1924, 1929-31 and 1931-35

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thinks he will interpret India as he knows it. Incidentally he has to interpret me to the best of his ability. To interpret a person is much more difficult than to interpret organizations. God bless his effort and give his tongue the right word.

I hope the great weight you are carrying sits lightly on you.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE PRIME MINISTER
LONDON

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, p. 4. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 220

492. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. I was very glad that you wrote in the Gujarati script. Make it a regular habit. There is room for improvement in your handwriting. It is, of course, better than your Devanagari. But you must improve in this respect as you improve in knowledge. When the writing is heavy, it comes out on the other side and therefore you cannot write on both sides.

You have given me plenty of news in your letter. Continue to write thus.

I hope to reach Sevagram in the first week of August. My plan to go to Panchgani has been upset. I hope nevertheless to pay a flying visit there.

Rasik's[2] ideas improved day by day and he rose very high. I have the same hopes of you. Rasik had almost reached the apex in thought when he passed away. May you reach the apex and may you live 125 years.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 9522. Courtesy : Kanu Gandhi

[1] Even though advised against it by the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, the addressee met Sudhir Ghosh and replying to this on August 14 wrote : "Thank you for your letter introducing Mr. Ghosh. I much enjoyed a talk with him. I trust that a complete settlement between our two countries may be attained. I think that the last time we met was in the House of Commons with George Lansbury. I trust that you keep well."

[2] Rasik, son of Harilal Gandhi, who died on February 8, 1929; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 431-3.

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493. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

POONA,
July 3, 1946

BHAI JAISUKHLAL,

The letter written in English and dated June 29 seems to be from you, although you never write to me in English. Which other J. K. Mehta could it be? Anyhow I take it you are a Gujarati. I would be shocked if Gujaratis started writing to me in English.

Why must you see me in Poona? Write whatever you like about the Constituent Assembly. I can have no leisure at all. Some new task or other always turns up demanding undivided attention. Hence I have not the heart to let anyone come from Bombay. If you are the same old Jaisukhlal, I may let you come so that I can see for myself that you are hale and hearty. Yet I am not sure and if you are not the same old Jaisukhlal, why should I trouble you to come?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI J. K. MEHTA
TAGORE ROAD
SANTA CRUZ

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

494. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

POONA,
July 3, 1946

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM[1],

I have your affectionate letter. It is all to the good that I rarely read any newspapers. How can I find the time? If I happened to read them I wouldn't believe you could have said so. Now, I shall be more careful.

[1] (1882-1962); Speaker, Legislative Assembly, U. P., 1937-39 and 1946-50; President of the Congress, 1950, but resigned soon after; Vice-President, Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

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I understand what you say about the Assembly under swaraj.

Blessings from
BAPU

BABU PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
SPEAKER BHAVAN
BANDARIA BAGH
LUCKNOW

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

495. LETTER TO THANMAL SOUCHETI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. THANMAL,

I got the sad news of Sheth Pratapmal's death. May everyone get a father like yours. He made such sacrifices and yet how silently he rendered service! May you grow as selfless as he was and continue his tradition.

Blessings from
BAPU

THANMAL SOUCHETI
C/O SJT. CHANGNIRAM PRATAPMAL
SOJAT ROAD, MARWAR

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

496. INTERVIEW TO JOACHIM DIAS AND CHANDRAKANT KAKODKAR[1]

POONA,
July 3, 1946

Do not bow before the Portuguese Government. Remember that 40 crores of Indians are behind you.[2]

Q. Our fight against the Portuguese imperialism is for the present to obtain civil liberties. Hence, what is the type of satyagraha that we should offer?

[1] President and Member of the Executive Committee of the Goan Youth League

[2] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*.

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A. You have to resist through civil disobedience every attack on civil liberties. But you should define beforehand what the civil liberties are for which you are fighting. You cannot ask for anything to which you have no moral right. Moreover, your movement should be strictly non-violent.

Q. The Colonial Administration of the Portuguese Government demands previous permission for meetings; but we want the right of calling meetings even without serving notice.

A. You should have every right to call meetings without notice. No self-respecting person can tolerate any hindrance to his doing what is morally just. We are free men and we want to hold meetings peacefully. For this we cannot give any previous notice. Hence you should hold meetings without giving any notice.

Q. In case we call a meeting and address the people and are arrested, and police allow us to go away saying we should come back on any fixed day, are we to agree to it? Or should we refuse to quit the police premises, or should we come out and defy their bans again?

A. The police who have the right to arrest you also have the right to let you go. Hence you should go out if you are allowed to do so. You should not insist on being kept under arrest. But once you go out you can defy the ban again. In case any day is fixed for your reappearance before the police, you are bound as gentlemen to do so.

Q. How should people act when a satyagrahi is arrested?

A. There should be no demonstration or disturbance of any kind if a satyagrahi is arrested. The people should be peaceful and offer themselves either individually or collectively to be arrested. I am not for hartal and such other things if anyone is arrested. After all you should know that a satyagrahi courts arrest of his own accord, and if the people wish to do anything at all, it should be to follow his example. As for demonstrations, etc., they will come at a later stage.

Q. How to defy the pre-censorship of Press?

A. This is really difficult but there are two solutions which I can offer. The first one is the one followed by me in South Africa. It is to issue handwritten bulletins which volunteers should sell openly. These bulletins should contain defiant news exposing the Government. It is better if the people who write out, sign their full names at the bottom of each bulletin. If

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many of you join together it won't be difficult to take out several copies. Let the Government arrest the people concerned, others can continue the work. The other way open to you is to get printed matter from outside and distribute it openly.

Q. How to defy the ban on organizations?

A. Start as many organizations as you like and begin working in their name.

Q. How should people react in case the Government takes recourse to shooting, etc.?

A. It is better to die bravely than exist under such repugnant conditions. Let the people say: 'All right, shoot us!'

Q. How should a satyagrahi keep up his morale when subjected to torture?

A. The satyagrahi must not wince. He should submit to every form of torture.

Q. What should be the attitude of a satyagrahi towards the Catholic Church in Goa when it becomes an active agency of oppression in the hands of the Portuguese rulers?

A. It is better to leave religion alone. But if it really plays into the hands of oppressors, then it is your duty to oppose it in the same way as you would oppose any oppressive regime. But be against it only to the extent to which it hinders your cause.

Now I have answered all your questions, and I want that you should show your courage and should not allow the movement to fizzle out. Even if no one is prepared for sacrifice it is the duty of anyone who feels the wrong to oppose it without waiting for others to follow. [If] you rot in prison, the eyes of the others will be opened some time or other. As for myself I would not have remained for a moment in Goa without breaking such inhuman laws.

You have all my blessings and I promise you I will exert all my influence to see that the Indian National Congress is interested in Goa and that Goa comes on the map of India. Only show courage; I admire it.

The Hindu, 5-7-1946, and C. W. 11018. Courtesy : U. R. Rao

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497. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

POONA,
July 3, 1946

Addressing the prayer gathering today, Gandhiji referred to the situation in Ahmedabad, and stated that the latest report was that the situation was well in hand. Shri Morarji Desai had invited the representatives of Muslims, Hindus and others to a joint conference at Ahmedabad and had told them that he was prepared to withdraw the police and military if they so desired. But the latter, he heard, had unanimously replied that they were not prepared to take the risk. The result was the police and military were there. The authorities had promulgated a curfew order for three days to be enforced day and night. Therefore although as a result, the disturbances had been arrested, the peace that was seen in Ahmedabad today was the peace of the grave.

It was something, he added, of which no one could be proud. How he wished that both the Hindus and Muslims would combine and dispense with the help of the police and military for purposes of keeping them from mutual fight. The State could not suddenly disband them, but they could certainly reserve them for purposes of regulating the traffic, municipal sanitation and growing more food to combat the famine. He reminded them that so long as they depended upon the help of the police and military for maintaining law and order, real independence must remain a mere idle talk. They daily joined him in prayers. The essence of prayer was reliance on God and utter fearlessness.

Gandhiji said that he would not say that the situation in South Africa was deteriorating. But it was certainly becoming graver. The Government repression was becoming worse. That was, however, part of the bargain. A satyagrahi breaks the law and welcomes the penalty.

Referring to the arrest and conviction of Parsee Sorabjee to three months' rigorous imprisonment, he described how as a young lad of sixteen he had given proof of unusual courage in the course of the satyagraha movement which he conducted in South Africa. A mounted policeman threatened to overrun the passive resisters. Sorabjee held the reins of the horse and told the policeman that he could not frighten the satyagrahis

[1] The source reports the speech in two parts under two different headings. These have been collated here.

into submission by such tactics.[1] He was a worthy son of a worthy father, the late Parsee Rustomjee, both for his bravery and munificence.

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to Rev. Scott of Johannesburg whose Christian conscience had revolted against the inequality of the segregation law and the ill-treatment to which the passive resisters were being subjected. As a protest against it, Rev. Scott had decided to cast in his lot with the satyagrahis and share with them the indignities to which they were being subjected. It was no small thing for a white man to identify himself with coloured people in South Africa. If the satyagrahis remained free and non-violent till the end, all would be well with them. He had already told the audience their duty in this connection, that is, a heart-felt prayer to God to give strength to the satyagrahis and light to the whites.

The Hindu, 5-7-1946

498. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
July 4, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am enclosing a copy of a cable[2] received this morning by Gandhiji from H. H. the Aga Khan.

Gandhiji would like to know if H. E. can do anything to help in the matter of the air passage for Ashwin Chawdhuri which the Aga Khan wants.[3]

I hope you are enjoying your respite from the heat.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 98

[1] According to *Satyagraha in South Africa* General Lukin was about to order his soldiers to open fire on the striking labourers when Parsee Sorabjee seized the reins of the General's horse and appealed to him not to order firing and persuaded the labourers to go back to their work. *Vide* Vol. XXIX, p. 252.

[2] The Aga Khan in his cable from Nairobi had said: "Sorabjee arrested. Most important Ashwin Chawdhuri proceed New York explain our case public opinion. Unless he gets proper air priority impossible. Am doing my best from here but position unsatisfactory. Kindly intervene. Get Ashwin Chawdhuri air priority arranged through Indian Government. Approach Bhopal, Jinnah. Please have united front."

[3] The addressee replied on July 9 saying: "I am . . . asking Commonwealth Relations Department on His Excellency's behalf to ascertain the exact position from the High Commissioner's Office."

499. LETTER TO KAMALA

POONA,
July 4, 1946

CHI. KAMALA (ANDHRA),

Your question is harmless. But we have to save ourselves from our sins. We spoil the dogs. If we do not kill them we ourselves will die. The society can never go that far. Therefore this kind of violence becomes inevitable. There are so many other acts of violence which we must eschew. Only then can a question such as yours arise.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 5905. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

500. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
July 4, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There is no point in the questions which you have asked. A man who is wicked by nature will show his wickedness on any occasion. If such a rule is to be framed, it can have no room for exceptions.

I shall answer the rest of your questions when I go there in August.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4560

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501. LETTER TO G. D. TAPASE

POONA,
July 4, 1946

BHAI TAPASE[1],

I have your English letter. Why in English? Write in Hindustani, Marathi or any other Indian language.

I have gone through the Bill. I see no difficulty about it and I think no Harijan worker will have any objection to it. But the painful thing is that custom transgresses the law. Untouchability has found refuge more in custom than in law.

In fact, as far as I know, there is absolutely no basis for untouchability in law but under the present judicial system, however evil it may be, custom acquires the strength of law. Take, for instance, the "age of consent"[2]. Now a days the Government has even stopped enforcing it because people no longer abide by it. It means that a law which is ahead of public opinion ceases to be observed. Nevertheless a Bill has to be brought up. Its implementation will depend largely upon the courage of caste Hindus and Harijans. Your law pundits will have to be careful of the word 'Harijan'. It is an apt expression, sweet but now embittered by many people.

There seems to be an error in sub-clause 4 under IV B. You may look up [the passage] "But not caste therein,"[3] etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. TAPASE, MINISTER
POONA

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

[1] Minister, Industries, Fisheries and Backward Classes in Bombay

[2] The expression within quotation-marks is in English. The reference is to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the Sarda Act.

[3] The expression within quotation-marks is in English.

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502. NOTE TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[On or before *July 5, 1946*][1]

Please write to Shriman about the technical point you have raised and he will consult me. I will go through the papers and give my decision. Technically, of course, you are right. What I wrote for Gujarat cannot, technically, be applied to other provinces. The exemption is intended only for those who already know Hindi; it does not apply to anybody who may seek admission to the Sammelan[2] [examination] now and later to the Urdu Anjuman[3]. The former contains the word "Hindi". But now we cannot retain that word. It is on this issue that I resigned.[4] People do not still seem to have realized that Hindi which excludes the use of the Urdu script and Urdu diction cannot be called a national language. The Congress has purposely adopted the word Hindustani and its decision is perfectly correct.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10810

503. LEFT-HANDED COMPLIMENT

I am writing this letter with a hope of getting proper and immediate response from you. Along with the whole of India I am well aware of your sweet will and affinity towards the Mehtar Community. Your *Harijan* has obliged us to a great extent by enabling us to see through your heart. Especially the recent *Harijans* have emphatically revealed your thoughts about the Mehtar Community.

I now wish to reveal my interrogatory heart in order to be well nigh to your feelings towards us and to be definite about our position in the muddled and complicated Indian political field.

By the time you will receive this letter it will be the last date of filling in nomination forms for the candidateships for the Constituent Assembly, which has, it is learnt, to be completed by the end of this month. Congress is proposing particular M. L. As and non-M. L. As for

[1] The postal cancellation mark bears the date 5-7-1946.
[2] Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan
[3] Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu
[4] On July 25, 1945, *vide* Vol. LXXXI, pp. 33-4.

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the same. It is believed that Scheduled Castes are also to be represented (adequately?). But is there any proposal from you or from Congress to elect adequate or at least some members from the Mehtar Community who, I am sure, will discharge their duty of citizenship and pick up their legitimate share in the future constitution of Free India?

2. Generous as you are towards us, may I assure myself and my community that Mehtar seats in the Constituent Assembly will not escape your notice?

3. Who will be the components of the Advisory Board? Caste Hindus or Minorities including (?) the Scheduled Castes?

4. Will the advice or proposals of the Advisory Board be binding to the Constituent Assembly? I think they will not. If so, what sense is there in appointing such a Board, which will be nonentity if the Constituent Assembly were not to pay heed to its advice? Is it not merely for the appeasement of the weak minorities?

You might say you have been [doing] and will do everything for us, but I wish to say 'let us be with you when everything for us is to be done. Let us be represented democratically.'

I strongly hope that my questions will be fully and satisfactorily answered by you with an obligation of immediate reply to me. I further humbly request you to be good enough to publish your answers in your weekly *Harijan*.

Hope to be excused for troubles.

I have reproduced the foregoing in order to show what havoc dangerous knowledge of English has produced in our society. This is a specimen not of English nor yet of Indian English. It is bookish English which the writer probably half understands. I suggest to him that if he had written to me in the national language Hindustani or in his provincial language, it would not have evoked an unfavourable response from me.

The writer has paid me a left-handed compliment and that perhaps in order to teach me how to express my love for the Bhangi, otherwise known as Mehtar. The writer is a discontented graduate, setting no example or a bad example to Bhangis. He has isolated himself from them, though he professes to represent them.

He will certainly become my teacher if he will be a graduate in the art of being a good Bhangi. I very much fear that he does no scavenging himself; he does not know what scientific scavenging is. If he became an expert in the art, his services would be wanted by all the cities of India. When Bhangis really rise from the slumber of ages, they will successfully sweep the Augean

stables everywhere and India will be a pattern of cleanliness and there will be in India no plague and other diseases which are the descendants of filth and dirt.

In the place where I am living in Bombay, my room and the adjoining lavatory are fairly clean, but I am in the midst of suffocating dirt. I have had no time to examine the tenements in front of me. They are as crowded and as dirty as the ones in the quarters where I was living in New Delhi. Had my graduate fellow Bhangi been an expert in the art, I would, without doubt, have requisitioned his services as my guide and helper.

As it is, not only have I no use for him, I have to risk his displeasure by telling him that he should not think of the Constituent Assembly or other assemblies. Let those go to them who are wanted there. Instead of getting rid of the wretched caste mentality, he argues that any Harijan is not good enough for the purpose but preference should be given to the Mehtar caste. I suggest to him that it is a harmful method, doing no good to anybody.

Anyway, he has expected the impossible from me. I am not made for these big institutions. I have never interested myself in the periodical assembly elections. I have not attended Working Committee meetings where they make these selections. What I know of the present selections is from the newspapers. I have become a Bhangi because I think that that is the vocation of every Hindu, that the hoary institution of untouchability as we know it today in its ugly shape will die a decent death only when the Hindus will be casteless by becoming Bhangis from the bottom of their hearts. That cannot be done by aspiring after the membership my correspondent has in view.

BOMBAY, July 6, 1946
Harijan, 14-7-1946

504. 'ALL ABOUT BHANDARS'[1]

An article under the above caption appeared in the *Khadi Patrika* of 3rd June. As it is important I give it in full below :

> It is our intention to make rapid changes in the running of our bhandars. In spite of the condition of yarn currency attaching to the sales of khadi, Bombay people have not yet taken to spinning. Most

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1946.

of the yarn given in exchange for cloth is bought. From the 1st of July, we shall give only Rs. 2 worth of khadi for one hank and, as a result, the sales of khadi will go down. One of the main reasons for khadi sales is that mill-cloth is rationed. Many persons who ordinarily wear mill-cloth are almost forced, as it were, to buy khadi. We take a statement from every customer as to whether the yarn given in is self-spun or spun by a member of the family or staff. But we have regretfully to admit that many customers do not appreciate their responsibility in the matter of making accurate statements. This irresponsible attitude is not in the best interests of khadi. Khadi production aims at self-sufficiency of village India. Other provinces will, therefore, now provide less and less cloth to our bhandars. The use of the words 'sale of khadi' is really inconsistent with the ideal. In the circumstances it is imperative for us to make timely changes in the running of bhandars. From July 1st we are closing two branches in Matunga and Dadar. For the last three months we have been giving training in Matunga in all the processes of khadi. In Dadar, there was some sale of khadi too, but these activities must now come to an end. In Girgaum, in the Khadi Printing Shop, the A. I. S. A. was running a training centre too. This shop will now be handed back to the trustees of the Khadi Printing Shop who will continue to give instruction in all the processes of khadi as well as arrange for some sales.

The reduction of work involves dispensing with the services of fifteen workers.

Ever since the new policy came into vogue, Gandhiji has been saying that the make-up of the bhandars must be changed. In order to fall into line we arranged facilities for teaching and weaving in some places but such outward changes have not connoted the real change. We felt that a change in our mental outlook is what was most needed. Therefore, examination of workers and such other reforms came into force.

Nevertheless all the changes mentioned above have not enabled us to gain our object. At the time when customers looked upon khadi as being in the fashion, bhandars were purely commercial depots. Today the bhandar desires to bring about a change in the mentality of the khadi-wearer. It no longer desires to remain a sales depot. It desires to become a centre for imparting knowledge in all the processes of khadi manufacture. It desires to become a centre of attraction for weavers and other craftsmen. To this end we must continue undeterred to bring about the necessary changes and *pari passu* change the outlook of Bombay khadi-wearers. Then only will bhandars reflect the reality. We expect the customers of Bombay to remain loyal to us in our endeavour.

Readers will note that the success of the purpose, as expressed in the article, rests on the faith, intelligence and capability of the workers.

