

1. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 10, 1928

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your letter about Ram Binod gives me much relief. I am sending copies to Jamnalalji and others. You do not say anything about re-reported purchases by Ram Binod. Is there any truth in those allegations?

I received the Bengali edition of *Seven Months*². Is it selling well? The English edition badly lacks an index. There are misprints too.

How are you keeping in health and how is Guruji?

The Ashram is undergoing many drastic changes of which perhaps Giriraj writes to you.

With love,

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 13654

2. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 10, 1928

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

I have your letter. But I have never held that one who is actually a soldier—and not one in outward appearance should also be a *jnani*³. But I would certainly say that anyone who was not a soldier, or could not become one, could never be a *jnani*. The same is true about being a *brahmachari*. We do not see in life that anyone who has mastered one of his senses is necessarily a man of knowledge, but all of us hold that immorality is impossible in a *jnani*. I do not

¹ In reply to his letter dated August 30, 1928, wherein he had absolved Ram Binod of the charges of having misused funds placed at his disposal for khaddar work in Berar

² *Seven Months* with Mahatma Gandhi, by the addressee

³ Man of knowledge

think I need to be a *jnani* to be able to put my hands on the shoulders of girls when walking without being disturbed by the touch. A father with many daughters who has pure feelings towards them may still be sunk in ignorance in other respects. He may even have impure feelings towards other women. It is but natural that I should have fatherly feelings for the girls in the Ashram. I have cultivated this state of heart over the years. Though I have, thus, pure feelings towards them as towards most women, I am not in a position to claim further that I have always experienced such pure feelings towards every woman. My present condition is certainly pure, but, so long as I have not become completely free from every kind of impure feeling, I cannot say that I feel no fear about the future too. I have never believed or felt myself to be a *jnani*. On the contrary, I realize my state of ignorance every day. I have never felt that I am committing the slightest wrong in putting my hands on the shoulders of girls, for I know that they are but daughters to me. That being so, it is also not true that I have done them harm by my conduct. I have felt that through such intimacy I have entered their heart and that in consequence they have become purer in their feelings towards men. I have also considered the matter from the point of view of the effect of my conduct on society. There is certainly a belief among Hindus that even a father should shrink from touching his daughter. This seems to me a wrong notion, an enemy of *brahmacharya*. That *brahmacharya* which entertains such fear is no *brahmacharya*. Rishyashringa's¹ *brahmacharya* is not our ideal. Nevertheless, for the past three weeks I have practically given up putting my hands on the shoulders of girls regarded as grown-up, for the doubt which occurred to you occurred also to other inmates of the Ashram. In such a matter I need not insist on my own point of view. Putting one's hands on the shoulders of girls cannot be a matter of principle, and therefore as soon as the issue was raised I discussed the matter with everyone and gave up the practice. 'The girls have felt a little hurt by this, but on the whole they are reconciled to it and in time will get completely reconciled. No one, of course, should imitate my practice. Anyone who has fatherly feelings towards girls will not shrink, when necessary, from touching them in a manner befitting a father and the world also will not censure him.

¹ A character in the *Ramayana*. He had no acquaintance with women and was lured away by the first woman he met.

I do not understand what you write about . . .¹ and why you are pained by the matter. You admit that you made a mistake in writing to him and advising him to follow my advice and in asking me to guide him. After that, where was the need for me to discuss the matter with you? Moreover, how could I believe that you could tell me anything more than what . . . would about his relation to his wife? Despite what you write and tell me, I believe that my advice to . . . was the right one. I have sent him there with the advice, and in the hope that, if he was sincere in the vow of *brahmacharya* which he had taken in regard to his wife, he would even now observe it. He has gone there to demonstrate that he is a brother and a friend of his wife. This is my view of the matter, which he has completely understood. If, instead of behaving as a brother, he acts like a husband, you may assume that his vow of *brahmacharya* in regard to his wife was insincere. It was only waiting for an opportunity to be broken. I suppose you have not overlooked the fact that he was never free from impure feelings towards other women. If . . . still writes to you about himself, I suggest that you should come and see me in the matter. I had suggested this course to you even earlier. I think it best that you should give up the attempt to guide . . . independently. If you do not understand what I have said in this letter, ask me again. You should have no doubt at all, I have none, about the rightness of my advice to . . . If you have any, however, or feel any doubt later, ask me again and again.

I very much liked your caution regarding the common kitchen. Our ideal of the Ashram is that even visitors should observe *brahmacharya* while they stay in it. This rule is made categorical in the new set of rules. That has naturally added to the number of those taking their meals in the common kitchen. How can we say that even those who take the vow of *brahmacharya* are not *brahmacharis* of their own will? I, however, believe your statement that many have joined the common kitchen out of their respect for me. The kitchen has led to a new idea during the past few days. There is no suggestion that it should be abandoned, but a proposal is being discussed whether those who cannot sincerely be its members and cannot whole-heartedly adopt its other implications should not leave the Ashram.

I shall await your letter regarding the effect of the use of linseed oil. How do you obtain fresh linseed oil? Do you obtain a day's or a

¹ Name omitted

month's requirement, at a time? Do you get oil pressed by an indigenous or an English mill? If it is oil pressed in an indigenous mill and if you know the process through which the seed is passed before it is pressed, please let me know. If you do not know this, get the information and let me have it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 801. Courtesy: Balkrishna Bhavé

3. *SPEECH ON BIRTH CENTENARY OF TOLSTOY*¹

September 10, 1928

My present state of mind does not at all permit me to join in celebrating any day or festival. Some time ago a reader of *Navajivan* or *Young India* asked me a question: "You have stated², writing about *shraddha*, that the right way of performing the *shraddha* of our elders, on their death-anniversary day, is to recall their virtues and make them our own. May I ask you, therefore, how you observe the *shraddha* days of your elders?" I used to observe these days when I was young, but I don't mind telling you that now I do not even remember the dates on which they fall. I do not recall to have observed any such day during the past many years. Such is my unhappy state of mind, or rather, you may say, my charming or, as some friends believe, profound, ignorance. I believe it is enough if we fix our attention every minute of the day on the task in hand, think about it and do it as methodically as we can. We thereby celebrate the death anniversary of our elders as also the memory of men like Tolstoy. If Dr. Hariprasad had not drawn me into the net, it is quite likely that I would have arranged no celebration in the Ashram on this day, the 10th: it is even likely that I would have forgotten the day altogether. I had letters three months ago from Aylmer Maude and others engaged in collecting Tolstoy's writings, requesting me to send an article on the occasion of this centenary celebration and to draw the country's attention to this date. You must have seen an abstract of Aylmer Maude's letter, or perhaps the whole of it, published in *Young*

¹ The speech was delivered at a meeting held in the Ashram under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Youth Association. An English version of the speech appeared in *Young India*, 20-9-1928.

² *Vide* "True Shraddha", 1-9-1927.

*India.*¹ Afterwards I forgot all about this matter. This is an auspicious occasion for me, but I would not have felt sorry if I had discovered that I had forgotten it. All the same, I welcome the opportunity which members of the Youth Association have offered of celebrating this day in the Ashram.

I wish I could say that, like Dattatreya, I had accepted many persons in this world as my gurus, but I am not in that position. I have said, on the contrary, that I am still in search of a guru in religious matters. It is my belief, which grows stronger day by day, that one must have especial fitness to find a guru. A guru comes unsought to him who has it. I lack such fitness. I have described Gokhale as my political guru. He had satisfied all my expectations of a guru in that field. I never doubted or questioned the propriety of his views or instructions. I cannot say that of anyone as a guru in religious matters.

And yet, I would say that three men have had a very great influence on my life. Among them I give the first place to the poet Rajchandra, the second to Tolstoy and the third to Ruskin. If I had to choose between Tolstoy and Ruskin and if I knew more about the lives of both, I would not know to whom to give preference. At present, however, I give the place to Tolstoy. I have not read as much of Tolstoy's life as many others may have, and in fact I have not read very much of his writings either. Among his works the one which has had the greatest effect on me is *The Kingdom of God Is within You*. The title means that God's Kingdom is in our heart, that if we search for it out-side we shall find it nowhere. I read the book forty years ago. At that time, I was sceptical about many things and sometimes entertained atheistic ideas. When I went to England, I was a votary of violence, I had faith in it and none in non-violence. After I read this book, that lack of faith in non-violence vanished. Later I read some of his other books, but I cannot describe what effect they had on me. I can only say what effect his life as a whole had on me.

I attach importance to two things in his life. He did what he preached. His simplicity was extraordinary; it was not merely outward; outward simplicity of course he had. Though he was born in an aristocratic family and had all the good things of life to enjoy, had at his disposal all that wealth and possessions could give a man, he changed the direction of his life's voyage in the prime of youth. Though he had enjoyed all the pleasures and tasted all the sweetness

¹ *Vide* "Tolstoy Centenary", 1-3-1928

which life can offer, the moment he realized the futility of that way of life he turned his back on it, and he remained firm in his new convictions till the end of his life. I have, therefore, stated in some message I have sent that Tolstoy was the very embodiment of truth in this age. He strove uncompromisingly to follow truth as he saw it, making no attempt to conceal or dilute what he believed to be the truth. He stated what he felt to be the truth without caring whether it would hurt or please the people or whether it would be welcome to the mighty emperor. Tolstoy was a great advocate of non-violence in his age. I know of no author in the West who has written as much and as effectively for the cause of non-violence as Tolstoy has done. I may go even further and say that I know no one in India or elsewhere who has had as profound an understanding of the nature of non-violence as Tolstoy had and who has tried to follow it as sincerely as he did.

I feel unhappy about this state of affairs, I do not like it. India is *karmabhumi*¹. The sages and seers of this country have made the biggest discoveries in the sphere of non-violence. But we cannot live on inherited wealth. If we do not continue to add to it, we would be eating it away. The late Justice Ranade has cautioned us against this. We may complacently quote the Vedas and Jain literature and talk profound things, or propound great principles and strike the world dumb, but people will not believe in our sincerity. Hence Ranade pointed it out as our duty that we should add to our inheritance. We should compare it with the writings of other religious thinkers and if, as a result of such comparison, we discover anything new or find new light shed on a subject, we should not reject it. We have, however, failed to do this. Our religious heads are always one-sided in their thinking. There is no harmony between their words and deeds. We do not have among us men who, like Tolstoy, would speak out the plain truth irrespective of whether or not that would please the people or the society in which they work. Such is the pitiable condition of this our land of non-violence. Our non-violence is an unworthy thing. We see its utmost limit in refraining somehow from destroying bugs, mosquitoes and fleas, or from killing birds and animals. We do not care if these creatures suffer, nor even if we partly contribute to their suffering. On the contrary, we think it a heinous sin if anyone releases or helps in releasing a creature that suffers. I have already written and explained that this is not non-violence, and I take this occasion, when I

¹ Land of duty, contrasted with *bhogabhumi*, land of enjoyment

am speaking about Tolstoy, to repeat that that is not the meaning of non-violence. Non-violence means an ocean of compassion, it means shedding from us every trace of ill-will for others. It does not mean abjectness or timidity, or fleeing in fear. It means, on the contrary, firmness of mind and courage, a resolute spirit.

We do not see this non-violence in the educated classes in India. For them Tolstoy's life should be a source of inspiration. He strove hard to put into practice what he believed in, and never turned back from his chosen path. I do not believe that he did not find that stick¹. He himself said, of course, that he had failed to discover it, but that was his humility. I do not agree with his critics that he did not find that stick. I might perhaps agree if anyone asserted that he did not fully act upon the principle of non-violence of which he had had a glimpse. But, then, has there been anyone in this world who could act upon the principle of non-violence fully while he lived? I believe it impossible for one living in this body to observe non-violence to perfection. While the body endures, some degree of egotism is inescapable. We retain the body only so long as egotism persists. Bodily life, therefore, necessarily involves violence. Tolstoy himself said that anyone who believed that he had realized his ideal would be lost. From the moment he believed that, his fall would begin. The further we travel towards an ideal the further it recedes. As we advance in its search, we realize that we have one step after another to climb. No one can climb all the steps in one leap. This view does not imply cravenness of spirit or pessimism but certainly there is humility in it. Hence our sages and seers said that the state of *moksha* meant utter emptiness. He who aspires after *moksha* must develop a state of such emptiness. One cannot attain this without God's grace. That state of emptiness can only remain an ideal as long as one lives in this body. The moment Tolstoy saw this truth clearly, grasped it with his intellect and started on his journey towards the ideal, he had found the green stick. He could not describe it, but could have only said that he had found it. If, however, he had in fact said that he had found it, progress in life would have been over for him.

The seeming contradictions in Tolstoy's life are no blot on him or sign of his failure. They signify the failure of the observer. Emerson has said that a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds.

¹ In his introductory remarks, Dr. Hariprasad had said that Tolstoy had failed to find the green stick with many virtues which his brother had advised him to discover.

We would be utterly lost if we tried to live and show that there was no contradiction in our lives. In trying to live in that manner, we would have to remember what we did yesterday and then harmonize our actions today with that; in trying to preserve such forced harmony, we would have to resort to untruth. The best way is to follow the truth as one sees it at the moment. If we are progressing from day to day, why should we worry if others see contradictions in us? In truth, what looks like contradiction is not contradiction, but progress. And so, what seems to be contradiction in Tolstoy's life is really not contradiction, but only an illusion in our minds. Only the man himself knows how much he struggles in the depth of his heart or what victories he wins in the war between Rama and Ravana. The spectator certainly cannot know that. If the person slips ever so little, the world will think that there was nothing in him; this, of course, is for the best. One should not condemn the world on that account and so the saints have said that we should rejoice when the world speaks ill of us, but tremble with fear when it praises us. The world cannot act otherwise than it does; it must censure where it sees evil. But, whenever we examine the life of a great man, we should bear in mind what I have explained. God is witness to the battles he may have fought in his heart and the victories he may have won. These are the only evidence of his failures and successes.

By saying this, I do not wish to suggest that you should cover up your weaknesses, or, when they are as big as hills, think that they are as small as grains of sand. What I have said is in regard to other people. We should look upon others' weaknesses, huge as the Himalayas, to be as small as mustard seeds and ours, as small as mustard seeds, to be as big as the Himalayas. When we become aware of the slightest lapse on our part or seem to have become guilty of untruth, intentionally or otherwise, we should feel as if we were burning, as if we were caught in flames. A snake bite or a scorpion sting is of little consequence; you will find many who can cure them. Is there anyone, however, who can cure us of the sting of untruth or violence? God alone can do that, and He will do it only if we strive in earnest. Hence, we should be vigilant against our weaknesses and magnify them to the utmost, so that, when the world censures us, we should not think that people were mean-minded and exaggerated our faults. If anyone pointed out a weakness in Tolstoy, though there could hardly

be an occasion for anyone to do so for he was pitiless in his self-examination, he would magnify that weakness to fearful proportions. He would have seen his lapse and atoned for it in the manner he thought most appropriate before anyone had pointed it out to him. This is a sign of goodness, and I think, therefore, that he had found that stick.

Tolstoy drew people's attention to another thing through his writings and his life, and that is the idea of "bread labour". It was not his own discovery. Another author had mentioned it in a Russian Miscellany; Tolstoy made his name known to the world and also put before it his idea. The cause of the inequalities we see in the world, of the contrasts of wealth and poverty, lies in the fact that we have forgotten the law of life. That law is the law of "bread labour". On the authority of Chapter III of the *Gita*, I call it *yajna*. The *Gita* says that he who eats without performing *yajna* is a thief and sinner. Tolstoy has said the same thing. We should not distort the meaning of "bread labour" and forget the real idea. Its simple meaning is that he has no right to eat who does not bend his body and work. If every one of us did bodily labour to earn his food, we would not see the poverty which we find in the world. One idler is the cause of two persons starving, for his work has to be done by someone else. Tolstoy said that people came forward for philanthropic service, spent money for the purpose and earned titles as reward for their service, but he said it would be enough if, instead of all this, they did a little physical work and got off the backs of others. That is true indeed. In that lies humility. To do philanthropic service but refuse to give up one's luxuries is to act in the way described by Akha Bhagat, "Stealing an anvil and gifting a needle". Can we hope thereby to go up in a *viman*¹ to heaven?

It is not that others have not said what Tolstoy said, but there was magic in Tolstoy's language, for he acted upon what he preached. He who was accustomed to the comforts of wealth started doing physical labour. He used to work on the farm or do other labour for eight hours a day. That does not mean that he gave up literary work. In fact, after he started doing physical labour his literary work came to have greater life in it. It was during spare time in this period of *yajna* that he wrote what he described as his most important work, *What Is Art?* Physical labour did not tell upon his health, and he believed that it sharpened his intellect. Students of his works will bear testimony that he was right.

If we wish to benefit from Tolstoy's life, we should learn these

¹ Flying machine

three things from it. I am addressing members of a youth association, and I wish to remind them that they have to choose between two paths in life: one of self-indulgence and the other of self-restraint. If you think that Tolstoy lived and died well, you will see that there is only one right path in life for all, especially for the young—and that is the path of self-control. That is particularly true in India. Swaraj is not something to be won from the Government. If you examine the causes of our degradation, you will see that we are more responsible for it than the Government. You will then see that the key to swaraj is in our hands, and not in England nor in Simla nor in Delhi. It is in your pocket and mine. Our lethargy is responsible for the delay in remedying the degradation and listlessness of our society. If we overcome that, there is no power on earth which can prevent us from raising ourselves and securing swaraj. We ourselves choose to lie helpless on the path and refuse to lift ourselves out of that condition. I should like to tell the members of the Youth Association that this is a golden time for them, or from another point of view, a hard time, a time of trial, if I put it in a third way. It is not enough that they pass university examinations and secure degrees. They will have secured real degrees only when they pass the examination of life and stand the test of hardships and difficulties. This is a period of transition, a golden time for you. You have two paths before you: one leading to the north and another to the south, one to the east and another to the west. You have to choose between the two. You must consider which path you will choose. All kinds of winds—poisonous winds, in my view—are blowing into the country from the West. There are, of course, some beautiful currents too, like Tolstoy's life. But these do not blow with every ship that arrives! You may say 'with every ship' or 'every day', for every day a ship arrives in the Bombay or Calcutta port. Along with other foreign goods, foreign literature too arrives. Its ideas intoxicate people and draw them to the path of self-indulgence. I have no doubt about that. Do not be vain and believe that your thoughts, or what in your immaturity you have read in books and understood from them, are the only truth, that what is old is barbarous and uncivilized and that truth lies only in things newly discovered. If you suffer from such vanity, I don't think you will bring credit to your Association. If you have still not fulfilled my hope that you have learnt humility, culture, a sense of propriety and purity from Sarala Devi, do so in future. Do not be puffed up because you have been praised for some good things you have done. Run away from praise,

and don't think that you have done much. If you collected money for Bardoli, worked hard and sweated for the cause, if a few of you went to jail for it, I ask you, as a man of experience, 'Is it much that you have done?' Others may say that you have, but you should not rest satisfied with what you have done. You have to purify your inner life, and it is from your conscience that you have to obtain a real certificate. Truly speaking our *atman* too is generally asleep. It was said by Tilak Maharaj that in our languages we have no word corresponding to 'conscience'. We do not believe that everyone has a conscience; in the West they do. What conscience can an adulterous or dissolute man have? Tilak Maharaj, therefore, rejected the idea of conscience. Our seers and sages of old said that one must have an inner ear to hear the inner voice, that one must have the inner eye, and must cultivate self-control to acquire these. Hence, in Patanjali's treatise on yoga the first step prescribed for the student of yoga, for one aspiring after self-realization, is the observance of the disciplines of *yama-niyama*¹. There is no path but that of self-control for you or me or others. Tolstoy showed this by leading a long life of self-control. I wish and pray to God that we should be able to see this as clearly as daylight, and should leave this meeting with a resolution that we shall learn the lesson of self-control from Tolstoy's life.

Let us resolve that we will never give up the pursuit of truth. To follow truth, the only right path in this world is that of non-violence. Non-violence means an ocean of love, whose vastness no one has ever been able to measure. If it fills us we would be so large-hearted that we would have room in it for the whole world. I know this is difficult to achieve, but not impossible. Thus we heard the poet say, in the prayer with which we commenced, that he would bow his head only to him who was free from attachment and aversion, who had overcome all desires and who was the perfect embodiment of non-violence, that is, love, whether he was named Shanker or Vishnu or Brahma or Indra or whether he was Buddha or Siddha²? Such non-violence is not limited to refraining from killing disabled creatures. It may be dharma not to kill them, but love goes infinitely further than that. What does it profit a person that he saves the lives of disabled creatures, if he has had no vision of such love? In God's court, his work will have little value.

¹ Rules of moral and ethical discipline

² One who has attained spiritual realization

The third thing is bread labour—*yajna*. We earn the right to eat only by putting the body to hard work, by doing physical labour. *Yajna* means any work done for the service of others. It is not enough that we do physical labour; we should live only in order that we may serve others, and not that we may run after immoral and worldly pleasures. If a young man who has trained his body with rigorous exercise spends eight hours every day in such exercise, he is not doing 'bread labour'. I do not belittle your doing exercise and training your body; but such exercise does not constitute the *yajna* which Tolstoy has advised and which is described in Chapter III of the *Gita*. He who believes that this life is for *yajna*, for service, will day by day give up running after pleasures. True human effort consists in striving to realize this ideal. It does not matter if no human being has succeeded in doing that to perfection; let the ideal ever remain distant from us. We should walk and break stones, as Farhad did for Shirin, our Shirin being the ideal of non-violence. This certainly holds our little Swaraj, but it holds everything else too.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

4. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI¹

[After September 10, 1928]

It will do if you send the Shradhanand money to the Secretary, C/o *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi.

I have not got any letter from Bhai Purushottam.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine

¹ In reply to his letter dated September 10

5. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SABARMATI,
September 11, 1928

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

I was so happy to have Mother with me for a few hours before [her] sailing for her great mission.¹ Naturally we talked a lot about you. I see you are now allowed to move about. If doctors permit you it would be a good thing for you to accept Mrs. Ambalal's invitation to pass some time with her. Ahmedabad has a dry climate. And if you came and were strong enough to do some work there is enough here to occupy you. I did not at all like the idea of your working on the permanent staff of *The Hindu*. You will not do the work. It was good and brave of you to have let Mother go to America. And having let her go, you must make up your mind not to be unwell at all.

With love,

M.K.G.

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
TUBERCULAR SANATORIUM
AROGYAVARAM
CHITTOOR DIST.

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

6. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHANA CHANDIWALA

September 12, 1928

CHI. BRIJKISHORE²,

I have your letter. If your nephew has grown so overbearing it will do him good if one just has nothing to do with him. If you think it necessary, let him be paid a monthly allowance.

¹ Sarojini Naidu left for the United States of America on September 12, 1928, on a propaganda mission. For details *vide* "Notes" sub-title "Foreign Propaganda And Sarojini Devi", 13-9-1928 and "My Notes" sub-title Sarojini Devi", 16-9-1928

² A slip for "Brajkisan" as this letter is included among Brijkrishna Chandiwala's original letters

Build up your body. For this, the mind too has to be healthy!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2359

7. MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS WAR

Rev. B. de Ligt has written in a French journal called *Evolution* a long open letter to me. He has favoured me with a translation of it. The open letter strongly criticizes my participation in the Boer War¹ and then the Great War² of 1914 and invites me to explain my conduct in the light of ahimsa. Other friends too have put the same question. I have attempted to give the explanation more than once in these columns.

There is no defence for my conduct weighed only in the scales of ahimsa. I draw no distinction between those who wield the weapons of destruction and those who do red-cross work. Both participate in war and advance its cause. Both are guilty of the crime of war. But even after introspection during all these years, I feel that in the circumstances in which I found myself I was bound to adopt the course I did both during the Boer War and the Great European War and for that matter the so-called Zulu "Rebellion"³ of Natal in 1906.

Life is governed by a multitude of forces. It would be smooth sailing, if one could determine the course of one's actions only by one general principle whose application at a given moment was too obvious to need even a moment's reflection. But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined.

Being a confirmed war resister I have never given myself training in the use of destructive weapons in spite of opportunities to take such training. It was perhaps thus that I escaped direct destruction of human life. But so long as I lived under a system of Government

¹ *Vide* "Indian Ambulance Corps", 13-12-1899, "Indian Ambulance Corps in Natal", 14-3-1900, "Indian Ambulance Corps", 18-4-1900, and "Speech at Calcutta Meeting", 27-1-1902.

² *Vide* "Letter to Under Secretary for India", 14-8-1914, "Circular Regarding Training Corps", 22-9-1914 and "Letter to India", 4-11-1914; and also "Letter to J. L. Maffey", 30-4-1918 and "Appeal for Enlistment", 22-6-1918.

³ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Meeting", 24-4-1906, "Indian Volunteers", 23-6-1906 and "Indian Stretcher-Bearer Corps", 19-7-1906.

based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for me, I was bound to help that Government to the extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war unless I non-co-operated with that Government and renounced to the utmost of my capacity the privileges it offered me.

Let me take an illustration. I am a member of an institution which holds a few acres of land whose crops are in imminent peril from monkeys. I believe in the sacredness of all life and hence I regard it as a breach of ahimsa to inflict any injury on the monkeys. But I do not hesitate to instigate and direct an attack on the monkeys in order to save the crops.¹ I would like to avoid this evil. I can avoid it by leaving or breaking up the institution. I do not do so because I do not expect to be able to find a society where there will be no agriculture and therefore no destruction of some life. In fear and trembling, in humility and penance, I therefore participate in the injury inflicted on the monkeys, hoping some day to find a way out.

Even so did I participate in the three acts of war. I could not, it would be madness for me to, sever my connection with the society to which I belong. And on those three occasions I had no thought of non-co-operating with the British Government. My position regarding that Government is totally different today and hence I should not voluntarily participate in its wars and I should risk imprisonment and even the gallows if I was forced to take up arms or otherwise take part in its military operations.

But that still does not solve the riddle. If there was a national Government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war, I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion.

Non-violence works in a most mysterious manner. Often a man's actions defy analysis in terms of non-violence; equally often his actions may wear the appearance of violence when he is absolutely non-violent in the highest sense of the term and is subsequently found so to be. All I can then claim for my conduct is that it was, in the instances cited, actuated in the interests of non-violence. There was no thought of national or other interest. I do not believe in the promotion of national or any other interest at the sacrifice of some other interest.

¹ Vide "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928, sub-title "When Killing Is *Himsa*".

I may not carry my argument any further. Language at best is but a poor vehicle for expressing one's thoughts in full. For me, non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breath of my life. I know I fail often, sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously. It is a matter not of the intellect but of the heart. True guidance comes by constant waiting upon God, by utmost humility, self-abnegation, by being ever ready to sacrifice one's self. Its practice requires fearlessness and courage of the highest order. I am painfully aware of my failings.

But the Light within me is steady and clear. There is no escape for any of us save through truth and non-violence. I know that war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil. I know too that it has got to go. I firmly believe that freedom won through bloodshed or fraud is no freedom. Would that all the acts alleged against me were found to be wholly indefensible rather than that by any act of mine non-violence was held to be compromised or that I was ever thought to be in favour of violence or untruth in any shape or form. Not violence, not untruth, but non-violence, Truth, is the law of our being.

Young India, 13-9-1928

8. *CONDONATION IN SOUTH AFRICA*

South Africa Indian Congress sends me the following cable:

Would-be condonees who were unable to leave India by the last boat may cable Comasia (telegraphic address of Commissioner of Asiatics), Pretoria, intention of applying for condonation giving registration domicile or identity certificate number before thirtieth September. Please give wide newspaper publicity throughout India.

This cable was sent to the Press as soon as it was received. Only those who are covered by the scheme published in these columns¹ may cable the particulars asked. I would strongly dissuade others' from spending good money uselessly.

Young India, 13-9-1928

¹ *Vide* "Bardoli Settlement", 6-8-1928

9. NOTES

FOREIGN PROPAGANDA AND SAROJINI DEVI

I am no believer in foreign propaganda as it is commonly understood, i.e., in the sense of establishing an agency or even sending peripatetic deputations. But the foreign propaganda that Sarojini Devi would carry on during her tour in the West would be the propaganda that would tell more than anything that could be done by an established agency whose very existence would be unknown to the indifferent and would be ignored by those whose opinion would matter to us. Not so India's Nightingale. She is known to the West. She would compel a hearing wherever she goes. She adds to her great eloquence and greater poetry a delicate sense of the true diplomacy that knows what to say and when to say it and that knows how to say the truth without hurting. We have every reason to expect much from her mission to the West. With the instinct of a gentlewoman she has gone with the resolution not to enter upon a direct refutation of Miss Mayo's insolent libel¹. Her presence and her exposition of what India is and means to her would be a complete answer to all the untruth that has been dinned into the ready ears of the American public by agencies whose one aim is to belittle India and all that is Indian.²

RASHTRIYA STRI SABHA AND KHADI³

For years past this Sabha has been doing valuable propaganda for khadi among the fashionable citizens of Bombay and elsewhere through introducing artistic designs in khadi. Through this work the Sabha is supporting in the city of Bombay over 250 needy girls of all classes. It has five centres through which the work is distributed. Naturally these girls have to be paid regularly from month to month. Under the cash system insisted upon by the All-India Spinners' Association the Sabha is obliged to pay cash for all the khadi it buys. Experience has shown the Sabha that it must insist upon cash payment if it has to pay cash for work done and khadi bought. Moreover, all the sisters who are engaged in organizing this work are volunteers. It is therefore but right that they should expect khadi lovers who

¹ The reference is to *Mother India*.

² This was followed by a note entitled "First Offshoot of Bardoli", not reproduced here, as it had already appeared in *Navajivan*, 9-9-1928; vide "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 22-4-1928

³ A Gujarati article on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 16-9-1928.

patronize their labours to pay cash for the orders they send. Shrimati Perinbai Captain has addressed on behalf of the Sabha a circular letter in which she commends to the buyers of the articles prepared by the Sabha the necessity for cash payment. There is no doubt that the Sabha deserves encouragement for the philanthropic and useful service it is rendering. Cash payment is the least encouragement that the Sabha has the right to expect. Those who buy these articles help not only the poorest among the villagers but also the needy girls of our cities.

Young India, 13-9-1928

10. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter. I may not pay Rs. 60 for Keshu's board and tuition. At the same time I admit that Mr. Cox's terms are quite reasonable. Do please thank both Mr. Bjerrum and Mr. Cox. I am now making some other arrangements. I have not made up my mind what to do and Keshu is not here at present. When he returns from Rajkot, I shall know what to do.