BOMBAY, July 6, 1946
Harijan, 14-7-1946

505. LETTER TO J. J. SINGH[1]

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

DEAR SINGH,

Our mutual friend, Mr. Louis Fischer tells me that your persistent labours were solely responsible for the passage of the Indian Immigration Act. I congratulate you on your successful labours. You will, perhaps, oblige me by sending me a copy of the Act.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times Weekly, 27-4-1969

506. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your postcard. Today we have come to Bombay. As far as I can see Manilal will now plunge into the struggle. We should wait to see its outcome and you should not therefore leave in a hurry. It will be proper to take Arun and Ila along with you when you wish to go. And about this too you should decide for yourself. Anything that you do will meet with my approval. I am not competent to make the final decision. You know the children's attitude better than anyone else. Mind you, this time it will be your responsibility to coach them well in Gujarati. If there is anything particular to discuss we shall discuss it when you come to see me although you may stay only for two or three days.

[1] This was reproduced by the addressee in his article entitled "Mahatma Gandhi—Some Reminiscences" wherein he says: "I received Gandhiji's letter in Hindi with a translation in English written by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur."

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I hope you are all keeping well. I shall return to Poona by the 9th at the latest. I shall be busy with the meeting which is scheduled to go on till the 12th. On the 13th I shall go to Sasvad. To Panchgani on the 14th, where I shall stay till the 29th. Then Poona. I propose to be in Sevagram by 7th August.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

507. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

At the end of the prayer, Gandhiji asked how many Harijans were present in the hall. Not a hand went up. It was a great disappointment for him, Gandhiji said. He had come to live in a Harijan quarter because he had become a Bhangi. But there was not even one Harijan there.

I blame you and not those who are absent.

The reason for their absence is that the so-called caste Hindus have kept down the so-called untouchables for ages and that too in the name of religion. This hall is meant for the use of Harijans. Non-Harijans can come only by grace. Those who come here should make it a point to bring at least one Harijan each. If they befriend the Harijans, untouchability will disappear in the twinkling of an eye.

But he was grieved to find that they had not really done so. There were Harijan barristers and lawyers. Even today, they could not live in the bungalows on Malabar Hill. There was a Harijan volunteer girl working in his camp. She was studying in the B. A. class. There was nothing in her appearance to distinguish her from other girls. Why should the knowledge that she is a Harijan make her an untouchable to be treated differently from other girls?

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he was embarrassed by the care and attention that was being lavished on him by those who were in charge of the management of the camp. Yet he was finding his stay very taxing. There was so much dirt and filth about the place. Dr. Dinshaw had told him that the lavatories were so dirty that he could not use them. There were so many flies about the place that he was anxious that he (Gandhiji) might catch some infection and get killed. He himself was not worried about that. Although the two doctors with him looked after him, he did

not depend on anyone except God. The Almighty would take care of his health. But his companions did not have that faith in God.

He had brought with him a big party, Gandhiji went on. They were there to render personal services and to help him with the editing of his weeklies and his correspondence. He was anxious for them. He himself had been given a good clean lavatory. But all the party could not use it. He had been thinking that if he came here again, he should stay here all by himself. He was occupying the house of the overseer. He had been wondering why those in charge of sanitation, that is, the Municipality and the P. W. D., should put up with this filth. What was the use of his coming and staying there if it could not induce them to make the place healthy and hygienic?

What was the connection between all this and the prayer, asked Gandhiji. A man who did not observe the rules of external cleanliness could not pray for internal cleanliness. If the object of their attending the prayer was idle curiosity, they had committed a sin by coming. If they had come to join in the prayer, they must pray for inner and outer cleanliness. To say one thing and to do something different would be deception. No one could deceive God, because he was omnipresent and omniscient.

The Hindu, 8-7-1946

508. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C.[1]

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1946

I have often said that man plans but the success of his plans depends not on him but on the will of Providence which is the supreme arbiter of our destinies. Unlike you, I am [here] not in my own right but on sufferance. I have been told that some of my previous remarks about the Cabinet Mission's proposals have caused a good deal of confusion in the public mind. As a satyagrahi it is always my endeavour to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I never wish to hide anything from you. I hate mental reservations. But language is at best an imperfect medium of expression. No man can fully express in

[1] On June 26 the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution in New Delhi expressing willingness to "join the proposed Constituent Assembly with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India" and demanding the formation of "a representative and responsible Provisional National Government" at the earliest possible date.

Gandhiji spoke on the motion moved by Abul Kalam Azad seeking ratification of the resolution of June 26 and the one on satyagraha in South Africa.

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words what he feels or thinks. Even seers and prophets of old have suffered under that disability.

I have not seen what has appeared in the papers about what I am supposed to have said regarding the Cabinet Mission's proposals. I cannot read all the newspapers myself. I content myself with perusing only what my co-workers and assistants may place before me. I hold that I have lost nothing thereby. Because of what has appeared in the Press, an impression seems to have been created that I said one thing at Delhi and am saying something different now. I did say in one of my speeches at Delhi in regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals that I saw darkness where I saw light before.[1] That darkness has not yet lifted. If possible it has deepened. I could have asked the Working Committee to turn down the proposals about the Constituent Assembly if I could see my way clearly. You know my relations with the members of the Working Committee. Babu Rajendra Prasad might have been a High Court Judge, but he chose instead to act as my interpreter and clerk in Champaran.[2] Then there is the Sardar. He has earned the nickname of being my yes-man. He does not mind it. He even flaunts it as a compliment. He is a stormy petrel. Once he used to dress and dine in the Western style. But ever since he decided to cast his lot with me my word has been law to him. But even he cannot see eye to eye with me in this matter. They both tell me that whereas on all previous occasions I was able to support my instinct with reason and satisfy their head as well as heart, this time I have failed to do so. I told them in reply that whilst my own heart was filled with misgivings, I could not adduce any reason for it or else I would have asked them to reject the proposals straightway. It was my duty to place my misgivings before them to put them on their guard. But they should examine what I had said in the cold light of reason and accept my viewpoint only if they were convinced of its correctness. Their decision, which they have arrived at after prolonged deliberations and which is almost unanimous, is before you. The members of the Working Committee are your faithful and tried servants. You should not lightly reject their resolution.

I am willing to admit that the proposed Constituent Assembly is not the Parliament of the people. It has many defects. But you are all seasoned and veteran fighters. A soldier is never

[1] *Vide* pp. 370-1.
[2] In 1917

afraid of danger. He revels in it. If there are shortcomings in the proposed Constituent Assembly, it is for you to get them removed. It should be a challenge to combat, not a ground for rejection. I am surprised that Shri Jayaprakash Narayan said yesterday[1] that it would be dangerous to participate in the proposed Constituent Assembly and therefore they should reject the Working Committee's resolution. I was not prepared to hear such defeatist language from the lips of a tried fighter like Jayaprakash. One line from a song composed by the late Choudhary Rambhaj Dutt has always made a very deep appeal to me. It means : "We will never be defeated—nay, not even in death." That is the spirit in which I expect you to approach this resolution. A satyagrahi knows no defeat.

Nor would I expect a satyagrahi to say that whatever Englishmen do must be bad. The English are not necessarily bad. There are good men and bad men among the English people as among any other people. We ourselves are not free from defects. The English could not have risen to their present strength if they had not some good in them. They have come and exploited India, because we quarrelled amongst ourselves and allowed ourselves to be exploited. In God's world unmixed evil never prospers. God rules even where Satan seems to hold sway, because the latter exists only on His sufferance. Some people say that satyagraha is of no avail against a person who has no moral sense. I join issue with that. The stoniest heart must melt if we are true and have enough patience. A satyagrahi lays down his life, but never gives up. That is the meaning of the "Do or die" slogan. That slogan does not mean 'Kill or be killed'. That would be wilful distortion and travesty of its true meaning. The true meaning is that we must do our duty and die in the course of performing it if necessary. To die without killing is the badge of a satyagrahi. If we had lived up to that ideal we would have won swaraj by now. But our ahimsa was lame. It walked on crutches. Even so it has brought us to our present strength. I know what happened in 1942. You will perhaps say that it was sabotage and underground activity that had brought the country to its present strength. It cannot be denied that sabotage activity was carried on in the name of the Congress during the '42 struggle but I deny *in toto* that the strength of the masses is due to that. Whatever strength the masses have is due entirely to ahimsa however imperfect or defective its

[1] At the A. I. C. C. meeting

practice might have been. Our ahimsa was imperfect because we were imperfect, because it was presented to you by an imperfect being like myself. If then, even in the hands of imperfect instruments it could produce such brilliant results, what could it not have achieved in the hands of a perfect satyagrahi?

In 1942 our people showed great valour. But greater valour will be required of us before our goal is reached. We have done much, but more remains to be done. For that we must have patience and humility and detachment. You should try to understand what happened in 1942, the inner meaning of that struggle and the reason why it stopped short where it did.

This is no time for dalliance or ease. I told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that he must wear the crown of thorns for the sake of the nation and he has agreed.[1] The Constituent Assembly is going to be no bed of roses for you but only a bed of thorns. You may not shirk it.

That does not mean that everybody should want to go into it. Only those should go there who are especially fitted for the task by virtue of their legal training or special talent. It is not a prize to be sought as a reward for sacrifices, but a duty to be faced even like mounting the gallows or sacrifice of one's all at the altar of service.

There is another reason why you should join the Constituent Assembly. If you asked me whether in the event of your rejecting the proposed Constituent Assembly or the Constituent Assembly failing to materialize, I would advise the people to launch civil disobedience, individual or mass, or undertake a fast myself, my reply is 'No'. I believe in walking alone. I came alone in this world, I have walked alone in the valley of the shadow of death and I shall quit alone when the time comes. I know I am quite capable of launching satyagraha even if I am all alone. I have done so before. But this is no occasion for a fast or civil disobedience. I regard the Constituent Assembly as the substitute of satyagraha. It is constructive satyagraha.

The alternative is constructive work which you have never done justice to. If you had, you would have today got the Constituent Assembly of Jayaprakash's dream instead of the present one. But a satyagrahi cannot wait or delay action till perfect conditions are forthcoming. He will act with whatever material is at hand, purge it of dross and convert it into pure gold. Whatever may be the defects in the State Document of May 16th, I have no doubt as to the honesty of those who have

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the Indian National Congress.

framed it. They know they have got to quit. They want to quit in an orderly manner. And to that end they have produced the Document they could under the circumstances. I refuse to believe that they came all the way from England to deceive us.

A Polish lady[1] has sent me a note just today saying that all Europeans had received secret instructions to leave India as the British army would no longer be able to give them adequate protection. If it is so, it is a sad reflection on us. We would be unworthy of the name of satyagrahi if even an English child did not feel secure in our midst. Even if we succeed in driving out the Europeans by these tactics, something worse will take their place. Our Quit India Resolution[2] has no malice about it. It only means that we will no longer be exploited.

Let us not be cowardly, but approach our task with confidence and courage. Let not the fear of being deceived dismay us. No one can deceive a satyagrahi. Never mind the darkness that fills my mind. He will turn it into light.[3]

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the draft resolution on the satyagraha movement now being carried on by Indians in South Africa. He said that the Indians in South Africa were being ill-treated not because they were not whites but because they were considered as coolies. The Indians in South Africa spoke English and many of them were doctors and lawyers. In spite of all this, the South African whites looked upon them as coolies and called them as such. The Indians, of course, were in a minority and yet they were putting up a brave fight. They had no swords or guns but they were determined to resist the anti-Indian laws by soul force, which was the only force available to satyagrahis. Durban owed its present prosperity to the Indians. The South African whites had agreed to give the Indians the vote though not as equals but as inferiors.

The white civilization in South Africa could not be kept alive by such means. Mahatma Gandhi wondered how a brave man like General Smuts who had praised the Indians so much in the past could be instrumental in taking steps to deprive the Indians of their elementary rights.[4]

Commenting on the doings of the white hooligans who were said to have beaten to death an Indian, whom they mistook for a satyagrahi, Gandhiji remarked:

[1] Wanda Dynowska; *vide* p. 428.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXVI, Appendix VIII.

[3] The report up to this point has been reproduced from *Harijan*. What follows is from *The Hindu*.

[4] What follows is from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 14-7-1946.

It is a sad event. Nevertheless, I feel happy. A satyagrahi must always be ready to die with a smile on his face without retaliation and without rancour in his heart. Some people have come to have a wrong notion that satyagraha means only jail-going, perhaps facing lathi blows and nothing more. Such satyagraha cannot bring independence. To win independence you have to learn the art of dying without killing.

I venture to submit that a civilization which needs such barbarous legislation for its protection is a contradiction in terms. The Indians are fighting for their honour. The land in South Africa does not belong to the whites. Land belongs to one who labours on it. I would not shed a single tear if all the satyagrahis in South Africa are wiped out. Thereby they will not only bring deliverance to themselves but point the way to the Negroes and vindicate the honour of India. I am proud of them and so should you be.

His object in speaking to them, he continued, was not to move them to tears or to incite them to anger and vituperation against the whites. Rather they should pray to God to guide the whites aright and grant strength and courage to their brethren to remain steadfast to the end.

The South African struggle may appear to be insignificant today but it is charged with momentous consequences. Satyagraha is today being tried in the land of its birth. The success of a handful of Indians, mostly descendants of indentured labourers, has excited the jealousy of the whites of South Africa. And they are now subjecting them to unspeakable indignities. They are sought to be segregated into ghettos and further humiliated by being offered an inferior franchise. That all this should happen under the imprimatur of Field Marshal Smuts fills me with shame and humiliation. Our sins have a strange way of coming home to roost. We turned a portion of ourselves into pariahs and today the whites of South Africa are doing the same to our compatriots there. Let us purge ourselves of this curse and bless the heroic struggle of our brethren in South Africa. They do not need our monetary help. But they need all our sympathy and moral support.[1]

The Hindu, 8-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 14-7-1946 and 21-7-1946

[1] After Gandhiji's address the debate was resumed. Prominent among those who opposed the resolution were Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali, members of the Congress Socialist Party. The resolution was then put to vote and carried, 204 voting for and 51 against.

The resolution on the satyagraha in South Africa was also passed.

509. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1946

I am glad the weather having cleared, it was possible to worship God in the open air. I hope you will cultivate the habit of collective prayers. I would like to impress upon you the need for learning Hindustani, our national language. Without a national language we could not call ourselves as of India.

The Hindu, 9-7-1946

510. INTERVIEW TO "DAILY HERALD"[2]

[On or before *July 8, 1946*][3]

Gandhiji was gloomy about the world situation. He thought that there would be another war in less than ten years' time.

As for the atom bomb Gandhiji did not agree with the correspondent's suggestion that its frightfulness would force non-violence on the world. On the contrary Gandhiji's view was that the "violent man's eyes light up with the prospect of much greater amount of destruction and death which he would now wreak."

Gandhiji told the correspondent that "there would be no real freedom in India until the untouchables were free". He, however, pointed out that untouchables suffered from no legal disabilities like the Negroes in the United States and the Indians and other Asiatics in South and East Africa.

The Hindu, 11-7-1946

[1] As Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech was read out.
[2] This was given to Peter Strusberg, *Daily Herald*'s correspondent in India.
[3] The report appeared under the date-line "London, July 8".

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511. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1946

Kind friends have inundated me with messages of congratulation on my providential escape from what might have been a nasty train accident.[1] As it is not possible to send individual acknowledgment, I hope the senders of messages will accept my thanks through the Press.

The Hindu, 8-7-1946

512. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1946

Speaking at the prayer meeting this evening, Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the audience on their exemplary silence during the prayer.

Gandhiji drew pointed attention to the insanitation of the *chawls* around. Dr. Sushila Nayyar and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta had inspected the *chawls* at his request. They had reported to him that the filth and dirt that they saw were unbearable. In several places, the drain pipes were choked, with the result that they did not function properly. In other places, the drains overhead were leaking to the discomfort of those living below. There was great scarcity of water. Excepting for two or three hours during the day, the taps were not running. Flush latrines were worse than useless under such conditions. It was a wonder to him how anyone could use such filthy latrines. The arrangements for collection and disposal of refuse were most unsatisfactory. The open refuse tins emitted a foul smell.

The overcrowding in the *chawls* was appalling. It was the duty of those in authority to improve the sanitary conditions of the *chawls* and if the municipality failed in its duty, it was the right of the people to demand redress even by offering satyagraha. The owners of the *chawls* and the overseers and the managing staff should all do their utmost to rectify the wrong.

[1] *Vide* pp. 392-3.

[2] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

Gandhiji felt ashamed and hurt to find that his residence was being guarded by the police day and night. It was a matter of shame for them also. They should tell the police that he was in their charge and that they would look after him. The Harijans had cause to feel bitter about the caste Hindus and therefore, against him too, though he had become a Bhangi. If they were angry with him also and vented their anger on him, he would feel no rancour against them. He had been doing his utmost to explain to the caste Hindus and the Harijans their respective duties. The Harijans, however, could well feel bitter towards him, because with all his efforts, untouchability had not disappeared root and branch. When he came again, he would like to have cleanliness all round and not merely in his room. And he would like to do without police protection. He had no desire to become a burden to them, the dwellers in the *chawls*.

The Hindu 10-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 14-7-1946

513. THE REAL DANGER

As during the two days of the session of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay I listened to some of the spirited speeches against the Working Committee's resolution submitted to the A. I. C. C. for ratification, I could not subscribe to the dangers portrayed by the opposition. No confirmed satyagrahi is dismayed by the dangers, seen or unseen, from his opponent's side. What he must fear, as every army must, is the danger from within.

Opposition, however eloquent it may be, will defeat its purpose if it is not well informed, balanced and well based and does not promise action and result more attractive than what is opposed. Let the opposition at the late meeting answer.

My purpose here is merely to point out the danger from within. The first in importance is laziness of mind and body. This comes out of the smug satisfaction that Congressmen having suffered imprisonment have nothing more to do to win freedom and that a grateful organization should reward their service by giving them first preference in the matter of elections and offices. And so, there is an unseemly and vulgar competition for gaining what are described as prize posts. Here there is a double fallacy. Nothing should be considered a prize in the Congress dictionary and imprisonment is its own reward. It is the preliminary examination of a satyagrahi. Its goal is the slaughter-house even as that of the spotless lamb. Jail-going is, instead, being used as a passport to every office accessible to the Congress. Hence there is every prospect of a satyagrahi's imprisonment

becoming a degrading occupation like that of professional thieves and robbers. No wonder my friends of the underground variety avoid imprisonment as being comparatively a bed of roses. This is a pointer to the pass the Congress is coming to.

The friends who opposed the resolution on the British Cabinet Delegation's proposals do not seem to know what they are aiming at. Is independence to be bought at the price of a bloody revolution as was, say, the French, the Soviet or even the English? Then frank and honest work has yet to begin. They have to tread a very dangerous path in openly making the Congress such an institution. My argument has no force if subterranean activity is a doctrine of universal application and is now being employed against the Congress. The very thought repels me. I should hope for the sake of my own sanity that the thought is devoid of any foundation. Then it is clearly their duty to say to the Congressmen that now that there is Congress Raj or Representative Raj, whether of the Congress variety or the Muslim League, they must set about reforming it in detail and not condemn it *in toto*. Total non-violent non-co-operation has no place in popular Raj, whatever its level may be.

Who is responsible for the mad orgy in Madura and, coming nearer, in Ahmedabad? It will be folly to attribute everything evil to British machinations. This senseless theory will perpetuate foreign domination, not necessarily British. The British will go in any case. They want to go in an orderly manner as is evident to me from the State Paper or they will go and leave India to her own fate assuming that India has forsaken the path of non-violence with the certain result of a combined intervention of an assortment of armed powers. Let the opposition say to the Congressmen what kind of independence they want. Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. They recite the formula almost parrot-like. Or, their notion of independence is fully expressed in saying that they mean by it Congress Raj. And they won't be wrong. They have left further thinking to the Working Committee—a most undemocratic way. In true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself. How this real revolution can be brought about I do not know except that every reform like charity must begin at home.

If then the Constituent Assembly fizzles out, it will not be because the British are wicked every time. It will be because we are fools or, shall I say, even wicked? Whether we are fools

or wicked or both, I am quite clear that we must look for danger from within, not fear the danger from without. The first corrodes the soul, the second polishes.

BOMBAY, July 9, 1946
Harijan, 14-7-1946

514. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP BOMBAY,
July 9, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I quote below from a letter of a Polish lady[1] whom I have known for years:

> There are now about 5,000 Polish evacuees in India. They have been supported first by the Polish and then by the British Government. Now it is reported that they will be taken over by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. About 3,600 of them will soon be joining their families, also soldiers in Britain. About 1,400 have been evacuated, we do not yet know where. There is a tendency on the part of the Indian Government to evacuate all the Europeans from India in a hurry. Even those of the Poles who are working in different parts of India and require no charity and who are quite useful to the country in their present jobs will be compelled to leave India, much against their will. Among other reasons, the Government representatives give the unwillingness of Indians to have foreigners in their midst. Out of the 5,000 Poles here, only 77 are reported to be ready to return to Poland in her present position of utter slavery and terrorist regime.

You will oblige me if you could kindly inform me whether there is any truth in the statement of my correspondent.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 87

[1] Wanda Dynowska; *vide* p. 422.

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515. SUCCESS OF THE NEW TEAM

The success of the new team[1] depends as much upon the manner in which it carries out the work as upon the manners of the old. If the new team breaks with the old, it is bound to fail even like a son who repudiates the inheritance left by his father. It is also bound to fail if those who have retired do not help their successors in every possible way. They were selected by Maulana Saheb not in order to give them importance but by reason of their services in their own provinces. A servant does not cease to be a servant when he gives place to another for the sake of accession of new blood or some other similar and cogent reason. It is to be hoped therefore that the old ones will give the new ones the full benefit of their experience.

The most striking change is the retirement of the General Secretary who had held the post for an unbroken period of ten years. His help will be required constantly by his successors[2] who are new to the office and the new members of the Working Committee. I know they will get all the help they need from Acharya Kripalani. It is a good thing a woman fills for the first time in the history of the Congress the post of General Secretary. Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai was one of the pupils of Acharya Kripalani in the initial stage of the career of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Therefore, she will have full guidance from her *acharya* in the difficult task to which she is called.

To those to whom the change may give cause for misgivings, I would say that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself makes a fine and stable bridge between the old and the new, assisted as he will be by some of the ablest members of the old team. No one need therefore entertain any fear of a break with the past. A healthy circulation is as necessary for the body politic as for the individual.

POONA, July 10, 1946

Harijan, 14-7-1946

[1] On July 9 Jawaharlal Nehru had announced the formation of the new Congress Working Committee which included: Abul Kalam Azad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Govind Ballabh Pant, C. Rajagopalachari, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Sarat Chandra Bose, Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Rao Saheb Patwardhan, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Pratap Singh, Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar.

[2] Viz., Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar

516. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

POONA,
July 10, 1946

I know what is taking place there because in a way I belong to South Africa, having passed 20 years of the best part of my life there. It was there that satyagraha was born. The West is passing through a purgatory today. The vanquished lie prostrate at the feet of the victors. But those who have won the war have found that they are no more victors than those who have lost it. Yet it is not in the World War II that the Western civilization will have met its grave. It is being dug in South Africa. The white civilization in South Africa looks black in contrast with the coloured or the Asiatic civilization which is comparatively white. If our people remain steadfast and non-violent till the end, I have not a shadow of doubt that their heroic struggle will drive the last nail into the coffin of Western civilization which is being found out in its true colours in South Africa.

The whites in South Africa are becoming like brutes. Eastern and Western cultures are pitted against each other. And what a contrast they present! The whites have enacted savage laws to force the Indians to live in ghettos. Field Marshal Smuts is a great philosopher. He calls me his friend. He has nothing to say against Asiatic culture. But he has to take measures to safeguard the white civilization. He told me that he did not look down upon coloured people. The fact that Mrs. Subbaroyan, when she went to England for studies stayed in Field Marshal Smuts' house supports that statement. But, said the Field Marshal, in spite of the absence of prejudice, he was bound to protect Western culture in South Africa and he hoped that an understanding man that I was, I would appreciate it.

Gandhiji failed to understand how a culture or civilization worth the name could require legal protection. The Indians were resisting the ghetto law in a civil, i. e., non-violent and therefore civilized, way. They welcomed the penalty for the breach of law which could not be morally defended. But the white hooligans too were breaking their own laws. Theirs was criminal disobedience. It was a matter of pride for India that the children of

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The speech was also reported in *The Hindu*, 12-7-1946.

indentured labourers and traders—many of them descendants of Harijans—were proving themselves such brave satyagrahis. As against this the whites were resorting to lynch law. He remarked:

> After all civil resistance had its birth in Asia. Jesus was an Asiatic. If he was reborn and went to South Africa today and lived there, he would have to live in a ghetto.

He hoped that as in 1914, Field Marshal Smuts would at long last realize that he could not persecute the Indians in South Africa for ever and come to an honourable settlement with them when he had tried them through and through. A committee of white men had been formed in South Africa to express sympathy with and identify themselves with the cause of the Indian passive resisters there. There was something of that kind in his time also. But this time it seemed to be on a bigger scale. If this becomes extensive and the hooliganism is stopped and anti-Asiatic laws are repealed, there is hope of a blending of Eastern and Western cultures. Otherwise South Africa may prove to be the grave of Western civilization.

Harijan, 21-7-1946

517. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI AND MADHURI DESAI

POONA,
July 11, 1946

CHI. DHIRU AND MADHURI,

I was hoping to come and see you during my stay in Bombay but it could not be done. So I contented myself with sending you a message through Nathubhai from Bori Bunder. I did not wish to come on a condolence visit, but wanted to clear a misunderstanding you are reported to harbour. Both of you are reported to believe that I was the cause of Bhulabhai's early death. This is wholly untrue. The belief does no justice to Bhulabhai. I was in fact his well-wisher. I believe that Bhulabhai had accepted the usefulness of my advice. Even if this is doubted there can certainly be no doubt as to the soundness of my advice. I should like both of you to realize this. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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518. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

POONA,
July 11, 1946

BROTHER RAJBHOJ,

I was glad to see your letter written in Marathi. But there is still one complaint. You could have written independently in Marathi. Instead, you have translated the letter from English. If any translating has to be done it should be done from Marathi into English, not from English into Marathi.

At the moment the work is so heavy that it is difficult to find time for a meeting. Still it should be all right if you come tomorrow between 8.30 and 9 p. m.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Marathi : G. N. 781

519. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 11, 1946

Giving the latest news from South Africa to the prayer gathering, Mahatma Gandhi said that men and women from Johannesburg had gone to Durban to offer satyagraha. It was good news. Victory was sure if they kept up that spirit.

Referring next to the meetings of the A. I. S. A. and the Kasturba Trust which he had attended in the afternoon, Gandhiji mentioned that the A. I. S. A. had distributed five crores of rupees on an average of Rs. 25 lakhs per year among the poor spinners and weavers. It had done a lot, but compared to the task before it, its achievement appeared insignificant. It had to clothe the whole of India with khadi as was the case once upon a time. Not only did India produce enough cloth for herself, she was also able to export it. There were no mills in India then. He said:

I might say that every woman had her own mill in the charkha and the *takli*.

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Modern mills were evolved from the charkha. Man was a mixture of divine and devilish forces. The force behind the spinning-wheel was divine, devoid of any trace of exploitation. The foreigner saw the hidden possibilities that were in it and, by the application of steam and electricity, created mills and used them as instruments of exploitation of the simple races of the earth.

This represented the power of the devil. There were so many cloth-mills in India and yet India went about almost naked. There was scarcity of cloth all over the world. The Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic Dr. Sultan Sjahrir, had informed Pandit Nehru that they had surplus rice which they would gladly send to India to help meet the threat of famine. In return, they wanted no money, but would be glad to have cloth as they were suffering from cloth shortage themselves. They had neither cloth-mills nor had they taken to the wheel. Pandit Nehru had broached the matter to some mill-owners who gladly gave quantities of cloth for despatch to Java. If out of the 40 crores of India, even 20 crores in her seven lakh villages took to spinning for one or two hours a day, they could not only clothe the population of the villages but even supply cloth for the cities. The conviction had dawned upon him even before he came to India that the revival of hand-spinning alone could restore India to its pristine glory. He had since compared the spinning-wheel to the central sun round which the solar system of village economy revolved. It provided the golden bridge between the rich and the poor.

To meet the crisis that faced them, said Gandhiji, he suggested that the popular Ministries should make a declaration that the villagers must produce their own cloth. They would be supplied with cotton, which they must spin and make into cloth. This would enable them to have cloth almost free of cost as it were.

The All-India Spinners' Association is likely to draw up a scheme for the expansion of the khadi industry in the country and place it before the popular Ministries. If the Ministers realize that there is no other way to clothe the naked in India, the scheme will go ahead without any difficulty.

Today, the city-dwellers complained that they could not get khadi at khadi bhandars, that they were asked to make partial payment in yarn spun by themselves. If they understood the new spirit behind the khadi drive, these complaints would disappear. There was nothing to prevent the city-dwellers from producing their own khadi in the same way as the villagers were expected to do.

As for the Kasturba Trust its work was still more difficult than that of the A. I. S. A. They had collected one and a quarter crores of rupees, but the money had to be spent on the welfare of women and children in the

villages. Take for instance maternity work in the villages. The village midwives were ignorant and dirty. The village women were more hardy than city women. Still the laws of Nature could not be defied. To teach clean methods to the village midwife was not an easy job. It was a matter of adult education and everyone knew that adult education was a much harder task than the education of the children. He could spend away the one and a quarter crores today by raising one or two big hospitals of the city type. But that would not be rendering real service to women and children in the villages. The money was collected in the name of a woman who had become a villager and who died with her heart in the villages. He was not prepared to squander away that money anyhow. He knew that the public were becoming impatient. They felt that the work was progressing too slowly. But he wished to tell them not to lose patience. The work was going on slowly but surely. They were moving in unchartered waters. They must proceed with caution.

The Hindu, 13-7-1946

520. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

POONA,
July 12, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Sushila has come here alone to consult me. I have advised her that she should miss the ship which sails on the 18th and await your letter. Whether to take the children along has to be thought about. This too you are in a better position to do. I should myself like them to stay on here. There are difficulties of course. So the right thing will be for you to consider the situation there and decide. I do see the need for Sushila's presence there.

I see from Sundaram's letter that both Sita and Sumitra are in Kashi at present.

Sushila is leaving today for Bombay. She will be there for a day and then go to Akola.

I am leaving for Panchgani tomorrow for a fortnight. Then by August 7, I shall be in Sevagram. My health is fairly good. I say something every day about the situation in South Africa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4984

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521. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
July 12, 1946

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

As you know, with the consent of you people (Holding Trustees) about 10 or 12 lakhs of rupees of the Kasturba Trust are at present lying in the fixed deposit account with the Central Bank and the United Commercial Bank. The Central Bank pays 1¼ per cent interest for a period of 12 months and the United Commercial Bank 2¼ per cent. Since the Trust is meant for philanthropic work I would like the Banks to pay to the Trust what they realize by way of interest from loans to the Government or from other sources. It means the Trust must get at least 3 per cent interest. I am writing to Sir Homi Mody about the interest from the Central Bank, and to you about the interest from the United Commercial Bank. It would be good if you, in your capacity as Chairman of the Bank, gave 3 per cent interest.

Tomorrow I am leaving for Panchgani. Please send the reply there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original : C. W. 8050. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

522. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 12, 1946

Gandhiji talked to the audience about the conditions of Indians in Ceylon this evening. He had visited Ceylon years ago.[1] If Kashmir with its snow-clad Himalayas was the diadem of Mother India, then Ceylon was the emerald pendent of the necklace round her neck. It was rightly described

[1] In November, 1927

as Ceylon the Golden. Indians had played an important part in developing Ceylon. The Ceylonese had got a sort of constitution now. There was nothing wonderful about it. But they felt that the Indians should be turned out of Ceylon. The Indians had gone there as labourers. They worked under the most difficult and unhealthy conditions. They worked for Ceylon and settled down there. It was hard for them to leave that country now, and they wanted equal citizenship rights with the Ceylonese.

The Ceylonese case was that the Indians could not ride two horses at one time. If they were Indians, they should return to India. If not, they should become Ceylonese nationals. There were others who were not prepared to have the Indians in Ceylon in any circumstances. It was strange. The Indians and Ceylonese were brothers. A narrow strip of water separated India from Ceylon. A strong man could swim across the channel. They were both coloured people. The Ceylonese followed Buddhism and the birth-place of Buddhism was India. How could such a quarrel between Indians and Ceylonese be tolerated? They all wished them to bridge the gulf and become one. The A. I. C. C. had passed a resolution appointing a committee of four to go into the matter. It consisted of the Congress President, Shri C. Rajagopalachari, Shri Ramachandran, and Shri Aryanayakum. The Indian labourers in Ceylon had gone on strike. The Congress had advised them to give it up. They did not wish to embarrass the Ceylonese. They wanted a brotherly settlement.

What was their duty in the matter?—Gandhiji asked the gathering. They should all pray to God to show light to both. It was their duty to know how their brothers overseas were faring. That is why he had told them all about the Indians in Ceylon. In the end, he asked them to keep up the habit of praying regularly both in the morning and in the evening after he had gone away from Poona.

The Hindu, 14-7-1946

523. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

There was a discussion about Bhai . . .[1] in the Charkha Sangh meeting. I knew nothing about the matter. I saw the letter. You have needlessly taken the matter to heart. Whatever institution we might be in, our decisions can be changed, they are subject to criticism. Why should we be sensitive about

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

it? No one had anything else in mind beyond what was said. Nothing that was said warranted your tendering resignation. The Sangh having expressed its opinion has even left the decision to you. It shows that there was no question of the trustees going to the court or anything else. You should have forbearance. You are a devotee of khadi and a dedicated worker; how can a *sevak* be so sensitive? Now that you have the right opportunity to serve khadi, avail yourself of it fully.

Owing to my bad handwriting I am dictating this. I hope you will have no trouble in following it. If you have any difficulty in replying in Hindustani you may do so in English.

I shall be in Panchgani up to the 28th. After that till the 4th August I shall be in Poona and then at Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

524. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1946

In the song that has just been sung,[2] the world has been aptly described as the valley of sorrow and suffering. God alone enables us to brave it all. The poet, however, has proceeded to call the world an illusion and a dream. Joy or what men call happiness may be, or really is, a dream in a fleeting and transitory world, where everything is like a dissolving phantasmagoria. But we cannot dismiss the suffering of our fellow creatures as unreal and thereby provide a moral alibi for ourselves. Even dreams are true while they last and to the sufferer, his suffering is a grim reality. Anyway, whether the world be real or unreal, we have certain duties in life which must be faced, understood and duly performed while we are in this world.

Mahatma Gandhi said he was grateful to God for being able to come to Panchgani again this year although he was not able to come earlier because of his stay in Delhi on account of the Cabinet Mission. This annual short stay at the hill station enabled him, he added, to store up enough

[1] The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

[2] By the Parsi girls of the Batha High School where the prayers were held

energy for carrying on his heavy work during the remaining months. From his experience of the last three years he found it beneficial to plan staying about six months on the side of Poona from February to August and in Sevagram during the rest of the year.

He could not leave Sevagram altogether because of his close and fairly long association with various activities there, but he also wanted to devote some time to his newly found nature-cure centre at Uruli Kanchan and had therefore planned to spend some time there.

The Hindu, 15-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 21-7-1946

525. KHADI IN TOWNS

Your scheme for making village India self-sufficient in the matter of clothing has hit town lovers of khadi pretty hard. You have gone so far as to say that sales bhandars may close as such and that townsfolk may even revert to the use of mill cloth.

While there is no quarrel with the new ideology and the consequent basic change in the running of bhandars nor with the introduction of a certain quota of yarn currency for purchasing khadi, I would like you to solve the difficulty of town buyers who must use only khadi.

Let the readers fully understand the so-called new plan for khadi. I call it so-called, because what is being done is the logical step, if khadi is to clothe the villagers, as from the very start it was intended to do. Khadi was never meant merely for the townspeople, it was never meant to bleed the villagers as they are being bled so that the townspeople can live. Khadi was from its inception conceived for the sake of reversing the order though never to bleed the townspeople. To reverse the order was to restore the natural relation. Towns there were before the British arrival. Things were bad enough then. Now they are much worse. Towns became cities. The latter, in spite of their Indian millionaires, lived mainly for the British masters. Khadi was to undo the grave mischief. Mill cloth is the symbol of the slavery of village India as khadi is or should be the symbol of its freedom, both economic and political. If it cannot be that, it is meaningless. Therefore, any healthy change undergone in the process of khadi development is to be welcomed.

The defect in the existing development, good though it appeared, was not good enough for the villagers who spun yarn and wove khadi but did not use it themselves. They neither understood nor appreciated the dignity and value that its use

carried. The fault was not theirs. The workers themselves did not. The town-dwellers had to wear khadi and do the penance. They were willing to buy penance for a few extra rupees which they could easily spare and be called patriots into the bargain. But how could the Charkha Sangh (called in English All-India Spinners' Association) belie its faith by ignoring the very foundation of khadi? And so it is employing its resources to making the villagers khadi-clad. It naturally begins with the spinners and weavers of hand-spun. If the move succeeds, as it is bound to, there will be after a time, ample khadi in the city and town markets. Then the only cloth available in India will be khadi. The A. I. S. A. is diligently working at the consummation. If its researches show that khadi has no such potentiality, it will have no hesitation in declaring its insolvency. Let the reader remember that it is a science which deals with the psychology of forty crores of people in the machine age. Thus considered, it is a tremendous problem, though at the same time fascinating and interesting. The very defeat, if defeat it is to be, will itself be no defeat. Let it be understood that it is not an attempt to go back to the dark ages when the charkha was the symbol of the slavery of the masses. Surely it will be a triumph of human understanding, i. e., of the soul of India, when India makes an effort through the charkha to break her bonds asunder. The free man eats the same bread as the slave. The one eats the bread of freedom, the other of slavery.

But if the city-dwellers and the town-dwellers would learn the glad tidings that the charkha has to give, they will willingly employ their leisure time in carding, spinning, and weaving rather than in gambling on the race course or drinking and idling away their time in their clubs. And their children? Why —they could spin for their parents, for the liberty of India and have education of the type that India wants. I was in Rome[1] and Mussolini's officials took pride in showing the graceful manœuvres of the little children who were being taught all naval tricks. And do the English children do otherwise than learn in their mother tongue what England needs? It is only reserved for India to teach her children the foreigners' language and through it, such things as the latter need. Who but a foreigner has devised the education code?

The A. I. S. A. sales depots will be used for a better purpose than before. They will teach the people, who, I hope, will

[1] In December, 1931

flock to them, all the tricks of spinning and weaving. If they do, they will have all the khadi they need. Where there is a will, there is a way.