What is this that is going on in the Mysore State about the Hindu-Muslim trouble? The *Times*¹ has almost always sensational headlines and equally sensational reports utterly discrediting the State. Is it all truthful, or is it a plot against the State? Do you know anything about what is appearing in the *Times*?

Mahadev returns about the 20th. I hope you are both making steady progress.

From a photostat: S.N. 13522

¹ *The Times of India*

11. LETTER TO N. PATNAIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

Here is my message:

“I hope that the tour of Orissa by Sir P. C. Ray and Satis Babu will bear, as it ought to bear, ample fruit. You should be able to sell out the bulk of the accumulated stock. Poor as the villagers of Orissa are, those who live in the cities are not so poor as not to be able to buy the khadi you have, if only they have the will and love for the poverty-stricken in the land.”

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRANJAN PATNAIK
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BERHAMPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13683

12. LETTER TO DR. S. C. BANERJEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have your letter. This is what you said in the letter dated 7th August in answer to which I sent the telegram:

Herewith I am sending a copy of our Ashram report for 1927. We shall be much obliged if you can kindly give publicity to it in some issue of *Young India* with suitable comments.

It is this report that I sent for so as to enable me to deal with it in the pages of *Young India* as you desired.¹ I am still without that report.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13684

¹ *Vide* “Abhoy Ashram”, 27-9-1928.

13. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

I have gone through the circular letter¹. You will find in the enclosed the additions I have made.

With reference to the figures as to spinners, I think that it is necessary to have the census taken from year to year and as accurately as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 1

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIAM
A.I.S.A., AHMEDABAD

[ENCLOSURE]

ADDITIONS TO THE CIRCULAR LETTER DATED JUNE 22, 1928

No. 28. Add after "Progress made":

also information as to whether spinning is done on wheels or *taklis*, and what is done with the yarn spun.

To have the following as Item No. 32:

The average condition of spinners, weavers, carders, giving how many days in the year they work at the rate of how many hours, their other occupation if any, and what is the average earning from their other occupation, when they are not spinning, or weaving or carding.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13686

14. LETTER TO KIRBY PAGE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with a translation copy of Rev. B. de Ligt's open letter. The writer sent it himself two weeks before your letter was received. He also wanted me to send my reply for his journal. But I

¹ Of the All-India Spinners' Association

thought that I would reach a wider circle of readers, that is, those who are in the habit of reading my writings, if I attempted a brief reply in the pages of *Young India*. This, therefore, I have done.¹ It was the best I could do in the time at my disposal. You may of course copy it for your paper. I send you a marked copy of *Young India* containing my reply.

Yours sincerely,

KIRBY PAGE, ESQ.

“THE WORLD TOMORROW”

52 VANDERBILT AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14368

15. LETTER TO B. DE LIGT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now attempted a reply in the pages of *Young India* of which I send you a marked copy. You may of course translate it in *Evolution*. If the reply does not deal with any point you have raised, you will please not hesitate to tell me so.

Yours sincerely,

REV. B. DE LIGT

ONEX, GENEVA

From a photostat: S.N. 14395

16. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

September 15, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

This will be presented to you by Mr. Mahomed Khan who was with me in South Africa. He is at present on the Railways. He has been ailing for some years. He once wanted a note to Hakim Saheb which I gave him. He tells me that Hakim Saheb's treatment gave him relief for the time being. He has again a relapse. He now wants a note to

¹ *Vide* “My Attitude towards War”, 13-9-1928.

you, which I gladly give. I know you will give him what advice is possible.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI

1 DARYAGUNJ, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13524

17. AHMEDABAD AND ITS DEAF AND DUMB

If, although I live near Ahmedabad, I hardly write anything about it, it is not because of my unwillingness but because of my inability to do so. I have often felt the urge to participate in the life of this city, but it has subsided every time. Friends suggested that I should enter the municipality and work in it. I should certainly like to, but I never had the courage to try. Let no resident of Ahmedabad believe that now, on the brink of death, I have acquired that courage. I have mentioned this only in order to admit that I have still to repay the debt that I owe to Ahmedabad.

Shri Pranshankar Desai is running a school for the deaf and dumb in Ahmedabad. I have been acquainted with it since 1915, i.e., ever since I came to live here. From that very time I have believed that such institutions should be located outside the city. This school will now move outside the city. In accordance with the wishes of Sheth Mangaldas, its foundation-stone was laid by me last week.¹ In my opinion, we are late by twenty years. The school was started twenty years ago. However, the choice of its site did not lie with Shri Pranshankar. It rested with the ruling deity of Ahmedabad. Speaking in today's terminology, it depended on the temper of the city. Just as those with a religious sentiment believe that the body has a soul, similarly they may also attribute a soul to the physical form of the city too, and regard it as its ruling deity. As the ruling deity of Ahmedabad is miserly, he has huddled its residents together within a small area, has kept them in insanitary surroundings and thereby polluted its air. That deity alone knows how suffocated he must feel by keeping these human beings in misery! In his essay on hygiene, Dr. Hariprasad has stated that amongst the cities of India, Ahmedabad occupies the first place so far as the death rate or, in other words, so far as

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Deaf and Dumb School, Ahmedabad", 7-9-1928.

insanitation is concerned.

If the wealthy and the educated wish, they can change the face of Ahmedabad. The biggest Jain firm is in Ahmedabad. It is said that the firm of Anandji Kalyanji is wealthier than any other firm in the world which can be described as a religious body. Ahmedabad is the capital of Gujarat and it is also the headquarters of the Jains. It claims a monopoly of compassion for all living beings. However, it has still to learn real compassion. Looking after cattle in some manner in crowded localities is a narrow form of such compassion and its least expression. The latter should be as wide as the ocean and, as the life-sustaining oxygen spreads its fragrance from the ocean all the hours of the day, so should the oxygen of compassion do and give happiness, peace and good health to human beings and all other living creatures. However, it is not Jainism alone which enjoins the gift of health. The Vaishnavas claim no less that they, too, regard it as their duty, and Islam accords no less honour to it. There are followers of these faiths too in Ahmedabad. All of them share equally in Ahmedabad's shame.

There is so much wealth in Ahmedabad that it could turn this capital of Gujarat of Gujarat which is famed for its beauty into physically and spiritually the healthiest place in India.

Nature has gifted Ahmedabad with such air and water that it could become a health resort. Its residents, however, pollute both these. The hospitals, temples, schools and orphanages of Ahmedabad should be removed to places outside the city. Its narrow lanes should be relieved of the congestion in them. There should be small open spaces in the city. We ought to have fragrance spreading all around in-stead of the stink that now pervades the city.

This task is not beyond the capacity of Ahmedabad's citizens. It does not require crores of rupees to be spent. Moreover, it has been the experience of all cities in the world which have become prosperous that the amount spent is recovered twice over. It is true, of course, that the expenditure must be incurred wisely, in a spirit of charity and with pure motives. What is true of human beings is also true of cities. Their freedom lies in their own hands. The people's attitude and public opinion must change. In order to change them, leaders must make sacrifices. One person, Chamberlain, changed the face of Birmingham. Ahmedabad, too, needs a Chamberlain of its own. Or, as in France where the soldiers of the revolution fought without a leader,

here too, if a Chamberlain does not come forward, cannot an organization like the Youth Association make sacrifices to purify the atmosphere in Ahmedabad and make its foul air fragrant?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

18. KHADI PROPAGANDA FUND

Shri Gopaldas Mathurawala has contributed Rs. 100 to this fund and while sending the amount he writes to say:

You may use this amount for the propagation of khadi or for any other purpose. In no circumstances need it be returned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

19. MY NOTES

SAROJINI DEVI

Sarojini Devi left the shores of India last Wednesday to proceed to the United States of America. Many hope that, by establishing agencies in Europe, America and other continents or by sending our representatives there from time to time, we can present a true picture of India, to the people of the West and thereby remove the false image of our country that is being projected there, but such hopes have always been disappointed. By adopting such a course, we would be misusing public funds and the time of persons whose services could be much better utilized at home. However, if anyone's visit to the West can be worth while it would certainly be that of Sarojini Devi or the great poet Rabindranath Tagore. Sarojini Devi is well known in the West through her poems. She is gifted both as a poet and as an orator. She is also eminently tactful. She knows how to say the right thing at the right place and time. She has mastered the art of speaking the truth without hurting others. Wherever she goes, people are compelled to listen to her. She won the hearts of the Englishmen in South Africa by making full use of her powers there and, through her great success, smoothed the way for the delegation led by Sir Mohammed Habibullah. The task there was a difficult one. But, recognizing her own

limitations and accepting them, she avoided going into legal intricacies and adhered to the main facts; she thereby accomplished her task with fine success and raised the prestige of India. She will accomplish something of a similar nature in the U.S.A. and other countries. Her very presence there will act as a reply to the falsehoods spread by Miss Mayo. Her courage is as great as her other qualities. While going abroad she requires neither a co-worker to assist her nor a secretary. She is fearless and goes wherever she wishes to. This fearlessness of hers is not only worth emulation by other women but it even puts men to shame. We can certainly hope that her Western tour will be fruitful.

KAKA'S IMPATIENCE

While sending me the prose-poem entitled "Yamunarani", which appears in this issue over Kakasaheb's signature, he writes to say:¹

Kakasaheb has become impatient to impart true education to Gujarat. If this was not the case, after having written in praise of Gangamaiya two years ago, and having postponed the praise of "Yamunarani" so far, why should he suddenly insist that it should be published in this very issue? Moreover, he has left me with no freedom to refuse his request, since he has declared his intention of sending Gujarati rendering of the Sanskrit verses directly to the Dress and so bound my hands. In acting in this way, Kakasaheb has presumed that I am as impatient as he for the education of Gujarat. He was entitled to do so. Shri Nagindas and Shri Punjabhai's sacrifices have made us both impatient. To me, the Vidyapith does not mean only the structure of bricks on the west hanks of the Sabarmati, or the handful of men and women students who receive a literary education and training in crafts in it. It is the task of the Vidyapith to spread true education among the old men and women and the boys and girls in villages. True education means a knowledge of one's true essence and conduct which befits such knowledge. It is Kakasaheb's aim to make such education available even to those who are illiterate. Hence this article, which was written some time ago, finds a place in *Nav-ajivan* now. It is intended that lovers of the language and patriotic men and women would read it, understand it and persuade others to read it or explain it to them. The article is difficult for all readers to understand. The title itself is frightening. How many of us know the

¹ The letter is not translated here.

Kalindi to be the river Jamuna? Only a few persons in the villages would know the Jamuna as the Yamuna. However, as with the passing of time the patriotic sentiment grows the people will be more eager to have *darshan* of the Ganga and the Jamuna. All cannot go there, but they will get pleasure in reading such articles which will bring the Ganga and the Jamuna to their doorsteps and give them the feeling of having actually seen the rivers. The reader would earn the same merit as by bathing in the Ganga, if he purifies himself by entering into the spirit of these articles, whereas those who live on the banks of the Ganga and pollute its waters every day may be evil-doers and be piling up sins on their heads instead of accumulating merit.

To anyone who reads these articles in the spirit suggested above my advice is that he should keep a map beside him while reading them. The Vidyapith is preparing a dictionary¹ such as has never been attempted in the Gujarati language, so that such articles are easily understood. Till it is in the reader's hands, he should somehow find the meanings of words and make up his own dictionary.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

20. BLIND FAITH

It is the khadi cause that Shri Harjivan Kotak is serving on behalf of the Charkha Sangh in Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. But the heart of a khadi worker certainly melts at the sight of misery wherever he sees it. Hence, when the pilgrims to Amarnath suffered hardships due to excessive rain, he sent me a telegram. when I asked for details, I received the following reply²:

What a contrast between Amarnath and lorries! There was a time when pilgrims travelled on foot from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and then, after suffering many hardships, ascended Amarnath. Even in those days, there was danger to life. We have no figures about the number of people who in those days lost their dear lives while in quest of religious merit, as there were no figures about other things. That was a true pilgrimage.

¹ *Sarth Jodanikosh*

² This is not translated here. About 5,000 men, women and children, going on a pilgrimage to Amarnath, were caught in torrential rains which lasted a week and disrupted all communications.

Today, motor-lorries unload pilgrims at the foothills of Amarnath, just as they would unload goods and the pilgrims on their part regard it as a meritorious deed to travel in such comfort. The remaining distance has to be covered by foot or on horseback and this the pilgrims somehow manage to do. They would readily accept if anyone was prepared to carry them right up to their destination or go in an aeroplane if it would take them straight to the top of Amarnath.

Thus, human beings, while hankering after comforts, undergo hardships and even court death yielding to religious sentiments. This involves blind faith. Such faith craves for happiness but is prepared to undergo hardships, whereas pure, genuine faith finds happiness in undergoing physical suffering and hence it realizes that, while reaching Amarnath by aeroplane satisfies one's curiosity, it cannot be called a pilgrimage. Those having genuine faith would go walking barefoot and would disregard thorns, heat or cold, the danger from tigers or wolves and even though they might not reach Amarnath, they would acquire the same merit. Although the four ways of travelling by plane, by car, by train or on foot are open to them, they would feel happy in choosing the fourth alternative. When people acquire such determination, their dharma would acquire an altogether new form. Then it would make no distinction between the pilgrimage to Amarnath and that to swaraj. They would regard it as a religious merit to suffer hardships while going to Amarnath and also regard it as such to be sent to the gallows for the sake of swaraj. Those who retreat do not know their dharma.

A servant of the people has before him the unlimited field of the people's faith through which he can serve them. Vallabhbhai has discovered this. He taught the people that it was their dharma to offer non-violent resistance to the Government. The people were attracted by the word dharma; they truly found their dharma in *satyagraha* and they understood the true meaning of pilgrimage. True pilgrimage is within the heart, it consists in cheerfully accepting and enduring hardships.

The reader will see that I have not asked for help for relieving the suffering of the pilgrims to Amarnath and I have not even expressed sympathy for them. There is no possibility of any assistance reaching them; whatever little could be given would have been locally available. Those who have lost their lives are gone and those who have survived will be safe when they reach the foothills. The incident that

took place at Amarnath is a common occurrence to those people who climb great mountain-peaks.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

21. HOW TO CELEBRATE FESTIVALS

On the occasion of the festival of *Paryushan* two gentlemen from Bombay have sent me a bill of exchange worth Rs. 75, for being utilized in any good cause. This sum will be used for the benefit of our *Antyaja* brothers and sisters. While celebrating festivals, we generally waste money on ourselves, on indulging in pleasures, on good food and drink for ourselves and our friends. Instead of that, it is better to follow the practice adopted by these gentlemen and others mentioned in *Navajivan*. Our dharma as well as our wealth, our self-interest as well as the public good would be better served if the whole or part of the amount spent on pomp and feasts during deaths, marriages, births, etc., is saved and a half of this is given away for the service of the community. Many people are prevented from doing so only by fear of public opinion. It is to be hoped that those who are not afraid of the bogey of public opinion and have understood what I have said will follow the example mentioned above.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-9-1928

22. NOTE TO CHAND TYAGI

September 16 [1928]¹

It is better to die rather than ever to forsake truth.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3271

¹ As in the G.N. register.

23. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ASHRAW, SABARMATI
September 17, 1928

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

HOTEL CECIL, SIMLA

LYALLPUR PEOPLE SAY YOU HAVE AGREED PRESIDE¹ IF
I CONSENT. HAVE NO IRREVOCABLE OBJECTION IF YOU
THANK YOU CAN SPARE TIME AND HAVE INCLINATION.

BAPU

Frog a photostat: S.N. 14863

24. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, PUNJAB POLITICAL
CONFERENCE

ASHRAM, SABARMATI
September 18, 1928

SECRETARY

PUNJAB POLITICAL CONFERENCE

LYALLPUR

YOUR WIRE. WIRED² VALLABHBHAI WHO SAYS HE HAS NEITHER
INCLINATION NOR TIME PRESIDE. AM POWERLESS UNDER THESE
CIRCUMSTANCES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14864

25. LETTER TO SATIS DAS GUPTA

September 18, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letters. I say nothing more, as I expect we shall meet
on 25th.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1596

¹ Over the Punjab Political Conference

² *Vide* the preceding item.

26. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 18, 1928

CHI. DEVDAS,

When I address someone with 'thou' in speaking, it is even more appropriate and expressive of love to do so in letters also. That is why sometimes you cease to be 'you' and become 'thou'. True love does not speak and often does not even act, and yet it cannot but be felt. Though I thus know that 'you' and 'thou' are mere external forms, I have adopted a certain style of addressing persons in letters which I have now started following in writing to you children, too.

It is quite true that these days my letters have ceased to be letters. Both physically and mentally I am so much tied up that I am unable to see even the people in the Ashram whom I want to see. And writing letters gets indefinitely postponed. Today I have put off writing several important letters and am devoting the little time left before the prayers to writing this.

In my quest for truth I have realized that as for me I can find it only through experience, that is, not by giving up action in the world but by remaining non-violent while continually engaged in action. I have been utterly drained in getting the recent changes in the Ashram adopted. You know very well how much I am interested in women's progress. But except for two or three there were no women staying in the Ashram of their own choice. Even those who do cannot be said to understand even cursorily the rules of the Ashram. Do all the men do so?

Then what can we expect about the deeper meaning of the rules? Even I who was the author of the rules do not know their full meaning, though I am realizing it more and more clearly every day. Thinking over the problem and discussing it, I saw that in following and enforcing the rules and building up the Ashram we have, unknowingly and unintentionally but most certainly, oppressed the women. They could neither leave their husbands nor the Ashram. Though perfectly willing to stay, they are equally unable to observe the rules.

It seemed to be a sin to show the slightest leniency in the observance of the rules if the Ashram continued in its original form. I regard the rules that have been framed as essential elements of

Satyagraha. In fact they have been kept a little mild so that they are within the capacity of all. Hence, as we progress towards truth, these rules should be made more stringent. I therefore felt that if we wished to keep the women with us, the Satyagraha Ashram must take a different form. Hence the Ashram will now remain only as a symbol and an ideal in our minds without any external activities. The Ashram has been therefore handed over to the new agency that has been created. The Ashram land also will be transferred to it at a nominal rent. The Ashram will thus exist at present in an almost invisible form. But as the burden on the others will in this way be lightened, that on those who have taken the vows will increase, for even in the new Udyog Mandir it is the same persons who will be working. They will have to be guardians of the vows and make their contribution to the Udyog Mandir in that spirit. The underlying hope is that if the Ashram inmates have the true spirit of the Ashram in them, the Udyog Mandir itself will be reborn as a more perfect institution. This is enough for the present, as I must now leave for the prayer.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/4

27. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

September 19, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have read the Khan Bahadur's letter. You should send him the following reply:

'Gandhi says that although he takes the deepest interest in the subject, he does not think that any useful purpose can be served by his expressing an opinion on the questions asked.'¹

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11131. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

28. PRISON TREATMENT

The Director of Information in his communique dated 12th September, 1928, has attempted a reply to the article² in *Young India*

¹ This is in English.

² *Vide* "Our Jails", 16-8-1928.

of 16th August regarding the food served out to prisoners at the Sabarmati Central Jail. He boldly says that these statements are incorrect. It is perfectly clear from the communique that he has not made the inquiry himself but his opinion is based upon the statements supplied to him by the very parties who are accused of neglect. It is unnecessary for me to refute the statement that the health statistics in the prisons of India compare favourably with the statistics of the population living outside. This is an admitted fact, for the simple reason that the laws of sanitation are undoubtedly better enforced in the prisons than outside. But better sanitation does not prove more humaneness or more consideration for the prisoners. My point is that there is absence of the human touch about the whole of the prison system. And it seems to me to be wholly beside the point to mention that the general health of the inmates of prisons is better than outside, and I claim that even this statement becomes untenable when applied to the class of prisoners from whom satyagrahis are drawn. It was open to the Director to say, if he had so chosen, that the satyagrahis knew that there would be no humanity to be found inside the prison walls. Statements such as I made in the article in question had point. Because the claim is often made that the prisoners in Indian prisons are treated humanely and that as much consideration as is possible to give to prisoners is given in these jails.

With regard to the specific statements made in the Director's communique I can only give extracts from the statements made by the released prisoners, every one of whom I hold to be far more reliable than all the jail authorities put together. The statements were made by the satyagrahis on their discharge from the jail in reply to my request about the treatment, and when I saw with my own eyes the shattered constitution of Sjt. Chinai whom I knew to be in possession of excellent health and when I saw a Vidyapith lad Dinkar suffering from an obstinate fever which, but for the extraordinarily good nursing and able medical aid he had the good fortune to receive after being discharged from the prison, might have proved fatal.

I shall take the first extract from the statement made by Sjt. Sanmukhlal, a well-known man of Valod who got dysentery twice as a result of bad food:

The greens served out were wretched beyond description.... *Luni* simply stank in one's nostrils so much so that I had to discontinue taking it. When it was exhausted, radishes and a hotchpotch of dry leaves like those of cabbage,

etc., were substituted in its place with the result that soon after many prisoners began to suffer from bowel complaints in large numbers. But nobody could muster sufficient courage to lodge a complaint about it to the Superintendent. I even heard from some prisoners that one of the prisoners was given bar-fetters for several months for making such a complaint....

Things improved a little after some time.... Pumpkin and onions and later *turiya* and *gowar* were introduced in the vegetable fare; the *gowar* and *turiya* were hard and stringy being over-ripe, but even so were picked out and regarded by the prisoners as a delicacy.

The *juwar* bread was only half-baked and so full of grit that it could hardly be chewed and had to be swallowed. This was especially the case when the grinding stones of the flour mills were freshly dented. As a result of this food I got dysentery, almost half of our number sharing the same fate with me.

Sjt. C. L. Chinai in his statement repeats the same story:

The food did not agree with me and I began to get stomach-ache and finally had diarrhoea, sometimes getting as many as 30 or 35 motions in a day. Whenever I took the greens they invariably gave me darrohea. Thus I began fast to lose my weight. When I complained about it to the doctor he said that I should give up taking the greens if I wanted to keep fit, which I did and from that time till the end remained on bread and water only. I did not complain about it to the Superintendent because he never paid any heed to the complaints of the prisoners regarding food. I even heard that there had been cases of prisoners being punished for making such complaints. Therefore nobody dared to take the matters before the authorities.

Even Sjt. Ravishankar Vyas with his iron constitution was driven to say in his statement:

The greens consisted of dry, tough, leathery leaves with an admixture of pumpkin. To eat it was to court certain stomach-ache.

Sjt. Chinai was given hard labour beyond his capacity and consequently he had attacks of giddiness, but for twenty days he could not get the medicine that he needed. He lost over 20 lb in weight during his incarceration. Similarly, Govind Gosain who was already in a poor state of health when he was sentenced came out of jail in such a weak condition that he could scarcely keep steady on his legs.

I have given only the briefest extracts from the statements in my possession. If the authorities are serious, I shall have much pleasure to send them all the statements and any further proof that they may need. Refutations such as the Director of Information has made, I feel sure, carry no weight with the public, certainly do not improve the

condition of the prisoners, nor make for humaneness in the prisons. The first condition of humaneness is a little humility and a little diffidence about the correctness of one's conduct and a little receptiveness. One misses all the three in the Director's refutation.

Young India, 20-9-1928

29. HOW I DISCOVERED THE SPINNING-WHEEL

A friend who has been studying the All-India Spinners' Association organization after having studied a centre in Karaikudi (Tamilnad) writes:

This (Uttukuli) is a heavy production centre for hand-spinning and weaving. I have half picked up this work here. There are about a thousand spinners. I have gone about the villages and met many of them in their own little cottages. Every day that passes makes me marvel the more as to how you discovered the spinning-wheel. I am very much tempted to ask if you could not kindly tell in the pages of *Young India* when and how exactly you re-discovered the wheel. It is so little and so big at the same time. It reminds me of the rain drops—each so tiny by itself but together “the mighty ocean”. Nothing is more wrong than to think that you have asked India to spin and that India has begun to spin driven to do so by you. The truth is rather that the millions in the villages have driven you to it—to be their agent for disposing of all their yarn. I am daily watching crowds of old women and girls coming with their yarn. They come with smiling faces, their precious yarn clutched to their hearts. And khadi is retouching slowly into life just those vital parts of our national being that have been touched almost into death by this most soulless of exploitations. I realize now as never before the truth of your words when you said that the world would some day accept khadi as the noblest of your works.

He is right when he says that the toiling, starving millions drove me to it. It was in London in 1909¹ that I discovered the wheel. I had gone there leading a deputation from South Africa. It was then that I came in close touch with many earnest Indians—students and others. We had many long conversations about the condition of India and I saw as in a flash that without the spinningwheel there was no swaraj. I knew at once that everyone had to spin. But I did not then know the distinction between the loom and the wheel and in *Hind Swaraj*² used

¹ The source has “1908”.

² *Vide* “Hind Swaraj”, 22-11-1909.

the word loom to mean the wheel. This is what I have said in the concluding chapter of the I booklet:

We will get nothing by asking; we shall have to take what we want, and we need the requisite strength for the effort and that strength will be available to him only who:

2. if a lawyer, will give up his profession, and take up a handloom (spinning-wheel);

8. although a doctor, will take up a handloom (spinning-wheel);

10 if a wealthy man will devote his money to establishing hand looms (spinning-wheels). and encourage others to use hand-made goods by wearing them himself.

The words are as true today as they were in 1909 when the booklet was written. Today not only are lawyers, doctors and others spinning by way of sacrifice but they are also organizing the movement. But alas, they are yet far too few for the purpose of waking the millions from their helpless lethargy. The vast majority are still standing aside. I-hey seem to be waiting for a catastrophe greater than the one that is happening in front of them. They seem to await the simultaneous destruction of millions to produce in them a shock that would move them to action. Be that as it may, there is no organic swaraj until the starving millions feel its glow. They will not feel it until the living contact is established between them and us the vocal class who literally bleed them in order that we may live.

But to return to the wheel. Though the wheel was discovered to the mental vision in 1909, it saw work only in 1918, after three years' patient and strenuous effort. The first khadi vow (very much adulte-rated to suit the fashionable sisters of Bombay) was taken in 1919¹. The wheel found a place in the Congress programme in 1921². The history of the movement since then is an open book still being written in the lives of the two thousand odd organizers and nearly seventy thousand spinners in whose lives the wheel has brought a ray of hope. Were we not under the hypnotic and desolating spell of the city civilization, we would realize through our hearts that only a little combined, conscious and honest effort in the shape of work is required to take the wheel to every cottage in India. Multiply the return of one wheel by say one hundred million and the result will

¹ *Vide* "The Swadeshi Vow", 13-5-1919

² *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922

convince the most confirmed un-believer of its potency. But probably he will refuse to be willing and say: "What you say is true as an arithmetical problem, it is wholly untrue as a practical proposition" You can only take a willing horse to the trough. But a true spinner must have unlimited patience. He does not give in. The answer to the question propounded by the friend therefore perhaps should be: "The wheel is still being discovered." I know that it shall be one day, for there are some in this country who are prepared to pay for the discovery with their lives.

Young India, 20-9-1928

30. COW-PROTECTION TRUE AND FALSE

I commend this powerfully written article¹ to the attention of everyone who would know the inwardness of cow-worship in India.

Young India, 20-9-1928

31. MY NOTES

Thursday [September 20, 1928]

HINDU-MUSLIM FIGHT IN GODHRA

On Wednesday, I received a postcard from Godhra informing me that, in the fighting that took place there between Hindus and Muslims on the occasion of the *Paryushan* festival, Shri Wamanrao Mukadam, Shri Purushottamdas Shah and some other Hindus have been seriously injured. Today, that is, on Thursday, at the time of writing this, I received a telegram informing me of Shri Purushottamdas's death. I am aware of my inability to do anything besides expressing my sympathy to the bereaved family and I am sorry on this account. Hence I write nothing these days on this subject near my heart. I do not believe I have the right to say anything on it. I have come to the conclusion that the medicine I have is wanted by neither side. I have no other medicine with me except non-violence and love. At present it is not possible for me to explain the efficacy of this medicine to anyone. Hence I believe and am aware that silence is proper for me. My silence is my sole contribution to the efforts for

¹ By Pyarelal. For extracts, *vide* "Cow-Protection True and False", 20-9-1928

unity. But this silence does not mean indifference. As I believe in prayer, I ceaselessly pray to God to give wisdom to both the communities and ordain that unity of hearts be established among them. If this prayer is sincere, I am bound sooner or later to find some means of ending this enmity.

DISCOUNT IN KHADI PRICES FOR A LIMITED PERIOD

The organizer of the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar on Ritchie Road in Ahmedabad writes to say that khadi will be sold at a reduced rate as follows¹ from the 10th to the 20th of October:

Besides these, some other varieties such as shawls, saris, prints, towels, handkerchiefs, dhotis, caps, fine as well as coarse khadi of small and large widths and woollen material of various types will be sold at a discount ranging from 6_% to 12_%.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

32. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR

[September 20, 1928]²

AMRITLAL THAKKAR

GODHRA

DEEPLY DISTRESSED SHAH'S DEATH PRAY CONVEY
CONDOLENCE FAMILY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14776

33. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[September 20, 1928]³

RIGHT HONOURABLE SASTRI

PRETORIA

PRAY INTEREST YOURSELF ABOOBAKER'S PRETORIA

¹ The table of rates is not reproduced here.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ From a typewritten copy (S.N. 11987)

PROPEPTY. OMER JHAVERI HIS BROTHER WILL SEE
YOU. PROPERTY WAS MATTER PUBLIC SETTLEMENT OF
1908. IT MUST BE PRESERVED FOR HEIRS AND
SUCCESSORS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11961

34. CABLE TO OMER JHAVERI

[September 20, 1928]

OMER JHAVERI

DURBAN

CABLED SASTRIJI. SEE HIM.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 11961

35. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 21, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. I am not taking any interest in the Statutory Commission. I see no truthfulness about anything emanating from the Commission. Sir John Simon's letters have a false ring about them) and if he is not wilfully untruthful, he is certainly kept absolutely in the dark about the true nature of things.

Mahadev is returning today from Simla. I am glad he had a little bit of rest and detachment from the routine work. In Simla, of course, he wrote the chapters for his forthcoming book on Bardoli.

Vallabhbai too is returning today from Simla, as also Swami. They were all however fed up with the Simla atmosphere.

Devdas is in Delhi. Krishnadas is with Ram Binod in Bihar. Pyarelal and Subbiah are here. Mirabehn goes next week on a brief tour. She wants to see the khadi depots. I do hope you will not overwork

yourself there;

Here are some letters received from Italy.