Lastly, let the reader know too that nowadays khadi like mill cloth is scarce. Let me not go into the reason why.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-7-1946

526. JEWS AND PALESTINE

Hitherto I have refrained practically from saying anything in public regarding the Jew-Arab controversy. I have done so for good reasons. That does not mean any want of interest in the question, but it does mean that I do not consider myself sufficiently equipped with knowledge for the purpose. For the same reason I have tried to evade many world events. Without airing my views on them, I have enough irons in the fire. But four lines of a newspaper column have done the trick and evoked a letter from a friend who has sent me a cutting which I would have missed but for the friend drawing my attention to it. It is true that I did say some such thing in the course of a long conversation with Mr. Louis Fischer on the subject.[1] I do believe that the Jews have been cruelly wronged by the world. "Ghetto" is, so far as I am aware, the name given to Jewish locations in many parts of Europe. But for their heartless persecution, probably no question of return to Palestine would ever have arisen. The world should have been their home, if only for the sake of their distinguished contribution to it.

But, in my opinion, they have erred grievously in seeking to impose themselves on Palestine with the aid of America and Britain and now with the aid of naked terrorism. Their citizenship of the world should have and would have made them honoured guests of any country. Their thrift, their varied talent, their great industry should have made them welcome anywhere. It is a blot on the Christian world that they have been singled out, owing to a wrong reading of the New Testament, for prejudice against them. "If an individual Jew does a wrong, the whole Jewish world is to blame for it." If an

[1] According to the newspaper cutting Louis Fischer had quoted Gandhiji to the effect that the Jews had a good case but he hoped the Arabs too would not be wronged.

individual Jew like Einstein makes a great discovery or another composes unsurpassable music, the merit goes to the authors and not to the community to which they belong.

No wonder that my sympathy goes out to the Jews in their unenviably sad plight. But one would have thought adversity would teach them lessons of peace. Why should they depend upon American money or British arms for forcing themselves on an unwelcome land? Why should they resort to terrorism to make good their forcible landing in Palestine? If they were to adopt the matchless weapon of non-violence whose use their best Prophets have taught and which Jesus the Jew who gladly wore the crown of thorns bequeathed to a groaning world, their case would be the world's, and I have no doubt that among the many things that the Jews have given to the world, this would be the best and the brightest. It is twice blessed. It will make them happy and rich in the true sense of the word and it will be a soothing balm to the aching world.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-7-1946

527. QUESTION BOX

Q. Is it possible during prayers, for thousands who assemble at your prayer gatherings, to concentrate their minds on anything whatever?

A. I can only answer yes. For, if I did not believe in mass prayer, I should cease to hold public prayers. My experience confirms my belief. Success depends upon the purity of the leader and the faith of the audience. I know instances in which the audience had faith and the leader was an impostor. Such cases will continue to happen. But truth like the sun shines in the midst of the darkness of untruth. The result in my case will be known probably after my death.

A wag asks three questions in this matter. One requiring an answer runs: "Is not political education infinitely superior to the religious?" In my opinion, political education is nothing worth, if it is not backed by a sound grounding in religion by which is not meant sectional or sectarian belief. Man without religion is man without roots. Therefore, religion is the basis on which all life structure has to be erected, if life is to be real.

THIEVING

Q. What is the employer to do when an employee of his is addicted to stealing and is not amenable to correction whether it is by way of entreaty or the cane?

A. It may well be that the others too are addicts though they may not be found out. Observation would show that we are all thieves, the difference being that most of us are tolerant towards ourselves and intolerant towards those that are found out and are not of the ordinary run. What is a man, if he is not a thief, who openly charges as much as he can for the goods he sells? If the reply be that the buyer is a willing dupe, it begs the question. In reality the buyer is helpless rather than willing. The stealing referred to is one of the symptoms of a deep-seated disease of society. It is symptomatic of the eternal strife between the monied few and the many paupers. Therefore, my advice to the employer will be to remove all temptation in the way of the thief, to treat him as if he was his own brother and, when he refuses to yield to any treatment, however humanitarian it may be, to ask him to go his way. Let the employer always ask himself whether he would treat his own brother in the same way at the given stage.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-7-1946

528. "A DIRTY HABIT"

A sister writes:

> For some years I have been trying to help people to understand the danger of spitting everywhere. The filth and the dirt is so bad on account of spitting and cleaning noses everywhere that one does not know where to begin. Even small boys, girls, educated men and women, apart from illiterate folk spit on railway platforms, carriages, trams, outside shops, in corridors outside their houses and everywhere. Our country is getting dirtier and dirtier and diseases are spreading all over. Will not volunteers come forward for spreading the message of cleanliness ?

Promiscuous spitting is a bad habit on which I have commented often enough. It is all part and parcel of the incredible ignorance that exists in our land among all classes of people in regard to the elementary laws of sanitation and hygiene. It

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is a habit which we must give up, if we would avoid certain diseases. My correspondent's suggestion is certainly commendable.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946
Harijan, 21-7-1946

529. KASTURBA MEMORIAL TRUST[1]

Some people complain that the funds of this Trust are not being spent fast enough and that no one knows how they are being spent. The complaint is baseless on both counts. The thing is that even though the donations to the Trust came largely from the cities, the aim has throughout been for the money to be spent in the villages, and in the interest of village women and children. Therefore, those who do not see the Trust accounts would not know how the money is spent in villages. The critics are all city-dwellers. Villagers neither read the newspapers nor care about how the money is spent. If any work is done in their own village they can see it for themselves. Anything done for the city-dwellers is widely publicised. If a building or a statue is being made, there is a discussion in the papers about how it is being made. Then when it is completed its opening or unveiling ceremony is performed with much fanfare so that people would know that the purpose for which the money was collected had been accomplished. There cannot be any such advertisement of the work which is being done for women in villages. Therefore, for the time being the newspaper-readers will have to be content with just knowing through whom the work is being carried on. When some work has been done in a few thousand out of the seven lakhs of our villages and the women and children of these villages have been prepared everyone will come to know of it. Take just one example. Training is being given to village women as midwives. Nurses are being trained to work in villages. If this information is not enough, what more can one say?

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kasturba Trust held recently at Poona, budgets were passed for the holding of training camps in several of the twenty-one provinces. But the women trained in this way have to go to

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 21-7-1946.

villages. City-dwellers can know about them only if they are paraded in the cities. But this is not intended, nor would it be proper. There is another thing. The work to be undertaken in the villages is of a new kind and has to be taken up from the beginning. Therefore, the progress would perforce be slow as it has been in the case of khadi and other village industries. We paid very little attention to the villages. It is so even today. When city-dwellers turn their attention to the villages, things will be different. So long as this does not happen neither the newspapers will notice the work of organizations of this kind nor city-dwellers will take much interest in it.

There are occasions when it is not wise to spend the money as soon as it is collected, when wisdom in fact lies in spending it slowly and with care, as it has been in the case of the Kasturba Trust. The donors may be numbered in thousands, but the field in which the money is to be spent is 1900 miles long and the population to be served numbers forty crores. Time was needed to decide how to work and where. Time was also needed to find workers. And now that the workers are found time is being spent on training them. Therefore the donors must have confidence that the Trustees will neither spend money uselessly nor shirk spending from laziness when it is necessary to spend.

Ever since the committees were constituted, there have been complaints that they have not been constituted from among the donors and where donors have been taken on the committees their numbers are too few. The fact is that donors are not always the best judges of how and on what the donations should be spent. Suppose, for instance, a number of persons together donate a sum of ten crore rupees for the construction of a pond. But having done this, what else can they do about it? The money donated must pass into the hands of those who know how to make a pond. Only such people will form a committee and spend the money. Many such instances could be cited. In the first instance the committees formed by the trustees were formed in this manner. Later it was realized that whatever work women could do, should be got done by them and not by forming committees of them but through them as agents. Only thus can women be trained and the entire organization passed into their hands. In this way the responsibility of the work will rest with them. Efforts towards this end are underway. It was bound to take time and it will still take time. Difficulties are many, but it is hoped that ultimately the work will grow and

women too will have been prepared to shoulder the burden. Only experience will judge of the result.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 21-7-1946

530. LETTER TO SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1946

BHAI DIKSHIT,

I have a letter from Ratnamayibehn. It makes me happy as well as unhappy. Unhappy because the fear which I had and which I had expressed has proved true. And I am happy at the frank admission of weakness. If you even settle down in your present sphere of work and achieve success in it, I shall be satisfied. To have confidence about something which is beyond our attainment is also a fault, it is a sign of pride.

"All creatures follow their nature; what then will constraint avail?"[1]

Send this letter or a copy of it to Ratnamayi as I am not writing to her separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT
C/O *Nagpur Times*
NAGPUR

From the Hindi original : Sita Charan Dikshit Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] *Bhagavadgita*, III. 33

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531. DISCUSSION WITH NIMBALKAR[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 14, 1946*][2]

N. What would you have us do next?

G. You should give proof of the same courage and bravery here that you people displayed on the battlefield. There was perfect unity in the ranks of the I. N. A. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis; all communities were like blood brothers. There was no high or low, no untouchable. Demonstrate that unity here. But I am afraid you will not be able to do so.

N. Yes, we cannot, so long as the British power rules over us.

G. Well, there is a lot that can be done in spite of the British. I have voluntarily become a Bhangi. Who can prevent me from doing so? Shah Nawaz[3] today is an Indian first and an Indian last. Nobody can prevent him from doing so. In fact, wherever he goes, he puts up with his Hindu friends. But even so, he realizes that he cannot achieve here what he could outside India. The I. N. A. men on returning to their homes take the complexion from their environment. They shed what they had learnt outside and it is difficult to prevent them from falling into the old rut.

Again, if you expect India to spend lakhs on you, that is not right. You should be like Garibaldi's[4] soldiers who were promised by their leader only "blood, toil and tears". They tilled the land and supported themselves when not engaged on the battle-field. No one paid them a salary. You have been trained by the British who spend lavishly. If you expect medals like Victoria Crosses and such prizes as the British can give, you will be disappointed. The starving millions of India cannot afford that. You have to become one with them and serve them.

[1] & [2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Captain Nimbalkar of the Indian National Army had come from Satara to meet Gandhiji on this date.

[3] One of the three officers of the I. N. A. who were tried for treason but later released

[4] Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82); Italian General who liberated his country

Today the man in the street is terrified of the military. The military man acts like a bully and there can be no appeal against his high-handedness. You have to prove that you are friends and servants of the people, so that they will not be awed by you.

N. We befriend the people here as we did outside India.

G. That is good. But I tell you, your leaders are finding it difficult to control the I. N. A. men in India. There are petty jealousies and rivalries. 'If A can get something, why not I?' —that is the kind of feeling coming uppermost. It was different abroad. You had a very capable leader in Netaji. In spite of our sharp differences I have always admired his burning patriotism, courage and resourcefulness.

N. You have no idea of the deep love and admiration he had for you. What should be our contribution in the next struggle for independence?

G. The struggle for independence is going on today. It has never stopped. But, if my will prevails, it will be a non-violent struggle. The lesson of the last 25 years of training in non-violence, has gone home to the masses. They have realized that in non-violence they have a weapon which enables a child, a woman or even a decrepit old man to resist the mightiest government successfully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of physical strength ceases to be a handicap. *Per contra* I have seen the Zulus in South Africa with Herculean bodies tremble before a white child. White soldiers could go into the Zulu kraals and shoot men, women and children sleeping in their beds. There was no resistance in the Zulu and the physical strength could not make up for it.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

532. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 14, 1946*][2]

Poverty, remarked Gandhiji, had a dignity in our country. The poor man was not ashamed of his poverty. He preferred his hut to the rich man's

[1] & [2] Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", from which this is extracted, reports it as "second day's discourse" at Panchgani. Gandhiji had reached Panchgani on July 13, 1946.

palace. He even took pride in it. Though poor in material goods, he was not poor in spirit. Contentment was his treasure. He might as well say to himself, 'Since we cannot all become rich and own palaces, let us at least pull down the palaces of the rich and bring them down to our level.' That could bring no happiness or peace either to themselves or anyone else, and God would certainly be not the friend and helper of the poor of such description. Poverty, in the sense of inequality of material possessions was there in every part of the world. That was perhaps in a certain measure inevitable, for all men are not equal either in their talents or the measure of their needs. Even in America which was fabulously rich and where Mammon had taken the place of God, there were many poor. Poet Malabari had come across some relatives of Shah Alam[1] begging in the streets of Rangoon. He had written a beautiful poem about it which had sunk into Gandhiji's heart. The substance of it was that he alone is rich who has God for his friend and helper. In India there was a particular type of man who delighted in having as few needs as possible. He carried with him only a little flour and a pinch of salt and chillies tied in his napkin. He had a *lota* and a string to draw water with from the well. He needed nothing else. He walked on foot covering 10-12 miles a day. He made the dough on his napkin, collected a few twigs to make a fire and baked his dough on the embers. It was called *bati*. He tasted it and found it most delicious. The relish did not lie in the food but in the appetite that honest toil and the contentment of the mind gave. Such a man had God as his companion and friend and felt richer than any king or emperor. God was not the friend of those who inwardly coveted others' riches. Everyone could copy that example and enjoy ineffable peace and happiness himself and radiate it to others. On the other hand if one hankered after riches, one had to resort to exploitation, by whatever name it might be called. Even then the crores could not become millionaires. True happiness lay in contentment and companionship with God only.

Harijan, 21-7-1946

[1] His successor Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal Emperor, was exiled to Burma.

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533. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. VALJI,

I have gone through your draft. It is a good summary. You have given better treatment to the vows than to the constructive programme. The latter lacks life. Maybe the original itself lacks it.

It would be quite wrong to give to this writing the title "Mohan Samhita". I do not see the quality of a *Samhita*[1] in it. A simpler title would be more becoming. Truly speaking what Manu Subedar wants is something much better. It has to be something original. He is not likely to want a mere summary. Probably what he has in mind is a booklet or two based on all my writings. You should show him your draft and find out. It is the title that I strongly object to. 'Mangalprabhat' and 'A Summary of Constructive Programme' would be a better description of what you have written.

I hope you are well. It would be morally wrong to neglect your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Should I send the draft and the books with somebody or bring them with me when I come there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 7500. Courtesy : Valji G. Desai

[1] A treatise of laws and rules

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534. LETTER TO LILAVATI K. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I have already written to Munshi[1] to come whenever he likes.

I like the idea of students being obliged to devote a few years to teaching. It is obvious that they should be qualified for the job. If a few years' conscription [for military training] is all right, why not for the noble work of education?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

535. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

I have gone through both your letters, that is, I had them read out to me. Sushila Pai read them out while I span. I think I have replied to all your questions. There was no censure of you in my misgivings. It was your naivete. All I want is that you should be careful. Non-violence of the coward is worthless. In a brave person non-violence is an adornment, in a coward it can be a defect. Remember the saying "a helpless man becomes a saint". I admit this is not so in your case.

To overcome one's nature and to weed out subtle defects, striving and company of good men are required.

It is useless to work among the labourers or in an institution. If your health permits it will be best to remain with me. If not, we shall see.

I am returning both the letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2498

[1] K. M. Munshi, addressee's husband

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536. TESTIMONIAL TO SARDAR SINGH

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

During my stay at Bhangi Niwas in Delhi, Sardar Singh used to drive the car with devotion—so said all those who used the car. As for me, I think I had no occasion to enjoy a ride in that car.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

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

537. TESTIMONIAL TO AMAR SINGH

[*July 15, 1946*][1]

During the whole of my stay at Bhangi Niwas in New Delhi, Bhai Amar Singh always brought the car on time and drove me very carefully and with great love. He was always available, whatever the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

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

[1] This and the following testimonial are written on the same sheet as the preceding one.

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538. TESTIMONIAL TO HARE RAM

[*July 15, 1946*]

When I was in New Delhi Bhai Hare Ram rendered all service willingly and with great care. It was rendered not by a mere servant, as it were, but in the spirit of pure devotion.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

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

539. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

DELHI,
April 14, 1946

When God cares, why should we be full of cares?

April 15, 1946

More people die of worry than of natural causes.

April 16, 1946

Better to die once than to die daily.

April 17, 1946

When a man has lost patience, he should resort to silence, and speak only when he has calmed down.

April 18, 1946

When man realizes himself, he is saved.

April 19, 1946

When our outer life gets the better of our inner life, the result is bound to be bad.

[1] At the request of Anand T. Hingorani, Gandhiji on November 20, 1944 started the practice of writing a thought for each day and continued it for about two years. These thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, namely, July 15, 1946.

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April 20, 1946

One man's cruelty is the measure of another man's gentleness.

April 21, 1946

It is useless to recite Ramanama without acting in a manner worthy of Rama.

April 22, 1946

Perfection is only an ideal for man; it cannot be attained, for man is made imperfect.

April 23, 1946

Sacrifice with regret is no sacrifice.

April 24, 1946

When the inner lamp burns, it illumines the whole world.

April 25, 1946

How is it that a precept regarded as applicable to others appears inapplicable to oneself ?

April 26, 1946

When all forsake you, God shall still be with you.

April 27, 1946

What more do you want when the heavens are within you, and even God Himself ?

April 28, 1946

Sweet are the fruits of patience.

April 29, 1946

Why should I depend upon anyone for my own affairs?

April 30, 1946

With whom will you be angry? With yourself ? Do that every day. With others? Why need there be any reason for that?

May 1, 1946

We cannot act or even think, in two opposite ways at the same time.

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SIMLA,
May 2, 1946

The nearer we approach our ideal, the more truthful we become.

May 3, 1946

To have good thoughts is one thing; to act upon them is another.

May 4, 1946

The benefit of solitude can be realized only by experience.

May 5, 1946

Faith is that which remains unshaken even in the face of adversity.

May 6, 1946

Noise does not overcome noise; silence does.

May 7, 1946

Fewer people die from disease than from fear of disease.

Gurudev Jayanti, May 8, 1946

He who has divine endowment in him becomes thereby immortal.

May 9, 1946

To gain immortality through divine endowment is not a big thing. To fulfil our obligations in daily life is.

May 10, 1946

He who is not disturbed by bad news will not be elated by good news.

May 11, 1946

If the courage to endure everything with goodwill is lacking, goodwill becomes a lame virtue.

May 12, 1946

We are no better than any other—this thought is full of truth and humility.

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May 13, 1946

It is very difficult to confess one's error; but then there is no other way of cleansing oneself.

KALKA,
May 14, 1946

It is not the whistle that moves the train but the power harnessed in the steam.

NEW DELHI,
May 15, 1946

God is everywhere. Even so, if we really wish to feel His being, we must remove the ego and make room for Him.

May 16, 1946

When the self dies, God fills the void.

May 17, 1946

He who looks for faults in others cannot see his own.

May 18, 1946

On the one side, truth; on the other, Dominion over the Earth. O my heart, thou shalt choose the Truth and reject the Dominion.

May 19, 1946

Being a slave to fear and selfishness is the worst form of slavery.

May 20, 1946

When everything belongs to God what shall we offer to Him?

May 21, 1946

If we call God our Redeemer and let our indolence grow, we are committing a sin.

May 22, 1946

Debts are redeemed by deeds, not by words.

May 23, 1946

What is in the mind must come out, sooner or later.

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May 24, 1946

[Ramanama] is the only unfailing remedy for man's three-fold ills.

May 25, 1946

He who seeks refuge in Ramanama, has Ramanama installed in his heart and is duly rewarded.[1]

May 26, 1946

Pure thought is far more potent than speech.

May 27, 1946

Restlessness and impatience are two diseases and both shorten life.

MUSSOORIE,
May 28, 1946

He who lacks peace and firmness cannot realize God.

May 29, 1946

If we do not forsake our ideal, the ideal will never forsake us.

May 30, 1946

To remain entangled in things physical and aspire for self-realization is like asking for the moon.

May 31, 1946

The soul dries up without the company of the good.

June 1, 1946

Our personal cleanliness counts for little if our neighbours are not clean.

June 2, 1946

What is true of outer cleanliness is true of the inner too. If our neighbour is unclean inside, it will affect us also.

June 3, 1946

Bravery is not the monopoly of any one person; it is latent in all, only they are not aware of it.

[1] This is in Gujarati.

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June 4, 1946

To speak the truth, you have to weigh your words again and again.

June 5, 1946

A man of knowledge attains peace only through renunciation.

June 6, 1946

If we are late for a train, we miss it. What if we are late for prayer?

June 7, 1946

When God is enshrined in our hearts, we cannot harbour evil thoughts or do evil deeds.

June 8, 1946

When a man's mind is filled with the Light of Heaven, all obstacles in his path vanish.

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1946

Life is not a bed of roses; it is full of thorns.

June 10, 1946

No joy can compare with the joy of doing one's duty in silence.

June 11, 1946

Steadfastness in meditation indicates depth of thought; it also makes for purity and maturity of thought.

June 12, 1946

A calculating mind cannot attain self-realization.

June 13, 1946

What shall we call a person who, in the name of Rama, acts like Ravana?

June 14, 1946

One is a servant of him for whom one works, not to whom one pays only lip service.

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June 15, 1946

When we give something, we must give the truest part of ourselves.

June 16, 1946

Knowing that everything has two sides, let us look at the bright side alone.

June 17, 1946

When attachment is present, the performance of even a pure deed involves manipulation.

June 18, 1946

When man smites, it is God who comes to our rescue.

June 19, 1946

How can a man who turns night into day be non-attached ?

June 20, 1946

He who wants to drink of the nectar of Ramanama must purge himself of lust, anger and the like.

June 21, 1946

Even if he be your relation, do not try to hide his faults.

June 22, 1946

Evenmindedness is the best of all wisdom.

June 23, 1946

Even nectar turns into poison if poison is added to it.

June 24, 1946

Man must never suppress his inner voice even if he stand alone.

June 25, 1946

Intuition is lame if it is not supported by reason.

June 26, 1946

A river goes dry when cut off from its source. So does man when cut off from his original source, i. e., God.

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June 27, 1946

Pure thought is so subtle and yet so powerful a thing that it becomes all-pervading.

June 28, 1946

A votary of truth must have a sense of discrimination and of time, as also a full understanding of the opposite side.

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA,
June 29, 1946

Man rests in the jaws of Death. He is said to be dead when the jaws close.

POONA,
June 30, 1946

Such being the case, where is the sense in making merry or becoming arrogant?

July 1, 1946

When Truth, that is God, is with us, what matters whether the world is with us or not, whether we live or die?

July 2, 1946

If you want to stand before God, you must go after shedding the robe of egoism.

July 3, 1946

If you are truly humble you will never, even in your dreams think disparagingly of those who do not practise such austerities as you do.

July 4, 1946

He who is not in the habit of keeping everything in its place is a fool. He wastes much time in searching for it when he wants it.

BOMBAY,
July 5, 1946

Divine Power is a thing that nothing can withstand.

July 6, 1946

We remember God when all is well with us. But a true devotee is he who remembers Him even when things go awry.

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July 7, 1946

Man finds himself by losing his Self.

POONA,
July 8, 1946

He who explores the branch and forgets the root, strays.

July 9, 1946

The nectar of Ramanama brings joy to the soul and rids the body of its ailments.

July 10, 1946

Man dies when he cuts himself off from the source of his being, not when the soul leaves the body.

July 11, 1946

Meditation does not make one dull.

July 12, 1946

Meditation makes one strong and lucid.

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1946

Just as drop by drop the lake fills up, so also every minute of sincere prayer nourishes the soul.

July 14, 1946

Man by himself is nothing. But when he has become one with God, he is everything.

July 15, 1946

When God is our Guide, we need worry about nothing.

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Bapuke Ashirwad: A Thought for the Day*, pp. 466-601

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S SPEECH[1]

The world is very ill. This is the time when hatred is rife in the world and when many mighty branches of the human family, victors or vanquished, innocent or guilty, are plunged in bewilderment, distress or ruin. Two fearful wars in our lifetime have torn the heart out of its grace and culture.

Measureless injury has been done to much that the 19th century would have called 'Christian civilization', for all the leading nations have been racked by stresses which have blunted their sensibilities and have destroyed their agreeable modes of social intercourse.

Only science has rolled forward, whipped by the fierce winds of mortal war, and science has placed in the hands of men agencies of destruction far beyond any development of their commonsense or virtue.

In a world where over-production of food was formerly from time to time a problem, famine has laid its gaunt fingers upon the peoples of many lands and scarcity upon all.

The psychic energies of mankind have been exhausted by the tribulations through which they have passed and are still passing. It is not only bloodletting that has weakened and whitened us.

The vital springs of human inspiration are, for the moment, drained. There must be a period of recovery. Mankind cannot, in its present plight bear new shocks and quarrels without taking to altogether cruder and primordial forms.

Yet we do not know that the hatred and confusion which are found will not confront us with even harder trial than those we have so narrowly and painfully survived.

In many countries, where even united efforts would fall short of what is needed, party strife and faction is fomented or machine-made and skeleton fanatics rave at each other about their rival ideologies.

All the while, the ordinary folk of every country show themselves kindly and brave and serviceable to their fellow men. Yet, they are driven against one another by forces and organizations and doctrines as wantonly and remorselessly as they ever were in the ages of absolute emperors and kings.

There never was a time when breathing space was more needed, a blessed convalescence, a truce of God and man.

Harijan, 5-5-1946

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

APPENDIX II

SUGGESTED POINTS FOR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE[1]

1. There shall be an All-India Union Government and Legislature dealing with Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communications, Fundamental Rights and having the necessary powers to obtain for itself the finances it requires for these subjects.

2. All the remaining powers shall vest in the provinces.

3. Groups of provinces may be formed and such Groups may determine the provincial subjects which they desire to take in common.

4. The Groups may set up their own Executives and Legislatures.

5. The Legislature of the Union shall be composed of equal proportions from the Muslim-majority provinces and from the Hindu-majority provinces whether or not these or any of them have formed themselves into Groups, together with representatives of the States.

6. The Government of the Union shall be constituted in the same proportion as the Legislature.

7. The constitutions of the Union and the Groups (if any) shall contain a provision whereby any province can by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

For the purpose of such reconsideration a body shall be constituted on the same basis as the original Constituent Assembly and with the same provisions as to voting and shall have power to amend the constitution in any way decided upon.

8. The constitution-making machinery to arrive at a constitution on the above basis, shall be as follows:

A. Representatives shall be elected from each Provincial Assembly in proportion to the strength of the various parties in that Assembly on the basis of 1/10th of their numbers.

B. Representatives shall be invited from the States on the basis of their population in proportion to the representation from British India.

C. The Constituent Assembly so formed shall meet at the earliest date possible in New Delhi.

D. After its preliminary meeting at which the general order of business will be settled, it will divide into three sections, one section representing the Hindu-majority provinces, one section representing the Muslim-majority provinces and one representing the States.

[1] *Vide* p. 122.

E. The first two sections will then meet separately to decide the provincial constitutions for their Groups and, if they wish, a Group constitution.

F. When these have been settled it will be open to any province to decide to opt out of its original Group and go into the other Group or to remain outside any Group.

G. Thereafter the three bodies will meet together to settle the constitution for the union on the lines agreed in paragraphs 1-7 above.

H. No major point in the Union constitution which affects the communal issue shall be deemed to be passed by the Assembly unless a majority of both the two major communities vote in its favour.

9. The Viceroy shall forthwith call together the above constitution-making machinery which shall be governed by the provisions stated in paragraph 8 above.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 452-3

APPENDIX III

TALK WITH HORACE G. ALEXANDER AND AGATHA HARRISON[1]

Strictly confidential *May 7, 1946*

[G.] Two sides to talk—may be a favourable side but whole of talk left unfavourable impression on me.

Idea is at any cost to please Jinnah—struggled hard to show this not proper thing.

An attempt to prevent civil war—and civil war at any cost. "We want to prevent civil war coming"—but this can't be prevented if hearts are not together.

Just now something should be imposed is thought.

Hatred is rampant—I have done the utmost in inducing faith—even if one is not inclined to believe the evidence. Hold that nothing is lost by this belief—in spite of all that is said "I told you so", etc.

He recounted steps taken to bring conference—Pethick-Lawrence's 27th letter and the replies of Azad and Jinnah. The formula was only to "start discussion".

Asked by Horace Alexander, "What did you advise?" Gandhiji said, "Don't think of an award." Patel had reminded him that Attlee had definitely stated there would be no such thing. He had advised them to pick up one party in which they believed and persuade them whichever party had the greater justice and rightness on its side; then they should deliver the goods and say, 'We trust you with power.' This might be the Muslim League. If

[1] Notes of which, presumably were jotted down by Agatha Harrison. *Vide* p. 122.

justice and right not on the Muslim League side then deliver the goods to the major party.

Here the Sardar said he did not know how they would prevent civil war by this method. "They seem to have come to an agreement with Jinnah to do anything to placate him. We took Attlee's speech [in good faith] otherwise we should not have come."

Gandhiji said that a better interpretation was they did not want to impose a formula—that they sincerely believed that Jinnah had come round. Patel said they were impressed with fact that Jinnah could create trouble. In effect they were saying, 'If you want to avoid civil war—you must agree'. This was an incitement.

Gandhiji said the Ministers admitted that they had sinned and that because of this they were here. Gandhiji said he felt this should be publicly stated.

Regarding what Horace and I should do Gandhiji said, "Watch and pray"; that it would be dangerous to build on his account of the talk last night that his conversations were based on a fear. Therefore for us to act on the account he had given would be wrong. He had challenged them and they were sending along [*sic*].

From a copy : Gandhi Nidhi Files. Courtesy : Gandhi National Museum and Library

APPENDIX IV(A)

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL[1]

VICEROY'S CAMP, INDIA, (SIMLA),
May 10, 1946

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

The Finance Member reports to me that rumours about a possible reduction or abolition of the salt duty are almost certain to cause a salt famine in certain areas unless immediate steps are taken to prevent it. Merchants and wholesale dealers are abstaining from placing orders with the salt manufacturers lest they be caught with large stocks on which they have paid duty, but which they may be able to sell only at a lower duty-free rate. Strong representations have been received from the Bombay salt merchants and Shilotries Association on the subject.

2. To prevent a salt famine, which would of course be a serious matter for the poor, Government propose to put out a Press Note of which I enclose a copy.

[1] *Vide* pp. 133-4.

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3. I am sure you will appreciate that we cannot avoid taking this action.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47 pp. 159-60

APPENDIX IV (B)

PRESS NOTE

Complaints have been received by Government that rumours to the effect that the salt duty may be reduced or abolished have sown doubt and uncertainty in the minds of traders and manufacturers to such an extent as to discourage the purchase of salt, thereby hampering trade and slowing down manufacture and, in view of the present chronic transport difficulties and of the further difficulty of transporting this commodity during the wet months, entailing serious risk of a salt famine in upcountry areas. To obviate these risks, Government desires to make clear that any change would only be made after a full and comprehensive investigation which would necessarily take considerable time, and that ample notice would be given in order to permit the disposal of duty-paid stocks

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 160

APPENDIX V

INTERVIEW WITH LORD WAVELL AND CABINET MISSION[1]

May 6, 1946

We had decided early in the afternoon that it would be a good thing to see Gandhi at once and enlist his support for the proposed solution, as Cripps was confident he could do. For some reason the Delegation wished him to be asked merely to see the Viceroy, and they would drop in later, which is all rather in a line with their methods of indirect approach. It was Gandhi's day of silence which he could not break till 7.50 p. m. He came at 7.30 p. m. and I spoke a monologue for 15 minutes or so, telling him generally how things were going. Then the Delegation came in, just as his silence was up, and the Secretary of State and Cripps started their explanations and blandishments. The result was a shock to them. Gandhi,

[1] As recorded by Lord Wavell. *Vide* pp. 133-4.

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who had been living with Ghaffar Khan and Patel, the two malcontents, had adopted entirely their point of view, said the proposed solution was "worse than Pakistan", and he could not recommend it to Congress; we must either adopt entirely the Congress point of view, if we thought it just, or Jinnah's point of view if we thought it juster; but there was no half-way house. Gandhi seemed quite unmoved at the prospect of civil war, I think he had adopted Patel's thesis that if we are firm the Muslims will not fight. Though Cripps and Secretary of State kept at Gandhi for an hour, till 9 p. m., they quite failed to move him.

Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal, pp. 259-60

APPENDIX VI

THE HYMN[1]

We are inhabitants of a country
where there is no sorrow and no suffering
Where there is no illusion no anguish,
no delusion nor desire,
Where flows the Ganges of love
and the whole creation is full of joy,
Where all minds flow in one direction
and where there is no occasion for sense of time.
All have their wants satisfied,
Here all barter is just,
Here all are cast in the same mould,
Here is no lack nor care,
No selfishness in any shape or form,
No high no low, no master no slave,
All is light yet no burning heat,
That country is within you—
It is Swaraj—Swadeshi,
The home within you,
Victory! Victory! Victory!
He realizes it who longs for it.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 355

[1] *Vide* p. 161.

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APPENDIX VII

STATEMENT OF CABINET DELEGATION AND VICEROY[1]

May 16, 1946

1. On March 15th last just before the despatch of the Cabinet Delegation to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words:

"My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of Government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision. . . . I hope that India and her people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that they will find great advantages in doing so. . . . But if she does so elect, it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If, on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has a right to do so. It will be for us to help to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible."

2. Charged in these historic words we—the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy—have done our utmost to assist the two main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of the unity or division of India. After prolonged discussions in New Delhi we succeeded in bringing the Congress and the Muslim League together in Conference at Simla. There was a full exchange of views and both parties were prepared to make considerable concessions in order to try and reach a settlement but it ultimately proved impossible to close the remainder of the gap between the parties and so no agreement could be concluded. Since no agreement has been reached we feel that it is our duty to put forward what we consider are the best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new Constitution. This statement is made with the full approval of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

3. We have accordingly decided that immediate arrangements should be made whereby Indians may decide the future Constitution of India and an Interim Government may be set up at once to carry on the administration of British India until such time as a new Constitution can be brought into being. We have endeavoured to be just to the smaller as well as to the larger sections of the people; and to recommend a solution which will lead

[1] *Vide* pp. 160-1.

to a practicable way of governing the India of the future, and will give a sound basis for defence and a good opportunity for progress in the social, political and economic field.

4. It is not intended in this Statement to review the voluminous evidence that has been submitted to the Mission; but it is right that we should state that it has shown an almost universal desire, outside the supporters of the Muslim League, for the unity of India.

5. This consideration did not, however, deter us from examining closely and impartially the possibility of a partition of India; since we were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu-majority rule.

This feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards. If there is to be internal peace in India it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, and economic or other interests.

6. We therefore examined in the first instance the question of a separate and fully independent sovereign State of Pakistan as claimed by the Muslim League. Such a Pakistan would comprise two areas; one in the north-west consisting of the Provinces of the Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier, and British Baluchistan; the other in the north-east consisting of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam. The League were prepared to consider adjustment of boundaries at a later stage, but insisted that the principle of Pakistan should first be acknowledged. The argument for a separate State of Pakistan was based first, upon the right of the Muslim majority to decide their method of Government according to their wishes, and secondly, upon the necessity to include substantial areas in which Muslims are in a minority, in order to make Pakistan administratively and economically workable.

The size of the non-Muslim minorities in a Pakistan comprising the whole of the six Provinces enumerated above would be very considerable as the following figures[1] show:

North-Western Area	Muslims	Non-Muslims
Punjab	16,217,242	12,201,577
North-West Frontier Province	2,788,797	249,270
Sind	3,208,325	1,326,683
Br. Baluchistan	438,930	62,701
	22,653,294	13,840,231
	62.07%	37.93%

[1] The source carries the note: "All population figures in this Statement are from the most recent census taken in 1941."

North-Eastern Area

Bengal	33,005,434	27,301,091
Assam	3,442,479	6,762,254
	36,447,913	34,063,345
	51.69%	48.31%

The Muslim minorities in the remainder of British India number some 20 million dispersed amongst a total population of 188 million.

These figures show that the setting up of a separate sovereign State of Pakistan on the lines claimed by the Muslim League, would not solve the communal minority problem; nor can we see any justification for including within a sovereign Pakistan those districts of the Punjab and of Bengal and Assam in which the population is predominantly non-Muslim. Every argument that can be used in favour of Pakistan, can equally in our view be used in favour of the exclusion of the non-Muslim areas from Pakistan. This point would particularly affect the position of the Sikhs.

7. We therefore considered whether a smaller sovereign Pakistan confined to the Muslim majority areas alone might be a possible basis of compromise. Such a Pakistan is regarded by the Muslim League as quite impracticable because it would entail the exclusion from Pakistan of (a) the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur Division in the Punjab; (b) the whole of Assam except the District of Sylhet; and (c) a large part of Western Bengal, including Calcutta, in which city the Muslims form 23.6 per cent of the population. We ourselves are also convinced that any solution which involves a radical partition of the Punjab and Bengal, as this would do, would be contrary to the wishes and interests of a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these Provinces. Bengal and the Punjab each has its own common language and a long history and tradition. Moreover, any division of the Punjab would of necessity divide the Sikhs leaving substantial bodies of Sikhs on both sides of the boundary. We have therefore been forced to the conclusion that neither a larger nor a smaller sovereign State of Pakistan would provide an acceptable solution for the communal problem.

8. Apart from the great force of the foregoing arguments there are weighty administrative, economic and military considerations. The whole of the transportation and postal and telegraph systems of India have been established on the basis of a united India. To disintegrate them would gravely injure both parts of India. The case for a united defence is even stronger. The Indian armed forces have been built up as a whole for the defence of India as a whole, and to break them in two would inflict a deadly blow on the long traditions and high degree of efficiency of the Indian Army and would entail the gravest dangers. The Indian Navy and Indian Air Force

would become much less effective. The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth the area of Pakistan would be insufficient.

9. A further consideration of importance is the greater difficulty which the Indian States would find in associating themselves with a divided British India.

10. Finally there is the geographical fact that the two halves of the proposed Pakistan State are separated by some seven hundred miles and the communications between them both in war and peace would be dependent on the goodwill of Hindustan.

11. We are therefore unable to advise the British Government that the power which at present resides in British hands should be handed over to two entirely separate sovereign States.

12. This decision does not however blind us to the very real Muslim apprehensions that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus with their greatly superior numbers must be a dominating element. To meet this the Congress have put forward a scheme under which Provinces would have full autonomy subject only to a minimum of Central subjects, such as Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications.

Under this scheme Provinces, if they wished to take part in economic and administrative planning on a large scale, could cede to the Centre optional subjects in addition to the compulsory ones mentioned above.

13. Such a scheme would, in our view, present considerable constitutional disadvantages and anomalies. It would be very difficult to work a Central Executive and Legislature in which some Ministers, who dealt with Compulsory subjects, were responsible to the whole of India while other Ministers, who dealt with optional subjects, would be responsible only to those Provinces which had elected to act together in respect of such subjects. This difficulty would be accentuated in the Central Legislature, where it would be necessary to exclude certain members from speaking and voting when subjects with which their Provinces were not concerned were under discussion.

Apart from the difficulty of working such a scheme, we do not consider that it would be fair to deny to other Provinces, which did not desire to take the optional subjects at the Centre, the right to form themselves into a group for a similar purpose. This would indeed be no more than the exercise of their autonomous powers in a particular way.

14. Before putting forward our recommendations we turn to deal with the relationship of the Indian States to British India. It is quite clear that with the attainment of independence by British India, whether inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the relationship which has hitherto existed between the Rulers of the States and the British Crown will no longer be possible. Paramountcy can neither be retained by the British Crown nor

transferred to the new Government. This fact has been fully recognised by those whom we interviewed from the States. They have at the same time assured us that the States are ready and willing to co-operate in the new development of India. The precise form which their co-operation will take must be a matter for negotiation during the building up of the new constitutional structure, and it by no means follows that it will be identical for all the States. We have not therefore dealt with the States in the same detail as the Provinces of the British India in the paragraphs which follow.