Love.

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

112 GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 2630

36. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 21, 1928

MY DEAR JAYAEKAR,

I have your letter. Mahadev has talked to me about the offer made to you. He sent me a brief letter also but asked me to wait till his arrival before I replied. I am able therefore to sleep over the thing and after the fullest consideration have come to the conclusion that you should not accept the offer. I am of opinion that the Viceroy should consult Sastri¹ himself as to his successor; but if he does not do so, Maharaja Kunwar Singh should go. It is a most difficult job and can only be filled by one who has the conviction that connection with the British Empire is good and should last. It is difficult to explain the reasons behind this proposition, but I am sure you will have no difficulty in understanding my viewpoint.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 1995

37. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and copies of the July and the April numbers of the *Student World*.

I note what you say about the Conference² at Mysore in Decem-

¹ V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Agent-General of Government of India in South Africa

² Of the World's Student Christian Federation

ber. I am yet unable to give you any definite reply. And, of course, I have warned you against building anything on the hope of my being able to attend the Conference.

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK
5 RUSSELL ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13529

38. LETTER TO CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI

September 21, 1928

DEAR DR. CHOITHRAM,

It is impossible for me to move out of the Ashram at the present moment and Vallabhbhai's hands are really full. In my opinion, it is better to spare Vallabhbhai just now. Let him work up the constructive programme in Bardoli. It is really more difficult than the struggle with the Government. All the same I shall put your letter before Vallabhbhai and ask him to write to you.

Yours sincerely,

DR. CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 13530

39. LETTER TO DHANWANTRI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. The message that I can send to the Students' Union is:

“Do not fear the Government or any other power that may come in your way. Go forward and build a strong link between yourself and the toiling millions who do not even know the meaning of the word education.”

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DHANWANTRI
SECRETARY, LAHORE STUDENTS UNION, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13531

40. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

September 21, 1928

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

I have your postcard. . .¹ is a scamp. He is not truthful when he says that he has walked all the way from here to Calcutta to meet you. He has been going to several places; among them was Brindaban from where he wrote saying that he was practically fixed up. He is good-hearted but he is thoroughly untrustworthy.

I showed your letter² about Ram Binod to Rajendra Babu who was here on his return from Europe. He is of opinion that some step will be necessary.

SJT. KRISHNADAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13689

41. LETTER TO AMY TURTORE

September 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter as also the beautiful piece of linen. Here is a sample of what is being done here.

I thank you also for your prayers. I am forwarding our correspondence to Mr. Andrews.³

Yours sincerely,

M. AMY TURTORE

CAMOLLIA, 47 SIENA, ITALY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14398

42. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 21, 1928

BHAI JETHALAL,

The means of overcoming desire explained in the *Gita* is God's grace, and that is obtained through worship of Him.

¹ Name omitted

² Dated August 30; *vide* "Letter to Krishnadas", 10-9-1928.

³ *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 21-9-1928.

About your intention to join the Vidyapith, you should meet Kakasaheb. The highest salary it pays is Rs. 75. If you can live within that figure, perhaps Kakasaheb can accommodate you. According to me, you cannot live in the Ashram unless you agree to observe *brahmacharya*.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1344

43. LETTER TO J. S. AKARTE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no doubt about it that the more young men stand up against child-marriage and enforce their opposition whenever they get an opportunity, the sooner the evil will be removed. I have so often noticed this matter in the pages of young India that I do not think it necessary to deal with the special case of your caste.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. S. AKARTE

SENIOR B.A. CLASS, HISLOP COLLEGE, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13532

44. LETTER TO N. LAKSHMI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. For the present I can only suggest to you that you should continue your reading of the *Gitanjali*, and add to it a brief reading of the *Gita*.

Your questions do not need any answer if you are a regular reader of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI N. LAKSHMI

MEDICAL SCHOOL, VELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13533

45. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
September 22, 1928

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

I thank you for your letter. I am ashamed to have to confess that I have not yet been able to approach Dr. Sunderland's manuscript. I have kept it on my desk and it always stares me in the face. But I do not know when I shall be able to go through it.

I will keep the corrections you have sent me with manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMANAND CHATTERJEE
EDITOR, "MODERN REVIEW"
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13534

46. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

September 22, 1928

BHAISHRI BHOGILAL,

This is my argument, in the fewest possible words, about my deliberately killing the calf.¹

1. The calf was in great pain. It had been under doctors' treatment and they had given up all hopes. We could give it no help. Four or five men were required to turn it on its side, and even then this caused it pain. In this condition, I thought that dharma lay in killing it.

2. I see dharma in applying to human beings, in similar circumstances, the rule which I apply to other creatures. There are fewer occasions of acting in that way towards human beings, because we have more means of helping them and more knowledge for doing so. But history tells of occasions, and we can imagine others, in which there might be non-violence in killing a person, in the same way that there is non-violence in an operation performed by a surgeon.

3. The argument that he who cannot create life has no right to destroy it and that no one can violate another's dharma does not apply in a case like this. That argument can be advanced only for the

¹ *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal". 30-9-1928.

purpose of preventing violence, that is, cruelty. It may be itself an act of violence to advance such an argument to a person about whose non-violent motives we have no doubt at all, for it is likely to confuse the reason of such a person if he is not vigilant enough and may dissuade him from performing an act of non-violence.

4. It is necessary to bear three points in mind in order to understand the non-violence of the act in question: (1) It is ignorance to believe that every act of killing is violence. (2) As there is violence in killing, so also there is violence in inflicting what we regard as lesser suffering. (3) Violence and non-violence are mental attitudes, they concern the feelings in our heart. A slap given through anger is pure violence, whereas a slap given to a person bitten by a snake to keep him awake is pure non-violence.

Many other arguments can be deduced from this. If you wish to ask me any question exclusively concerning dharma, please do. You can use this letter in any place and in any manner you wish to. My only aim in life is to discover dharma, know it and follow it. I do not wish to breathe a single moment if I cannot do that.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11811

47. ATROCITIES BY OFFICIALS

A correspondent from Dholka writes:¹

Such atrocities should be a matter of surprise, if not in India, at any rate in Gujarat. It is in the fitness of things that the Dholka Taluk Committee has undertaken the task of putting an end to the atrocities of the police. The Congress Committees are committed to such work. However, it is the least part of the work of these committees to register a complaint before the collector or to go to the law-courts and demand justice. However, where this becomes inevitable, such work may certainly be done. The real task to be done is to follow the example of Bardoli. That is to say, to live among the people and give them training in fearlessness. Such training cannot be imparted by

¹The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that an orphan lad suspected of theft was severely beaten by the police. Farmers were harassed in order to extort tax. When the incidents were reported to the authorities the people did not come forward to tell the truth.

means of speeches alone, but by being fearless oneself and infecting the others with such fearlessness. In order that this feeling may spread, some kind of useful constructive activity must be carried on amidst the people, without which one cannot come into contact with them, enter into their lives and win their confidence. The fact that khadi activity is the most effective one for coming into contact with every family living within one's area is becoming increasingly clear every day. While carrying on such activity, one must come into contact with the talati and the police as well. Since they too wear clothes, the message of khadi should reach them also. The atrocities of the police and the talatis can be ended by an appeal to their hearts. Such atrocities will not be averted if one policeman or talati is punished. However, a change may be brought about in their conduct if they are made aware of the fact that although they hold the posts of policeman or talati, they are nevertheless the friends or rather the servants of the people. The local police and the talati of Bardoli became friendly with the people as soon as the latter became fearless. Boycott is a much better weapon of non-co-operation than either punishment or complaint; however, this weapon should be used only by those who know no fear. Hence I would request the Dholka Taluk Committee to continue their task of seeking justice from the law-courts or the collector if they regard this as inevitable but, at the same time, vigorously and patiently to take up the task of making the people fearless. It will find from experience while doing so that office work and constructive work cannot be combined. In trying to do the one, the other will have to be given up. It is perhaps necessary to introduce well-known leaders to the people in cases where the latter feel suppressed and timid.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

48. POLICY OF MAKING KHADI SELF-SUPPORTING

I would like to draw the attention of readers to the article entitled "Khadi Work in Bijolia" appearing in this issue. It has been published as it was sent by Shri Jethalal with no changes—except for a few minor verbal changes. I hope no one will be scared by the length of the article. Shri Jethalal is one of the very few persons among us who are crazy about khadi. By this word, the *Gita* implies one who

loses one's heart and soul in one's work. The country is in dire need of persons who are wholly dedicated to the work which they have taken up as a form of public service. Moreover, in this field we have achieved success sooner in Bijolia than elsewhere. It is the duty of every worker in the cause of khadi to know how and to what extent this success has been achieved. I have published the entire article for this reason. The reader will see clearly that at the root of the success of this work lie unflinching devotion to khadi and the resultant patience and determination. The following portion of the article deserves to be noted by everybody.

It must be stated here that we had decided to practise such discipline as if we had gone crazy about khadi, or that we did not know or understand anything except khadi. The people did not welcome the preaching of khadi; they would hesitate to commit themselves as it was something which involved action. We saw with our own eyes conditions which deprived one of one's humanity—disease, immorality and social and political unrest. As soon as we stopped talking about our subject and the conversation turned to other subjects, we ceased to take any interest in it. We used to think that the strength of our argument regarding khadi would be lost if we took interest in other matters.

It is only such devoted persons who joyfully put up with “the cold of a winter morning, the fierce heat of a summer afternoon, and the continuous downpour during the monsoon as well as knee-deep mud” that can take the message of khadi to the people. In the words of Shri Jethalal, the leisure hours of the farmer are the “active season” for khadi workers and the success of the task depends upon doing what has to be done just in that particular season.

[From Gujarati]

Navajavan, 23-9-1928

49. NATIONAL SCHOOL AT BOMBAY

The handful of national schools which have survived in the country are comely to the eyes of a spectator even as a little lake would look beautiful in a dry arid desert. The national school at Bombay is one of these. That school has had to function in the face of many difficulties, which persist even today. The chief among them is lack of funds. There are difficulties in the way of the Vidyapith subsidizing these schools wholly under strict rules. It has been a

policy of the Vidyapith not to provide any aid to schools where the teachers are unable to collect funds. If the Vidyapith itself is to become self-supporting at any time, it will have to be increasingly strict in its adherence to this rule. It is necessary to understand the meaning of the word “self-supporting” in this context. It implies a school which can meet its own expenses with ease on the strength of the reputation enjoyed by its Principal and the other teachers. The best form of self-support is for the students of such national schools to earn through their own efforts enough to meet the expenses of their schools. Such self-support is not beyond my visualization. In the United States of America, innumerable students earn enough to pay their fees and their schools subsist upon them. In India, many schools running under Government patronage bear their own expenses and those who run them earn fairly good money. The reason for this is obvious. Government-sponsored education has a set market value and the demand for this education exceeds the Government’s capacity or intention to provide it. National education has yet to have its market-value determined. If this had been done, we would have been enjoying swaraj today. However, the “self support” that I visualize is higher than that of the schools which are run under Government patronage, as it is also distinct from that which is to be found in the U.S.A.

This country needs an industrial climate. In the education of this country, the vocational aspect should constitute its dominant part. When this takes place, the students who will go on learning a craft will support their schools through it. Shri Madhusudan Das had conceived such a plan with regard to his tannery in Cuttack. The plan was a fine one. But it did not materialize as the prevailing atmosphere in the country provided no encouragement to vocational training or a tannery. Why should not carpentry be an indispensable part of our higher education? Education without a knowledge of weaving would be comparable to the solar system without the sun. Where such trades are being properly learnt, the students should be able to meet the expenses of their own schools. For this scheme to succeed, the students should have physical strength, will-power and a favourable atmosphere created by the teachers. If a weaver could become a Kabir, why cannot other weavers become, if not Kabirs, at any rate, Gidwanis, Kripalanis or Kalelkars? If a cobbler could become a Shakespeare, why cannot other cobblers become, if not great poets, at any rate, experts in the fields of chemistry, economics and such other subjects?

It is very necessary to understand that, by regarding vocational training as something that is opposed to intellectual education, we are labouring under a great misapprehension and that thereby we are retarding the progress of the people. The Vidyapith has taken in hand the task of explaining this fact. In the mean time, those who have faith in national education should help institutions like the national school in Bombay to the best of their ability. And if the citizens of Bombay will not provide this help, who else will? I hope that no one will excuse himself on the ground that business in Bombay is slack. The citizens of Bombay may be suffering from many shortcomings, but I have not yet discerned in them that of miserliness. Hence I hope that the patriotic citizens of Bombay will fill Acharya Gokulbhai's purse and free him from worries.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

50. COMMUNITY FEASTS

Shri Manilal Chhatrapati writes from Jambusar to say that on the occasion of a *simant* in his family, he finally gathered the courage not to hold a feast for his own caste-members. I congratulate him on it. Such courage in Congress workers should not be regarded as a matter of surprise. There is only one thing that is required for developing such courage: Disregard of or unconcern at being declared outcaste. To be excommunicated implies that one cannot attend caste-feasts, etc., and one cannot marry one's sons or daughters within that caste. When we wish to boycott all feasts, we should consider ourselves fortunate if we receive no invitations at all. Moreover, if one's sons and daughters cannot be betrothed within one caste, cast barriers can readily be broken down. If the country is to rise, those barriers have necessarily to be done away with. Hence reformers like Shri Manilal Chhatrapati need fear nothing. These feasts reduce civilized persons to the level of aborigines, they are a crushing burden for the poor and are a blot on our country. The fact that even those who are well off long for these feasts is something certainly unbecoming. Hence, with more reformers like Manilal Chhatrapati, these customs will gradually decline. A portion of the money that is saved on such feasts should be used by reformers for public service and in the wholesome service of those who wish to remain within the bounds of the caste. Wherever the

mahajan acts out of ignorance, it forfeits its high status and no longer deserves respect. Hence those who give donations must be careful to see that the amount given for reforms within the caste is properly utilized.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-9-1928

51. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

September 23, 1928

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I cannot decide which day is my birthday. Formerly there was only one day, now there are many days. According to the Tilak calendar, the birthday falls on a particular date. I did not know about this at all. According to the Christian calendar, it falls on another date. According to the Sanatana, the Saur and the Sayan calendars, it falls on still other dates. And yet more methods of reckoning may be discovered in future. If everyone would celebrate the day by spinning, as you do, I would not grumble even if every day was my birthday. Bombay does not seem to agree with Kishorelal. Manilal and Sushila seem to be completely absorbed in each other in Phoenix.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6676

52. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SABARMATI,

September 24, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Mahadev has just returned from Simla. He tells me you have written in the papers that I sought by every means at my disposal to keep Shuaib out from the Nehru Committee. I have not been following the disputes between you and Dr. Ansari. I have read and that cursorily only one of your letters to the Press. Hence my missing the above titbit. Well, it is news to me that I tried to keep Shuaib out. I do

not even remember what I said about him and others. All I know is that I never dreamt of keeping Shuaib out of anything. I have too much regard for his honesty and independence to wish to keep him out. And you ought to know my nature. I never even keep out opponents and if I want to, I say so. What led you to think that I wanted to keep Shuaib out with a purpose?

If it is merely a matter of feeling, time alone coupled with my own future conduct can cure you of the feeling.

Having heard the story from Mahadev, I thought I owed it to you to set you right, if my word could do so.

I must confess that the only letter of yours to Dr. Ansari that I read, I did not like at all. I thought it was so unnecessary. But I did not feel it right to say anything to you about it. I know you to be too good not to make amends if and when you see your error. Even your errors make you lovable so long as I retain the opinion which I do, that you are truthful and fear God. Why should I worry over what I may hold to be your error, seeing that I err often enough and need the indulgence of friends and foes alike?

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13692

53. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMNARAIN¹

[September 25, 1928]

SHYAMNARAIN

PROSECUTING INSPECTOR, MEERUT CITY

ARRIVED
ARRIVAL.

SAFE.

DETAINING

PENDING

YOUR

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14780

¹ In reply to his telegram dated September 25, which read: "My son Sarupnarain aged eighteen thin sallow left college. Please detain. Coming."

54. TELEGRAM TO CHOITHRAM P. GIDWANI¹

[September 25, 1928]

DR. CHOITHRAM

HYDERABAD (SIND)

VALLABHBHAI

GONE

BARDOLI.

DIFFICULT

LEAVE

POST.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14781

55. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH

Wednesday [On or before September 26, 1928]²

CHI. KANTI,

Newspapers declared you dead and Kishorelalbhai also believed you to be dead. Ramdas will read out to you his letter accompanying this, or, if you are able to read, you may do so yourself. It will make you laugh, but at the same time prove Kishorelalbhai's prediction about you true. Chhaganbhai also has believed you to be an ideal student of the Ashram. You know that I have hesitated to believe so. But my hesitation can make no difference to my love for you. We all very much wish that you may live long and be an ideal man and ideal servant. You certainly have the strength to become one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6268

56. 'STARTLING CONCLUSIONS'

William R. Thurston, according to the publisher's preface, was a Major in the United States army, which he served for nearly ten years. And, during these years, he had varied experiences in several parts of

¹ In reply to his telegram dated September 25, which read: "Letter received. Request spare Vallabhbaiji for a day only."

² From the contents, this and the following letter appear to have been written before the one to the addressee and to Kalyanji Mehta dated October 2, 1928; *vide* "Letter to Kalyanji Mehta and Kanti", 2-10-1928 and "Extracts from Letter to Kalyanji Mehta", 3-10-1928 The Wednesday preceding was September 26.

the world, including China. During his travels he studied the effects of marriage laws and customs, as a result of which he felt the call to write a book on marriage. This book which is called *Thurston's Philosophy of Marriage* and was published last year by the Tiffany Press, New York, contains only 32 pages of bold type, and can be read inside of an hour. The author has not entered into an elaborate argument but has simply set forth his conclusion with just a dash of argument to support his conclusions which the publisher truly describes as "startling". In his foreword, the author claims to have based his conclusions on "personal observation, data obtained from physicians, statistics of social hygiene and medical statistics," compiled during the War. His conclusions are:

1. That Nature never intended a woman to be bound to a man for life, and to be compelled to occupy the same bed or habitation with him, night after night, in pregnancy and out, in order to earn her board and lodging, and to exercise her natural right to bear children.

2. That the daily and nightly juxtaposition of the male and female, which is a result of present marriage laws and customs, leads to unrestrained sexual intercourse, which perverts the natural instincts of both male and female, and makes partial prostitutes of 90% of all married women. This condition arises from the fact that married women have been led to believe that such prostitution of themselves is right and natural because it is legal, and that it is necessary in order to retain the affections of their husbands.

The author then goes on to describe the effects of continual "unrestrained sexual intercourse" which I epitomize as follows:

(a) It causes the woman to become highly nervous, prematurely aged, diseased, irritable, restless, discontented, and incapable of properly caring for her children.

(b) Among the poorer classes it leads to the propagation of many children who are not wanted.

(c) Among the higher classes, unrestrained sexual intercourse leads to the practice of contraception and abortion. *If contraceptive methods under the name of 'birth-control' or any other name are taught to the majority of the women of the masses, the race will become generally diseased, demoralized, depraved and will eventually perish.* (The italics are the author's.)

(d) Excessive sexual intercourse drains the male of the

vitality necessary for earning a good living. *At present there are approximately 2,000,000 more widows in the United States than there are widowers. Comparatively few of these are war widows.* (Italics are the author's.)

(e) The excessive sexual intercourse incident to the present married state develops in the minds of both male and female a sense of futility. *The poverty of the world today, and the slums of the larger cities are not due to lack of profitable labour to be performed, but to excessive, unrestrained sexual intercourse, resulting from present marriage laws.* (Italics are the author's.)

(g) Most serious of all from the standpoint of the future of the human race is sexual intercourse during pregnancy.

Then follows an indictment of China and India into which I need not go. This brings us to half of this booklet. The next half is devoted to the remedy.

The central fact of the remedy is that husband and wife must always live in separate rooms, therefore, necessarily sleep in separate beds, and meet only when both desire progeny, but especially the wife. I do not intend to give the changes suggested in the marriage laws. The one thing common to all marriages throughout the world is a common room and a common bed, and this the author condemns in unmeasured terms, I venture to think, rightly. There is no doubt that much of the sensuality of our nature, whether male or female, is due to the superstition bearing a religious sanction that married people are bound to share the same bed and the same room. It has produced a mentality, the disastrous effect of which it is difficult for us, living in the atmosphere generated by that superstition, properly to estimate.

The author is equally opposed, as we have already seen, to contraceptive methods.

S. Ganesan, the enterprising publisher of Madras, has obtained the permission of the author to reprint the booklet for circulation in India. If he does so, the reader can possess a copy at a trifling price. He has secured also the rights of translation.

Many of the other remedies suggested by the author are, in my opinion, not of practical use to us, and in any case require legislative sanction. But every husband and wife can make a fixed resolution from today never to share the same room or the same bed at night and to avoid sexual contact, except for the one supreme purpose for which it is intended for both man and beast. The beast observes the law invariably. Man having got the choice has grievously erred in making

the wrong choice. Every woman can decline to have anything to do with contra-ception. Both man and woman should know that abstention from satisfaction of the sexual appetite results not in disease but in health and vigour, provided that mind co-operates with the body. The author believes that the present condition of marriage laws "is responsible for the greater part of all the ills of the world today". One need not share this sweeping belief with the author to come to the two final decisions I have suggested. But there can be no doubt that a large part of the miseries of today can be avoided, if we look at the relations between the sexes in a healthy and pure light and regard ourselves as trustees for the moral welfare of the future generations.

Young India, 27-9-1928

57. KHADI WORK IN BIJOLIA

The following¹ is a summary of an elaborate report prepared for the khadi workers by Sjt. Jethalal Govindji, the indefatigable worker who has specialized in the self-help method of khadi production. Sjt. Jethalal Govindji swears by his method. Whether one agrees with him or not, one cannot help admiring the single minded zeal with which he has worked out his method. His exclusive absorption in his self-imposed labours is worthy of emulation. It is the spirit that defies defeat. The experiences of such a worker cannot but be of value to every national servant.

Young India, 27-9-1928

58. ABHOY ASHRAM

This is one of the efficient institutions of Bengal to which many young men have dedicated themselves for national service. The readers of *Young India* cannot be unfamiliar with the Abhoy Ashram as it has been noticed in these columns more than once. The report for the year 1927, now before me, is published in pamphlet form, is well illustrated, covers 35 pages, and furnishes a record of continuous progress. Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerji is the President of the governing body, and Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh is its Secretary. It has 13 members who are under the vows of fearlessness, truth, love,

¹ Not reproduced here; *vide* also "Policy of Making Khadi Self-supporting", 23-9-1928.

non-appropriation, labour, purity and patriotism. The creed of the Ashram is self-realization through the service of the motherland. Its headquarters are at Comilla, and its activities are spinning, medical relief, removal of untouchability, national education, dairying and agriculture. Khadi is the largest among these activities? Through it, the Ashram distributed last year over Rs. 66,000 among artisans, of which Rs. 28,000 went to the weavers, Rs. 27,000 to the spinners, over Rs. 1,200 to women who did embroidery work upon khadi, over Rs. 3,000 to washermen and over Rs. 6,000 to tailors. Its sales amounted to over Rs. 1,42,000 during the year under notice. The khadi department was worked at a profit. The cost of production and sale was 13% of the total sales. The profit earned was over Rs. 1,200. The khadi department absorbs 63 whole-time workers, who work in 20 centres scattered throughout the province. And "as khaddar organization naturally becomes the pivot for nation building institutions to grow round it", reading rooms, libraries, elementary schools, gymnasiums and other social service organizations are being reared up in the khadi organization established by the Ashram. I must omit the very interesting details about the medical department, untouchability work, national education, etc., and commend to the reader the report itself. The report goes on to state that if the Ashram is to continue to grow, it requires pecuniary assistance for the various departments. The total amount is estimated at Rs. 61,000 of which Rs. 10,000 are required for the dyeing department, Rs. 40,000 for the expansion of khadi work, Rs. 3,500 for agriculture, Rs. 2,500 for dairy and Rs. 5,000 for additional buildings which a growing institution like the Abhoy Ashram must always need. It need hardly be mentioned that the majority of the workers are all living on bare maintenance. The Ashram in fact represents the spirit of sacrifice, of which Bengal is probably among all the provinces the finest repository. I would invite the reader to procure the report, read it and give this great institution all the help he can.

Young India, 27-9-1928

59. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[September 28, 1928]¹

CHI. MIRA,

Just to tell you I have your letter. Do you know that Jamnalalji has lost his father? No decision has yet been arrived at. It will be to-

¹ From the postmark

morrow I hope. The oven is finished. Chhotelal is better.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

ASHRAM, HATUNDI, AJMER (RAJPUTANA)

From the original: C.W. 5309. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8199

60. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
September 28, 1928

CHI. RAMDAS¹,

I have received your letter. I will not reply fully to it just now. The bell for prayer has been struck.

If you are content to acquit yourself well in doing the duty which may have come to you unsought, a good many of the knotty problems will get solved. Solving such problems one by one will result in all of them being solved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

61. LETTER TO KANTI PAREKH

Sunday [On or before September 30, 1928]

CHI. KANTI,

I did not worry at all on receiving the wire about your having been wounded. But I prayed to God that you should have been wounded an innocent man. Many of us will have to be wounded in that manner. It is better that we should be wounded rather than other innocent people. Wish well even of the assailant. You have learnt that lesson here. I have received today Bhai Kalyanji's letter giving all the details. Your wound is serious but not dangerous. I have forbidden Jayanti² and Indu³ to be upset. We are learning in the Ashram not to grieve when our dear ones are wounded or die. Many lovers of God

¹ The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.

² Addressee's brothers

³ As placed in the Diary

have strengthened their love during such periods of compulsory rest. You should do the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11828

62. 'THE FIERY ORDEAL'¹

The killing of an ailing calf in the Ashram under circumstances described below having caused a great commotion in certain circles in Ahmedabad and some angry letters having been addressed to Gandhiji on the subject, Gandhiji has critically examined the question in the light of the principle of non-violence in an article in *Navajivan*, the substance of which is given below. P.

I

WHEN KILLING MAY BE AHIMSA

An attempt is being made at the Ashram to run a small model dairy and tannery on behalf of the Goseva Sangha. Its work in this connection brings it up, at every step, against intricate moral dilemmas that would not arise but for the keenness to realize the Ashram ideal of seeking Truth through the exclusive means of Ahimsa.

For instance some days back a calf having been maimed lay in agony in the Ashram. Whatever treatment and nursing was possible was given to it. The surgeon whose advice was sought in the matter declared the case to be past help and past hope. The suffering of the animal was so great that it could not even turn its side without excruciating pain.

In these circumstances I felt that humanity² demanded that the agony should be ended by ending life itself. I held a preliminary discussion with the Managing Committee most of whom agreed with my view. The matter was then placed before the whole Ashram. At the discussion a worthy neighbour vehemently opposed the idea of killing even to end pain and offered to nurse the dying animal. The nursing consisted in co-operation with some of the Ashram sisters in warding the flies off the animal and trying to feed it. The ground of the friend's opposition was that one has no right to take away life which one cannot create. His argument seemed to me to be pointless here. It

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 30-9-1928.

² The Gujarati original has "ahimsa".

would have point if the taking of life was actuated by self-interest. Finally in all humility but with the clearest of convictions I got in my presence a doctor kindly to administer the calf a quietus by means of a poison injection. The whole thing was over in less than two minutes.

I knew that public opinion especially in Ahmedabad¹ would not approve of my action and that it would read nothing but *himsa* in it.

But I know too that performance of one's duty should be independent of public opinion. I have all along held that one is bound to act according to what to one appears to be right even though it may appear wrong to others. And experience has shown that that is the only correct course. I admit that there is always a possibility of one's mistaking right for wrong and *vice versa* but often one learns to recognize wrong only through unconscious error. On the other hand if a man fails to follow the light within for fear of public opinion or any other similar reason he would never be able to know right from wrong and in the end lose all sense of distinction between the two. That is why the poet has sung:

The pathway of love is the ordeal of fire,
The shrinkers turn away from it.

The pathway of ahimsa, that is, of love, one has often to tread all alone.

But the question may very legitimately be put to me: Would I apply to human beings the principle I have enunciated in connection with the calf? Would I like it to be applied in my own case? My reply is yes; the same law holds good in both the cases. The law of यथा पिंडे तथा ब्रह्मांडे (as with one so with all) admits of no exceptions, or the killing of the calf was wrong and violent. In practice however we do not cut short the sufferings of our ailing dear ones by death because as a rule we have always means at our disposal to help them and because they have the capacity to think and decide for themselves. But supposing that in the case of an ailing friend I am unable to render any aid whatever and recovery is out of the question and the patient is lying in an unconscious state in the throes of fearful agony, then I would not see any *himsa* in putting an end to his suffering by death.

Just as a surgeon does not commit *himsa* but practises the purest ahimsa when he wields his knife on his patient's body for the latter's benefit, similarly one may find it necessary under certain imperative circumstances to go a step further and sever life from the body in the interest of the sufferer. It may be objected that whereas the surgeon

¹ Words "especially in Ahmedabad" are not in the Gujarati original.

performs his operation to save the life of the patient, in the other case we do just the reverse. But on a deeper analysis it will be found that the ultimate object sought to be served in both the cases is the same, *viz.*, to relieve the suffering soul within from pain. In the one case you do it by severing the diseased portion from the body, in the other you do it by severing from the soul the body that has become an instrument of torture to it. In either case it is the relief of the soul within from pain that is aimed at, the body without the life within being incapable of feeling either pleasure or pain. Other circumstances can be imagined in which not to kill would spell *himsa*, while killing would be *ahimsa*. Suppose for instance, that I find my daughter—whose wish at the moment I have no means of ascertaining—is threatened with violation and there is no way by which I can save her, then it would be the purest form of *ahimsa* on my part to put an end to her life and surrender myself to the fury of the incensed ruffian.

But the trouble with our votaries of *ahimsa* is that they have made of *ahimsa*¹ a blind fetish and put the greatest obstacle in the way of the spread of true *ahimsa* in our midst. The current (and in my opinion, mistaken) view of *ahimsa* has drugged our conscience and rendered us insensible to a host of other and more insidious forms of *himsa* like harsh words, harsh judgments, ill-will, anger and spite and lust of cruelty; it has made us forget that there may be far more *himsa* in the slow torture of men and animals, the starvation and exploitation to which they are subjected out of selfish greed, the wanton humiliation and oppression of the weak and the killing of their self-respect that we witness all around us today than in mere benevolent taking of life. Does anyone doubt for a moment that it would have been far more humane to have summarily put to death those who in the infamous lane of Amritsar were made by their torturers to crawl on their bellies like worms? If anyone desires to retort by saying that these people themselves today feel otherwise, that they are none the worse for their crawling, I shall have no hesitation in telling him that he does not know even the elements of *ahimsa*. There arise occasions in a man's life when it becomes his imperative duty to meet them by laying down his life; not to appreciate this fundamental fact of man's estate is to betray an ignorance of the foundation of *ahimsa*. For instance, a votary of truth would pray to God to give him death to save him from a life of falsehood. Similarly a votary of *ahimsa* would on bent knees implore his enemy to put him to death rather than humiliate him or make him do things unbecoming the dignity of a

¹ 'Non-killing' would be nearer to the Gujarati original.

human being. As the poet has sung:

The way of the Lord is meant for heroes,
Not for cowards.

It, is this fundamental misconception about the nature and scope of ahimsa, this confusion about the relative values, that is responsible for our mistaking mere non-killing for ahimsa and for the fearful amount of *himsa* that goes on in the name of ahimsa in our country. Let a man contrast the sanctimonious horror that is affected by the so-called votaries of ahimsa, at the very idea of killing an ailing animal to cut short its agony with their utter apathy and indifference to countless cruelties that are practised on our dumb cattle world. And he will begin to wonder whether he is living in the land of ahimsa or in that of conscious or unconscious hypocrisy.

It is our spiritual inertia, lack of moral courage—the courage to think boldly and look facts squarely in the face that is responsible for this deplorable state of affairs. Look at our pinjrapoles and goshalas, many of them represent today so many dens of torture to which as a sop to conscience we consign the hapless and helpless cattle. If they could only speak they would cry out against us and say, “Rather than subject us to this slow torture give us death.” I have often read this mute appeal in their eyes.

To conclude then, to cause pain or wish ill to or to take the life of any living being out of anger or a selfish intent is *himsa*. On the other hand after a calm and clear judgment to kill or cause pain to a living being with a view to its spiritual or physical benefit from a pure, selfless intent may be the purest form of ahimsa. Each such case must be judged individually and on its own merits. The final test as to its violence or non-violence is after all the intent underlying the act.

II

WHEN KILLING IS HIMSA

I now come to the other crying problem that is confronting the Ashram today. The monkey nuisance has become very acute and an immediate solution has become absolutely necessary. The growing vegetables and fruit trees have become a special mark of attention of this privileged fraternity and are now threatened with utter destruction. In spite of all our efforts we have not yet been able to find an efficacious and at the same time non-violent¹ remedy for the evil.

The matter has provoked a hot controversy in certain circles and I have received some angry letters on the subject. One of the corres-

¹ The original has “blameless”.

pondents has protested against the “killing of monkeys and wounding them by means of arrows in the Ashram”. Let me hasten to assure the reader that no monkey has so far been killed in the Ashram, nor has any monkey been wounded by means of “arrows” or otherwise as imagined by the correspondent. Attempts are undoubtedly being made to drive them away and harmless arrows have been used for the purpose.

The idea of wounding monkeys to frighten them away seems to me unbearable though I am seriously considering the question of killing them in case it should become unavoidable. But this question is not so simple or easy as the previous one.

I see a clear breach of ahimsa even in driving away monkeys, the breach would be proportionately greater if they have to be killed. For any act of injury done from self-interest whether amounting to killing or not is doubtless *himsa*.

All life in the flesh exists by some *himsa*. Hence the highest religion has been defined by a negative word ahimsa. The world is bound in a chain of destruction. In other words *himsa* is an inherent necessity for life in the body. That is why a votary of ahimsa always prays for ultimate deliverance from the bondage of flesh.

None, while in the flesh, can thus be entirely free from *himsa* because one never completely renounces the will to live. Of what use is it to force the flesh merely if the spirit refuses to cooperate? You may starve even unto death but if at the same time the mind continues to hanker after objects of the sense, your fast is a sham and a delusion. What then is the poor helpless slave to the will to live to do? How is he to determine the exact nature and the extent of *himsa* he must commit? Society has no doubt set down a standard and absolved the individual from troubling himself about it to that extent. But every seeker after truth has to adjust and vary the standard according to his individual need and to make a ceaseless endeavour to reduce the circle of *himsa*. But the peasant is too much occupied with the burden of his hard and precarious existence to have time or energy to think out these problems for himself and the cultured class instead of helping him chooses to give him the cold shoulder. Having become a peasant myself, I have no clear-cut road to go by and must therefore chalk out a path for myself and possibly for fellow peasants. And the monkey nuisance being one of the multitude of ticklish problems that stare the farmer in the face, I must find out some means by which the peasant's crops can be safeguarded against it with the minimum amount of *himsa*.

I am told that the farmers of Gujarat employ special watchmen

whose very presence scares away the monkeys and saves the peasant from the necessity of killing them. That may be but it should not be forgotten that whatever efficacy this method might have, it is clearly dependent upon some measure of destruction at some time or other. For these cousins of ours are wily and intelligent beings. The moment they discover that there is no real danger for them, they refuse to be frightened even by gun shots and only gibber and howl the more when shots are fired. Let nobody therefore imagine that the Ashram has not considered or left any method of dealing with the nuisance untried. But none of the methods that I have known up to now is free from *himsa*. Whilst therefore I would welcome any practical suggestions from the readers of *Navajivan* for coping with this problem, let the intending advisers bear in mind what I have said above and send only such solutions as they have themselves successfully tried and cause the minimum amount of injury.

Young India, 4-10-1928

63. CURING SEX OBSESSION

It is desirable that every man and woman should carefully study the translation published in this issue of the substance of the new book¹ on marriage written by an author named Thurston. Among us, starting from boys of the age of fifteen right up to men of fifty or, in the case of girls, starting from an even younger age up to women of fifty, the belief is current that it is not possible to live without the gratification of our sexual desires. Hence both the sexes are in a continuous state of excitement. They do not trust each other and a man changes colour when he sees a woman and *vice versa*. Because of this, certain customs have become prevalent, as a result of which both men and women have lost their vitality and have become sickly and listless and our lives have been reduced to a state which is unworthy of human beings.

Even in the Shastras which came into being in such an atmosphere, such commands and beliefs are found which result in a man and a woman having to act as if they were enemies of each other. This is so because sexual desires are aroused or there is a fear of their being aroused when a member of either sex catches a glimpse of a member of the other sex.

Because of this belief and because of the customs that have been

¹ *Thurston's Philosophy of Marriage*; vide "Startling Conclusions", 27-9-1928.

forged on the basis of this belief, one's life is spent in the gratification of sexual desire or in thinking about it, with the result that life becomes as bitter as poison.

As a matter of fact, because, of his powers of discretion, man should have greater strength for renunciation and should be able to exercise more self-control than animals. Despite this, it is our everyday experience that man fails to observe the limits observed by animals in their relationship with members of the opposite sex. Ordinarily, the relationship between a man and a woman should be similar to that between a mother and a son, a sister and a brother or a father and a daughter. It is obvious that the relationship between husband and wife can be something in the nature only of an exception, and a man would be afraid of being with a woman and *vice versa* only if a brother and a sister need be thus afraid. On the contrary, in actual practice even the relationship between a brother and a sister is not free from inhibitions. And they are taught to cultivate such inhibitions.

It is absolutely necessary to save ourselves from this pitiable condition, that is, from this atmosphere polluted by sexual desire. The ignorant fear that we cannot free ourselves from this has taken deep root in us. True manliness lies in destroying it, and we should acquire the confidence that it is possible to so.

Thurston's little book helps greatly in such an effort. I for one feel that this writer's theory—that, at the root of this desire are the current beliefs regarding marriage and the customs, both in the East and in the West, based on them—is correct. For a man and a woman to sleep alone at night in one room and share a bed between them is fatal to both and is a potent means of universalizing the reign of sexual desire and making it permanent. For religious preachers and reformers to preach self-control when all married couples behave like this, is like trying to patch up the sky. It is not surprising that the measures adopted for practising self-control are futile in an atmosphere where sex is so predominant. The Shastras proclaim that the sexual desire should be indulged in only for the purpose of procreation. This commandment is being violated every moment and yet people look for other causes for the resulting diseases. This is an action similar to that of a person who, while carrying his child on his hips, searches for it in the whole town. If this fact which is clear as daylight is understood, we would do the following:

1. Men and women would take a pledge today that they would not sleep in privacy and would not engage in procreation without mutual consent. Whenever possible, they should sleep in separate rooms. Where this is not possible due to poverty, they should sleep on

separate beds, set far apart, and have some friend or relation to sleep between them.

2. Understanding parents should not give their daughter in marriage unless she is going to be provided with a separate room and a separate bed. Marriage is a kind of friendship. A man and a woman become partners in joys and sorrows, so that as soon as they are married, on the very first night they should not give in to the gratification of their sexual desire and lay the foundation of the ruin of their lives. Children should be given such training.

The new, wonderful beneficent and peaceful conception that is implied in the acceptance of Thurston's theory deserves to be pondered over and it is necessary to understand the changes that ought to be made in the prevalent ideas on marriage. We can profit from this discovery only if this can take place. If those who have been able to understand this discovery have children of their own, they should accordingly alter their children's education and the atmosphere in their own homes.

We should not require Thurston's testimony or his support in order to realize the harmful nature of the tremendous propaganda that is being carried on at present for the use of artificial methods of birth-control side by side with the gratification of sexual desire. It is surprising how this method can be adopted in India at all. It passes my understanding how educated persons suggest this method in the prevalent enervating atmosphere in this country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-9-1928

64. MUSIC IN GUJARAT

The reader is aware of the fact that the National Music Association has been functioning in Ahmedabad for the last few years. Dr. Hariprasad Desai is the President of the Association and the well-known musician Shri Narayan Moreshwar Khare, is its Secretary. This Association has been steadily carrying out its work in Gujarat. All Gujaratis are or should be aware of the fact that as compared with Bengal, Maharashtra and the Southern provinces, Gujarat lags far behind in respect of music. Not only are Gujarati men and women less musical but ordinarily even boys and girls cannot sing in tune even a simple song. It follows then that there can be no difference of opinion on the need for propagation of music. Moreover, the music that is being taught by the musician Shri Khare is fully conducive to improvement in moral standards and is steeped in the spirit of prayer.

Although this Association gets some assistance from Ahmedabad, it is not enough or adequate, either because the people have not fully realized its need or, maybe, the propaganda carried on by it has not been sufficiently popular. As both Dr. Hariprasad and the musician Shri Khare wish to see a simultaneous increase in financial assistance and in popularity and as the support from the wealthy class is meagre, they have formulated a new scheme from which I quote the following paragraph:

I hope that the citizens of Ahmedabad will welcome this scheme and that a hundred members will be enrolled immediately. Those who wish to have any further information should write to Shri Khare at the Ashram address.¹

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-9-1928

65. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

September 30, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Mahadev gave me your message. But as there was nothing definite to say and as I have been overwhelmed with work in connection with the Ashram, I did not write to you before now.

Mahadev tells me that you want me to attend the All-India Congress Committee's meeting. What shall I do there? What can I do? I know that that part of the national work is also useful, but my heart has gone out of it and I become more and more inclined to give my time to what is concisely understood as constructive work. I do not mention khadi alone, because I am giving such attention as I can to other items of constructive work not even mentioned in the Congress programme. And I see that everywhere strength of mind has got to be evoked and to the extent that it is, the power of resistance is developed. Lucknow seems evidently to have left the masses untouched. Today riots are going on in Gujarat which never before knew Hindu-Muslim rioting. News has just arrived that a brave Ashram lad was nearly done to death yesterday. Whilst he was in a press building, the goondas broke into that building, indiscriminately assaulted every-

¹ Not translated here. The scheme was to popularize Indian music, both vocal and instrumental, by arranging a weekly concert covering various *ragas*, and holding it at various times in the morning, in the evening or in the night, according as a *raga* demanded it. It was to start functioning after a hundred members had been enrolled at an annual fee of Rs. 12.

one who was in it and then set fire to it. A noted *Vakil* of Godhra was fatally wounded and Waman Rao who is a member of the Bombay Council and whom you know was seriously assaulted. Every day some fresh rioting news comes from some place or other.

I know that in spite of all this, the constitution-building work must be done. I only want to tell you that these riots largely unfit me for such work. Indeed, I am contemplating absence even from the Congress if you could permit me to remain away. There is a double reason: the prevailing atmosphere and the decision of the Calcutta Committee to copy the Madras type of Exhibition.¹ The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association has decided to abstain from being represented at that Exhibition. Much though I feel the error in using Madras Exhibition as a type, I do not want to criticize it in the public. If I go to Calcutta, my presence will either embarrass the Committee or my silence will embarrass me.

I have now given you what is today oppressing my mind. You will now decide firstly, whether you want me for the All-India Congress Committee in Calcutta and secondly, whether you want me to attend the Congress in December.

You and Vithalbai worked wonders in Simla.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13695

66. A LETTER

[September, 1928]³

DEAR SISTER,

He who wishes to follow truth will endure everything in patience. When we are firm and remain unbending in our firmness, opposition by others cannot last long. It subsides after some time. That is what is meant when we say that untruth is non-existent. Un-truth is not constant. It changes its form from moment to moment, while truth is constant, and abides in its essence for ever. Knowing this, you should keep patience even if confined to the home. One's test lies in so remaining patient. Mother-in-law's and father-in-law's anger and opposition have to be overcome by courtesy and gentleness and by service.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 325/72

¹ *Vide* "The National Congress"

67. INTERVIEW TO W. K. HALL¹

[Before *October*, 1928]

Mr. Hall . . . tells how he presented a series of questions to Mr. Gandhi, the first of which referred to “the choice of a life career” which would “make the greatest contribution to society”. On this point, Mr. Gandhi said:

The vital consideration is not so much the choice of one or another profession as the achieving of self-realization. . . . In facing the problem of a career, a man should emphasize, above all else, the spiritual aspects of life. With this uppermost in his thoughts, he should test his own potentialities, discover how he can best meet the peculiar needs of the local community in which he finds himself, and apply himself to meeting those needs to the utmost of his ability.

Q. What relation should religion and character bear to education in our present-day programme?

A. Education, character and religion should be regarded as convertible terms. There is no true education which does not tend to produce character, and there is no true religion which does not determine character. Education should contemplate the whole life. Mere memorizing and book-learning is not education. I have no faith in the so-called systems of education which produce men of learning without the backbone one of character.

What fitting substitute can the Western nations find for militarism?

Militarism is essentially self-assertion. I should therefore substitute for self-assertion self-abnegation.

But what is meant by the term “self-abnegation”?

The sense in which Christ understood it: “He who loseth his life shall find it.”

What is the way out of the present seemingly hopeless antagonism between religious factions in all parts of the world?

Charity. We must learn toleration and respect for others. Every religion in some measure satisfies the spiritual needs of men. If a religious act, such as tomtoming, annoys me, I should not try to have it prohibited, but should realize that it ministers to other people’s needs, and remove myself from the scene of disturbance.

I have ceased to declare myself publicly on this issue. My views are well known. As the French proverb has it, “He who excuses himself accuses himself”. I believe that by maintaining silence, my message is more forcibly conveyed than by constant admonition.

¹ Of the *North American Review*. The interview took place in the Ashram at Ahmedabad.

There is, however, no need of despairing of this or any other issue where the right is involved. The world is moving on the right course. When you consider that our mortal lives are mere specks in relation to the whole of time, you may appreciate that the world may be progressing, even when progress is not apparent. I am supremely hopeful.

The Indian Review, October, 1928

68. SPEECH ON ANNIE BESANT'S BIRTHDAY, AHMEDABAD

October 1, 1928

Speaker after speaker paid glowing tributes to Dr. Besant, whose 82nd birthday was celebrated here this evening; Mahatma Gandhi presided.

Gandhiji observed that they could celebrate Dr. Besant's birthday properly only if they followed in her footsteps. She had always put her precepts into practice and had the courage of her convictions. There was indomitable will and unflinching determination in her utterances.

Gandhiji asked the gathering to follow Dr. Besant's simplicity of life and her power of introspection. He declared:

If you keep that same will-power and determination even in small things, you will achieve great things. India wants swaraj, but where is her fitness? She is in chains and only when you break those chains and become fit for it will you get swaraj, and then no power on earth can resist her.

It was Dr. Besant, declared Mahatmaji, who bridged the gulf between religion and politics. Bereft of religion politics would be like a body without soul. Without religion swaraj would be of no avail. It was Dr. Besant, concluded Gandhiji, who had awakened India from her deep slumber. To Dr. Besant there was nothing impossible in this world. Determination, simplicity, sacrifice and penance—these were the chief characteristics in her life; and Gandhiji fervently appealed to young men of India to take a vow to put these into practice in their lives.

The Hindu, 2-10-1928

69. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 2, 1928

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

Your yarn is better than before, but it is not yet up to the mark. You must get someone from Kripalani's Ashram¹ to show you the

¹ Gandhi Ashram, Banaras

proper way or come here to learn.

With reference to the Benares incident¹, I have purposely omitted it as many other interesting chapters of my life. Indeed as I proceed with the chapters, my embarrassment increases, because the chief actors are still alive and they are much before the public. I sometimes almost feel that I should now cease writing the further chapters and yet dare not do it till I have reached the special session of 1920². Of course I myself regard that event in Benares as one of the proud events of my life. I was really unprepared for it, and I do not yet know where I got the strength to stand the trial. I can say about so many incidents in my life "Thy faith has made thee whole."

I duly received the cheque sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
SEVASHRAMA, BENARES CANTONMENT
From a microfilm: S.N. 13538

70. LETTER TO DR. P. C. RAY

October 2, 1928

DEAR DR. RAY,

Here is the series of articles contributed to *Young India* by Prof. C. N. Vakil on India's poverty.³ Prof. Vakil wrote to me saying that you wanted the series. It took some time in collecting the articles as some of the issues containing the articles were not easily available.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. C. RAY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13539

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Benares Hindu University", In his letter dated September 20, Sri Prakasa had said: "I was eagerly expecting a chapter in your autobiography on the laying of the foundation-stone of the Benares Hindu University and your putting all the princes to flight as you declared, 'Princes, go and sell your jewels', in your speech. I 'complained' of the omission to Seth Jamnalal. He said I should write to you. I do so in the hope that that beautiful chapter may still come and the great incident recorded for ever."

² Of the Indian National Congress held at Calcutta

³ *Vide* "Notes", 12-7-1928, sub-title, "Are We Getting Poorer?".

71. LETTER TO NANAKCHAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 2, 1928

MY DEAR NANAKCHAND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I am glad that you are doing well. You must now become strong, healthy and hardy. Though you have got there access to all the luxuries of life, you must rigorously deny them to yourself and evolve a strong will and a strong constitution before you think of coming here again. You have seen something of the Ashram life. You can practise there whatever has commended itself to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NANAKCHAND, B.A.,
C/O SHAMLAL, ADVOCATE, ROHTAK

From a microfilm: S.N. 13540

72. LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT

October 2, 1928

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I have the note signed by you as Secretary of the Madras Committee formed to support the report of the All-parties Conference at Lucknow. My sympathies are all with you in your endeavour, which I know will cost you much time and trouble; but I am sure that the time and trouble given to popularizing the report will not be lost. For, having at last got a document with the imprimatur of all parties, it will be a great national tragedy if the report is not acclaimed by the public.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

DR. BESANT
ADYAR, MADRAS
[PS.]

Wish you many returns of the day.¹

M.K.G.

From a photostat: S.N. 13699

¹ Dr. Annie Besant's 82nd birthday fell on October 1.

73. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA AND KANTI

[October 2, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

I have your letter and Kanti's. I was very happy. You did very well in supplying milk. We wish to overcome hatred through love. Give me detailed news about Kanti from time to time.

CHI. KANTI,

You acted in a wonderful manner. Let your heart be always as tender as you showed it this time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2681

74. EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

[On or before October 3, 1928]²

Mahatma Gandhi has written a letter to Mr. Kalyanji, Congress worker of Surat, about the Surat riots. Gandhiji says that he does not feel aggrieved that Kaviti³ (a Congress volunteer) was wounded in the riot, but that he feels that he has no strength at all to render any help in such riots. Gandhiji observes:

But I have been sustaining my life in the hope that from such weakness new strength will arise.

Gandhiji requests Mr. Kalyanji to send him daily reports and asks him not to be angry with Mahomedans even mentally. Gandhiji concludes:

Whenever humanity is mad, it acts in the same way. If we but keep cool, we will achieve something some day.

The Hindu, 5-10-1928

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,

October 3, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your wire. I had your postcard too. Did you get mine? I was glad you were able to wire "very well". I was a bit anxious. You will know all about Kanti Parekh from Prabhudas. Please tell him I

¹ From the postmark

² The report appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad, October 3".

³ Perhaps, 'Kanti'; *vide* the preceding item.

have his letter. I must not reply today. The Udyog Mandir resolution was accepted by the meeting but much yet remains to be done.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

C/O PRABHUDAS GANDHI, SHAILA KHADI SHALA, ALMORA, U.P.

From the original: C.W. 5310. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8200

76. LETTER TO BABAN GOKHALE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You know that the Depressed Class friends have been intending to build a hall and a hostel as also a school for Depressed Class children. They came to me when I was convalescing at Juhu. I told them that I would gladly interest myself in the matter if they raised some money themselves and I told them too that I would endeavour to beg some money myself. They made many attempts more or less successful and they showed me many draft copies of the trust-deed necessary for the purpose. The latest I enclose herewith. They leave me to suggest the names of other trustees beyond two from among themselves. The names of the two are Sjt. Ramachandra Satvaji Nikalje and Sjt. Jayaram Tabaji Gaikwad. I would like you to interest yourself in this matter. Go through the whole thing yourself, see the site, meet all the principal members and then advise me. I would like you also to become the Secretary of the trust and one of the trustees. You may suggest to me the other names. I would like you to see Sir Purushottamdas and ask him whether he has promised to give Rs. 5,000 and whether he will give that money and become one of the trustees. Suggest some other names also to me. I would myself suggest Sjt. Gokulbhai Bhatt of the Rashtriya School and Kishorelal Mashruwala, Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale, Seth Jamnalal Bajaj; Sjts. Jerajani and Yeshwant Prasad Desai. That would become a business-like trust. Sir Purushottamdas can become the Chairman. If Mr. Jayakar joins, he will be a good addition. But you may omit these names altogether and make your own original suggestions. I have in mind Rameshwar Birla. He may not consent to be one of the trustees though he has given me ample funds for this class of work, and for this very work too I expect from him a fairly good sum if I can convince him that this would be a living trust and that you or some person like you

would act as the Secretary. More you will ascertain from Sjt. Bhonsle who carries this letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BABAN GOKHALE
GIRGAUM, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14736

77. LETTER TO FULSINH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 3, 1928

BHAI FULSINHJI,

I have your letter. I thank you for writing to me immediately what you know about the monkeys. Have you made sure that in both cases the nuisance can be stopped? Kindly make still more detailed inquiry and let me know.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 227

78. MISTAKEN HUMANITY?

Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is rightly accepted as the truest man of Karachi. Almost every good public movement there claims him as its own. He devotes practically the whole of his time to public movements. He is one of the best representatives of theosophy. His honesty and independence are as unquestioned as his patriotism. When therefore such a man commits an error of judgement or runs counter to public opinion, his friends feel sore at heart. Sjt. Jamshed Mehta, who is the President of the Karachi Municipality, seems to me to have committed an error of judgement. Though a lover of khadi he recently felt called upon to move on behalf of an absentee member a resolution about khadi which drew forth very strong opposition from the members. Another matter was his attitude about a product that has been introduced from Europe into India as vegetable ghee.

Many common friends have drawn my attention to the controversy that has been going on in Karachi on these topics and invited me to express my own views on them, I suppose, in the hope that they may either influence the President who knows my regard for him, or if they do not influence him, may at least prevent some of the Karachi public from being misled into wrong action owing to what the

correspondents consider to be the erroneous views of the popular President. Whether my views produce any such influence or not, opinions on these questions of Sjt. Jamshed Mehta deserve a patient and respectful examination.

I

He tells me that he moved the khadi resolution in order to test the feeling of the Municipality and withdrew it when he saw that the members were opposed to it. I copy the resolution and the argument from the local Press:

This Corporation resolves to cancel its resolution No. 304 dated 2nd July, 1924 because compulsory purchase and use of hand-spun and handwoven khaddar *in all cases* has frequently resulted in pure waste of Municipal money in different departments of the Municipality.

In moving the above resolution, the President at the outset assured the house that he himself was actually in favour of popularizing the use of khadi but during the last three years the Corporation had spent no less than one lakh of rupees for encouraging this cottage industry but his honest opinion was that the poor menials wearing khadi supplied by the Corporation were undergoing great hardships. The Councillors were doing great injustice to themselves and to the ratepayers by spending such an enormous amount on khadi which did the wearers little good. It was really a cruelty to ask the sweepers to wear this heavy cloth and go in the streets. Moreover white khadi became dirty soon and the poor peons had to spend lot of money for washing. The colour was tried but found useless. The Corporation could give only two suits and they had to suffer much for keeping them clean. The President emphatically observed: "I tell you it is really a cruelty. We have spent nearly a lakh of rupees but Rs. 85,000 is really wasted. Our purpose has not been served. Unless and until we give them a better and lighter khadi of a superior quality at double the present cost, we should not think of giving khadi suits. The stuff we are now giving our peons is enough to bring tears in one's eyes."

Let us examine this argument. In judging the Municipal employees as he did by his own standard, I feel that the President has done the employees and the cause of khadi a serious injustice. His judgement is very like that of a delicate lady judging the appetite of her weather-beaten guests by her own or like that of an ant measuring out a few particles of flour to the elephant and feeling that she had meted out to her guest an exact measure—we know that the measure in each case would be false. The delicate lady and the ant would be right in their measure if they had guests of the same species finding themselves in the same circumstances.

In the Karachi case, the measure adopted by the President is wrong because the Municipal employees have not been delicately

brought up like the mover of the resolution. The President's measure is doubly false, first because the sweepers do not need the same fineness in their dress material as the President and secondly because they do not want the same style of dress which educated Indians have from fear, ignorance or ambition imitated from the rulers. I venture to suggest that the Councillors should revise their notions of decency and equip their employees with garments of a style in keeping with the climate and the manners of the country. They need not then fear to use the coarsest khadi. And they will save Municipal money, promote the comfort of the employees, revive true art and will at the same time serve the poorest of their countrymen whom they cannot reach save through khadi. If the President would do unto the employees as he would that they should do unto him, let him for a moment step into their shoes and see how he would feel and his measure would be right.

But assuming that the employees must have an unnatural uniform in order to suit Municipal vanity, it is not difficult to pick up fine khadi nowadays if the Municipality will pay the price, nor is it impossible to have khaki-coloured khadi for the purpose.

The cheapest and the most patriotic method will be to train the girls and the boys of the Municipal schools and for the Councillors to train themselves to spin fine yarn and have it woven locally. The other citizens will then copy the patriotic and industrious example of the Councillors and if say one-third Karachi devotes only half an hour to philanthropic spinning, there would be many times more than enough khadi to clothe the employees.

One valid objection may be taken to this course being adopted, namely that khadi thus produced will not support the paupers in whose interest it has been recommended to public corporations. Whilst the objection is sound so far as it goes, it must not be forgotten that if any city takes up spinning in the manner suggested by me, it will be very substantial though indirect service of pauper India in that the moral effect of such sacrificial spinning will be so pervading that there will be produced a spinning atmosphere that would make the irresponsive masses take to it for supplementing their present income which is admitted to be altogether inadequate for human sustenance. Where the average daily income is less than seven pice, the addition of even one pice per day will be a princely addition.

But this may be treated as a counsel of perfection not worthy of consideration by practical business men. Anyway I know that the idealist President will not dismiss my suggestion quite so summarily. But for those who will not seriously and scientifically organize

home-spinning in the manner suggested, I submit that no expense incurred for khadi need be considered as waste, no discomfort suffered on its account too much, when it is borne in mind that every pice spent upon khadi goes directly into the pockets of the needy and that even of this at least 85 per cent goes into the pockets of the poorest artisans including the semistarved spinners.

But says the President:

Why not supply the employees with uniform made of swadeshi mill cloth and save over sixty per cent of the price paid for khadi?

This is an argument I had least expected from Sjt. Jamshed Mehta the friend of the poor. Surely, if every Municipality gave a bounty of 60 per cent to khadi, it would not be wrong to do so assuming that it had the power so to do.

And I have repeatedly shown in these pages that there can be no comparison between khadi and mill-cloth even as there can be none between the home-made chapati, however costly it may be and troublesome to make, and cheap, easily prepared machine made biscuit. Mill-cloth needs no protection or patronage from the public in the sense that khadi does. Indian mill-cloth gets preference as it ought to when khadi is unavailable at any cost, when machine-made cloth becomes a necessity and when the choice lies only between foreign cloth and swadeshi mill-cloth. Khadi it is clear must displace both. Khadi has no established market like mill-cloth. It has not even become as yet a bazaar article. Every yard of khadi bought means at least eighty-five per cent in the mouths of the starving and the poor ones of India. Every yard of mill-cloth bought means more than 75 per cent in the pockets of the capitalists and less than 25 per cent in the pockets of the labourers who are never helpless, who are well able to take care of themselves, and who never starve or need starve in the sense that the helpless millions starve for whose sake khadi has been conceived. Indeed I should be surprised if the Municipal employees, whose supposed discomfort owing to wearing coarse khadi has moved the humanitarian Sjt. Jamshed Mehta to action, would not, if they were informed of the great national importance of khadi, themselves prefer it to swadeshi mill-cloth however comfortable the latter may be to wear. Khadi in my opinion is cheap at any cost *so long as it functions to find work for and through work feed the millions.*

II

Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is not only a humanitarian, he is an ardent vegetarian and dares to incur the wrath of friends for the sake of his principles. He has somehow come to the conclusion that the product known as vegetable ghee which enterprising foreign manufacturers

have introduced into the Indian market is preferable to what passes as genuine ghee but what is according to him almost always adulterated with animal fats. Though I yield to none in my enthusiasm for vegetarianism and personally always avoid the bazaar ghee and would, if I could get some medical encouragement or could summon sufficient strength of mind, avoid even goat's milk ghee, I could never bring myself to use the chemically doctored vegetable product which is generally palmed off on the gullible public as ghee.