15. We now indicate the nature of a solution which in our view would be just to the essential claims of all parties, and would at the same time be most likely to bring about a stable and practicable form of constitution for all India.

We recommend that the constitution should take the following basic form:

(1) There should be a Union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which should deal with the following subjects: Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Communications; and which should have the powers necessary to raise the finances required for the above subjects.

(2) The Union should have an Executive and a Legislature constituted from British Indian and States' representatives. Any question raising a major communal issue in the Legislature should require for its decision a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities as well as a majority of all the members present and voting.

(3) All subjects other than the Union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the Provinces.

(4) The States will retain all subjects and powers other than those ceded to the Union.

(5) Provinces should be free to form Groups with executives and legislatures, and each Group could determine the Provincial subjects to be taken in common.

(6) The Constitution of the Union and of the Groups should contain a provision whereby any Province could, by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of 10 years and at 10 yearly intervals thereafter.

16. It is not our object to lay out the details of a constitution on the above lines, but to set in motion the machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by Indians for Indians.

It has been necessary however for us to make this recommendation as to the broad basis of the future constitution because it becomes clear to us in the course of our negotiations that not until that has been done was there any hope of getting the two major communities to join in the setting up of the constitution-making machinery.

17. We now indicate the constitution-making machinery which we propose should be brought into being forthwith in order to enable a new Constitution to be worked out.

18. In forming any Assembly to decide a new Constitutional structure the first problem is to obtain as broad-based and accurate a representation of the whole population as is possible. The most satisfactory method obviously would be by election based on adult franchise; but any attempt to introduce such a step now would lead to a wholly unacceptable delay in the formulation of the new Constitution. The only practicable alternative is to utilize the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as the electing bodies. There are, however, two factors in their composition which make this difficult. First, the numerical strength of the Provincial Legislative Assemblies do not bear the same proportion to the total population in each Province. Thus, Assam with a population of 10 millions has a Legislative Assembly of 108 members, while Bengal, with a population six times as large has an Assembly of only 250. Secondly, owing to the weightage given to minorities by the Communal Award, the strengths of the several communities in each Provincial Legislative Assembly are not in proportion to their numbers in the Province. Thus the number of the seats reserved for Muslims in the Bengal Legislative Assembly is only 48 per cent of the total, although they form 55 per cent of the Provincial population. After a most careful consideration of the various methods by which these inequalities might be corrected, we have come to the conclusion that the fairest and the most practicable plan would be—

(a) to allot to each Province a total number of seats proportional to its population, roughly in the ratio of one to a million, as the nearest substitute for representation by adult suffrage.

(b) to divide this provincial allocation of seats between the main communities in each Province in proportion to their population.

(c) to provide that the representatives allotted to each community in a Province shall be elected by the members of that community in its Legislative Assembly.

We think that for these purposes it is sufficient to recognize only three main communities in India; General, Muslim, and Sikh, the "General" community including all persons who are not Muslims or Sikhs. As the smaller minorities would, upon the population basis, have little or no representation, since they would lose the weightage which assures them seats in the Provincial Legislatures, we have made the arrangements set out in paragraph 20 below to give them a full representation upon all matters of special interest to the minorities.

19 (i) We therefore propose that there shall be elected by each Provincial Legislative Assembly the following numbers of representatives, each part of the Legislative (General, Muslim or Sikh) electing its own representatives

by the method of proportional representation with the single transferable vote:—

TABLE OF REPRESENTATION

SECTION A

Province	General	Muslim	Total
Madras	45	4	49
Bombay	19	2	21
United Provinces	47	8	55
Bihar	31	5	36
Central Provinces	16	1	17
Orissa	9	0	9
Total	167	20	187

SECTION B

Province	General	Muslim	Sikh	Total
Punjab	8	16	4	28
North-West Frontier Province	0	3	0	3
Sind	1	3	0	4
Total	9	22	4	35

SECTION C

Province	General	Muslim	Total
Bengal		33	60
Assam		3	10
Total	34	36	70
Total for British India			292
Maximum for Indian States			93
Total			385

Note: In order to represent the Chief Commissioner's Provinces there will be added to Section A the Member representing Delhi in the Central Legislative Assembly, the Member representing Ajmer-Merwara in the Central Legislative Assembly, and a representative to be elected by the Coorg Legislative Council.

To Section B will be added a representative of British Baluchistan.

(ii) It is the intention that the States should be given in the final Constituent Assembly appropriate representation which would not, on the basis of the calculations adopted for British India, exceed 93, but the method

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of selection will have to be determined by consultation. The States would in the preliminary stage be represented by a Negotiating Committee.

(iii) The representatives thus chosen shall meet at New Delhi as soon as possible.

(iv) A preliminary meeting will be held at which the general order of business will be decided, a Chairman and other officers elected, and an Advisory Committee (see paragraph 20 below) on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas set up. Thereafter the provincial representatives will divide up into the three sections shown under A, B, and C, in the Table of Representation in the sub-paragraph (i) of this paragraph.

(v) These sections shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces included in each section, and shall also decide whether any Group Constitution shall be set up for those Provinces and, if so, with what provincial subjects the Group should deal. Provinces, shall have the power to opt out of the Groups in accordance with the provisions of sub-clause (viii) below.

(vi) The representatives of the Sections and the Indian States shall reassemble for the purpose of settling the Union Constitution.

(vii) In the Union Constituent Assembly resolutions varying the provisions of paragraph 15 above or raising any major communal issue shall require a majority of the representatives present and voting of each of the two major communities.

The Chairman of the Assembly shall decide which (if any) of the resolutions raise major communal issues and shall, if so requested by a majority of the representatives of either of the major communities, consult the Federal Court before giving his decision.

(viii) As soon as the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation, it shall be open to any Province to elect to come out of any Group in which it has been placed. Such a decision shall be taken by the new legislature of the Province after the first general election under the new constitution.

20. The Advisory Committee on the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal and excluded areas should contain full representation of the interests affected, and their function will be to report to the Union Constituent Assembly upon the list of Fundamental Rights, the clauses for the protection of minorities, and a scheme for the administration of the tribal and excluded areas, and to advise whether these rights should be incorporated in the Provincial, Group or Union constitution.

21. His Excellency the Viceroy will forthwith request the Provincial Legislatures to proceed with the election of their representatives and the States to set up a Negotiating Committee. It is hoped that the process of constitution-making can proceed as rapidly as the complexities of the task permit so that the interim period may be as short as possible.

22. It will be necessary to negotiate a Treaty between the Union Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power.

23. While the constitution-making proceeds, the administration of India has to be carried on. We attach the greatest importance therefore to the setting up at once of an Interim Government having the support of the major political parties. It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through the difficult tasks that face the Government of India. Besides the heavy task of day-to-day administration, there is the grave danger of famine to be countered; there are decisions to be taken in many matters of post-war development which will have a far-reaching effect on India's future; and there are important international conferences in which India has to be represented. For all these purposes a Government having popular support is necessary. The Viceroy has already started discussions to this end, and hopes soon to form an Interim Government in which all the portfolios, including that of War Member, will be held by Indian leaders having the full confidence of the people. The British Government, recognising the significance of the changes in the Government of India, will give the fullest measure of co-operation to the Government so formed, in the accomplishment of its tasks of administration and in bringing about as rapid and smooth a transition as possible.

24. To the leaders and people of India who now have the opportunity of complete independence we would finally say this. We and our Government and countrymen hoped that it would be possible for the Indian people themselves to agree upon the method of framing the new constitution under which they will live. Despite the labours which we have shared with the Indian Parties, and the exercise of much patience and goodwill by all, this has not been possible. We therefore now lay before you proposals which, after listening to all sides and after much earnest thought, we trust will enable you to attain your independence in the shortest time and with the least danger of internal disturbance and conflict. These proposals may not, of course, completely satisfy all parties, but you will recognize with us that at this supreme moment in Indian history statesmanship demands mutual accommodation.

We ask you to consider the alternative to acceptance of these proposals. After all the efforts which we and the Indian Parties have made together for agreement, we must state that in our view there is small hope of peaceful settlement by agreement of the Indian Parties alone. The alternative would therefore be a grave danger of violence, chaos, and even civil war. The result and duration of such a disturbance cannot be foreseen; but it is certain that it would be a terrible disaster for many millions of men, women and children. This is a possibility which must be regarded with equal abhorrence by the Indian people, our own countrymen, and the world as a whole.

We therefore lay these proposals before you in the profound hope that they will be accepted and operated by you in the spirit of accommodation and good will in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interests of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people.

We hope that the new independent India may choose to be a member of the British Commonwealth. We hope in any event that you will remain in close and friendly association with our people. But these are matters for your own free choice. Whatever that choice may be we look forward with you to your ever increasing prosperity among the great nations of the world, and to a future even more glorious than your past.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 582-91

APPENDIX VIII

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE'S PRESS CONFERENCE[1]

[*May 17, 1946*]

Q. Can the Constituent Assembly be regarded as sovereign in view of three points that are put forward, viz.,

1. Adult suffrage has been ruled out;
2. British troops would continue to remain on the soil;
3. The principle and the procedure of the constitution-making body have been laid down.

A. After dealing with the first two points the Secretary of State said: The third question was whether, as we had laid down certain provisions, the constitution-making body or Constituent Assembly could be regarded in any sense as sovereign. Well, we only laid these conditions down because Indians did not come to an agreement among themselves. If it had been possible for the two Indian parties to come together to make a constitution, we should have made no stipulations of any kind. But when we got here, we found, what we suspected in advance, that a Constituent Assembly representing all parties could not be acceptable except on certain decisions taken in advance. We then asked the Indian parties whether they themselves by agreement would lay down certain decisions which would enable the Constituent Assembly to meet together and to function, and we tried our very best to get that agreed to and we went a considerable distance towards getting agreement on that point, but we did not get all the way, and therefore only because of that we suggested this basis and we

[1] *Vide* p. 165.

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made these recommendations, because it is only on those that we felt that we could get representatives of all parties to sit together and try and draw up a constitution. But even so, I would point [out] to you that even that basis can be altered but it can only be altered by a separate majority of each party who desire to do so and the reason is this that these representatives of different parties have never agreed to meet together on that basis. That is what we believe is the basis on which they will come together. If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it if by a majority of each party they desire to do so.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 618-9

APPENDIX IX

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

Confidential

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

Since receiving your two letters of the 19th and 20th, we have had an official communication from the Congress raising the same points.[2]

As we intend shortly to reply to this letter I will not in this answer deal with the various matters you raise.[3]

As some of the paragraphs in your second letter do not accord with my recollection or that of Sir Stafford, I am enclosing a note setting out the matters on which we differ. We confirm as you imply in your paragraphs 6 and 7 that we told you quite definitely that we could not agree with the propositions you there set out. The Delegation wish me in particular to make it plain that independence must follow and not precede the coming into operation of the new Constitution.

All good wishes.

Sincerely yours,
PETHICK-LAWRENCE

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.

[1] *Vide* pp. 165 and 172-4.
[2] *Vide* Appendix X.
[3] *Vide* Appendix XI.

ENCLOSURE

1. We gave no such assurance but stated that we were investigating the position on the lines stated.

2. On this matter we said there would have to be consultations as set out in paragraph 14 of the Statement which we read to you and that a part of them would no doubt be between the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and the President of Congress.

3. This was your suggestion. We stated that it was proposed to appoint a person in the best way possible to ensure his representative character.

4. In the second paragraph you are misinterpreting what Sir Stafford said. He stated that he knew the view was held that in the past Paramountcy had been used in certain cases to support the Princes against their people but that in the interim period the Crown Representative would want to help forward the movement towards democracy in the States so as to make it easier for them to come into the Union. It was also stated by us that Paramountcy would be exercised by the Crown Representative and that it would not be in consultation with the Interim Government, though there might be consultation between the Interim Government and the States on matters of common economic interest.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 195-6. Also *The Transfer of Power 1942-47*, Vol. VII, pp. 642-3

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM ABUL KALAM AZAD TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

20 AKBAR ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

DEAR LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE,

My Committee have carefully considered the Statement issued by the Cabinet Delegation on May 16th, and they have seen Gandhiji after the interviews he has had with you and Sir Stafford Cripps. There are certain matters about which I have been asked to write to you.

As we understand the Statement, it contains certain recommendations and procedure for the election and functioning of the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly itself, when formed, will in my Committee's opinion, be a sovereign body for the purpose of drafting the Constitution unhindered by any external authority, as well as for entering into a treaty. Further that

[1] *Vide* p. 165.

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it will be open to the Assembly to vary in any way it likes the recommendations and the procedure suggested by the Cabinet Delegation. The Constituent Assembly being a sovereign body for the purpose of the Constitution, its final decisions will automatically take effect.

As you are aware some recommendations have been made in your Statement which are contrary to the Congress stand as it was taken at the Simla Conference and elsewhere. Naturally we shall try to get the Assembly to remove what we consider defects in the recommendations. For this purpose we shall endeavour to educate the country and the Constituent Assembly.

There is one matter in which my Committee were pleased to hear Gandhiji say that you were trying to see that the European members in the various Provincial Assemblies, particularly Bengal and Assam, would neither offer themselves as candidates nor vote for the election of delegates to the Constituent Assembly.

No provision has been made for the election of a representative from British Baluchistan. So far as we know, there is no elected Assembly or any other kind of chamber which might select such a representative. One individual may not make much of a difference in the Constituent Assembly. But it would make a difference if such an individual speaks for a whole province which he really does not represent in any way. It is far better not to have representation at all than to have this kind of representation which will mislead and which may decide the fate of Baluchistan contrary to the wishes of its inhabitants. If any kind of popular representation can be arranged, we would welcome it. My Committee were pleased, therefore, to hear Gandhiji say that you are likely to include Baluchistan within the scope of the Advisory Committee's work.

In your recommendations for the basic form of the Constitution (page 3 of the printed draft, No. 5) you state that provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures and each group could determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common. Just previous to this you state that all subjects other than the union subjects and all residuary powers should vest in the provinces. Later on in the Statement, however, on page 5 you state that the provincial representatives to the Constituent Assembly will divide up into three sections and "these sections shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces in each section and shall also decide whether any group constitution shall be set up for those Provinces". There appears to us to be a marked discrepancy in these two separate provisions. The basic provision gives full autonomy to a province to do what it likes and subsequently there appears to be a certain compulsion in the matter which clearly infringes that autonomy. It is true that at a later stage the Provinces can opt out of any group. In any event it is not clear how a Province or its representatives can be compelled to do something

which they do not want to do. A Provincial Assembly may give a mandate to its representatives not to enter any group or a particular group or section. As Sections B and C have been formed it is obvious that one Province will play a dominating role in the Section, the Punjab in Section B and Bengal in Section C. It is conceivable that this dominating Province may frame a Provincial Constitution entirely against the wishes of Sind or the North-West Frontier Province or Assam. It may even conceivably lay down rules, for elections and otherwise, thereby nullifying the Provision for a Province to opt out of a group. Such could never be the intention as it would be repugnant to the basic principles and policy of the Scheme itself.

The question of Indian States has been left vague and, therefore, I need not say much about it at this stage. But it is clear that State representatives who come into the Constituent Assembly must do so more or less in the same way as the representatives of the Provinces. The Constituent Assembly cannot be formed of entirely disparate elements.

I have dealt above with some points arising out of your Statement. Possibly some of them can be cleared up by you and the defects removed. The principal point, however, is, as stated above, that we look upon this Constituent Assembly as a sovereign body which can decide as it chooses in regard to any matter before it and can give effect to its decision. The only limitation we recognize is that in regard to certain major communal issues the decision should be by a majority of each of the two major communities. We shall try to approach the public and the members of the Constituent Assembly with our own proposals for removing any defects in the recommendations made by you.

Gandhiji has informed my Committee that you contemplate that British troops will remain in India till after the establishment of the Government in accordance with the instrument produced by the Constituent Assembly. My Committee feel that the presence of foreign troops in India will be a negation of India's independence. India should be considered to be independent in fact from the moment that the National Provisional Government is established.

I shall be grateful to have an early reply so that my Committee may come to a decision in regard to your Statement.

Yours sincerely,
A. K. AZAD

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 639-41

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APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

May 22, 1946

The Delegation have considered your letter of 20th May and feel that the best way to answer it is that they should make their general position quite clear to you. Since the Indian Leaders after prolonged discussion failed to arrive at an agreement, the Delegation have put forward their recommendations as the nearest approach to reconciling the views of the two main parties. The scheme therefore stands as a whole and can only succeed if it is accepted and worked in a spirit of compromise and co-operation.

You are aware of the reasons for the grouping of the Provinces, and this is an essential feature of the scheme, which can only be modified by agreement between the two parties.

There are two further points which we think we should mention. First, in your letter you describe the Constituent Assembly as a sovereign body, the final decisions of which will automatically take effect. We think the authority and the functions of the Constituent Assembly and the procedure which it is intended to follow are clear from the Statement. Once the Constituent Assembly is formed and working on this basis, there is naturally no intention to interfere with its discretion or to question its decisions. When the Constituent Assembly has completed its labours, His Majesty's Government will recommend to Parliament such action as may be necessary for the cession of sovereignty to the Indian people, subject only to two provisos which are mentioned in the Statement and which are not, we believe controversial, namely, adequate provision for the protection of minorities and willingness to conclude a treaty to cover matters arising out of the transfer of power.

Secondly, while His Majesty's Government are most anxious to secure that the interim period should be as short as possible, you will, we are sure, appreciate that for the reasons stated above independence cannot precede the bringing into operation of a new Constitution.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 659-60

[1] *Vide* p. 165.

APPENDIX XII

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION[1]

May 24, 1946

The Working Committee have given careful consideration to the Statement dated May 16, 1946, issued by the Delegation of the British Cabinet and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, as well as the correspondence relating to it that has passed between the Congress President and the members of the Delegation. They have examined it with every desire to find a way for a peaceful and co-operative transfer of power and the establishment of a free and independent India. Such an India must necessarily have a strong central authority capable of representing the nation with power and dignity in the counsels of the world. In considering the Statement, the Working Committee have kept in view the picture of the future, in so far as this was available to them from the proposals made for the formation of a Provisional Government and the clarification given by members of the Delegation. This picture is still incomplete and vague. It is only on the basis of the full picture that they can judge and come to a decision as to how far this is in conformity with the objectives they aim at. These objectives are : independence for India, a strong, though limited, central authority, full autonomy for the provinces, the establishment of a democratic structure in the centre and in the units, the guarantee of the fundamental rights of each individual so that he may have full and equal opportunities of growth, and further that each community should have opportunity to live the life of its choice within the larger framework.

The Committee regret to find a divergence between these objectives and the various proposals that have been made on behalf of the British Government, and, in particular, there is no vital change envisaged during the interim period when the Provisional Government will function, in spite of the assurance given in Paragraph 23 of the Statement. If the independence of India is aimed at, then the functioning of the Provisional Government must approximate closely in fact, even though not in law, to that independence and all obstructions and hindrances to it should be removed. The continued presence of a foreign army of occupation is a negation of independence.

The Statement issued by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy contains certain recommendations and suggests a procedure for the building up

[1] *Vide* p. 198.

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of a Constituent Assembly, which is sovereign in so far as the framing of the Constitution is concerned. The Committee do not agree with some of these recommendations. In their view it will be open to the Constituent Assembly itself at any stage to make changes and variations, with the proviso that in regard to certain major communal matters a majority decision of both the major communities will be necessary.