So far as I have been able to examine medical authorities, they show that there is no effective vegetable substitute for ghee or animal fats, these being rich in vitamin A which they say is absolutely necessary for a person to keep in good health. We therefore arrive at this (for vegetarians) painful conclusion that whilst Sat adulterated ghee is bad from the vegetarian standpoint, from the medical it is harmless. The only proper course for jealous food reformers like Sjt. Jamshed Mehta is to move heaven and earth to ensure a never failing supply of pure ghee and to that end I invite him to join the Goseva Sangha if he has no other and more expeditious method of reaching the common goal. Let him municipalize the milk and ghee supply of Karachi and run an efficient Municipal dairy. Vegetable ghee deserves only to be boycotted at all cost. For it is itself often adulterated and unlike adulterated ghee equally often injurious to health being chemically treated and in almost every case it is worthless as a food. In this country which abounds in oil seeds, the fresh seed oils are infinitely superior to the prepared vegetable fats whose basis is mostly coconut. Everyone in India can prepare for himself good vegetable ghee from an undried cocoanut which can be procured cheap in any bazaar.

Young India, 4-10-1928

79. SPINNING IN ANCIENT INDIA

Sjt. C. Balaji Rao of Coimbatore, the indefatigable khadi lover, sends me the following interesting extracts¹ which he has copied from Dr. Shamashastri's learned translation of Kautilya's Arthashastra (period 321-296 B.C.). These extracts, besides giving much valuable information on the manners of our countrymen during that period, show that spinning was a State concern as it should be today. The inexhaustible man-power that is running to waste in the country merely awaits utilization for want of organization.

Young India, 4-10-1928

¹ Not reproduced here

80. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 4, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I cannot trace your previous letter. With reference to yours of the 27th ultimo I see that you will be free from the relief work at the latest at the end of this month I know that you have work for you in Sind, and I know too that you will make your presence felt, no matter where you are working. The only question is what should be your final choice. Of course I had set my mind upon you as the Secretary for the All-India Suppressed Class Association to be formed. But *I* cannot guide you in this matter. Your own instinct must be the best guide. After all *you* must make the choice, and therefore you must choose that work which is most to your liking and for which you may consider yourself to be the most fitted. If Sind needs you and you feel that you should bury yourself in Sind, I do not mind it; only you must make your final choice in so far as it is humanly possible.

I note what you say about your daughter. I do not like the thing overmuch. But I am sure that you have done the best that was possible in the circumstances. If it was not tragic, I should have a hearty laugh over your considering the expense of Rs. 2,000 a little thing. We poor people of the new age consider Rs. 10 a trifle too much. Ramdas's marriage cost me probably one rupee, that is, one or two cocoanuts and two *taklis* for the bride and the bridegroom, two copies of the *Gita* and two copies of the *Bhajanavali*. Rs. 2,000 in Gujarat will be considered a fairly large sum even outside the Ashram limits. I do not think that even Jannalalji spent Rs. 2,000 over Kamala's wedding two years ago. But I know that if I measured Sind by the Gujarat footrule or the footrule of the new age, it would be a hopelessly false measurement. I suppose, for you, it is progress from perhaps Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 2,000, and if you were to go from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 20, you would perhaps have to renounce your mother-in-law and to have a divorce from your wife. Considered from that point of view, Rs. 2,000 is perhaps not a bad bargain.

I hope you all keep good health.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. NARAIN DAS MALKANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 888

81. LETTER TO D. B. KRISHNAMMA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 4, 1928

MY DEAR KRISHNAMMA,

I was delighted to receive the album and the frame. Some of the reproductions are very striking. You will show me the originals when, if ever, I come to Rajahmundry.

I hope you are keeping quite well.

Yours sincerely

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI D. B. KRISHNAMMA
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14787

82. MESSAGE TO LAHORE STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

[Before October 5, 1928]¹

Do not fear Government or any other power that may Come in your way. GO forward and build a strong link between yourselves and the toiling millions who do not know even the meaning of the word 'education'.

The Hindustan Times. 7-10-1928

83. TELEGRAM TO ANNIE BESANT²

[October 5, 1928]

DR. BESANT

YOUR WIRE. AM CONVINCED IT WILL BE DISASTROUS IF NEHRU CONSTITUTION BREAKS DOWN FOR WANT COUNTRY'S SUPPORT WHICH CAN BE GIVEN WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO ATTEMPTS MADE REALIZE INDEPENDENCE GOAL. WHILST I AGREE THAT MAXIMUM AGREEMENT AMONG PARTIES NOT ALWAYS ESSENTIAL WE SHOULD STRIVE FOR

¹ The message appeared under the date-line "Lahore, October 5". The conference was to meet at Lahore on October 6.

² In reply to her telegram received at Sabarmati on October 5, which read: "Srinivasa Iyengar interview Free Press calls on Congressmen keep aloof from All-Parties Conference ground independence not accepted goal in draft resolution. Expresses disbelief in working for maximum agreement among political parties. Feel that clear lead by you for immediate publication essential for success. Tomorrow's conference started solely strengthen hands executive Lucknow Conference."

IT IN MATTERS LIKE THIS WHERE NO NATIONAL INTEREST IS COMPROMISED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13700

84. LETTER TO SHANKARBHAI MANEKLAL DESAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 5, 1928

BHAI SHANKARBHAI¹,

I have your letter. Give this message from me to all who may come on the Rentia Baras day² that if they want to perpetuate Haribhai's memory in Kapadwanj they should perpetuate the work that he did. Whatever the difficulties none of the activities started by him should be abandoned or neglected.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desaine, p. 82

*85. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU*³

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
[*October 6, 1928*]

MOTILAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

YOUR WIRE. DOCTOR BESANT ALSO WIRED. SENT FULL
REPLY⁴ YESTERDAY. HOPE ALL WILL GO
WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13702

¹ Brother of Harilal M. Desai. He established the Sevasangh at Kapadwanj in memory of Harilal Desai who had passed away in July, 1927. For details *vide* also "Death of a Satyagrahi", 7-8-1927

² Literally, 'Spinning-wheel 12th,' Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram era; the day was celebrated by non-stop spinning.

³ In reply to his telegram (S.N. 13799) dated October 5, which read: "Srinivasa Iyengar improperly interfering with Madras Provincial All-Parties Conference Mrs. Besant holding tomorrow by calling upon Congressmen keep aloof as independence resolution not accepted. Conference called simply to adopt Lucknow decisions as maximum agreement reached cannot possibly compromise Congress. Srinivasa declared disbelief in working for maximum agreement. Kindly wire to him to desist. Have wired Ansari and am issuing Press Statement."

⁴ *Vide* the preceding item.

86. TELEGRAM TO T. R. PHOOKAN¹

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
October 6, 1928

T. R. PHOOKAN

GAUHATI

BEING TOO OVERWORKED REPLY. SUGGEST YOUR APPROACHING
MONEYED CONGRESSMEN.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13549

87. 'WHAT ARE WE TO DO?'²

Two weeks ago I wrote in *Navajivan* a note on the tragedy in Godhra, where Sjt. Purushottam Shah bravely met his death at the hands of his assailants, and gave the note the heading "HinduMuslim Fight in Godhra"³. Several Hindus did not like the heading and addressed angry letters asking me to correct it. I found it impossible to accede to their demand. Whether there is one victim or more, whether there is a free fight between the two communities, or whether one assumes the offensive and the other simply suffers, I should describe the event as a fight if the whole series of happenings were the result of a state of war between the two communities. Whether in Godhra or in other places, there is today a state of war between the two communities. Fortunately the countryside is still free from the war fever which is mainly confined to towns and cities, where, in some form or other, fighting is continually going on. Even the correspondents who have written to me about Godhra do not seem to deny the fact that the happenings arose out of the communal antagonisms that existed there.

If the correspondents had simply addressed themselves to the heading, I should have satisfied myself with writing to them privately and written nothing in *Navajivan* about it. But there are other letters in which the correspondents have vented their ire on different counts. A volunteer from Ahmedabad who had been to Godhra writes:

You say that you must be silent over these quarrels. Why were you not

¹ In reply to addressee's telegram (S.N. 13543) which read: "My letter from Simla regarding decree for Rs. 13,500 against us for Congress dues. Please devise means to save."

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan* 7-10-1928. This is a translation by Mahadev Desai.

³ *Vide* "My Notes", 20-9-1928.

silent over the Khilafat, and why did you exhort us to join the Muslims? Why are you not silent about your principles of ahimsa? How can you justify your silence when the two communities are running at each other's throats and the Hindus are being crushed to atoms? How does ahimsa come there? I invite your attention to two cases:

A Hindu shopkeeper thus complained to me: "Mussalmans purchase bags of rice from my shop, often never paying for them. I cannot insist on payment, for fear of their looting my godowns. I have therefore to make an involuntary gift of about 50 to 75 maunds of rice every month."

Others complained: "Mussalmans invade our quarters and insult our women in our presence, and we have to sit still. If we dare to raise a protest, we are done for. We dare not even lodge a complaint against them."

What would you advise in such cases? How would you bring your ahimsa into play? Or even here would you prefer to remain silent?

These and similar questions have been answered in these pages over and over again, but as they are still being raised, I had better explain my views once more at the risk of repetition.

Ahimsa is not the way of the timid or the cowardly. It is the way of the brave, ready to face death. He who perishes sword in hand is no doubt brave, but he who faces death without raising his little finger and without flinching is braver. But he who surrenders his rice bags for fear of being beaten is a coward and no votary of ahimsa. He is innocent of ahimsa. He, who for fear of being beaten, suffers the women of his household to be insulted, is not manly but just the reverse. He is fit neither to be a husband nor a father, nor a brother. Such people have no right to complain.

These cases have nothing to do with the inveterate enmity between Hindus and Mussalmans. Where there are fools there are bound to be knaves, where there are cowards there are bound to be bullies, whether they are Hindus or Mussalmans. Such cases used to happen even before the outbreak of these communal hostilities. The question here therefore is not how to teach one of the two communities a lesson or how to humanize it, but how to teach a coward to be brave.

If the thinking sections of both the communities realize the cowardice and folly at the back of the hostilities, we can easily end them. Both have to be brave, both have to be wise. If both or either deliberately get wise, theirs will be the way of non-violence. If both fight and learn wisdom only by bitter experience, the way will be one of violence. Either way, there is no room for cowards in a society of men, i.e., in a society which loves freedom. Swaraj is not for cowards.

It is idle therefore to denounce ahimsa or to be angry with me on the strength of the cases cited. Ever since my experience of the

distortion of ahimsa in Bettiah in 1921,¹ I have been repeating over and over again that he who cannot protect himself or his nearest and Dearest or their honour by non-violently facing death, may and ought to do so by violently dealing with the oppressor. He who can do neither of the two is a burden. He has no business to be the head of a family. He must either hide himself, or must rest content to live forever in helplessness and be prepared to crawl like a worm at the bidding of a bully.

I know only one way—the way of ahimsa. The way of *himsa* goes against my grain. I do not want to cultivate the power to inculcate *himsa*. As ahimsa has no place in the atmosphere of cowardice prevailing today, I must needs be reticent over the riots we hear of from day to day. This exhibition of my helplessness cannot be to my liking. But God never ordains that only things that we like should happen and things that we do not like should not happen. In spite of the helplessness, the faith sustains me that He is the Help of the helpless, that He comes to one's succour only when one throws himself on His mercy. It is because of this faith that I cherish the hope that God will one day show me a path which I may confidently commend to the people. With me the conviction is as strong as ever that willy-nilly Hindus and Mussalmans must be friends one day. No one can say how and when that will happen. The future is entirely in the hands of God. But He has vouchsafed to us the ship of Faith which alone can enable us to cross the ocean of Doubt.

Young India, 11-10-1928

88. THE TANGLE OF AHIMSA²

My article "The Fiery Ordeal"³ has brought down upon me the ire of many an incensed critic. Some of them seem to have made the violence of their invective against me a measure of their solicitude for ahimsa. Others, as if to test my capacity for ahimsa, have cast all decorum and propriety to the winds and have poured upon me the lava of their unmeasured and acrimonious criticism, while still some others have felt genuinely grieved at what seems to them a sad aberration on my part and have written to me letters to unburden their grief to me. I have not the time to reply to all the letters that have been sent to me, nor, do I feel it to be necessary. As for the acrimonious

¹ *Vide* "Dyerism in Champaran", 15-12-1920

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 7-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

³ *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal"

letters, the only possible purpose that they can serve is to provide me with some exercise in forbearance and non-violence. Leaving aside such letters, therefore, I shall here try to examine some arguments that I have been able to glean from other and soberly written communications.

I am always prepared to give my best consideration to letters that are brief and to the point and are neatly written out in ink in a clear legible hand. For I claim to be a humble seeker after truth and am conducting *Navajivan* not merely to teach but also to learn.

To come now to the objections and the counsels addressed to me by my correspondents they may be summed up as follows:

1. You should now retire from the field of ahimsa.
2. You should confess that your views about ahimsa are imported from the West.
3. You must not express views even when they are correct if there is a possibility of their being misused.
4. If you believe in the law of karma then your killing of the calf was a vain attempt to interfere with the operation of that law.
5. What warrant had you for believing that the calf was bound not to recover? Have you not heard of cases of recovery after the doctors have pronounced them to be hopeless?

Whether I should retire or not from the field of ahimsa, or for the matter of that from any other field, is essentially and solely for me to judge. A man can give up a right, but he may not give up a duty without being guilty of a grave dereliction. Unpopularity and censure are often the lot of a man who wants to speak and practise the truth. I hold it to be the bounded duty of a satyagrahi openly and freely to express his opinions which he holds to be correct and of benefit to the public even at the risk of incurring popular displeasure and worse. So long as I believe my views on ahimsa to be correct, it would be a sin of omission on my part not to give expression to them.

I have nothing to be ashamed of if my views on ahimsa are the result of my Western education. I have never tabooed all Western ideas, nor am I prepared to anathematize everything that comes from the West as inherently evil. I have learnt much from the West and I should not be surprised to find that I had learnt something about ahimsa too from the West. I am not concerned what ideas of mine are the result of my foreign contacts. It is enough for me to know that my views on ahimsa have now become a part and parcel of my being.

I have publicly discussed my views in the matter of the calf, not necessarily because I believe them to be correct, but because they are

to the best of my knowledge based on pure ahimsa and as such likely to throw light on the tangled problem of ahimsa.

As for the problem of the monkeys, I have discussed it publicly, because I do not know my duty in the matter, and I am anxious to be enlightened. Let me assure the readers that my effort has not been in vain and I have already received several helpful suggestions from my correspondents. Let me further assure them that I would not proceed to the extreme length of killing unless I am absolutely driven to it. It is because I am anxious to be spared this painful necessity that I have invited suggestions for dealing with these persistent and unwelcome guests.

I firmly believe in the law of karma, but I believe too in human endeavour. I regard as the *summum bonum* of life the attainment of salvation through karma by annihilating its effects by detachment. If it is a violation of the law of karma to cut short the agony of an ailing animal by putting an end to its life, it is no less so to minister to the sick or try to nurse them back to life. And yet if a man were to refuse to give medicine to a patient or to nurse him on the ground of karma, we would hold him to be guilty of inhumanity and *himsa*. Without there-fore entering into a discussion about the eternal controversy regarding predestination and free will I will simply say here that I deem it to be the highest duty of man to render what little service he can.

I admit that there was no guarantee that the calf would not recover. I have certainly known cases that were pronounced by doctors to be hopeless and were cured afterwards. But even so I hold that a man is bound to make the utmost use of his reason, circumscribed and poor as undoubtedly it is, and to try to penetrate the mists of ignorance by its light and try to act accordingly. And that is precisely what we do in countless cases in our everyday life. But strangely paradoxical as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that the moment we come to think of death the very idea frightens us out of our wits and entirely paralyses our reasoning faculty, although as Hindus we ought to be the least affected by the thought of death, since from the very cradle we are brought up on the doctrines of the immortality of the spirit and the transitoriness of the body. Even if it were found that my decision to poison the calf was wrong, it could have done no harm to the soul of the animal. If I have erred I am prepared to take the consequences of my error, but I refuse to go into hysterics because by my action I possibly cut short the painful existence of a dying calf say by a couple of hours. And the rule that I have applied to the calf I am prepared to apply in the case of my own dear ones as well. Who knows how often we bring those we love

to a premature end by our coddling, infatuation, wrong diagnosis or wrong treatment? The letters that I have received from my correspondents more than ever confirm me in my conviction that in our effusiveness over matters like this we forget the elementary duty of kindness, are led away from the path of true love, and discredit our ahimsa. The fear of death is thus the greatest obstacle in the way of our realizing the true nature of ahirnsa.

Young India, 11-10-1928

89. LETTER TO G. K. DEVDHAR¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 7, 1928

MY DEAR DEVDHAR,

This letter will serve to introduce to you Shrimati Urmila Devi who is the only surviving widowed sister of the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. Her only son is studying at the Agricultural College in Poona. In order to supervise his education and be near him, she has broken up her home in Calcutta and intends to settle down in Poona. I told her that it would be better for her and would fit in with her spirit of service if she stayed at the Seva Sadan and did some work there or stayed at Professor Karve's University, whichever she preferred or whichever was possible. I would therefore like you to discuss with Shrimati Urmila Devi the possibilities of her being able to render service and otherwise advise her. Of course she has no desire to ask you to go out of your way to accommodate her in the Seva Sadan. She would like to feel that she would really be of service to the institution if she decided to stay there at all.

At first I thought I would give a separate letter to Prof. Karve. But whilst dictating this, I thought that I would confine myself only to this letter and leave you to introduce Shrimati Urmila Devi to Prof. Karve and let her see both the institutions and make her choice, if a choice is at all open to her. And naturally what I have said regarding the Seva Sadan applies equally to Prof. Karve's Home.

I have known Shrimati Urmila Devi intimately for several years and I know how eager she is for doing some service.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13544

¹ Of the Servants of India Society

90. LETTER TO ROLAND J. WILD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I am sorry Mr. Wilson has not been able to visit Sabarmati. I am sending you a telegram tomorrow, today being Sunday, as follows:

“Your letter. You will be welcome any time. Advisable your coming Ahmedabad before going Bardoli. Letter follows.”

I expect to be in the Ashram during the whole of the month. You will be therefore welcome whenever you arrive. On Mondays I take my silence as you may be aware.

I wonder if you will stay with us at the Ashram. Ours is you may know a meagre board and extremely simple life as it may appear to you. But if you can accommodate yourself to the life of the Ashram, of course we should all be delighted to have you in our midst.

I quite agree with you that it will be better for you to visit the Ashram before going to Bardoli.

Yours sincerely,

ROLAND J. WILD, ESQ.
ASSISTANT EDITOR, “THE PIONEER”, ALLAHABAD
From a microfilm: S.N. 14463

91. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
[*October 7, 1928*]¹

CHI. RAMDAS,

Your letters serve just the purpose of giving information about the services you have rendered. I have learnt more about the causes of fever from Vallabhbhai. If the fever is not related to the wound, there is nothing to fear. You did well in saving an *anna*. But due to an oversight on my part, I spent one *anna* in posting the same letter to Manilal. That means a day’s wage of a spinner is lost. But hardly anyone atones for that. One cannot go to heaven without dying oneself. I cannot atone for my sins through representatives. I have to do it myself. The true atonement for one’s sin is not to commit that

¹ From the postmark

sin again. I have to find the remedy to make up for my negligence. In fact, I have found it out. Let us see when it bears fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
PATIDAR ASHRAM
NANPURA, SURAT

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

92. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Monday, October 8, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I receive your letters regularly. Pray do not be afraid of length. I want to know everything about you and your doings. It pleases me immensely to find you happy and well and gaining all the experience. I am glad you spoke firmly to Jethalal. It would be a good thing if he sticks to his promise.

The Ashram is settling down to the new change. It is yet too early to prophesy. Two varieties of cooking, spiced and unspiced, commenced today. I do not know the members in each division.

The clouds having dispersed, the days are very hot nowadays.

The Austrian friends¹ have now learnt carding and they insist on bringing all their slivers to me. So I am again overloaded. Chhotelal had an attack of malaria. He is better and permitted to do some work. Vimla has again got the fever.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5312. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8202

¹ Frederic and Francisca Standenath

93. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 8, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

After I wrote to you at Almora,¹ I got your wire. I am however letting that letter go to its destination. It is fairly long but there is nothing much in it.

Malarial fever is still with us. Chhotelal's bakery is ready. He has been making experiments.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5311. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8201

94. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

October 8, 1928

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

Though no one likes to lose his mother, I do not propose to send you my condolences. Your mother died happy in the thought of having brought up good and dutiful children and having lived a godly life. A death such as hers is to be envied. I hope both of you are keeping well.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3208

95. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Unrevised October 8, 1928

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am fatigued and overworked. Arrears are increasing and they worry me. Hence the delay in replying.

I was working out a solution for Hemprabha Devi and Tarini. Meanwhile came your letter about their disposal. I was unwilling to have them in the Ashram. For I knew that it did not suit her last time. And I could not hit upon another place. Tarini was none too happy in Wardha. Some place must be thought out in or near Bengal. I am no further forward even now.

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

How happy I should feel if they could go to Comilla. I expect you to conquer Abhoy Ashram even though the Pratishtan has to suffer or to die. Only, the death or the suffering must be conscious and voluntary, not¹ mechanical and forced. This reflection arises out of your remarks about Utkal. So far as I can see, various organizations will come into being as khadi progresses. It is a condition of its growth. But the central or chief provincial organization has so to shape its course that by force of character and ability, it commands attention and respect. One difficulty with the Pratishtan is that it has not many self-sacrificing volunteers. This is due to your own upbringing. Your own personal sacrifice was phenomenal and so you carried few with you from the environment that you had created in the chemical works. Your sudden change of life had to take root and grow into a big tree before it could cover saplings. That you have only now begun to do. I remember the conversation we had in Atrai, how you dispensed with volunteers and got paid men and made of the famine work a success. If your upbringing had been otherwise, you would have made of the work a success with the volunteers. Success of ahimsa depends upon the successful organization of voluntary workers. And khadi is an attempt at working out ahimsa on a fairly large scale. We will succeed if we have patience and *tapasya* enough.

I hope my meaning is clear. This letter must not put you out or dishearten you. I want it to Trace you for the future difficulties. My letter is intended to be a stimulant. When I began it, I had no notion of the length it would run to or what it was to contain.

Let Utkal be a lesson that Dr. Ray should not be taken for any fixed programme. It is really too much to expect him to go through a sustained effort in khadi. He has too many irons in the fire, too many calls upon his time and he is now not a youth. The marvel is that he is still available for tours, etc.

Why not Giridih again for Hemprabha Devi and Tarini? You must send them to a salubrious climate.

With love,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13701

¹ The source has “but”.

96. *LETTER TO CHHOTALAL TEJPAL*

October 9, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHOTALAL,

I have your letter. I have not received your hook. I will go through it when I get it. Please send to Mr. Clayton Pragji Desai's address (Box No. 5390, Johannesburg), so that I need not write.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SHRI C. TEJPAL

ARTIST, RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2587

97. *LETTER TO MOTIBHAI*

ASHRAM,

October 9, 1928

BHAI MOTIBHAI,

You have raised a relevant question. The feeling of high and low has become deeply ingrained in us. The use of the singular in speaking to persons is its least expression. The feeling is the least in the Ashram, but I see that it is there. Continue, both of you, to exercise self-restraint to the best of your ability.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/12

98. *LETTER TO HASAN ALI*

ASHRAM,

October 9, 1928

DEAR HASAN ALI,

I do not at all believe in the *Shuddhi* and *Tabligh* movements as they are being carried on today. But I have repeatedly said that if the Arya Samjists do wish to carry on *Shuddhi* nobody can stop them. Nobody can forcibly prevent anyone from doing a thing so long as that thing is not against morality.

The moment I cease to be an optimist I shall no longer be able to live. Some day the Muslims are sure to co-operate. Even today many of them are doing so.

Since you are determined, God will certainly help you to obser-

vez observe the vow of *brahmacharya*. Frugality in eating and non-stimulating food is a good external aid. The real means is heart-felt prayer.

I have read some literature of theosophy, I like its general principles, but not its occult experiments. I am unable to believe in the Jagadguru and in Krishnamurti. I am not interested in the subject.

I do not believe in the traditional practice of *shraddha*. But I do consider it right and necessary to pray for the dead as for the living. I see great confusion about the meaning of the law of karma. It only means that no action is without its effect. But new actions mix with the old and continually produce new and mixed results. And since the individual souls are intimately related to one another, their actions also are so related. Prayer is a new action producing good result.

Fasting without water certainly involves greater self-control. But from the point of view of health water is necessary. One cannot fast without water for many days. I have observed in many Muslim friends during the *roza* that they almost wipe out the merit of fasting for sixteen hours without water by eating at night anything and everything in any quantity they like. Praying for God's forgiveness does not wipe out a sin, but it purifies the soul, and if one feels genuine repentance one desists from sin in future.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/14

99. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 10, 1928

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your letter¹. Pashabhai also wrote about the same thing. I think that the matter is too trivial for you to worry over. You must dismiss it entirely from your mind.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9610

¹ Dated October 5. Raihana, daughter of Abbas Tyabji, had formed a Youth League in Baroda. Another woman was chosen President. Later the members disapproved of a certain action of the President and courteously asked her to explain it, whereupon the latter turned abusive. Some members wanted to expose her behaviour in the papers. Raihana was hesitant about taking such an action and wrote to Gandhiji for advice (S.N. 13542).

100. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 10, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

Do you know anything about this lady?

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13280

101. LETTER TO VINAYAK

ASHRAM,
October 10, 1928

BHAISHRI VINAYAK,

We cannot forcibly stop anyone from committing sin. So long as men and women feel immoral craving of the flesh such incidents will continue to take place in spite of all efforts to prevent them. The duty of you all is to live a life of self-control and continually increase the purity of the surrounding atmosphere and your own ability for service.

From a copy of the Gujarati: KusumbehN Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/15

102. LETTER TO BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

October 10, 1928

BHAI BANARSIDAS,

I have two letters from you to be answered.

I sent over for *Young India* the one about "Chocolate"², adding my note to it. I did not read the book. My note was based

¹ The enclosure to this letter is "The Widow", a story by Katherine published in a magazine. In 1921 during the foreign cloth boycott movement a poor widow, Sita, possessing a single sari—of foreign make—was threatened with leprosy if she kept it. Later demented by fear of leprosy and enforced nakedness she hanged herself.

² A collection of Hindi short stories by 'Ugra' (Pandeya Bechan Sharma) which gave rise to a controversy in Hindi circles when the addressee condemned it for obscenity. Later he retracted his condemnation and quoted from Gandhiji's letter in the second edition of that book.

solely upon your letter. I thought it was not right to make comments in this way; a book ought to be read. I finished it today. The impression I formed is not the same as yours. The purpose of the book, I think, is pure. I do not know if its impact is good or bad. The author has aroused disgust at inhuman conduct. I shall now have your letter taken off the chase.

What shall I write about Maharaj Kunvar Singhji¹? I have been thinking a lot. Writing alone will serve no purpose. Sastriji is making efforts. I am vigilant.

Only the Bihar Government can, if it chooses, do something in the case of Parbhu Singh; otherwise what can be done? I do not wish to take part in this affair.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SJT. BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2521

103. GOD IS

Correspondents often invite me to answer in these pages questions about God. That is the penalty I have to pay for what an English friend calls the God stunt in *Young India*. Whilst I am unable to notice all such questions in these columns, the following compels an answer:

I read your *Young India* of May 12, 1927, p. 149, where you write, "I think it is wrong to expect certainties in this world, where all else but God that is Truth is an uncertainty."²

Young India, p. 152: "God is long-suffering and patient. He lets the tyrant dig his own grave, only issuing grave warnings at stated intervals."³

I humbly beg to say that God is not a certainty. His goal ought to be to spread truth all round. Why does He allow the world to be populated by bad people of various shades? Bad people with their unscrupulousness flourish all round and they spread contagion and thus transmit immorality and dishonesty to posterity.

¹ Gandhiji obviously means Kunvar Maharaj Singh whose name along with Kurma V. Reddi's was being considered to succeed V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as Agent-General in South Africa

² *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. III, Ch. XXIII.

³ *Vide* "Notes", sub-title Evils of Machine-Milling, 12-5-1927

Should not God, omniscient and omnipotent as He is, know where wickedness is by His omniscience and kill wickedness by His omnipotence there and then and nip all rascality in the bud and not allow wicked people to flourish?

Why should God be long-suffering and be patient? What influence can He wield if He be so? The world goes on with all its rascality and dishonesty and tyranny.

If God allows a tyrant to dig his own grave, why should He not weed out a tyrant before his tyranny oppresses the poor? Why allow full play to tyranny and then allow a tyrant, after his tyranny has ruined and demoralized thousands of people, to go to his grave?

The world continues to be as bad as it ever was. Why have faith in that God who does not use His powers to change the world and make it a world of good and righteous men?

I know vicious men with their vices living long and healthy lives. Why' should not vicious men die early as a result of their vices?

I wish to believe in God but there is no foundation for my faith. Kindly enlighten me through *Young India* and change my disbelief into belief.

The argument is as old as Adam. I have no original answer for it. But I permit myself to state why I believe. I am prompted to do so because of the knowledge that there are young men who are interested in my views and doings.¹

There is an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. I feel It, though I do not see It. It is this unseen Power which makes Itself felt and yet defies all proof, because It is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends the senses.

But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. Even in ordinary affairs we know that people do not know, who rules or why and how he rules. And yet they know that there is a power that certainly rules. In my tour last year in Mysore I met many poor villagers and I found upon inquiry that they did not know who ruled Mysore. They simply said some god ruled it. If the knowledge of these poor people was so limited about their ruler, I, who am infinitely lesser than God than they than their ruler, need not be surprised if I do not realize the presence of God, the King of kings. Nevertheless I do feel as the poor villagers felt about Mysore that there is orderliness in the Universe, there is an unalterable Law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is not a

¹ What follows, excluding the last sentence and the stanza from Newman, was recorded on October 20, 1931, by the Columbia Broadcasting Company, London, during Gandhiji's stay in Kingsley Hall.

blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings and, thanks to the marvellous researches of Sir J. C. Bose, it can now be proved that even matter is life. That Law then which governs all life is God. Law and the Law-giver are one. I may not deny the Law or the Law-giver, because I know so little about It or Him. Even as my denial or ignorance of the existence of an earthly power will avail me nothing, so will not my denial of God and His Law liberate me from its operation; whereas humble and mute acceptance of divine authority makes life's journey easier even as the acceptance of earthly rule makes life under it easier.

I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever changing, ever dying, there is underlying all that change a living Power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing Power or Spirit is God. And since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is.

And is this Power benevolent or malevolent? I see It as purely benevolent. For I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth, truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the supreme Good.

But he is no God who merely satisfies the intellect if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. He must express Himself in every the smallest act of His votary. This can only be done through a definite realization more real than the five senses can ever produce. Sense perceptions can be, often are, false and deceptive, however real they may appear to us. Where there is realization outside the senses it is infallible. It is proved not by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within.

Such testimony is to be found in the experiences of an unbroken line of prophets and sages in all countries and climes. To reject this evidence is to deny oneself.

This realization is preceded by an immovable faith. He who would in his own person test the fact of God's presence can do so by a living faith. And since faith itself cannot be proved by extraneous evidence, the safest course is to believe in the moral government of the world and therefore in the supremacy of the moral law, the law of truth and love. Exercise of faith will be the safest where there is a clear determination summarily to reject all that is contrary to Truth and Love.

But the foregoing does not answer the correspondent's

argument. I confess to him that I have no argument to convince him through reason. Faith transcends reason. All I can advise him to do is not to attempt the impossible. I cannot account for the existence of evil by any rational method. To want to do so is to be coequal with God. I am therefore humble enough to recognize evil as such. And I call God long-suffering and patient precisely because He permits evil in the world. I know that He has no evil in Him, and yet if there is evil, He is the author of it and yet untouched by it.

I know too that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself. I am fortified in the belief by my own humble and limited experience. The purer I try to become, the nearer I feel to He to God. How much more should I be, when my faith is not a mere apology as it is today but has become as immovable as the Himalayas and as white and bright as the snows on their peaks? Meanwhile I invite the correspondent to pray with Newman who sang from experience:

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on;
Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Young India, 11-10-1928

104. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 11, 1928

I have your long letter, and I am glad you have written to me so fully. There is no cause whatsoever for losing hope. Yours is a new venture. It may therefore take time. But I do want you to add Indian music to your accomplishments, if it is at all possible to do so.

Do come again and pass a few days at the Ashram with me. Nothing can be finer than that you should be able to take to the Ashram life, but I know that it is a very difficult thing for you to do.

At present we have an Austrian couple. Wife knows both vocal and instrumental music. She seems to be very accomplished. She speaks English only indifferently. She is very fond of sacred music. How I wish you could meet her and hear her.

MISS KHURSHED NAOROJI

NAPEAN SEA ROAD, MALABAR HILLS, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13546

105. LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 11, 1928

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE,

Your letter has been in my file for a long time, but I have been helpless. It is only today whilst everybody is spinning and I have also to spin much longer than on ordinary days that I have been able to find time for overtaking the arrears of correspondence.

Your scheme is good, but reads very ambitious. Two things occur to me. You offer Rs. 75 to those who are married and Rs. 30 to those who are unmarried. I think that you should abolish the distinction, and offer the same thing to either. You may say that you will consider the cases of married people on merits. And if the wives of such people are also prepared to do the village work, stipend may be increased. You should also have a pledge from all about khadi, untouchability, temperance, etc. And instead of saying Hindi preferably, you should make Hindi compulsory. I think you should firmly refuse to take those who do not know Hindi well. You are quite right in saying that your sphere of work will be in the U.P. Why therefore burden yourself with any student who does not know Hindi well?

I am not publishing the scheme just now. In any event, you do not expect me to publish it in full. Let me know if it has already been sanctioned and in working order and if it is, I will gladly notice it in the pages of *Young India*.

I hope both of you are keeping well and doing well.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13703

106. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

October 12, 1928

MOTILAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

SORRY HEAR YOUR FEVER. WIRE CONDITION
ALSO KAMALA'S.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

107. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

October 12, 1928

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

EXPECTED LETTER RECEIVED REPUDIATING CATEGORICALLY ANY
UNDERSTANDING. BETTER COME HERE CONSIDER
FURTHER
STEPS.

BAPU

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

108. TELEGRAM TO MEERUT POLITICAL CONFERENCE

October 12, 1928

SECRETARY, POLITICAL CONFERENCE

MEERUT

SORRY UNABLE ATTEND. WISH CONFERENCE
EVERY SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

109. LETTER TO ELIZABETH KNUDSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 12, 1928.

DEAR MISS KNUDSEN,

I was delighted to receive your letter after such a long time.

I endorse your rebuke about roses. You are not aware evidently of the tremendous movement that is going on in India at the present moment for the uplift of women.

I hope you are doing and keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

MISS E. KNUDSEN

Y.W.C.A. BUILDING, KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13548

110. LETTER TO SIR M. V. JOSHI¹

October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which was received only yesterday. As I have already intimated in reply to a previous enquiry through Shrimati Saraladevi Ambalal Sarabhai, I very much regret that I shall be unable to give evidence before your Committee. I hope you will therefore please excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SIR M. V. JOSHI

AGE OF CONSENT COMMITTEE, CAMP AHMEDABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13550

111. LETTER TO R. N. SHRIVASTAVA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Evidently we look at the same thing from opposite points of view. You think that killing in self-defence is not *himsa*, whereas the killing of the calf for its own good, no matter how mistaken it might afterwards be discovered to be, is *himsa*. Here I see no meeting ground. I regard even the killing of a snake to be *himsa*. That I may not be able to avoid it, being afraid of the snake, does not make the act of destruction any the less *himsa*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RUP NARAYAN SHRIVASTAVA

C/O SHETH JAMNADAS, M.L.A., JUBBALPUR, C.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 13551

¹ In reply to his letter (S.N. 13545) dated October 9, requesting Gandhiji to give evidence before the Age of Consent Committee at his convenience during their stay at Ahmedabad from October 15 to 19. The Committee was appointed by the Government, following discussions on the Child-marriage Bill introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly, to examine and report on the question.

112. LETTER TO S. SUBRAMANIAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sending you the sandals and the *veshti*¹ you are so insistent on, deducting the postage from your donation.

With regard to the good saris and good *veshtis*, they can be had from the Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, Bombay. I do not think is any V.P. system with Malaya. You will therefore have to send them cash before they can execute the order.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SUBRAMANIAM

GOVERNMENT ENGLISH SCHOOL, SEGAMAT, JOHORE, MALAYA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13552

113. LETTER TO ISAAC SANTRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall certainly go through the pamphlet when it comes to me. But I prefer doing this kind of work in my own way. At the present moment I am averse to mixing up with any Empire thing because I distrust the Empire.

Yours sincerely,

ISAAC SANTRA, ESQ.

OFFICER-IN-CHARGE LEPROSY SURVEY

C/O POST MASTER, JAMNER, EAST KHANDESH

From a microfilm: S.N. 13553

114. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

I have your letter before reaching Prabhudas's place. It delights me to find you enjoying your travel and writing so cheerfully about it. I want you to return in full vigour and complete cheerfulness.

There are signs at the Ashram of winter approaching. The nights are now very cool and we require a fair amount of covering. Malaria

¹ Dhoti

is on the increase at the Ashram. Rajkishori is down with Sever and so is Sarada. Chimanlal and little Sarada had been down for the last three days.

As usual yesterday all the Ashram people, labourers included, had the fruit repast together. We numbered over 300. The repast consisted of dates, groundnuts, bananas and *kismis*¹.

From the original: C.W. 5313. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8203

115. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

October 12, 1928

MY DEAR BHAI,

I have your letter of well-deserved rebuke. But it was Ganesan's oversight pure and simple. The sending was not done through the Ashram. Ganesan is the publisher and he is a very careful man. But somehow or the other he forgot to send a copy² to you. Andrews got a copy or copies because he cabled.

And for your rebuke about the omission of Gabriel Isaac, I don't know that the name was omitted. I have just looked up the index to the English translation. I missed his name in the index. But of course that is no proof of the fact that the name is not to be found in the History³. But even if it is omitted, of course it is an unintentional omission. I have often talked about him and his sacrifice to the Ashram people. I often think of him and his goodness and simplicity. But I can't account for the omission, if there is an omission. I dare say that some other dear names also have been omitted quite unintentionally.

The confusion about the jails does not much worry me. These inaccuracies are bound to be found when a man with a crowded past beyond, recalls events that happened ten years before the time when he begins to recall them. Is it not enough that the substance of the History is absolutely true and that it is free from any bias? Such is the testimony given by those who have read the book. And I dare say you too will give me the same testimony.

Probably by this time you know the nature of the Memorial to be erected to the memory of Maganlal. But if you have missed that

¹ Raisins

² Of *Satyagraha in South Africa*; *vide*

³ Dated May 17, 1928; *vide* "Notes" sub-title Mill 'Khaddar'.

number of *Young India* I may tell you that it is to be a khadi museum in a specially erected building worthy of Maganlal's love for khadi and his technical knowledge. Subscriptions are coming in very slowly because of the interruption of Bardoli, which naturally absorbed the attention of those who would otherwise have paid far more liberally to the Maganlal Memorial and that was as it should have been.

I have the beautiful Dutch postcard.

All goes well at the Ashram which is undergoing several changes at the present moment. When they are fully developed you will know all about them through *Young India*. Mira has gone out touring in the spinning area. It is wonderful how she makes herself feel at home in the villages she visits. The Hindi that she has picked up is proving of good value.

At present an Austrian couple are staying here. They are extremely good people. The husband is a professor in a Medical College in Graz and the wife is a fine singer and a finer philosopher. From the commencement of their marriage they have led the life of *brahmacharya*. The merit is all the wife's. She says she never had any sexual desire. They are a wonderful couple in more ways than one.

Ramdas is in Bardoli, Devdas in Delhi. Chhaganlal is here, Mahadev, Pyarelal, Subbiah and the rest of course.

With love from us all,

Yours sincerely,

H. S. L. POLAK, EST.
42, 47 & 48 DANES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND, LONDON W.C. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 14394

116. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. You will see in your copy of *Young India* your article, "The Land of Rishis"¹.

The question of Sastri's successor is proving very troublesome. I do not know what the Government of India is doing. But I am

¹ *Vide* "An Ashram of Rishis", 21-10-1928.

getting a little nervous. It is difficult to replace Sastri and, if they use the post for favourites, all the great work that Sastri has done can be easily undone.

At the Ashram all is well except that we have the malaria of the season rather trying while it lasts.

MOHAN

From a photostat: S.N. 14409

117. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR MIRA,

I have your letter. Here is Padmaja's¹ reply to my letter. What can I do now when doctors themselves advise her not to leave the sanatorium? I shall write to her again and write to her from time to time and keep myself in touch with her. You must fulfil your engagements without any anxiety. God will take care of her, better than you and I, and use us as His instruments whenever He wills.

I hope you will keep good health during your tour. I expect to hear from you from time to time.

The political atmosphere is none too calm, none too clear. Poor Motilalji has his work cut out for him.

SHRIMATI SAROJINI NAIDU

C/O THOMAS COOK & SONS, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N.14410

118. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 12, 1928

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your letter after a long lapse of time. It was therefore doubly welcome. I hope that this finds you in better health and that if there was an operation that it was quite successful and has left no ill effects.

The Ashram is undergoing many changes at the present

¹ Addressee's daughter

moment. You will see them all described in the pages of *Young India* when the time comes. Except for malaria which is seasonal for this time of the year, everything goes well here.

Remember me to Menon when you write to him.

MRS. ESTHER MENON

From a photostat: S.N. 14411

119. LETTER TO PARAMANAND K. KAPADIA

ASHRAM,
October 13, 1928

BHAISHRI PARAMANAND,

I got your letter only yesterday. All your letters are good. They are well reasoned and are never discourteous. There can, therefore, be no question of impropriety in them. However, your letters do have one defect. They are too long for me. I have thought about most of what you say, and I would therefore grasp your point even if you put it concisely, and if I did not understand I would ask. This preface was prompted by your letter, as long as a pamphlet, placed before me by Kakasaheb nearly fifteen days ago. I have kept it in my file, so I see it every day, but being much too long it remains unanswered for want of time. Even this I do not say as criticism of you but only as an explanation of my having missed reading your previous letter. Now the reply to your letter.¹

You must have observed that I give new meaning to old words or enlarge their old meanings. I do not do that arbitrarily or to suit my purpose, but because I think it right to do so. The words of poets are inexhaustible in their meaning. The word *kavi* originally meant an enlightened person. The perfectly enlightened person is the perfect poet. If, therefore, I do not draw the right meaning of old words or sayings, I would have to waste my energy in, starting a new religion and would also be guilty of killing the souls of those words. I have realized that even words have souls. If, therefore, you wish, you can compel me to admit that I may be giving a new meaning to the word 'ahimsa'. It seems to me an exaggeration to describe 'ahimsa' as the supreme dharma in the sense you give to the word. But I have never quarrelled over the meaning of words. Hence if my purpose can be served without the word 'ahimsa', I will certainly give up its use.

Even at the time of the killing [of the calf] the risk was indeed

¹ For extracts from the addressee's letter and Gandhiji's more detailed reply, *vide* "Jain Ahimsa", 25-10-1928

there that people would draw wrong conclusions from my action. But I felt that the discernment of the true meaning of ahimsa had become so weak that I must do what I did even at the risk. And how could I hide having done something when the occasion required otherwise?

As for the question about the daughter I would only say I would not kill her thinking that I would otherwise commit a sin, but I would kill her if I thought that she would ask for the gift of death if she could speak. I do not at all subscribe to the belief that under no circumstance is a person willing to give up his or her life. I smell cowardice in it and it is against the experience of many people. If man is indeed so much attached to life, he can make no progress. How then can he ever attain *moksha*? I have seen in innumerable cases that such attachment is very much less in other countries.

As for the nuisance of the monkeys I see that I would again have to quarrel about the meaning of 'ahimsa'.¹ May I leave that discussion? How about keeping the question for a full discussion some time in future when we meet? I have much to say about the three principles you have put forward. If I get the time I will discuss the contents of your letter in *Navajivan*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 11595

120. A CRUEL CUSTOM

A Kathiawari gentleman writes to say:²

This difficulty is a genuine one in all Hindu households and not only in Kathiawar. If a young husband who has become conscious of his dharma wishes to save himself, he should find a way to do so. He should politely reason with his parents and bring home to them the true nature of marriage. If he has any difficulty in convincing them, he should insist upon living apart from his wife so long as he cannot live independently. Where there is a will, there is a way. Man can add to his stature by finding out ways to solve difficulties and can also develop his human estate.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-10-1928

¹ For Gandhiji's views on the issue, *vide* also "Monkey Nuisance", 8-7-1928

² The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that in Kathiawar married couples living with parents did not see much of each other during day time and asked how husband and wife could exchange ideas and how the husband could obtain the wife's consent to continence.

121. COWS IN BARDOLI

A Bania gentleman from the Bardoli taluk writes to say:¹

If the above facts are true, this also should be taken up as an essential activity in the constructive work that is being done at present in Bardoli. It has been repeatedly pointed out in *Navajivan* how great harm is done to an ox if it is not castrated. There is no doubt that almost an equal quantity of milk can be got from the cow as from the buffalo, but this result can be achieved only if the cow is reared in a scientific manner. On the whole, if we wish to spare ourselves the slaughter of the male buffalo, we should turn our full attention to an improvement in the breeding of cows. It can easily be proved that the cow and her progeny are far more useful than the buffalo and her progeny. We have paid no attention to the fact that successive generations of cows will become enfeebled if a cow is served by any and every ox. If the problem of the cow could be solved as a result of the great awakening in Bardoli, the people there would have significantly added to the services they have rendered through their *satyagraha*.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-10-1928

122. SAD PLIGHT

A young man writes:²

Though this young man has furnished his name, he wishes for a remedy through the columns of *Navajivan*, since there are many others like him. I have no panacea to offer. I regard this as a kind of disease. I know that many people suffer from it. I shall indicate what has benefited some persons.

Faith in God is the most essential thing in this. And those who have this faith ask for God's help in their helplessness and receive it. Rather than get involved in such arguments as whom should one pray

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that in Bardoli and other taluks it was mostly the Raniparaj community that maintained cows. The higher castes preferred buffaloes. They also refused, on sentimental grounds, to get calves castrated and let even very young or weak oxen go free in the village to meet cows through a misplaced sense of piety, which resulted in the progressive degeneration of the cow's offspring.

² The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, a young man of nineteen and married, was unable to shake off the habit of self-abuse which rendered him weaker day by day.

to, is God free thus to help, and if He is, why does He not avert the disease before He is prayed to, since He dwells in everyone's heart and should become aware of the disease, etc., etc., we should regard His ways as inscrutable and, following the example of others who have saved themselves by taking refuge in Him, we should have faith and offer heartfelt prayers to Him.

Effort on our part is as essential as prayer. A prayer without effort becomes a mere show. It is empty. Mere mechanical repetition of words which do not proceed from the heart is futile. Moreover, anyone who makes an effort immediately gains self-confidence. Constant physical work is essential to such effort, no matter how light that work may be. Reading material should be such as to nurture pure thoughts. Privacy should be altogether shunned. It is imperative to give up co-habitation with one's wife. Having taken all these measures, one should totally forget about one's disease and, if one is constantly occupied in physical activity, one will not even be reminded of it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 14-10-1928

123. A CONUNDRUM¹

Some fiery champions of ahimsa, who seem bent upon improving the finances of the Postal Department, inundate me with letters full of abuse, and are practising himsa in the name of ahimsa. They would if they could prolong the calf controversy² indefinitely. Some of them kindly suggest that my intellect has suffered decay with the attainment of sixtieth year. Some others have expressed the regret that the doctors did not diagnose my case as hopeless when I was sent to the Sassoon Hospital³ and cut short my sinful career by giving me a poison injection in which case the poor calf in the Ashram might have been spared the poison injection and the race of monkeys saved from the menace of destruction. These are only a few characteristic samples from the sheaf-fuls of 'love-letters' that I am receiving daily. The more I receive these letters the more confirmed I feel in the correctness of my decision to ventilate this thorny question in the columns of *Navajivan*. It never seems to have struck these good people that by

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 14-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

² Vide "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928.

³ Where he was operated upon for appendicitis in January 1924; vide "Interview to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", 12-1-1924

this unseemly exhibition of spleen they merely prove their unfitness to be votaries or exponents of ahimsa and strike it at the very root. I turn however from these fulminations to one from among a batch of letters of a different order that I have received and I take the following from it:

Your exposition of the ethics of the "calf-incident" has cleared up a lot of my doubts and shed valuable light on the implications of ahimsa. But unfortunately it raises a fresh difficulty. Suppose, for instance, that a man begins to oppress a whole people and there is no other way of putting a stop to his oppression; then proceeding on the analogy of the calf, would it not be an act of ahimsa to rid society of his presence by putting him to death? Would you not regard such an act as an unavoidable necessity and therefore as one of ahimsa? In your discussion about the killing of the calf you have made the mental attitude the principal criterion of ahimsa. Would not according to this principle the destruction of proved tyrants be counted as ahimsa, since the motive inspiring the act is of the highest? You say that there is no *himsa* in killing off animal pests that destroy a farmer's crops; then why should it not be ahimsa to kill human pests that threaten society with destruction and worse?

The discerning reader will have already perceived that this correspondent has altogether missed the point of my argument. The definition of ahimsa that I have given cannot by any stretch of meaning be made to cover a case of manslaughter such as the correspondent in question postulates. I have nowhere described the unavoidable destruction of life that a farmer has to commit in pursuit of his calling as ahimsa. One may regard such destruction of life as unavoidable and condone it as such, but it cannot be spelt otherwise than as *himsa*. The underlying motive with the farmer is to subserve his own interest or, say, that of society. Ahimsa on the other hand rules out such interested destruction. But the killing of the calf was undertaken for the sake of the dumb animal itself. Anyway its good was the only motive.

The problem mentioned by the correspondent in question may certainly be compared to that of the monkey nuisance. But then there is a fundamental difference between the monkey nuisance and the human nuisance. Society as yet knows of no means by which to effect a change of heart in the monkeys and their killing may therefore be held as pardonable, but there is no evil-doer or tyrant who need be considered beyond reform. That is why the killing of a human being out of self-interest can never find a place in the scheme of ahimsa.

To come now to the question of motive, whilst it is true that mental attitude is the crucial test of ahimsa, it is not the sole test. To

kill any living being or thing save for his or its own interest is *himsa* however noble the motive may otherwise be. And a man who harbours ill-will towards another is no less guilty of *himsa* because for fear of society or want of opportunity, he is unable to translate his ill-will into action. A reference to both intent and deed is thus necessary in order finally to decide whether a particular act of abstention can be classed as ahimsa. After all, intent has to be inferred from a bunch of correlated acts.

Young India, 18-10-1928

124. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

Aso Sud 1 [October 14, 1928]¹

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter.

There is no question of one confined to bed spinning. Even your pledge exempts you from that obligation during illness. If you give up spinning through lethargy or on the pretext of being too busy, I would certainly have some harsh words to say, would even consider employing satyagraha against you provided I loved you enough for the purpose. I would not make any such unreasonable demand on you that even during illness you should continue spinning. If, moreover, Lady Pattani is now spinning, as you say, with sincere faith, to me it is as good as your spinning. But I have doubt about her spinning with such faith. I regard your certificate as partial, so that I myself should test her sincerity. You also tell me that she does not always wear *pankoru*. If one has sincere faith, would one omit to wear it any time? *Pankoru* is a household word among us. She may wear *pankoru* of any thinness she likes; I don't take this word to mean necessarily coarse cloth. It means cloth made from yarn of whatever quality spun by our sisters and daughters. It is in your hand to spin yarn that is fine. Well, I have addressed this letter to Ramabehn, it seems.

Here are a few of the things I expect from you. You should provide in your budget for expenditure on things manufactured in your State, as you provide for expenditure for collecting revenue. At present, that expenditure is borne by me. But how much longer can I afford it?

Please prepare and send me a report, for public or for my

¹ The year is inferred from the reference to articles on running a dairy which appeared in *Young India*, 27-9-1928 and 11-10-1928.

information, of the results of the law enforcing prohibition in your State.

The State should run a model dairy in accordance with the principles explained by the Government Dairy expert in his articles in *Young India*. I am sure you will incur no loss through it in the end.

You can take up these things even while you are bed-ridden.

After you have been able to attend to them, you may ask me for more suggestions.

But one thing I should say above all else. Leave the bed. You will think this a difficult task and so do I. But to succeed in that, along with doctors, you should consult a few quacks too. One of them is Kuvalayananda. It seems you know him. I have not been able to assess the value of his work. There is one other quack like him. He does not know anything about yoga and employs water-treatment. If you wish to collect persons of that kind round you, all I can do to help you is to inquire about them. After you have heard them, follow any of their treatments which appeals to you and seems harmless. There is no reason why you should remain bed-ridden. Am I also not one of these quacks?

But at present I am useless. In any case, Rama is there, the greatest Vaid. If my efforts to know Him had succeeded, I would have certainly sent Him to you. But, alas, will I ever see such a lucky day?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3217. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

125. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Silence Day, October 15, 1928

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. Mirabehn has written to me in detail about the shortcomings in Jethalal's work. She says that Jethalal has agreed to rectify the mistakes. You should go on goading him.

I have understood the balance-sheet drawn up by you. I would advise you not to make sub-divisions of untruth. Exaggeration, half-truth, conniving at untruth—all this is untruth. We generally treat ourselves generously, whereas we ought to be parsimonious. We should magnify our own faults, small as mustard grains, into big mountains.

I have also observed something like this in regard to

brahmacharya. What we often condone as violation of mental brahmacharya is in fact violation of physical *brahmacharya*. For instance, unclean touch is always a violation of physical *brahmacharya*, and so is unclean joking. Unclean means prompted by impure thoughts.

I need not say this to you. But it has become necessary now to explain it to all inmates of the Ashram. When I examine my own life, I see this laxity in myself too, and that is why I caution you. The truth is that a pure life is a new birth, and one does not get it without God's grace.

“As long as the elephant relied on his own strength so long he failed.”¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6062. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

126. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Monday [October 15, 1928]²

BHAISHREE MAMA,

I was distressed to hear the news about Dalsukhbhai. Please console his relatives on my behalf. I very well remember Dalsukhbhai's affectionate face. The void left by his passing can never be filled. But we must all shoulder the responsibility. Tell his relatives that those who knew Dalsukhbhai share their grief. You have not given any address, so I send this letter through you.

Blessings from

BAPU

MAMA SAHEB

ANTYAJ ASHRAM

GODHARA

B.B. & C.I. RY.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32842

¹ The allusion is to the legendary Gajendra, king of elephants, who was rescued by Krishna from the clutches of a crocodile.

² From the postmark, October 15 was a Monday.

127. LETTER TO VIPIN BIHARI

October 15, 1928

BHAI VIPIN,

I have your letter. It is almost impossible for me to go or send someone. I congratulate you all on being able to persuade Sadhu Vaswani¹ to come over to Motihari. It is needless to tell the students of Bihar that true learning means increasing purity of life, i.e., being simple and straightforward.

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI VIPIN BIHARI

RECEPTION COMMITTEE, STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

MOTIHARI, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9128.

128. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

October 15, 1928

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letters come in regularly. By now your wife must have fully recovered. There is only one way of attaining peace of mind—to impress Ramanama upon the heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 196

129. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

October 15, 1928

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Your letter. Similar doubts have been expressed in many other letters. I have answered them in *Navajivan*,² so I write nothing here. I hope you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2360

¹ T. L. Vaswani

² *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928. The article appeared in *Hindi Navajivan*, 4-10-1928.

130. LETTER TO KARIM GOOLAMALI¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You are in the same boat as the Vaishnavites, a sect to which I belong by birth. And these sectarian abuses can only be dealt with by the members of the respective sects. There seems to me to be no royal road to reform except through constant striving and levelling up of public opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

KARIM GOOLAMALI, ESQ.
KHARADHAR, KARACHI

From a photostat: G.N. 233

131. LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 16, 1928

DEAR DR. MUTHU,

I have your letter. You won't ask me to sign any appeal please. You won't find my name in any appeal save those which I have myself inaugurated, for the simple reason that if I sign one I should have to sign many, and I do not like the idea of having to do so. I hope however that you will be able soon to finish the sanatorium and realize your ambition.

Yours sincerely,

DR. C. MUTHU
9 MONTEITH ROAD, EGMORE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13555

132. LETTER TO ROY HOPKINS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a cheque for £5 for a short article that you want me to give you on 'peace'. I have not a moment

¹ The typewritten office copy (S.N. 13556) of this letter bears the note:

to spare just now to write anything beyond my own appointments, and I hope I am humble enough to realize that the world is not waiting to know from me anything about the ways of securing peace for which it is thirsting.

I return the cheque you have kindly sent me. Even if I write anything I should not do it for remuneration, having never done it. Having written for some papers, I have received moneys on several occasions which have gone as contributions to the upkeep of public activities I am engaged in. Nobody is likely easily to get from me any writing because I am so chary of writing for anybody or any paper. You will therefore please forgive me for returning your cheque and also for my inability. to write for you.

Yours sincerely,

ROY HOPKINS, ESQ.
MANAGING DIRECTOR, LONDON GENERAL PRESS
8 BOUVERIES STREET, LONDON E.C. 4

From photostat: S.N. 14388

133. LETTER TO RUKHI GANDHI

October 16, 1928

CHI. RUKHI,

You would like, wouldn't you, that I should reply immediately? You were wise in keeping silent about the bullock. As you are keeping well and doing good work there, I do not feel eager to ask you to come over here.

Live as you will, but so
As to realize God.

Keshu seems to have settled down well. About Radha, I cannot say anything yet. We are having a good malaria exhibition these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. RUKSHAMANI
C/O KHUSHALBHAI GANDHI
OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL.
NAVA PURA, RAJKOT

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8761: Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhari

134. SASTRI'S WORK

A graphic letter received this week from an eye-witness describes the now famous Klerksdorp incident of which the South African Press is full. Though nothing remains or needs to be said from the political standpoint after the full, free and frank apology from the Union Government, too much cannot be said of Sjt. Sastri's generous and courageous behaviour in the face of a plot which might have proved fatal in its result. The letter before me shows that this true son and representative of India stood his ground without the least nervousness even when the lights were put out by the party that had come led by the Deputy Mayor to break up the meeting he was addressing. And when the firing of an explosive had made the meeting hall too suffocating for the audience, Sjt. Sastri went outside and, as if nothing untoward or serious had happened, finished his speech without even referring to the incident. Popular as he had already become among the Europeans of South Africa before this incident, his cool courage and generous behaviour raised him still further in their estimation.

And as he wanted no fame for himself (few men would be found shier than Sjt. Sastri of fame), he turned his popularity to the advancement of the cause he has represented with such singular ability and success. During his all too brief stay in South Africa he has immensely raised the status of our countrymen in that part of the world. Let us hope that they will by their exemplary conduct show themselves worthy of him.

But Sastri's contribution to the solution of the difficult and delicate problem of South Africa does not rest merely upon what was after all an accident. We know nothing except through the results of the inner working of the ambassador's office in which he had to exhaust all his art of a diplomacy that comes from a conviction of the correctness of one's cause and that spurns to do or countenance anything wrong, mean or crooked. But we do know how unsparing he has been in the use on behalf of his cause of the gifts of eloquence, scholarship, both English and Sanskrit and great and varied learning with which nature has lavishly endowed him. He has been delivering to large and select audiences of Europeans lectures on Indian philosophy and culture which have stirred European imagination and softened the hard crust of prejudice which has hitherto prevented the general body of Europeans from seeing anything good in the Indian. These lectures are perhaps his greatest and the most permanent contribution to the Indian cause in South Africa.

It must be a serious problem for the Government of India to

choose Sjt. Sastri's successor. He has persistently withstood all pressure to prolong his stay in South Africa. Letters from South Africa show me how our people dread Sjt. Sastri's impending departure. It will be a calamity if a worthy successor is not found to continue the mission so successfully inaugurated and represented by Sjt. Sastri. Tradition has, I hope, been set up at the Viceregal Lodge of treating the office of India's Agent in South Africa as neutral ground which the Government and popular parties may jointly tread. It is to be hoped that the successor to be chosen will be one who will commend himself equally to the Government and the people, and who will truly represent not merely the Government of India but the people as well.

Young India, 18-10-1928

135. TELEGRAM TO N. C. KELKAR¹

October 18, 1928

APART OTHER REASONS I WOULD BE EXCUSED EVEN FOR
SAKE OF SUCCESS SUCH CONFERENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13705

136. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 18, 1928

I have your two letters. You will certainly come with me to Calcutta and sell whatever stuff you like, but not at the Exhibition.