The procedure for the election of the Constituent Assembly is based on representation in the ratio of one to a million, but the application of this principle appears to have been overlooked in the case of European members of Assemblies, particularly in Assam and Bengal. Therefore, the Committee expect that this oversight will be corrected.

The Constituent Assembly is meant to be a fully elected body, chosen by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. In Baluchistan there is no elected assembly or any other kind of chamber which might elect a representative for the Constituent Assembly. It would be improper for any kind of nominated individual to speak for the whole province of Baluchistan, which he really does not represent in any way.

In Coorg the Legislative Council contains some nominated members as well as Europeans elected from a special constituency of less than a hundred electors. Only the elected members from the general constituencies should participate in the election.

The Statement of the Cabinet Delegation affirms the basic principle of provincial autonomy and residuary powers vesting in the Provinces. It is further said that Provinces should be free to form groups. Subsequently, however, it is recommended that provincial representatives will divide up into sections which "shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces in each section and shall also decide whether any Group Constitution shall be set up for those Provinces". There is a marked discrepancy in these two separate provisions, and it would appear that a measure of compulsion is introduced which clearly infringes the basic principle of provincial autonomy. In order to retain the recommendatory character of the Statement, and in order to make the clauses consistent with each other, the Committee read paragraph 15 to mean that, in the first instance, the respective provinces will make their choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed. Thus the Constituent Assembly must be considered as a sovereign body with final authority for the purpose of drawing up a constitution and giving effect to it.

The provisions in the Statement in regard to the Indian States are vague and much has been left for future decision. The Working Committee would, however, like to make it clear that the Constituent Assembly cannot be formed of entirely disparate elements, and the manner of appointing State representatives for the Constituent Assembly must approximate, in so far as is possible, to the method adopted in the Provinces. The Committee are gravely

concerned to learn that even at this present moment some State governments are attempting to crush the spirit of their people with the help of armed forces. These recent developments in the States are of great significance in the present and for the future of India as they indicate that their is no real change of policy on the part of some of the State governments and of those who exercise Paramountcy.

A Provisional National Government must have a new basis and must be a precursor of the full independence that will emerge from the Constituent Assembly. It must function in recognition of the fact, though changes in law need not be made at this stage. The Governor-General may continue as the head of that Government during the interim period, but the Government should function as a cabinet responsible to the Central Legislature. The status, powers and composition of the Provisional Government should be fully defined in order to enable the Committee to come to a decision. Major communal issues shall be decided in the manner referred to above in order to remove any possible fear or suspicion from the minds of a minority.

The Working Committee consider that the connected problems involved in the establishment of a Provisional Government and a Constituent Assembly should be viewed together so that they may appear as parts of the same picture, and there may be co-ordination between the two, as well as an acceptance of the independence that is now recognized as India's right and due. It is only with the conviction that they are engaged in building up a free, great and independent India, that the Working Committee can approach this task and invite the co-operation of all the people of India. In the absence of a full picture, the Committee are unable to give a final opinion at this stage.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 679-82. Also A.I.C.C. File No. 1499K, 1946-47. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

I thank you for your letter of yesterday. It seems to me quite natural that the Congress Working Committee should disperse while we are waiting

[1] *Vide* p. 198.

for the Muslim League whose decisive meeting is, I understand, timed for June 5. But I hope very much they will be back on that day or as soon as possible after it, or else we shall have a further delay.

With regard to yourself I do not see why you should trouble to remain in Delhi during the interval. But when the parties are here again after that I hope very much you will be able to come and give a helping hand.

I have come out here for the express purpose of launching India on its passage to sovereignty and independence and I greatly need your co-operation.

Sincerely yours,
PETHICK-LAWRENCE

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 687-8. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 197-8

APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

Personal

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

Thank you for sharing with me and Stafford your prayerful thoughts. I too have a strong feeling, where I am dependent on forces outside myself, that I must be content to accept the will of the Divinity that you call X; and that sometimes in Bjornsen's words a result may be "uber unserer kraft" (beyond our power). But where a decision of my own enters in I have a grave responsibility to all those who will be affected by it, to make it aright.

Did I ever tell you the following story illustrating the profound human belief in the rightness of things lying behind injustice? A parson said to a farmer who was worried about something, "Put your trust in Providence, my man." "No," said the farmer, "I have no trust in Providence. He lost me my pig 2 years ago. He let my home be burnt last year. He took away my wife last summer. No, I refuse to trust in Providence. But I will tell you what. There is a power above Him who will pull him up if he goes too far!"

Sincerely yours,
PETHICK-LAWRENCE

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, p. 862. Also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 203

[1] *Vide* p. 316.

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APPENDIX XV

INTERVIEW WITH LORD WAVELL[1]

June 11, 1946

1. I told Mr. Gandhi that I had asked him to come to see me because there appeared to be a deadlock over the last stage of the Cabinet Mission's work, the formation of an Interim Government. It would be a very great pity if after all the hard and successful work of the Mission there was a breakdown at this point; and we must avoid it in the interests of India.

The deadlock seemed likely to occur over the issue of parity between the Congress and the Muslim League in the Interim Government. It was quite clear that this Government must be a coalition of the two main parties; and the trouble threatened to arise because Mr. Jinnah would not commit the Muslim League to participation in the Interim Government unless he had parity with Congress, and it seemed that Congress would not come in on these terms. I said parity between the Congress and the Muslim League, in view of the respective number of voters whom they represented, was obviously illogical; but what we were concerned with was an expedient, which would not form a precedent, to get over the difficult interim period. I said that if both parties were determined to work for the common good of India in the interim period, parity had no real meaning; and that if one party was out to dominate the Government and order everything to its own advantage, then obviously the Government would do no good. I said that I was personally convinced that Mr. Jinnah, if he came into the Government, would work for good administration and not merely politically; and that I was sure that the same would be true of the Congress.

2. I stressed the need for good administration in the forthcoming period, both to tide India over her present difficulties, the threatened famine and the railway strike, and also to lay the foundations of India's future prosperity and independence. I said that I thought it was the opportunity for the Congress to make a generous gesture and to agree to Mr. Jinnah's condition, even if they thought it illogical and unreasonable, and that I hoped they would be able to do so. The alternative to obtaining a stable Government in this interim period was likely to be chaos and disorder, and might ruin the last opportunity for a really united India.

[1] As recorded in a note by Lord Wavell. *Vide* pp. 318-9.

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3. I suggested that perhaps the best way out of this difficulty would be for me to see Jinnah and Nehru together and to endeavour to arrive at an agreed composition for the Interim Government with them.

4. Mr. Gandhi said that he was thoroughly anxious for a settlement, and that he agreed that a coalition was necessary. What was required was a homogeneous team which would work together. It should not lean too much upon the Viceroy, who was, he said, only a bird of passage, but to work together as a team by themselves. I said that this was undoubtedly the ideal but that it was the first step which was necessary and that a mediator between the two parties would undoubtedly be essential.

Mr. Gandhi then went off into a rather long digression about the poverty of India and the necessity for more food and cloth; but at the end of it came back to my suggestion and agreed that the best thing would be for me to see the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League together; and that since he realized the difficulty of Azad meeting Jinnah, the meeting should be between Jinnah and Nehru; he would advise me to pin them down to make a Government and not to allow them to leave the room until they had done so; that parity was of no account, nor whether the members belonged to the Congress or the League or anyone, provided they were the best men available. He said I should be prepared to go out of the room and leave them to themselves if necessary.

5. He then turned on to the matter of the Europeans' vote and said that it was a most important issue, and that the Europeans should make a declaration if they did not intend to vote. I said that it was a matter which must be left to the commonsense of the Europeans.

6. The conversation lasted for about forty minutes and Mr. Gandhi was quite friendly throughout. It is always difficult to fathom how his mind is working, but he gave the impression that he would advise the Congress to come to terms and not to allow a breakdown on the parity issue.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 864-5

APPENDIX XVI

RESOLUTION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE COUNCIL[1]

June 6, 1946

This meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, after having carefully considered the Statement issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on May 16 and other relevant statements and documents officially issued in connection therewith, and after having examined the proposals set

[1] *Vide* pp. 323 and 329.

forth in the said Statement in all their bearings and implications, places on record the following views for the guidance of the Nation and direction to the Working Committee:

2. That the references made, and the conclusions recorded, in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Statement, concerning the Muslim demand for the establishment of a full sovereign Pakistan as the only solution of the Indian constitutional problem, are unwarranted, unjustified, and unconvincing, and should not therefore have found place in a State document, issued on behalf and with the authority of the British Government. These paragraphs are couched in such language and contain such mutilations of the established facts, that the Cabinet Mission have clearly been prompted to include them in their Statement solely with the object of appeasing the Hindus, in utter disregard of Muslim sentiments. Furthermore, the contents of the aforesaid paragraphs are in conflict and inconsistent with the admissions made by the Mission themselves in paragraphs 5 and 12 of their Statement, which are to the following effect: First, the Mission "were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu majority rule." Second, "this feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards." Third, "if there is to be internal peace in India, it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, economic or other interests." Fourth, "very real Muslim apprehensions exist that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus, with their greatly superior numbers, must be the dominating element." In order that there may be no manner of doubt in any quarter, the Council of the All-India Muslim League reiterates that the attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India, for the achievement of which they will, if necessary, employ every means in their power and consider no sacrifice or suffering too great.

3. That notwithstanding the affront offered to Muslim sentiments by the choice of injudicious words in the preamble to the Statement of the Cabinet Mission, the Muslim League, having regard to the grave issues involved, and prompted by its earnest desire for a peaceful solution, if possible, of the Indian constitutional problem, and inasmuch as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan are inherent in the Mission's plan by virtue of the compulsory grouping of the six Muslim provinces, in Sections B and C, is willing to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed in the scheme outlined by the Mission, in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan, and in the consummation of the goal of independence for the major nations, Muslims and Hindus, and all the other people inhabiting the vast sub-continent.

It is for these reasons that the Muslim League is accepting the scheme, and will join the constitution-making body and it will keep in view the opportunity and right of secession of Provinces or Groups from the Union which have been provided in the Mission's plan by implication.

The ultimate attitude of the Muslim League will depend on the final outcome of the labours of the constitution-making body, and on the final shape of the constitutions which may emerge from the deliberations of that body jointly and separately in its three sections. The Muslim League also reserves the right to modify and revise the policy and attitude set forth in this resolution at any time during the progress of deliberations of the constitution-making body, or the Constituent Assembly, or thereafter if the course of events so require, bearing in mind the fundamental principles and ideals herebefore adumbrated to which the Muslim League is irrevocably committed.

4. That with regard to the arrangement for the proposed Interim Government at the Centre, this Council authorizes its President to negotiate with the Viceroy and to take such decisions and actions as he deems fit and proper.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 836-8

APPENDIX XVII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

7.30 p.m., June 12, 1946

Gandhi came in and I said it was a pleasure to see him again after so long an interval and the Viceroy had asked me to thank him for his helpful talk the other day[2] and I wanted to thank him for the help he had been giving in the last few days. I knew he would agree with me as to the importance of not having a break now.

He said that was of course true but there were certain things that were wrong that must be straightened out. He then went in some detail into the question of the European vote in Bengal and elsewhere. I said we had promised when he was here before to discuss this with the Europeans and had scrupulously carried out this promise. But we could not amend the Statement and he himself had advised us not to do so. He said that though it was not expressly stated in the Statement it was implied by the references to adult suffrage, population, weightage, etc., that the tiny handful of Europeans should not have the voting power that they claimed and that, further,

[1] As recorded in a note by Lord Pethick-Lawrence. *Vide* pp. 328-9.
[2] On June 11

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Europeans by virtue of the fact that they were aliens should not interfere with such a purely Indian question as the future constitution of India. (He did *not* if I remember right refer specifically to the sentence in paragraph 3). I said that I understood the Europeans were issuing some public statement. He interrupted me and I gathered he knew all about the statement. He said it did not alter the facts and that the Europeans ought to have the good sense not to intervene. I said that they were in a very difficult position. I understood him to say that he appreciated this but it did not alter his strong feelings in the matter.

Turning to the Interim Government, I said that I was sorry it had not been possible to have the three-party interview which had been envisaged but that I understood the Viceroy had had a very full and interesting talk with Nehru. He said he was sure the plan he had supported provided a golden bridge with which to span the chasm. He then developed an attack on Jinnah alleging that Jinnah had said that he would use his position in the Interim Government to "water the seeds of Pakistan". When I suggested that if Jinnah came into the Interim Government he would work for the good of India, and that I found it difficult to credit him with the statement attributed to him, Gandhi said he would have the quotation looked up and send it to me.

I then stressed the fearful consequences of not reaching [an] agreement with which he seemed fully to concur. After some small talk in which I made reference to my desire to finish my work for Indian independence and to get back home, he took his departure. He had stayed about 40 minutes.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 888-9

APPENDIX XVIII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE[1]

1.30 p. m., June 16, 1946

Gandhi came to see me today at Willingdon Crescent. I described the document[2] to him stressing that the Viceroy had selected men that he thought would make a good team and would do good administrative work. I told him what the allocation between parties was, what would happen if one individual fell out, what would happen if the proposal were not accepted, and the need for the scheme of May 16th to go forward.

I said I understood that Congress had passed a resolution which in terms would prevent them from accepting this scheme but that, if it seemed good to him, I hoped he would not allow this decision to prevent them

[1] As recorded in a note by Lord Pethick-Lawrence. *Vide* p. 340.
[2] *Vide* Appendix XIX.

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from accepting. I believed he knew that I had only one desire—to promote the independence, prosperity and friendship of India and as he had the same idea I asked him to help to get the scheme through.

He then took the document and read it. The first thing that caught his eye was the alphabetical order of the names which caused him to smile and I think approve. He wanted to be quite clear as to what would happen if an individual fell out and I said that if he were a Congressman Congress would be consulted. In response to enquiry I said I could not commit the Viceroy to accepting the advice of Congress in selecting an alternative name but I thought it likely that if after discussion with Congress they strongly urged a certain name he would probably accept it. He noted that there was no woman on the list, and I said that personally I regretted that it had not been found possible to secure a suitable name.

He said that he realised it was not now possible to alter a comma in the Statement.

He said that he would examine it carefully, but of course there was not time to do so now as it was nearly 2 o'clock. He then left.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 953-4

APPENDIX XIX

LORD WAVELL'S STATEMENT[1]

NEW DELHI,
June 16, 1946

1. His Excellency the Viceroy, in consultation with the members of the Cabinet Mission, has for some time been exploring the possibilities of forming a coalition Government drawn from the two major parties and certain of the minorities. The discussions have revealed the difficulties which exist for the two major parties in arriving at any agreed basis for the formation of such a Government.

2. The Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission appreciate these difficulties and the efforts which the two parties have made to meet them. They consider, however, that no useful purpose can be served by further prolonging these discussions. It is indeed urgently necessary that a strong and representative interim Government should be set up to conduct the very heavy and important business that has to be carried through.

3. The Viceroy is therefore issuing invitations to the following to serve as members of the Interim Government on the basis that the constitution-making will proceed in accordance with the Statement of May 16 :

[1] *Vide* pp. 340-1.

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Sardar Baldev Singh
Sir N. P. Engineer
Mr. Jagjivan Ram
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Mr. M. A. Jinnah
Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan
Mr. H. K. Mahtab
Dr. John Matthai
Nawab Mohammed Ismail Khan
Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin
Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Dr. Rajendra Prasad
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

If any of those invited is unable for personal reasons to accept, the Viceroy will, after consultation, invite some other person in his place.

4. The Viceroy will arrange the distribution of portfolios in consultation with the leaders of the two major parties.

5. The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government.

6. The Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission believe that Indians of all communities desire to arrive at a speedy settlement of this matter so that the process of constitution-making can go forward and that the Government of India may be carried on as efficiently as possible in the meantime.

7. They therefore hope that all parties, especially the two major parties, will accept this proposal so as to overcome the present obstacles, and will co-operate for the successful carrying on of the interim Government. Should this proposal be accepted the Viceroy will aim at inaugurating the new Government about 26th June.

8. In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16.

9. The Viceroy is also directing the Governors of the Provinces to summon the Provincial Legislative Assemblies forthwith to proceed with the elections necessary for the setting up of the constitution-making machinery as put forward in the Statement of May 16.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 954-5

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APPENDIX XX

INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS[1]

[*June 20, 1946*][2]

I saw Gandhi at 1.10 p.m. and stayed with him till 2.40 p.m. He started by saying that I should address my arguments to the Maulana. I told him I had done so and the Maulana had suggested I should see him (Gandhi). To this he replied "he has done a disservice to both of us".

I made as strong an appeal to him as was possible on both the points, repeating all the arguments I had put to the Maulana.

On Engineer, which I dealt with first, he said he had no personal objection against him, indeed he had heard favourable accounts of the honourable way in which he had conducted the I. N. A. prosecutions. His objection was first that Congress had not been consulted on his name and second that as he was in an official post he would merely be another vote for the Viceroy.

I explained to him why Congress could not be consulted under the procedure we had adopted and I strongly stressed that his other fear was quite groundless as that was not the spirit in which the Viceroy was entering upon this task. He admitted that he had no reason to suspect it but maintained his objection "in principle" arising from his long experience of former Governments and in South Africa. I pointed out the conditions of this Government would be quite different and one amongst 14 was not a basis for objection to "officials". I also pointed out that Engineer was not an official though he happened to hold an official post and that any way as he had accepted we were not able to make any alteration as it would be a wrong and impossible way of dealing with an individual. With this he agreed.

We then went on to the other point and he reiterated that he had always said this was the wrong way for forming a Government, that it should be left to one party or the other and not be a coalition forced on the two parties by the British. He did not regard a breakdown on this as final since it might lead to a better arrangement.

[1] As recorded in a note by Sir Stafford Cripps. *Vide* p. 349.

[2] Though placed under June 19, a footnote in the source says that it seemed probable that this meeting took place on June 20.

It was quite clear that he could not be influenced from his point of view and therefore, after a final appeal to him to at least let this method be tried, I left him.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 985-6

APPENDIX XXI

INTERVIEW WITH CABINET DELEGATION[1]

8 p. m. *June 24, 1946*

1. Mr. Gandhi raised the matter of the instructions issued by Governors for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. He produced to the Delegation a telegram which he had received from Assam and said that this, read with the instructions as he had first understood them, made him think that members of the Constituent Assembly were being required to accept the Delegation's interpretation of their Statement of the 16th May because of the words in it which said that a candidate agreed to serve as a member of the Constituent Assembly for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the Statement of 16th May. Mr. Gandhi explained that he had taken legal opinion which did not support his anxieties and said that he had seen the Press Communique put out by the Government of India. If he had seen this Communique originally he would not have been troubled to the same extent that he had been. In addition to the legal difficulty, however, he felt a moral difficulty about this matter.

The Secretary of State and Sir S. Cripps pointed out that the telegram from Assam was based on a complete misunderstanding of what members of the Constituent Assembly were required to undertake. Mr. Gandhi was shown the form of undertaking required by the Bengal regulations and agreed that it contained no obligation of the kind he feared. The Secretary of State emphasised that by signing the undertaking a member of the Constituent Assembly was not accepting anything in addition to what was in the Statement of 16th May already.