Mrs. P. Byramji did meet me when I was in Nagpur and buy a lot of khadi. But beyond this I cannot say. That is all. Where is the question of trusting when our rule is to sell only for cash?

I have had a chat with Kakasaheb. He tells me he has no recollection of having made you any promise or told you anything about his ability to sell khadi for you at the Vidyapith. And he can have no customers for embroidered khadi. Did he tell you he had any

¹ In reply to his telegram of October 17 from Poona which read: "Supposing we decide to hold Bombay Presidency All-Parties Conference at Poona on Saturday 27th for one day before Simon Commission's departure to uphold and popularize Nehru Report and Lucknow resolutions could you consent presiding? Informing final decision after your wire."

bhandar?

I am keeping quite well.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN

From a microfilm: S.N. 13559

137. LETTER TO L. V. PATTANAYAKA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. *Karmabhumi* means to me a land not of enjoyment of pleasure but enjoyment of work by way of sacrifice.

My authority for saying that Sita was spinning is based upon a fact that, in her times, as history tells us every household had a spinning-wheel. There is no reason to believe that Sita's household was an exception.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. V. PATTANAYAKA

P.O. DIGAPAHANDI (GANJAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13560

138. LETTER TO YAJNESHWAR PRASAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

With reference to the boy who is suffering from tuberculosis, if he is old enough to judge for himself, I think he should use his own discretion and take whatever he considers is not objectionable from the religious standpoint. If, however, he is too young to decide for himself, it is proper for him to submit to his father's wishes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. YAJNESHWAR PRASAD

790 NAI BASTI, QUEEN'S ROAD, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13561

139. LETTER TO BINA DAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which has been with me for some time now. I have nowhere advocated the use of physical force even for self-defence. What I have said is that the use of physical force is preferable to cowardice, that is to say, it is wrong not to use force when we have a mind to do so but which we do not use because we fear to die. What I do advocate is the courage to die whether for self-defence or whether for the cause of one's country.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI BINA DAS
7 RAM MOHAN ROY ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13562

140. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

I have your letter. You are never without your full share of worries. I hope however that Dhiren is now fairly restored to health.

Devdhar can be found at his house or at the Seva Sadan. When he is in Poona, I think he always goes to the Seva Sadan.

We have many patients suffering from malaria at the Ashram just now. It is nothing surprising because it is the season. It never worries us because the treatment is only one: fast while the fever lasts and quinine preceded by some opening medicine.

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI
JANHAVI VILLA, P.O. DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 13563

141. LETTER TO T. R. PHOOKAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What appeal can I issue for you to take? What I have suggested is that you should personally go to moneyed Con-

gressmen and ask them to help you out of the difficulty.¹ I feel that that is the only proper course for you to adopt, and I feel also that those Congressmen who have money should bear the burden. I suggest your taking an audited account to them.

You are at liberty to make whatever use you like of this letter for approaching Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. R. PHOOKAN
GAUHATI (ASSAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13564

142. LETTER TO MAHARAJA OF NABHA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.² I had a visit too from Sjt. Ganesan. I regret I am unable to help you. I have given you my reasons and I gave them to those friends who came to see me on your behalf.

Yours sincerely,

H. H. THE MAHARAJAH OF NABHA
THE OBSERVATORY, KODAIKANAL, SOUTH INDIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13565

143. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 18, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your two letters.

Of course I shall obey your wishes about attending the Congress at Calcutta.

I did not refer to the Exhibition incident with a view to securing

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to T. R. Phookan", 6-10-1928.

² In his letter of September 19, Gurucharan Singh, deposed Maharaja of Nabha, had requested Gandhiji to help him get justice and separation from Government.

your intervention.¹ I would not in any way whatsoever like to be interfering with the local discretion. I simply told you of my own difficulty. I have certainly not objected to machines as such at all. My objection was and is to the exhibition of Indian mill-cloth. Regarding machinery my argument is that we may not exhibit any and every machinery but that we may certainly exhibit such machinery which we ourselves know to be desirable for the cultivators and which has not yet obtained vogue in the country.

I quite agree with you that we have to go on with the political work in spite of the riots.

I had your reassuring telegram about your own health and Kamala's. You will have to be in an absolutely good form in Calcutta because you will have more than enough to do there.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13707

144. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 19, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have been having your perfect letters. They please me and relieve me of all anxiety. You will not mind my not sending you anything long or regular just now. About Prabhudas, Chhaganlal will be wiring you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
JAMIA MILLIA, KAROL BAGH, DELHI

From the original: C.W. 5314. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8204

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 30-9-1928.

145. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

October 19, 1928

MIRABEHN

CARE DEVDAS

KAROL BAGH, DELHI

REGARDING PRABHUDAS USE YOUR OWN JUDGEMENT AND DO
WHAT YOU THINK BEST.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5315. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 8205

146. LETTER TO B. G. HORNIMAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your first letter which I reached after the allotted time was passed and so remained silent about it. I received your second letter yesterday and there was no time to acknowledge it there and then. If you pass 24 hours with me in the Ashram you will never ask me for an article even of five words, let alone 100 words. It have neither time nor energy for anything more than what just now engages my attention. You will therefore please excuse me for disappointing.

Yours sincerely,

B. G. HORNIMAN, ESQ.

BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13566

147. 'AN ASHRAM OF RISHIS'

An article under this heading which has been sent by Deenabandhu Andrews has been published in *Young India*¹.

In a city called Marburg in Germany, there is a university which has been called an ashram of *rishis* by Deenabandhu in this article. It contains a readable description of an elderly professor who leads the life of a *rishi* there. The Vedas are studied on an extensive scale in the Marburg University. And the Vedas seem to have made such a deep impression on the lives of the professors who study them that they

¹ Dated 11-10-1928

themselves lead the life of *rishis*. Professor Otto seems to be pre-eminent amongst these professors. Here is a description of him:¹

At the house of Professor Otto, where I was staying, it was indeed a happiness to be his guest, even for a short time. He has never married. He has spent his whole life in Vedic scholarship. His hair is white, and his sister, who is nearly the same age as himself, now keeps house for him. She treated me as a mother while I was there, looking after all my wants, in a very touching manner. Almost from the very first, the glowing, ardent love for India in Professor Otto's heart became visible to me through the animation, which lit up his face, while he related to me his experiences on his different visits. Yet his own health had suffered terribly in India. The malaria, which had infected him as early as 1912, never wholly left his system; and after his visit to India last year, he became a complete invalid for many months, lying on his back with heart weakness. He has not even yet recovered. Yet still India remains the land of his early dreams, and he has studied every feature of India's civilization with minutest care. Above all, he has studied deeply the Hindu religion, not only in the Vedas, Upanishads and Gita, But also both in its Puranas and in its modern forms of worship. His knowledge of Indian detail was to me amazing. This has been due to the fact, that in one way or other his whole life has been spent in research. Sanskrit is almost² like his own mother tongue to him; and he can use it when necessary as a second language.

I have here translated the description of only one of the *rishis*. We should admit with shame that the zeal, the earnestness and the perseverance with which some scholars in Europe and, especially in Germany, pursue the study of such treatises as the Vedas are something almost totally absent in this country today. It is very seldom that we come across anyone emulating the life of a *rishi*. And where do we see now *brahmacharya* being readily practised solely for scholastic reasons, without any accompanying ostentation? And when a sister remains a spinster in order to be a companion to her brother and to run his home, is this not something that delights one and creates a sacred atmosphere? The other day an American professor had narrated his experiences in *The Times* of Bombay. He too is a student of Sanskrit. He writes that he had come to India full of hopes; however, he had been disappointed after coming to India, seeing things for himself and meeting Sanskrit pundits. His article contains exaggerations, is full of hastily-formed judgements and is coloured by the atmosphere created by Europeans living in India. But allowing for all this, I see a grain of truth in what remains, and I feel ashamed. If

¹ The following description has been taken from Andrews's article in *Young India*.

² The source has "about".

there had been a true religious awakening in us, if we had the fervour to preserve whatever was true, good and beautiful in our ancient civilization, our condition would have been very different today. *Rishis* could live fearlessly in forests. *Brahmacharya* was something that they could readily practise. Today we cannot live safely even in cities. *Brahmacharya* appears to be something strange and wonderful to us and we shall with difficulty come across a true *brahmachari* if we search for one. How then can we find any women who have taken the vow of celibacy? Hence for a moment one feels that the *rishis* have started living in scattered corners of Europe and no longer live in this country which once was their abode.

This is not to suggest that anyone who reads this article should go over to Germany or some other place and try to become a *rishi*. That too will be futile. I cannot visualize an Indian going to Germany and becoming a *rishi*. It is right for Indians to imitate the good qualities of a person like Professor Otto and, while remaining in India, to revitalize the institution of *rishis* here. It can be claimed that the Arya Samaj has made superhuman efforts in this direction. But those attempts are like a drop in the ocean so far as India is concerned. It is only when even mightier efforts are made that we shall be able to find the lost key to our ancient civilization

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-10-1928

148. SIMPLE-MINDED LABOURERS

From a letter which I have received from Panchmahals, it appears that immoral and greedy agents lure simple-minded Rajputs and others and recruit them for serving in the tea-gardens of Assam. Thus I have received affidavits concerning twelve labourers. It is obvious from this that under the pretext of giving them work in the neighbourhood of Baroda, young men and women were taken as far away as Assam.

The question is not whether they are happy or otherwise in Assam, but how anyone can be deceived and taken so far away. The persons who signed the affidavits inform me that they had to go leaving behind their fields. These poor persons had gone in the hope of being employed as labourers in nearby places and now they have been ensnared, and have had to leave behind their worried relations.

There is only one way of preventing this situation. The agents deceive the labouring classes and lure them with false temptations for the sake of their commission. If this commission business is entirely

stopped, no one will be deceived any longer. The owners of tea-gardens in Assam have the right to recruit labourers in a proper way by laying down proper conditions. Let them advertise in an honest manner. But the practice of recruiting labourers through agents should be terminated. Agents receive commission in respect of every labourer they recruit. It is rumoured that the amount is Rs. 10 per head. Hence the agent who can deceive thirty labourers every month earns Rs. 300 a month. This is no small temptation. Hence, no matter what warning the owners give to the agents, the latter are hardly going to be deterred from practising such devious means.

As a matter of fact, if a job is worth while and sufficiently tempting, intermediaries should not become necessary. Experience indicates that they become necessary only when a job involves hard labour, the wage is meagre, and it involves going far away from one's home for the job. That the job may be at a distance from home is inevitable. There is no doubt, however, that labourers will go on their own if the conditions relating to wages, etc., are tempting. If the sums paid as agents' commission, etc., are spent on providing better facilities to the labourers, the incidents of hardships to which these affidavits bear witness will be done away with.

However, whether the owners withdraw their agents or not, public servants who come to know of these hardships should spread knowledge of the true facts among the people and warn them against being caught in the grip of the agents.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-10-1 928

149. MY NOTES

WHEN SHOULD PUNISHMENT BE AWARDED?

A teacher of the Vinaymandir has put the following questions¹:

In my opinion, it is simply improper to subject students to any form of punishment. By doing so, the feelings of respect and pure love that teachers should have for students disappear. The method of teaching students by punishing them is being progressively abandoned. I know that occasions do arise when even the best of teachers cannot but inflict punishment. However, this should be an exception and should not in any way be commended. If the best of teachers has

¹ Not translated here. He had asked whether pupils should be given corporal punishment for not studying or for moral lapses, especially in national schools.

to resort to beating, this should in fact be regarded as a drawback in his art. Although an individual like Spencer has looked upon every punishment as improper, he has not always been able to put his theory into practice. After replying to this question, I need not answer in detail the other questions.

Ordinarily, punishment is not compatible with non-violence. Of course, I can conceive of instances in which punishment cannot be regarded as such. These, however, should be regarded as irrelevant so far as teachers are concerned. For instance, if a father who is extremely unhappy punishes his son, it is a case of punishment given out of love. The son, too, would not regard it as an act of violence. Or, when in some cases a delirious patient has to be smacked by the person nursing him, it is not a violent act but a non-violent one. But these instances do not help teachers at all. A teacher has to develop the technique of teaching students and maintaining discipline amongst them without resorting to beating. We have before us instances of such teachers who have never beaten their students. Punishments other than corporal would be to make the student ashamed of himself, make him alternately sit down and stand up, make him hold his toes, abuse him, etc. I feel that teachers should discard all these methods.

To repent after punishing a student in order to improve him is no repentance at all. Moreover, teachers who believe and make their students believe that punishment leads to the latter's improvement, end up by making such a belief take root in society. And this belief creates the illusion that reforms can be brought about through violence. In my opinion, teachers of national schools who deliberately punish their students are indeed guilty of violating their pledge.

BOLSHEVISM¹

Q. What is your opinion about the social economics of Bolshevism and how far do you think they are fit to be copied by our country?

A. I must confess that I have not yet been able fully to understand the meaning of Bolshevism. All that I know is that it aims at the abolition of the institution of private property. This is only an application of the ethical ideal of non-possession in the realm of economics and if the people adopted this ideal of their own accord or could be made to accept it by means of peaceful persuasion there would be nothing like it. But from what I know of Bolshevism it not only does not preclude the use of force but freely sanctions it for the expropriation of private property and maintaining the collective State

¹ The translation of this question and answer is reproduced from *Young India*, 15-11-1928.

ownership of the same. And if that is so I have no hesitation in saying that the Bolshevik regime in its present form cannot last for long. For it is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built on violence. But be that as it may there is no questioning the fact that the Bolshevik ideal has behind it the purest sacrifice of countless men and women who have given up their all for its sake, and an ideal that is sanctified by the sacrifices of such master spirits as Lenin cannot go in vain: the noble example of their renunciation will be emblazoned for ever and quicken and purify the ideal as time passes.

THE LATE SHRI DALSUKHBHAI SHAH

Reporting the death of the Godhra lawyer, Shri Dalsukhbhai Shah, last week, Mamasahab writes as follows:¹

I had personally known the late Dalsukhbhai. I was fully aware of his gentlemanly qualities. Following close upon the heels of Shri Purushottamdas Shah's death, this second loss that Panchmahals has suffered is really to be regarded as too much. Both these men lent glory to the public life of Panchmahals and were true servants of the people. However, whether at the right time or untimely, all of us have to meet our death. As Mamasahab writes, it is the task of the youth to make this loss bearable. Moreover, as Chi. Nagindas, the eldest son of the deceased, is a graduate of the Vidyapith, his responsibility has doubled. As a son he must glorify his father's name and add to the legacy of nobility of character that the latter has left. It now becomes his special duty to add to the prestige of the Vidyapith by filling up the void among the public servants of Panchmahals. May God give him strength to full this task, give courage to the family of the deceased and grant peace to the soul of the departed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-10-1928

150. JAIN AHIMSA?²

A Jain friend who is reputed to have made a fair study of the Jain philosophy as also of the other systems has addressed me a long letter on ahimsa. It deserves a considered reply. He says in effect:

Your interpretation of ahimsa has caused confusion. In the ordi-

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that the deceased was an ideal lawyer who earned his livelihood in an honest way, span for his own requirements of khadi and gave up practice during the noncooperation days.

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 21-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

nary sense of the term *himsa* means to sever life from body and not to do so is *ahimsa*. Refraining from causing pain to any living creature is only an extension of the original meaning which cannot by any stretch of language be made to cover the taking of life. You would not understand me to mean from this that I regard all taking of life as wrong in every possible circumstance; for I do not think that there is any ethical principle in this world that can be regarded as absolute and admitting of no exception whatever. The maxim “*Ahimsa* is the highest or the supreme duty” embodies a great and cardinal truth but it does not cover the entire sum of human duties. Whilst therefore what you have termed “non-violent killing” may be a right thing it cannot be described as *ahimsa*.

I am of opinion that just as life is subject to constant change and development, the meanings of terms too are constantly undergoing a process of evolution and this can be amply proved by illustrations from the history of any religion. The word *yajna* or sacrifice in the Hindu religion for instance is an illustration in point. Sir J. C. Bose’s discoveries are today revolutionizing the accepted connotations of biological terms. Similarly if we will fully realize *ahimsa* we may not fight shy of discovering fresh implications of the doctrine of *ahimsa*. We cannot improve upon the celebrated maxim, “*Ahimsa* is the highest or the supreme duty” but we are bound, if we would retain our spiritual inheritance, to explore the implications of this great and universal doctrine. But I am not particular about names. I do not mind whether the taking of life in the circumstances I have mentioned is called *ahimsa* or not, so long as its correctness is conceded.

Another poser mentioned by this friend is as follows:

I have been unable to follow you in your description of the imaginary killing of your daughter in the hypothetical circumstances described by you.¹ It may be right to kill the ruffian in such a case, but what fault has the poor daughter committed? Would you regard the pollution of the poor victim as a disgrace to be avoided by death? Don’t you think that in such circumstances even if the poor girl for fear of public ignominy and shame begs to be put out of life, it would be your duty to dissuade her from her wish? As for me, I do not see the slightest difference between a case of dishonour, rape, and a case in which one has had one’s limbs cut off by force.

My reason for putting my daughter to death in circumstances mentioned by me would not be that I feared her being polluted but that she herself would have wished death if she could express her desire. If my daughter wanted to be put out of life because she was

¹ *Vide* “The Fiery Ordeal”, 30-9-1928.

afraid of public scandal and criticism I would certainly try to dissuade her from her wish. I would take her life only if I was absolutely certain that she would wish it. I know that Sita would have preferred death to dishonour by Ravana. And that is also what, I believe, our Shastras have enjoined. I know that it is the daily prayer of thousands of men and women that they might have death rather than dishonour. I deem it to be highly necessary that this feeling should be encouraged. I am not prepared to admit that the loss of chastity stands on the same footing as the loss of a limb. But I can imagine circumstances in which one would infinitely prefer death even to being maimed.

The third poser runs:

I cannot understand why the idea of wounding a few monkeys in order to frighten away the rest instead of straightway proceeding to kill them off should be regarded as intolerable by you. Don't you feel that the longing for life is strong even among the blind and the maimed animals? Don't you think that the impulse to kill a living creature because one cannot bear to see its suffering is a kind of selfishness?

The idea of wounding monkeys is unbearable to me because I know that a wounded monkey has to die a lingering death if left to itself. And if monkeys have to die at all by any act of mine, I would far rather that they were killed summarily than that they were left to die by inches. Again it beats my comprehension how I am practising ahimsa by thus wounding the monkeys instead of killing them outright. It might be a different thing if I was prepared to erect a hospital for wounded monkeys. I concede that the maimed and the blind would evince a longing for life if they have some hope of getting succour or relief. But imagine a blind, ignorant creature, with no faith in God, marooned in a desert place beyond the reach of any help and with a clear knowledge of his plight, and I cannot believe that such a creature would want to continue its existence. Nor am I prepared to admit that it is one's duty to nurse the longing for life in all circumstances.

The fourth poser is as follows:

The Jain view of ahimsa rests on the following three principles:

"No matter what the circumstances are or how great the suffering, it is impossible for anyone deliberately to renounce the will to live or to wish another to put him out of pain. Therefore the taking of life cannot in any circumstances be morally justified.

"In a world full of activities which necessitate *himsa*, an aspirant for salvation should try to follow ahimsa engaging in the fewest possible activities.

"There are two kinds of *himsa*—direct such as that involved in

agriculture, and indirect as that involved in the eating of agricultural produce. Where one cannot altogether escape from either, a votary of ahimsa should try to avoid direct *himsa*.”

I would earnestly request you critically to examine and discuss these three Jain principles of ahimsa in *Navajivan*. I notice that there is a vital difference between your view of ahimsa and that of the Jains. Whereas your view of ahimsa is based on the philosophy of action, that of the Jains is based on that of renunciation of action. The present is an era of action. If the principle of ahimsa be an eternal and universal principle untrammelled by time and place, it seems to me that there is a great need to stimulate the people’s mind to think out for themselves as to how the principle of ahimsa that has so far been confined to the field of renunciation only can be worked in present-day life of action and what form it will take when applied to this new environment.

It is with the utmost reluctance that I have to enter into a discussion of these principles. I know the risks of such discussion. But I see no escape from it. As for the first principle I have already expressed my opinion on it in a previous portion of this article. It is my firm conviction that the principle of clinging to life in all circumstances betrays cowardice and is the cause of much of the *himsa* that goes on around us and blind adherence to this principle is bound to increase instead of reducing *himsa*. It seems to me that if this Jain principle is really as it is here enunciated, it is a hindrance to the attainment of salvation. For instance a person who is constantly praying for salvation will never wish to continue his life at the expense of another’s. Only a person steeped in ignorance who cannot even remotely understand what salvation means would wish to continue life on any terms. The *sine qua non* of salvation is a total annihilation of all desire. How dare, then, an aspirant for salvation be sordidly selfish or wish to preserve his perishable body at all cost? Descending from the field of salvation to that of the family, one’s country, or the world of humanity, we again find innumerable instances of men and women who have dedicated themselves to the service of their family, their country or the world at large in entire disregard of their own life and this ideal of utter self-sacrifice and self-abnegation at present is being inculcated throughout the world. To hang on to life at all cost seems to me the very height of selfishness. Let however nobody understand me to mean that one may try to wean another even from such sordid egoism by force. I am adducing the argument merely to show the fallacy of the doctrine of will to live at all cost.

As for the second, I do not know whether it can at all be described as a principle. But be that as it may, to me it represents a truism and I heartily endorse it.

Coming to the third principle in the form in which it is enunciated by the friend, it suffers from a grave defect. The most terrible consequence of this principle to me seems to be this that if we accept it then a votary of ahimsa must renounce agriculture although he knows that he cannot renounce the fruits of agriculture and that agriculture is an indispensable condition for the existence of mankind. The very idea that millions of the sons of the soil should remain steeped in *himsa* in order that a handful of men who live on the toil of these people might be able to practise ahimsa seems to me to be unworthy of and inconsistent with the supreme duty of ahimsa. I feel that this betrays a lack of perception of the inwardness of ahimsa. Let us see, for instance, to what it leads to if pushed to its logical conclusion. You may not kill a snake but if necessary, according to this principle, you may get it killed by somebody else. You may not yourself forcibly drive away a thief but you may employ another person to do it for you. If you want to protect the life of a child entrusted to your care from the fury of a tyrant, somebody else must bear the brunt of the tyrant's fury for you. And you thus refrain from direct action in the sacred name of ahimsa ! This in my opinion is neither religion nor ahimsa. So long as one is not prepared to take the risks mentioned and to face the consequences, one cannot be free from fear and so long as a man has not shed all fear he is *ipso facto* incapable of practising ahimsa. Our scriptures tell us that ahimsa is all conquering. That before it, even the wild beasts shed their ferocity and the most hard-hearted of tyrants forget their anger. Utterly inadequate and imperfect as my own practice of ahimsa has been, it has enabled me to realize the truth of this principle. I cannot once more help expressing my doubt that Jainism subscribes to the third principle of ahimsa as enunciated by this friend. But even if Jain doctrine is just as it is stated by the friend, I must say, I for one cannot reconcile myself to it.

Now to come to the question of renunciation *versus* action: I believe in the doctrine of renunciation but I hold that renunciation should be sought for in and through action. That action is the *sine qua non* of life in the body, that the Wheel of Life cannot go on even for a second without involving some sort of action goes without saying. Renunciation can therefore in these circumstances only mean detachment or freedom of the spirit from action, even while the body is engaged in action. A follower of the path of renunciation seeks to attain it not by refraining from all activity but by carrying it on in a perfect spirit of detachment and altruism as a pure trust. Thus a man may engage in farming, spinning, or any other activity without departing from the path of renunciation provided one does so merely

for selfless service and remains free from the taint of egoism or attachment. It remains for those therefore who like myself hold this view of renunciation to discover for themselves how far the principle of ahimsa is compatible with life in the body and how it can be applied to acts of everyday life. The very virtue of a dharma is that it is universal, that its practice is not the monopoly of the few, but must be the privilege of all. And it is my firm belief that the scope of Truth and ahimsa is world-wide. That is why I find an ineffable joy in dedicating my life to researches in truth and ahimsa and I invite others to share it with me by doing likewise.

Young India, 25-10-1928

151. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 21, 1928

I am publishing your appeal¹. But I am not satisfied with it. It is too scrappy and without anybody to it. You ought to have given the population in the area affected, the nature of distress and the amount required. How are the people to respond to a general appeal of the type you have framed? It evidently betrays fatigue, haste, worry and overwork. If you want a good response you must send me an appeal worthy of yourself.

How are you doing now?

I hope the calf controversy² provides some amusement for you, if it provides no instruction. If I took seriously all the correspondence that comes to me I should have to drown my self in the Sabarmati. As it is, the correspondence affords both entertainment and instruction.

Your sincerely,

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

From a photostat: S.N. 13567

152. LETTER TO C. L. CHINAI

ASHRAM,

October 21, 1928

BHAISHRI CHINAI,

I have your letter. If I know the way even dimly or if others show it to me, I am ready to take the risk and try to bring about an understanding between the two. But I am afraid that today except for

¹ *Vide* "Famine in the South", 25-10-1928.

² *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", 30-9-1928.

a handful of non-co-operators, I have lost the confidence of the Hindus and the Muslims. Both trust in physical strength. The Muslims believe that they have it. The Hindus have been trying to acquire it. Till they have had enough of this mutual fighting, neither side will sincerely wish for peace. They will not even tolerate interference by a person like me, and I can understand their not tolerating it. In such a situation, silence seems to be the best course for me. Peace will not be brought about by persons like you, who take no part in the riots or in inciting them, merely wishing for it. It is also, therefore, useless for me to think of intervening out of respect for their wish. The only way for the Hindus to overcome whatever cowardice they have in them is for such of them as are aware of the weakness to shed it and try to help others also to do so. This can be done in two ways: by striving for either physical strength or spiritual strength. There is, of course, cowardice even in physical strength. This they will hardly admit today, and it is not surprising that they will not. And if a person who has no understanding of spiritual strength also lacks physical strength, he is bound to be an impotent coward. So long as one has the strength to die and is ready to do so, one need not worry in the least. One may try to stop the fighting wherever one can. But one must know one's limitations. We are not the judges of the world. Nor is it for us to shoulder its burden. There is an invisible power which does both. If we but surrender ourselves to it, we would know our duty from moment to moment.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/19

153. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

October 21, 1928

BHAISHRI GIRDHARILAL,

I have your letter. Regarding Ashat Ikranī I can only say that it was wrong to have got him married at all. The mistake can still be rectified if the false fear of public opinion is given up. In other words that woman should be freed completely. If after that she lives with either of the two men to satisfy her passion, I would still in common usage call it adultery. In saying this I have not considered the questions of caste or community or custom. I am indifferent to both.

The problem about Makranis¹ is easy to understand.

I am not aware of anyone having so far tried to reform the Makranis. In Kathiawar, moreover, state affairs are carried on wholly

¹ Belonging to the Makrana community in Saurashtra

on the basis of untruth. There is no rational policy in them. Both the rulers and the people seem to me like the Makranis. The people called Makrani about whom you write are but the external forms of the inner Makranis I am writing about. So long as that remain reality has not changed, the conditions are bound to remain as you describe them. They may change outwardly somewhat, but will not completely disappear. For that to happen both the rulers and the people must give up the Makrani spirit. I hope you will not ask me what one should do in the meantime. There is no room for such a question.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/20

154. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, October 22¹, 1928

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Ba is better. There is no cause for worry. Nimu arrived yesterday. She is all right. The moment she arrived, she joined in nursing Ba. Others who were ill have almost recovered. You must have got the news about a daughter having been born to Sushila.

Nanabhai has sent a cable that she should be named "Dhairyabala".

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6854

155. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

Silence Day [October 22, 1928]²

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. There was a cable here too. I asked them to send it to you by post. I felt happy to read your remarks on non-violence in your letter.

I do wish to reply to you, but shall do so when I get some time.

Kishorelal is leaving for that side on Friday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6677

¹ The source has 21, *vide* also the following two items.

² The cable mentioned in the letter was presumably from Manilal Gandhi, giving news about Sushila Gandhi having given birth to a daughter; *vide* the following item.

156. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 23, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letter, as also the cable. By the time you get this, Sushila will have left her bed and Dhairyabala will have learnt to smile. I had a letter from Nanabhai only yesterday, in which he said that he had sent a cable about the name of the baby. This time too if I had not thought of your letter just now, that is, at 3.30 a.m., I would not have written this. It was thus that I missed the last mail. I get very little time these days to write letters and therefore get up at 3 in the morning, sometimes even at 2, and dictate letters.

I wrote¹ you about Rasik and Navin having gone to Delhi. Ramdas is still in Bardoli. Nimu is here. Ba is ill. There is no cause for worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4744

157. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 23, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your wire. Nowadays for me to secure Mondays for love-letters is an impossibility. You must therefore manage without my regular letters. But I must hear regularly from you.

Things are going on fairly well here though I cannot say they are quite settled.

Mahadev has to leave for Bardoli today in connection with the inquiry. He will be away for perhaps a week or longer.

The bakery is making steady progress. Pyarelal has discovered a way of puffing wheat. As soon as it is fully puffed I propose to send you a packet.

Associated Press had a short message about you in the Press. It is perhaps a report of the meeting referred to by you.

Love.

BAPU

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Manilal and Susnila Gandhi", After 31-8-1928.

[PS.]

Did I tell you Gregg is here?

MIRABEHN

From the original: C.W. 5316. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8206

158. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 23, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You have been very good and very kind. Your regular letters have put me at ease and have enabled me to deal with complainants.

You have worked wonders. You have asked me not to press you to prolong your stay and I have religiously refrained and advised our people there to do likewise. But I am trembling to contemplate the future. I hear all kinds of ugly rumours. It will be a tragedy if the post is given not to the best man but to a favourite. I have no name round which to build public opinion. May God keep you for many a year to come.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11994

159. LETTER TO RAJPAL

ASHRAM,

October 23, 1928

BHAISHRI RAJPAL

I have your sorrowful letter. The day I summon up courage to kill the monkeys I will certainly be committing violence. But how can I hide my weakness? I cannot follow the path of non-violence by doing so. Rather than that out of a desire to be counted a great man I should be guilty of untruth, it is better that people should know me as I am. Do I not commit violence even today through weakness or ignorance? When I fumigate mosquitoes buzzing over puddles of water, they die; when I use a disinfectant to make water drinkable, the germs are killed. If a snake is discovered in a place where it cannot be caught I allow it to be killed. There is no limit to the violence I thus commit. But I take comfort in the thought that my aspiration for

perfect non-violence is sincere. Do ask me again if you still have any doubt.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/21

160. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 24, 1928

I now understand what you mean. Mridula has not yet opened her bhandar. If she does and if she will stock your khaddar, there is nothing to prevent her from doing so. In what way can Kakasaheb help you?