The Viceroy said that it was clear that grouping was an essential part of the Delegation's proposals. Sir S. Cripps pointed out that what was essential was the forming of the Constituent Assembly in sections for the purpose of framing the constitution. Mr. Gandhi said that he felt that the regulations should have referred to the Statement of May 16th as a whole and not specifically to paragraph 19. Sir S. Cripps pointed out that paragraph 19 was the only one which referred to the setting up of the Constituent Assembly. There were other parts of the Statement as a whole to which

[1] *Vide* pp. 361-2.

members of the Constituent Assembly could not be expected to give concurrence, for example, the paragraphs rejecting a sovereign Pakistan. Mr. Gandhi said that at the Press Conference Lord Pethick-Lawrence had interpreted the Statement to mean that the Constituent Assembly must meet in sections. He (Mr. Gandhi) had dissented from this view and his interpretation of the document was upheld by eminent lawyers. It was clear that the Delegation were the law-givers and could not interpret their own law. It must be the Federal Court which would interpret the meaning of the Statement. His trouble was that by signing the declaration required by the electoral rules a member of the Constituent Assembly might be bound morally to accept the Delegation's interpretation. Sir S. Cripps said that any doubt on the point might be solved by the fact that the person who sent the telegram from Assam was under a misapprehension as to what members of the Constituent Assembly were in fact asked to sign. Mr. Gandhi had agreed that the form of declaration was innocuous morally and his lawyers had agreed with the interpretation of it which Sir Stafford himself had expressed to Mr. Gandhi earlier. The First Lord said that what mattered was what a person signed. Mr. Gandhi agreed that whatever views a man might have about sections or groups he could sign the form of declaration in the Bengal regulations.

2. Mr. Gandhi said he wanted to make his position about the Constituent Assembly clear. His view was that the Europeans had no vote and could not stand as candidates. He would like to ask the Delegation whether they had made any further progress or did they ask Congress to rely on whatever local assistance they could get if the Europeans say that they want to assert their right. Sir S. Cripps and the Viceroy said there was nothing more to be said about the Europeans since the statement issued by the European representatives.

3. Mr. Gandhi said there was one very delicate matter which he would like to raise. Mr. Sudhir Ghosh had reported to him his conversation with Sir S. Cripps on this subject and he felt that he would like to clear his mind. What he wanted to know was whether, if the whole thing was scrapped, would the undertakings to Mr. Jinnah also be scrapped, or would the whole Statement be scrapped, or what would happen. It would not be a satisfactory thing from his point of view if this were the case. If the Government of India is appointed personally by the Viceroy he will be responsible only to the British Government. It would not be satisfactory to Mr. Gandhi nor did he think it would satisfy the Congress or, for that matter, the Muslim League. He thought the Delegation owed it to the Congress, the Muslim League and the public to tell them what they proposed to do. If the Delegation said that they could tell him nothing he would take that answer, but if they had anything to say to him so that he could advise the Working Committee with full knowledge, he would be obliged.

The Indian people would have to work this Constituent Assembly which had no statutory existence. It would be a difficult thing to do as the Delegation had created the Statement which had no legal existence. There were bound to be differences of opinion as to what it meant. The Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government used the same terms to mean different things. For example, the Congress independence meant independence now. To the Delegation it meant independence when "this Charter is passed", but it would only become a Charter if the people went for it and the British Government afterwards legalized the Charter. Suppose that there were a change of Secretary of State or a change of Government and that the intention of the British Government changed.... The Secretary of State here interrupted Mr. Gandhi to say that he would like to answer that point at once. It was not the practice of British Governments to repudiate definite pledges given by their predecessors to third parties. They were not capable of doing that but if it were assumed that they were then the answer was that no statute would be any protection because a new statute could be passed altering the old one. He thought that this suggestion of a statutory basis for the Constituent Assembly would add nothing to the dignity or security of the Indian people. It would make the Constituent Body a creature of a British statute and if legislation were introduced attempts might be made to alter or amend the Statement. He thought that Mr. Gandhi would have been the first person to object if the Delegation had said that the Constituent Assembly could only be set up by an Act of the British Parliament. Sir S. Cripps said that apart from these considerations the lack of rigidity in basing a Constituent Assembly on the Statement and not on an enactment was very desirable. The origin of a Constituent Assembly should be the popular will and not the act of another State's Legislature. This gave the Assembly the right constitutional status. It did not give it legal status. Mr. Gandhi said that the Delegation did contemplate a statute after the Constituent Assembly had met. Sir S. Cripps said this was not for the purpose of enacting the new Constitution but of removing the existing legislation. The First Lord said that there was no question as he understood it of any legislation except to cancel the existing constitution and the British Government had said that they would enact this legislation at the proper time provided two factors were satisfied. First, adequate provision for the protection of minorities as to the necessity of which there was no controversy at all and both major parties had said that they intended to make such provision, and secondly, reasonably formal engagements to be entered into between the United Kingdom and India covering matters arising out of the transfer of power. This would deal with formal matters such as the arrangements in regard to the Services.

4. Sardar Patel said he understood that the Europeans would not put up candidates but he would like to know whether it was contemplated

that they should vote. The First Lord said that the Secretary of State had fulfilled his undertaking to do what he could to arrange this matter. No European would now vote for a European to sit in the Constitution-making Body. That was the major point. Sardar Patel said that voting was very important. Sir S. Cripps said that the position on the Statement of 16th May was that members of the Legislatures were entitled to vote and therefore Europeans were entitled to vote. The document clearly did not intend that no one other than Indians should be members of the Constituent Assembly so that that question was on a different footing. Whether the Europeans exercised their vote was legally a matter for them. The First Lord said that the Europeans had gone a very long way from the position which obtained when the Congress complained about this matter. He thought that the original complaint had had justification but 75 per cent of it had been met.

The Transfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. VII, pp. 1026-9

APPENDIX XXII

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

June 22, 1946

I understand from Press reports that there is strong feeling in Congress circles that the party should insist on their right to include a Muslim of their choice among the representatives of the Congress in the Interim Government.

For reasons of which you are already aware it is not possible for the Cabinet Mission or myself to accept this request, but I would draw your attention to paragraph 5 of the Statement of the 16th June which reads as follows:

"The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government."

In the light of this assurance that no precedent is established we appeal to the Congress not to press their demand, but to take part in the strong Interim Government which the country so urgently needs.

The Transfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. VII, p. 1005

[1] *Vide* pp. 361-2.

APPENDIX XXIII

GROUPING CLAUSE CONTROVERSY[1]

It has been reported in the Press that the text of a Bengal Government communique requires every delegate to the Constituent Assembly to sign a declaration accepting Clause 19 of the Cabinet Delegation's Statement of May 16. This allegation is without any foundation. The A. P. I. has been authorized to state that according to the instructions actually issued a candidate for election to the Constituent Assembly from any province is required to declare that he has not been proposed for candidature to represent any other province and that he is willing to serve as a representative of the province for the purpose of paragraph 19 of the Cabinet Delegation's Statement.

The plain purpose of paragraph 19 is the framing of a new Constitution for India and this has been made further clear in the actual form of a declaration prescribed for the purpose by the Governor of Bengal which is as follows:

"I hereby agree to this nomination and declare that I am willing to serve in the Constituent Assembly as a representative of the General or Muslim part of the Bengal Legislative Assembly for the purpose of framing a new Constitution for India. I further declare that I have not been proposed as a representative of any part of the Legislative Assembly of any other province in India in the said Constituent Assembly."

The other reference to paragraph 19 of the Statement in the instructions issued by the Bengal Governor is with regard to reporting the result of the election.

This reads as follows: "The returning officer shall report the result of the election to the Governor who shall cause the names of the candidates declared elected, to be published in the Calcutta *Gazette* on July 15, 1946 or as soon as may be thereafter; and the persons whose names are so published shall be representative of Bengal for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the above-mentioned Statement."

The Hindustan Times, 25-6-1946

[1] *Vide* pp. 361-2.

APPENDIX XXIV

EXTRACTS FROM CABLES FROM SOUTH AFRICA[1]

I

Acts of savage violence committed against peaceful passive resisters by mobs (of) unruly Europeans during last few nights when resisters have been beaten unconscious, two of whom still lying in serious condition and some going about with swollen faces, has only made Indian people more determined (to) carry their struggle for emancipation. Despite ban meeting held Nicols Square today (at) 5.30 p. m. attended by ten thousand Indian men and women resolved (to) carry on non-violent struggle. Permission holding meeting had been refused by city council. A gallant band (of) volunteers who have been camping on and off resistance camp whenever not in detention cell [*sic*]. Present amongst them Doctors Naicker and Gonnam and M. D. Naidoo who addressed meeting. . . . Immediately after meeting huge crowd (of) Indians accompanied 47 Indian passive resister volunteers (who) left for resistance camp. Large police force and misguided European crowd awaiting 8.20 p. m. Ajosskeevy District Commandant . . . "in name (of) magistrate issued warning declaring any gathering within five hundred yards of intersection Sumbbilo and Gale streets unlawful assembly in terms of Riotous Assemblies [Act]. Order remains in force seven days." Crowds dispersed except forty-seven resisters who remained on camp ground. Arrested, taken in police van include Drs. Naicker, Gonnam and M. D. Naidoo, President, Vice-President (and) Secretary respectively (of) Natal Indian Congress, European resister Reverend Michael Scott and eight women. Doctor Dadoo on behalf of Joint Passive Resistance Council issued statement: "Consider police action and arrest first victory. Spirit of resisters excellent. Their non-violent behaviour under extreme provocation and assaults magnificent. Struggle continues more and more volunteers will go into action according to plan. We shall resist."

A. I. Meet
Passive Resistance Council
Natal Indian Congress

II

Following statement made in court today by Dr. G. M. Naicker, President Natal Indian Congress and Chairman Passive Resistance Council when charged under Riotous Assemblies Act together with 46 other passive resisters:

[1] *Vide* p. 378.

"I am South African born Indian peaceful citizen of this land. Recently Government has passed Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act 1946 which deprives my fellow countrymen and myself of certain basic elementary human rights. In protest to this unjust and inhuman law I have occupied land which Act debars me from. I am not challenging Durban City Council's ownership of land nor am I engendering hostility to any section of community. . . ."

In accordance with passive resistance code resisters pleaded guilty though no evidence brought before court to show resisters guilty of any act of violence. . . . Marked feature about round-up that groups of Indians found there after expiry of 5 minutes' warning irrespective of whether they waiting for transport arrested. But groups of Europeans seen standing in vicinity even an hour after expiry of warning were not touched by notice nor arrested.

DR. NAICKER
PRESIDENT, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 303

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CHRONOLOGY

(*April 14, 1946—July 15, 1946*)

April 14: Gandhiji was in New Delhi at the invitation of Viceroy and Cabinet Mission.
Congress Working Committee met.

April 15: Gandhiji advised T. Prakasam not to contest election for Chief Ministership of Madras.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

Before *April 16:* Sent message for Indian National Army.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

April 16: Spoke at prayer meeting.

April 17: Spoke at prayer meeting.
Congress Working Committee met.
V. S. Srinivasa Sastri died.

April 18: In *Harijan* Gandhiji paid tribute to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.
Called on Madan Mohan Malaviya and Pethick-Lawrence.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

April 19: Spoke at prayer meeting.

Before *April 20:* Met S. A. Ayer.

April 20: Visited Kasturba Balika Ashram and Jamia Millia.
Gave statement to Press regarding T. Prakasam.

Before *April 23:* Had talk with a zamindar and missionaries.

April 23: Spoke at prayer meeting.

April 24: Had interview with Herbert Hoover.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

April 25: Met Archibald Rowlands; sent to him draft and note on proposed proclamation on salt.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

April 26: Gave statement to Press regarding Herbert Hoover's visit.
Spoke at prayer meeting.
Stafford Cripps called on Gandhiji.

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April 27: Gandhiji met Jayaprakash Narayan.
Spoke at prayer meeting.
Cabinet Mission invited representatives of Congress and Muslim League for negotiations at Simla.

April 28: Gandhiji addressed volunteers at flag-hoisting ceremony.
Spoke at prayer meeting.
Congress Working Committee met.

April 29: Gandhiji called on Madan Mohan Malaviya.
Congress Working Committee concluded its session.

April 30: Stafford Cripps called on Gandhiji.

May 2: Gandhiji arrived in Simla in response to Cabinet Mission's invitation.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 3: Had talk with Agatha Harrison.

May 4: In statement to Press explained reason for sending his party back to Delhi.

May 5: Spoke at prayer meeting.
Conference with Cabinet Mission began.

May 6: Bhulabhai Desai died in Bombay. Gandhiji telegraphed condolence to Dhirubhai B. Desai; through Press paid tribute to Bhulabhai Desai.
Met Viceroy and Cabinet Mission.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 7: Speaking at prayer meeting, denounced tendency of speculation and asked people and Press to desist from spreading rumours. Met Viceroy and Stafford Cripps.

May 8: At prayer meeting paid tribute to Rabindranath Tagore.

May 9: Had discussion with Stafford Cripps.

May 10: Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 11: Met Viceroy. Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 12: At prayer meeting asked people not to be disappointed even if Conference failed and reiterated his faith in Cabinet Mission.
Met Viceroy.
Conference ended in a breakdown.

May 13: Gandhiji sent condolence to Seth Govinddas.
In message at prayer meeting stated that there was no need for depression at the failure of Conference.

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May 14: Left Simla for Delhi.

May 15: At prayer meeting warned people against speculation on impending statement of Cabinet Mission.
Met H. N. Brailsford and his wife.

May 16: In message expressed his conviction that Indians in South Africa must not submit to Land Tenure Legislation.
At prayer meeting asked people not to be led away by prejudice but to study statement carefully.
Cabinet Mission's Statement released to Press.

May 17: Gandhiji attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
Welcoming Statement at prayer meeting placed his interpretation before people.

May 18: At prayer meeting expressed hope that Statement would be honoured in letter and in spirit.
Congress Working Committee meeting continued.

May 19: Gandhiji had discussion with Pethick-Lawrence.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 20: In *Harijan* analysed Cabinet Mission's Statement.
Attended prayer meeting; written message was read out.
Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.

May 21: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 22: Addressed I. N. A. officers.
Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 23: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 24: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.
Congress Working Committee passed resolution expressing its inability "to give a final opinion at this stage on the proposals".

May 25: Gandhiji spoke at prayer meeting.

May 26: In *Harijan* discussed "vital defects" of official interpretation of Statement.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

May 27: Referring to riots, at prayer meeting asked people not "to encourage them by word, deed or thought".

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May 28: Reached Mussoorie for rest on medical advice.

May 29: At prayer meeting reminded the rich of the misery of rickshaw-coolies and advised them to build dharmashala for the poor.

May 31: Gave interview to Norman Cliff.
At prayer meeting, again appealed for building dharmashalas for the poor and Harijans.
Met Abul Kalam Azad.

June 2: Addressed Azad Hind Dal volunteers.
At prayer meeting spoke of deplorable living conditions of labourers in Mussoorie and emphasized need for sanitation.

June 3: At prayer meeting, through written message, welcomed move for building dharmashala.

On or before *June 5:* At prayer meeting deplored the custom of rickshaw-pulling.

On or before *June 6:* Spoke at prayer meeting.

June 6: Muslim League Council passed resolution accepting Cabinet Mission's proposals.

June 7: Gandhiji spoke at prayer meeting.

June 8: At prayer meeting spoke about work done in connection with dharmashala.
Left Mussoorie; reached New Delhi.

June 9: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
At prayer meeting advised people to pray and rely on God.

June 10: Attended prayer meeting; written message was read out.
Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.

June 11: At prayer meeting, regretting inability to give any definite news, pleaded for patience.
Had interview with Viceroy.

June 12: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
At prayer meeting, appealed to Europeans to abstain from participation in Constituent Assembly.
Had interview with Pethick-Lawrence.

June 13: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

June 14: Congress President wrote to Viceroy rejecting proposal for formation of Interim Government.

At prayer meeting Gandhiji spoke of Cabinet Mission's efforts to bring Congress and Muslim League together.

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June 16: Had interview with Pethick-Lawrence.
Viceroy's statement inviting 14 individuals to serve as members of Interim Government, issued.
At prayer meeting Gandhiji referred to Viceregal statement and asked people, in spite of his misgivings, to look at bright side and trust in the *bonafides* of Mission.

June 17: Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.

June 18: Congress Working Committee meeting continued.
Gandhiji spoke at prayer meeting.

June 19: Spoke at Congress Working Committee meeting.
At prayer meeting deprecated irresponsible reports appearing in Press.

June 20: In interview with Stafford Cripps, reiterated that Mission must choose between Congress and Muslim League.
Jawaharlal Nehru arrested following defiance of ban on his entry into Kashmir.
Gandhiji spoke at prayer meeting.

June 21: Spoke at Congress Working Committee meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.
Jawaharlal Nehru released.

June 22: At prayer meeting, Gandhiji spoke on satyagraha against Segregation Act in South Africa.

June 23: At Congress Working Committee meeting advised Congress to keep out of Interim Government.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

June 24: Had interview with Cabinet Delegation in morning.
Expressed his misgivings before Congress Working Committee at morning and afternoon sessions.
After ending silence at 8 p. m. again had interview with Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy.

June 25: At Congress Working Committee meeting in morning, voiced his doubts and advised it not to accept long-term proposition without its being connected with Interim Government.
Attended afternoon session of Congress Working Committee meeting.
Congress President communicated to Viceroy Congress Working Committee's decision to reject proposal for Interim Government and to accept long-term proposal relating to Constituent Assembly.

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At prayer meeting, referring to Congress Working Committee's decision, Gandhiji asked people "to follow the lead given by the Working Committee".

June 26: Congress Working Committee passed resolution rejecting Interim Government proposal and accepting long-term arrangement; concluded its session.
Gandhiji gave interview to Louis Fischer.
Spoke at prayer meeting.
Viceroy and Cabinet Mission announced that a temporary caretaker government of officials would be set up.

June 27: At prayer meeting, Gandhiji asked people to pray for Indian satyagrahis in South Africa.

June 28: At prayer meeting paid tribute to courage of satyagrahis in South Africa.

June 29: *En route* to Poona gave interview to Norman Cliff on train.
Between Karjat and Neral, his train met with an accident at night.
Cabinet Mission left for England.

June 30: Gandhiji reached Poona.
At prayer meeting spoke of his providential escape in train accident.

July 1: Communal riots broke out in Ahmedabad. Gandhiji wrote to Morarji Desai in this connection.
At prayer meeting condemned hooliganism of white men in South Africa.

July 2: At prayer meeting expressed sorrow and shame at communal riots.

July 3: At prayer meeting, paid tribute to courage of satyagrahis in South Africa and told people to pray to God to give strength to satyagrahis.
Gave interview to Joachim Dias and Chandrakant Kakodkar.

July 5: Reached Bombay.
Attended Congress Working Committee meeting.

July 6: Newly elected All India Congress Committee met under presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru.
Gandhiji attended A. I. C. C. meeting.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

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July 7: Addressed A. I. C. C. meeting.
A. I. C. C. passed two resolutions, one ratifying Congress Working Committee's resolution passed at Delhi, and another supporting Indian satyagraha in South Africa.
Gandhiji spoke at prayer meeting.

On or before *July 8:* Gave interview to *Daily Herald*.

July 8: Through Press acknowledged congratulatory messages on his providential escape.
At prayer meeting spoke of insanitary conditions of *chawls*.

July 9: Left Bombay; reached Poona.

July 10: Attended Kasturba Memorial Trust meeting.
At prayer meeting strongly condemned persecution of Indian satyagrahis by whites.

July 11: Attended meetings of Kasturba Memorial Trust and All-India Spinners' Association.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

July 12: At prayer meeting spoke about conditions of Indians in Ceylon.

July 13: Reached Panchgani.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

July 14: Had discussion with Nimbalkar of Indian National Army.
Spoke at prayer meeting.

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33	*Footnote 2, last line	storage of grain and proper	proper storage of grain and
188	*Line 7 from top	matses	masses
257	*Lines 6 & 7	will it	it will
458	*Last line	man we when	man when

*Due correction made.

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