The difficulty about Andhra is that so many manufacturers have proved false. Hence the necessity of exercising the greatest vigilance.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN
ISLAM CLUB BUILDINGS, CHOWPATTY, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13569

161. LETTER TO PRATAP DIALDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 24, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What you want and your wife want, to do is not birth-control but abortion. Abortion is a crime in law and in fact, it is likely also permanently to injure your wife's health. I would therefore strongly dissuade you both from the step. Birth-control is prevention by artificial methods of conception, a totally different thing from abortion, which means destruction of the conceived embryo. The only way therefore I can suggest to you is to allow the pregnancy to take its own course and when the child is born to nurse it tenderly. For future protection you should resolutely decline to share the same bed or the same room with your wife and you should avoid all privacy.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PRATAP DIALDAS
C/O DIALDAS MULCHAND
MAIN BAZAAR, HYDERABAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 13571

162. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 24, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I owe a reply to your two letters. Of course if there were only corn fields, monkeys will not give so much worry as they are giving now. What I have to do is to solve the question in Such a manner as to be of use to others. It would be no solution to ask people to have only corn fields. The logical consequence of notree campaign means no rain and no fruit. The greatest need of India so far as agriculture is concerned is more trees and more fruit trees.

So far as cattle are concerned, I quite agree with you that the ideal is to do without them. That again means doing without agriculture. And in so far as agriculture is concerned, it is not merely the cattle that are concerned, but there is so much inevitable destruction of life in the pursuit of agriculture. All that one can aim at is minimum of destruction and kindly treatment of cattle. I would like you not to worry about this question. And that brings me to your previous letter.

It is in the field of khadi that your ahimsa would be displayed in its fullness, and it is there that you have to solve the question. I know that you will do nothing mechanically, nothing in haste, and things will take their own course and come rightly.

If Hemprabhadevi can come to the Ashram and take her share in the common kitchen and the other activities to the extent that her body allows, I should feel delighted. She can come when she chooses.

Our circular about the Exhibition has gone to all the affiliated and aided organizations.

You will let me know the result of your having sent samples of your khadi to the Karachi Municipality.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1597

163. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM MAVJI

[Before October 25, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM MAVJI,

It is three o'clock in the morning. I have read your letter carefully from beginning to end. I think the articles² I have been writing these days answer your questions. I therefore advise you to get those articles if you do not have them and read them and ponder over them. Nevertheless, I briefly answer your questions here.

It is not true without exception that no living creature likes to die in any circumstances. I have seen with my own eyes persons laid on the floor as dead rising up alive. I have also heard of instances of persons sitting up on the pyre. But we can act only on the basis of what we assume to be true to the best of our knowledge. The reason for killing the calf was not that I could not bear to see its pain, but that, seeing the pain, I could not help it in any other way. I assumed that it would wish to be delivered from that pain, for I have known many men who so wished to be freed in similar circumstances. One may err in assuming such a wish in a particular case, but in countless situations, Nature has provided man with no other means but to make certain assumptions. I am dictating this letter on the assumption that I shall be alive till the letter is finished and that it will give you some comfort. But it is quite conceivable that I might die before the letter was finished or, possibly, instead of giving you comfort and peace, it might pain, displease and trouble you still more. But even if that was its effect, God would forgive me, because I started writing the letter with the purest of motives.

My answer to your question whether the calf was in unbearable pain is implied in what I have said above. But one more point is that in such matters self-deception is quite possible.

I can also reply that in a way I knew it for certain that the calf was going to die. But I know that you mean otherwise in your letter. You have not said that I could not know for certain from its pain that it would die. But that is what you think. However, I knew that its life was definitely going to end, if not because of the pain then through some other cause. If therefore I committed any error in acting on my assumption its only effect has been to alter the hour of death a little. It need not be necessary for me to try to become omniscient in order to save myself from the sin of altering the hour of death. Where the intention is not to give pain but to relieve pain by ending life, an

¹ In the Diary this letter is placed before the item that follows.

² *Vide*

ignorant man not only has the right to try but it is also incumbent on him to do so.

Please do not have the slightest fear that I would hastily decide to kill the monkeys. But I see that I have gained much by starting the discussion, and so have other people through it. Obeying our desire to live, we knowingly destroy many living things. We know that it is wrong to destroy life in that way. I for one knew it and yet I am unable to overcome the desire to live though I know well enough that the desire is not good. I am therefore trying gradually to wean myself from it. I believe that all of us should do the same. That is our dharma too. It is quite impossible to keep the monkeys away from the fields without harassing them in some way. Even brandishing a stick at them is inflicting pain on them. Every day I drive away the mosquitoes to protect myself from their nuisance. That too is inflicting pain on them. Though knowing this, out of my desire to live, I give pain to countless creatures. I therefore daily pray to God to deliver me this very day from this body and from the necessity of having to be in a similar body which cannot be kept alive even for a moment without giving pain to some living creature, and till I am so delivered, to take from this body such service as He may wish for the good of others, at least as penance by me for the sin of living. But God's ways are inscrutable. Even at this moment when I am praying thus, I am giving pain in some way or other to countless creatures. Innumerable creatures are eagerly waiting to settle in the space I now occupy. But what can I do? One cannot free oneself from the body merely by wishing it. To bring it about one must strive hard to live in a spirit of penance. While engaged in such an endeavour I have to accept innumerable troubles like that of the monkeys and I solve the problems according to my lights and to the best of my ability. I do not wish to deceive the world or myself in any way.

You did well of course to write the letter.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/22

164. 'DEATH IS REST'¹

When I am overwhelmed with correspondence betraying in every line fear of death and consequent travesty of ahimsa, it refreshes me to come across the following beautiful dialogue a friend sent me on Maganlal Gandhi's death:

¹ An article by Gandhiji on the same subject with an additional concluding paragraph appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928.

Tzu Kung said to Confucius,— “Master, I am weary, and would fain have rest.”

“In life,” replied the sage, “there is no rest.”

“Shall I then never have rest?” asked the disciple.

“You will,” said Confucius. “Behold the tombs which lie around; some magnificent, some mean. In one of these you will find rest !”

“How wonderful is Death!” rejoined Tzu Kung. “The wise man rests, the worldly man is engulfed therein.”

“My son,” said Confucius, “I see what you understand. Other men know life only as a boon; they do not perceive that it is a bane. They know old age as a state of weakness, they do not perceive that it is a state of ease. They know Death only as an abomination; they do not perceive that it is a state of rest.”

“How grand,” cried Yen Tzu, “is the old conception of Death! The virtuous find rest; the wicked are engulfed therein. In death, each reverts to that from which he came. The ancients regarded death as a return to, and life as an absence from, home. And he, who forgets his home, becomes an outcaste and a byword in his generation.”

It is not reproduced to defend the infliction of death *penalty* on any living being or thing. But it is given here to show that death is *not* a terror *in all circumstances* as many correspondents contend and that it may be a deliverance in certain cases, especially when it is *not inflicted as a penalty but administered as a healing balm*. “Death is but a sleep and a forgetting,” says the English poet. Let us not seek to prop virtue by imagining hellish torture after death for vice and houris hereafter as a reward for virtue in this life. If virtue has no attraction in itself, it must be a poor thing to be thrown away on the dung heap. Nature, I am convinced, is not so cruel as she seems to us, who are so often filled with cruelty ourselves. Both heaven and hell are within us. Life after Death there is, but it is not so unlike our present experiences as either to terrify us or make us delirious with joy. “He is steadfast who rises above joy and sorrow,” says the *Gita*. “The wise are unaffected either by death or life.” These are but faces of the same coin.¹

The concept of non-violence in our religion is framed from the standpoint of the pain that we may cause another individual. Why should there be any outcry where death is caused either accidentally or deliberately but without any thought of causing pain? If there is not the fear of death behind that outcry, what else is it? And fear of death does not become man. Where there is this fear, supreme human

¹ What follows is translated from *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928

endeavour in the form of non-violence is impossible.

Young India, 25-10-1928

165. FAMINE IN THE SOUTH¹

Salem, Coimbatore and other areas in the Tamil country whose peasant population depend on the unsteady rainfall of the central districts are having one of their very worst years. Reports from khadi centres show a terrible increase in rural unemployment. With October, the season for agricultural work generally begins and the peasant women in the khadi areas usually close down their spinning for the next four months. A certain number spin all the year round, but the majority who can work in the fields generally leave the charkhas during this time. But this year instead of a fall in the number of spinners there is an increase and a great rush for cotton at our depots.

The reader must remember that this rush is for a wage of one anna a day.

When will the intelligentsia of India and the well-to-do realize that the cloth that we wear is not mere covering or adornment, but a vital part of the national economy, a channel for distribution of national resources; and that clogging this is death? We can give substantial relief to the people at Pudukalayam and other famine-stricken areas where we have been enabled to set up khadi centres if only people will help us by a quick and generous consumption of the khadi that we produce. Ready consumption means room for more spinning and distribution of much needed relief among the Starving people. Sjt. Santanam desires to organize the maximum spinning in the Pudukalayam area in this period of distress there, and if we get public sympathy and support, he hopes to organize sale of food grains and seed at cheap fixed prices, the deficit being met from famine relief fund to be raised. . .

The way the public can help is

(a) by sending liberal orders for khadi;

(b) by sending donations either for distributing grams free or at rates within the means of the famishing people, or for supporting spinning centres where initial outlay will be a necessity.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

I hope that this appeal will receive a generous response. The appeal is evident]y written in a hurry and without possession of full facts. But past experience shows that in such cases a general description draws a picture less terrible than a mere narrative of 'facts reveals. The reader will therefore not wait for a detailed report before he opens his purse-strings. I hope too to be able shortly to give a rough forecast of the requirements. Let the reader remember also that

¹ From the appeal by C. Rajagopalachari, only excerpts are reproduced here.

the best help that can be rendered” is to help to clear the stock of khadi that is being and will be manufactured. When khadi becomes current coin, though scarcity of rainfall will be always with us, there need be no distress such as would compel people to live on charity. While hand-spinning is being organized on a national scale, some charitable relief will be found necessary to meet emergencies. For all the famine-stricken people are not ready or able to spin, nor has the nation provided facilities in every village for willing spinners.

Young India, 25-10-1928

166. TRUE HOLIDAY-MAKING

A correspondent invites me to warn those who care against turning during the forthcoming Divali holidays good money into fireworks, bad sweets and unhygienic illuminations. I heartily respond. If I had my way I should have people to do housecleaning and heart cleaning and provide innocent and instructive amusements for children during these days. Fireworks I know are the delight of children, but they are so because we the elders have habituated them to fireworks. I have not known the untutored African children wanting or appreciating fireworks. They have dances instead. What can be better or healthier for children than sports and picnics to which they will take not bazaar-made sweets of doubtful value but fresh and dried fruit? Children both rich and poor may also be trained to do house-cleaning and whitewashing themselves. It will be something if they are coaxed to recognize the dignity of labour if only during holidays to begin with. But the point I wish to emphasize is that at least a part, if not the whole, of the money saved by doing away with fireworks, etc., should be given to the cause of khadi, or if that is anathema, then to any other cause in which the poorest are served. There cannot be greater joy to men and women young and old than that they think of and associate the poorest of the land with them in their holidays.

Young India, 25-10-1928

167. HOW WE LOST INDIA¹

It was at Jalpaiguri just before Deshbandhu's death that I said to a mercantile audience in reply to an address from the merchants that we had lost India through merchants and that we should regain it also

¹ An article by Gandhiji on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928

through them.¹ If illustrations of the truth of this statement were wanted, a striking one is furnished by the following circular letter from a mercantile association to other similar bodies:

As you are aware, trade in Manchester piece-goods and yarn has much gone down in recent times and is still showing a marked tendency to decrease. It has been noticed that business men are not taking as keen an interest in this trade as they used to do formerly. As a result of this indifference, our countrymen are steadily losing what was as it still may be a source of great profit and income to them. The Marwari community, along with other commercial communities, being very greatly interested in the piece-goods and yarn trade, my Committee adopted a resolution in their meeting of the 7th instant, to fully investigate into the causes of its depression with a view to taking definite steps for the rehabilitation of this important branch of trade.

As the matter is one of general interest, my Committee consider it advisable to meet the representatives of different public bodies interested in the trade in a conference in order to take concerted action if possible.

The circular is dated 19th July², 1928. I do not know the outcome of the effort. We are however just now not concerned with its result. The fact that there should be in our midst respectable bodies of merchants engaged in devising means for sustaining the trade in Manchester yarn and piece-goods, at a time when the whole country is trying to boycott *all foreign* cloth, is a portent which should be taken notice of by every national worker.

Enough evidence has been adduced from time to time in these pages that India is held by the English for their commerce and that by far the largest imports consist of piece-goods. Surely no committee or commission is required to prove that so long as this exploitation of our country is permitted by us, India will be held by the British by every means at their disposal. What we need therefore above all is not so much conversion or expulsion of the British residents or rulers as the conversion of our own merchant princes and their dependents who are selling their country for their own interest.

Nor need our merchant princes ruin themselves for the sake of the country. India will want all the quantity of the cloth and yarn that they are now importing. They have but to apply their undoubted ability to the manufacture of this quantity in our seven hundred thousand villages. In doing so they will naturally benefit themselves. I admit that they will have to give up commercial gambling, speculation and palaces out of all proportion to their surroundings, and be

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Jalpaiguri", 10-6-1925

² *Navajivan* article has July 7.

satisfied with an income bearing some relation to the condition of those for whom and with whom they would trade. In other words, instead of taking part as they are now doing in bleeding the villages, they would be making some tardy return to those on whom their prosperity has depended. The story of the belly and the members has an eternal application. The toiling millions are the belly. The merchants and others are the members. They must wither if the belly is starved. Those who have eyes can see that the belly has been shamefully starved for a long enough period. The withering of the members must follow soon as night follows day. Let us then repent before it is too late.

Young India, 25-10-1928

168. "ECONOMICS OF KHADDAR"

Mr. Richard B. Gregg, the author of *Economics of Khaddar*, is a painstaking student. He has found additional material to support his thesis and discovered some printer's errors in his volume. He has sent me these additions and corrections¹. The reader will not mind my sharing these additions and corrections with the students of Mr. Gregg's volume. They will also be glad to know that he is now compiling a detailed index for it so as to facilitate the study and research of khadi lovers.

Young India, 25-10-1928

169. LETTER TO ALAVI

ASHRAM,
October 25, 1928

BHAISHRI ALAVI,

I have your letter.

It was not my duty to know more about Khilafat than I did. Khilafat was not merely Turkey. To me Khilafat had a much deeper meaning and the fight for my conception of Khilafat is still going on. The only difference now is that we no longer have to fight over the issue with the British. Ask me more about this when we meet some day. I would not be able to explain the matter more clearly. Where there is trust it is not proper to ask too many questions. The important thing is that even the British Prime Minister had recognized the claim

¹ Not reproduced here

of the Muslims to be just. The other Governments wanted to annex Turkey.

I will certainly now read the book on the Muslim Saint.

As for the calf I will only say that the argument that we have no right to kill a creature the sight of which gives us pain if our personal interest is not involved does not apply here. The question here was about one's duty to kill. Think over this difference. At the back of the American's action was his distrust of the people. He believed that people would not look after his daughter. And the girl was not unconscious. I think there is a lot of difference between her case and that of the calf. I have not been able to read that article in *Navajivan* again. Do write to me if you have still not been able to see the difference. I will then try to read that article and find time to write to you a more detailed reply.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/23

170. MESSAGE TO LITERARY CONFERENCE

October 26, 1928

Where Anandshankerbhai is the President, success is assured. I hope that lovers of literature will not forget the poor of Gujarat and that Anandshankerbhai will not let them do so.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 28-10-1928

171. LETTER TO SVENSKA KYRKANS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 26, 1928

MESSRS SVENSKA KYRKANS

DIAKONISTYRELSES, HOKFORLAG, STOCKHOLM 7 (SWEDEN)

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am surprised that you have not yet received my letter¹. The purport of my letter was that you were at liberty to translate the Autobiography in the Swedish language and that whatever you sent me would be utilized for some public purpose.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12783

¹ Dated June 8, 1928; *vide*

172. LETTER TO F. B. FISHER¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter from Hingham. I have got the book also, called *Understanding India*. I do not know when I shall get the time but as soon as I do, I shall read Mrs. William's book.

I reciprocate the hope that we shall meet one another some time next year.

Yours sincerely,

REV. F. B. FISHER
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 3 MIDDLETON STREET, CALCUTTA
From a photostat: S.N. 13509

173. LETTER TO HARRIETTE ASHBROOK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I have also the book by Mrs. Williams. As soon as I can get the time, I shall read the book and let you have my opinion. But I am so overwhelmed with work that I do not know when I shall get the time to read the book.

Yours sincerely,

HARRIETTE ASHBROOK
COWARD MCCANN, 425 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
From a photostat: S.N. 14390

¹ In reply to his letter dated September 7, which read: "Mother India has created a terrible sensation in America. It has been difficult to know just how to meet the situation.... There is now coming off from the press a book by Gertrude Marvin Williams called *Understanding India*, which I believe will help in many ways to correct the wrong impressions which Miss Mayo has given. . ."

174. LETTER TO HORACE HOLBY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter sending me the magazine *World Unity*.

I have instructed the Manager to put you on the exchange list. You are certainly at liberty to copy whatever you like from *Young India*, and if I find something in your magazine I might consider to be of value for the readers of *Young India*, I shall take the copy with due acknowledgment.

Yours sincerely,

HORACE HOLBY, ESQ.

EDITOR, "WORLD UNITY"

4 EAST 12TH STREET, NEW YORK

Copy to the Manager, *Young India*, for necessary action.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14397

175. LETTER TO J. B. PENNINGTON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I wish I could find the time to read the book you refer to.

With reference to the problem of poverty I wish you were able to see the India that I know. I am sure you will soon change your view about India's poverty apart from the reasons for it. I have forwarded your criticism to Mr. Vakil.¹

I do hope that you have still many years in front of you.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. PENNINGTON, ESQ.

3 VICTORIA STREET, 3 WESTMINSTER, S.W.

From a photostat: S.N. 14404

¹ Pennigton had mentioned that C. N. Vakil had overlooked the fragmentation of land, a result of the Hindu Inheritance Law, as a major cause of poverty in India.

176. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL M. HAMILTON

October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am sending a copy of it to Sir Purushottam Das.

You will have noticed that I published your paper in the pages of *Young India*. Several economist friends have interested themselves in it. I am expecting at least one criticism.

I hope you received the issues of *Young India* containing your article.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DANIEL HAMILTON

BALMAOARA, BY KYLE, ROSS SHIRE, ENGLAND

From a microfilm: S.N. 14418

177. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

October 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to hear from you after such a long time and under other circumstances.¹

I quite agree with you that the death of Mr. Krishna Pillay² was a great loss.

The untouchability question in Travancore is still hanging fire. But untouchability, it is undoubtedly going steadily though ever so slow.

I hope both you and Mrs. Pitt are enjoying yourselves there.

Yours sincerely,

W.H. PITT, ESQ.

LIDDINGTON, SWINDON, WILTS

From a photostat: S.N. 14423

¹ Pitt, who was Police Commissioner of Travancore till April 1928, began his letter (S.N. 14422) dated June 15 thus: "My dear Mahatmaji, I am all but a private citizen, and no longer bound by official conventions, so I am using your spiritual title to address you, instead of just Mr. Gandhi!"

² Commissioner, Travancore Devaswom

178. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 26, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

Here is a letter from Spain. Please send him the information he wants, and the books you should send only when he sends the money for them.

Mr. Gregg is here and he complains of absence of any letter from you, even regarding business enquiries. He tells me that you have not even sent a book to Mr. Roy in Shantiniketan. I have now sent a copy to Mr. Roy from here. Why all this negligence?

With reference to your letter about Bharati's songs, I have sent you a wire¹ today.

I wrote also to the Maharajah of Nabha some time ago.²

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. GANESAN
18 PYCROFTS ROAD, TRIPPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13573

179. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

October 26, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter came into my hands only today. I believe Ramdas hasz has been carrying out your orders. All the same, I am sending your letter to him.

You have undertaken a big task. But you always succeed in your ventures, and so everything will be all right. I am sure you take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

MITHUBEHN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2707

¹ Not available

² *Vide* "Letter to Maharaja of Nabha", 18-10-1928.

180. LETTER TO BHULABHAI DESAI

October 26, 1928

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI¹,

The Bardoli Inquiry Committee² will meet in the beginning of November. I think it is desirable that the case should be represented by an eminent and experienced advocate like you, so that the Committee may think twice before doing flagrant injustice. Can you spare the time? I do not insist that you should be present at every hearing. It will be enough if you remain present at the first two or three meetings to represent the ryots' case and thereafter attend the meetings only when you consider it necessary.³ This letter will be delivered to you by Mahadev who will tell you more. I have written along similar lines to Bahadurji⁴ also but Mahadev will use that letter, if necessary, only after meeting you.

Vandemataram form

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: Bhulabhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

181. TELEGRAM TO MRS. S. R. DAS

[On or after *October 26, 1928*]⁵

MRS. S. R. DAS

CALCUTTA

MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY IN YOUR LOW WHICH IS SHARED
BY YOUR NUMEROUS FRIENDS AMONG WHOM I COUNT MYSELF
AS ONE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13585

¹ Eminent advocate of Bombay

² Appointed by Government to investigate and report on the people's complaint that the enhancement of assessment in Bardoli Taluka was unwarranted.

³ The addressee consented to be the ryots' advocate and made the preliminary argument on behalf of the ryots when the Committee began its inquiry in November.

⁴ D. N. Bahadurji; *vide* "Letter to D. N. Bahadur", 27-10-1928

⁵ S. R. Das, Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, died on October 26.

182. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised October 27, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have been writing since 2.30 a.m., Kusum having got malaria. There are so many now ailing. Chhaganlal Joshi's whole family is ailing; Narandas has a relapse, Ba had a severe time; Pyarelal is prostrate; Chhotelal is threatening again; even the strong Surendra has not escaped. There are others who need not be mentioned. Standenath I must not forget. He had a bad attack. So you may imagine the time I am having. Mahadev is in Bardoli.

Well, in spite of the catalogue, God seems to want work from me and keeps me fairly fit. But who knows—?

Things are moving steadily. The calf incident has occupied my attention a great deal. It has done much good in that it has set people thinking.

(Here I had to stop for the prayer).

4.15 p.m.

Harjivan Kotak sends the enclosed telegram¹ from Srinagar. If you do not go to Nepal I would like you to retrace your steps and visit Kashmir. You should see it for its mountains as well as its khadi work.

Pandit Motilalji is here today.

I expect to go to Wardha during the last week of November.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5317. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8207

183. LETTER TO K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 27, 1928

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIAM,

I have your letter. I am wholly unable to advise without having a chat with the members of the Council². I do however feel that Pandit

¹ Dated October 27, which read: "Wish Mirabehn includes Srinagar in her tour if possible and you permit." It contained the following remarks in Gandhiji's 'land: "Write to him directly, Harjivan Kotak, A.I.S.A. Depot, Srinagar" (C.W. 5318).

² Of the All-India Spinners' Association. Subramaniam had enclosed a draft circular on behalf of the Association purporting to inform all khadi organizations not to participate in the Exhibition to be organized at the Calcutta Congress on account of differences between the Association and Reception Committee of the Congress as to the inclusion of mill-cloth in the Exhibition.

Jawaharlal Nehru is right when he says that he cannot do justice to the Agency as he has so many other calls on his time.

I return herewith Pandit Jawaharlal's letter sent by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. SUBRAMANIAM

ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION, AHMEDABAD

395 KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12784

184. LETTER TO D. N. BAHADUR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You know that the Bardoli Inquiry commences next month. I am most anxious that the ryot's case should be represented before the Committee by some eminent Counsel. Could you find the time to study the case and represent the cause at the opening of the Inquiry? I do not expect you to be present at all its sittings. But I would like you, if you have the time and the inclination, to guide the advisers generally and appear before the Committee whenever occasion requires your presence.

Mahadev will personally hand this note to you. I am sending a similar note to Bhulabhai¹

Yours sincerely,

D. N. BAHADURJI, ESQ.

RIDGE ROAD, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13575

185. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

Saturday [October 27, 1928]²

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

It is said that the Secretary of *Hindu* is hand-cuffed and ill-treated in other ways. Write to me to tell me what you know about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ Bhulabhai Desai

² From the postmark

[PS.]

Kanti must have left the bed now.

BHAISHRI KALYANJI
PATIDAR ASHRAM, SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2680

186. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Saturday [October 27, 1928]¹

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter.

Let me know what work you are now busy on. It is good that you joined the Mandal of Mithubehn.

Ba is getting impatient to send Nimu there. Nimu has not asked for anything. But today Ba was insistent and hence I write this much to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I read the accompanying letter after writing this one. But now I do not have to give you any guidance. Under the tender care of Mithubehn you will have no discomfort.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6858

187. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Saturday [October 27, 1928]²

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I receive your letters after long intervals. I would be happy if without straining yourself you could come here for a day, but only if it does not cause you any physical strain at all. There is an epidemic of fever around here these days. It seems in this season the peasant families do become afflicted with fever. You must follow Dr. Jivraj's advice and spend one more year in the peaceful atmosphere of a hill

¹ From the postmark

² *ibid*

resort.

Mahadev is at Bardoli this year. He will be in Bombay on Sunday. I should be very happy if your programme of going to Almora materializes. Prabhudas was immensely benefited.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

VICTORIA LODGE

MATHERAN (G.I.P. RLY.)

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

188. FAMINE IN THE SOUTH

There is no end to the misery in the South. On the one hand, there is a severe draught around Salem, while on the other, we hear of floods around Kakinada. We have still to learn of the extent of damage caused by the floods. Meanwhile the appeal that Shri Rajagopalachari has issued with regard to the drought has been published in *Young India*.¹ From this it is seen that the crops have been damaged owing to water scarcity and that the farmers are worried. There is a sudden rise in the number of women who wish to spin. Whereas last September, 2,473 women came to the Gandhi Ashram in order to take cotton, this September the number went up to 6,423. The amount of yarn received during the month last year was 4,785 pounds, while the amount received this year was 12,802 pounds.

This activity is the purest means of helping the famine-stricken population and, if it is firmly established, the people would not suffer despite the famine. At present famine causes hardship because the farmers are rendered unemployed and are without an income. They would be free from anxiety if they could be assured of the security provided by a subsidiary occupation. At this time, there are two ways of helping the people, first by buying the khadi that is produced in this famine-stricken area and second by offering them unconditional financial assistance. I hope to publish hereafter the figures relating to the famine. Those who wish to share in this privation now may contribute as much as they can or purchase khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajiv an, 28-10-1928

¹ *Vide* "Famine in the South", 25- 10-1928.

189. THE GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

It was a very important speech that the principal had prepared on the day the Diwali vacation started in the University and the Vinaymandir and read out at the farewell gathering. Although it was a long speech, its effect was that of a brief one because it contained no figurative language or repetition. Its speciality lay in its crystal-clear truth. No attempt was made to hide any drawbacks or to dismiss them as unimportant. Despite this the report of this term of 112 days may be considered as very hopeful. The speech indeed contains a brief outline of many activities. It is obvious from this that even the minutest detail has not been overlooked. Amongst these, the sections dealing with agriculture and practical training in crafts cannot but attract our attention. In the field of agriculture, growing fruit trees and cotton is an altogether new experiment. The activities of ginning, carding, spinning, weaving and carpentry are the ones that are most striking amongst the crafts. At least two hours a day are devoted to the crafts. In order to do proper justice to the crafts, it will be necessary to devote more time to them as no craft can be mastered without a great deal of practice and a craftsman's hands cannot become experienced without a full amount of work. Proficiency in a craft cannot be developed in the same manner as a mental activity. After reading a little, the mind can develop without further reading as it can continue to think while being engaged in any other activity. Being a purely physical activity, a craft can be developed only while it is being practised; hence it requires complete familiarization with it. Moreover, the middle classes are not in the habit of practising any craft; hence, in order to form that habit, they require specially to cultivate familiarity with it.

Another point in the speech which attracts our attention is the reference to the dictionary which is getting ready. The present chaotic state of spellings acts as a hindrance to the development of the language. Kakasaheb hopes that this dictionary will be ready by March. If this task is accomplished, an important piece of work as yet unaccomplished will have been completed. Amongst all the languages of India, Gujarati is found to be the only one in which laxity in regard to spellings is possible.

A new experiment which has been referred to in the speech is that of developing fellow-feeling towards one's servants. If we cannot do without servants, the alternative is to establish cordial relations with them by putting them on the same footing with ourselves. Kakasaheb hopes to establish such relations by running a class for servants. His good intentions will be fulfilled if the students carry out this task in an

honest manner.

Despite these new activities, knowledge of the alphabet has not been neglected. Anyone who goes through the speech will clearly see that sufficient attention is also being paid to this aspect. In other Words, a careful attempt is being made to put before the students who are being trained by the Vidyapith all that is required to turn them into village workers. Whether they will be receptive to this or not will depend on their enthusiasm. This latter factor in its turn is dependent upon the art of the teacher.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-10-1928

190. THE FAIR AT WAUTHA

This fair is held every year in Wautha on the full-moon day in the month of *Kartik*. Following is the notice which has been issued with regard to it by Shri Dahyabhai Patel on behalf of the taluk committee:¹

This appeal involves a request for two things: one is for volunteers and the other for funds. I am confident that assistance of both sorts will be forthcoming. While sending in this appeal, Shri Dahyabhai writes that he has received a sum of Rs. 300 from the provincial committee. The other contribution that has so far been received amounts to only Rs. 31. The minimum expense amounts to Rs. 500. Hence I hope that the balance will be readily forthcoming. I consider it remarkable that the public can be served through the expenditure of such a small sum. I have found that volunteer bodies incur large expenses on such occasions.

It is not always the case that people enjoy only innocent pleasures at such fairs. Dahyabhai has described the ideal. It is the task of the volunteers in such fairs to see that purity is maintained. It is often found that at fairs

1. limits of decency are transgressed,
2. gambling is practised,
3. there is fighting,
4. wicked persons resort to ill-practices, and
5. many inedible things are eaten and things which should not be sold are sold.

¹The appeal is not translated here. It asked people to serve as volunteers to look after the huge crowd of pilgrims and to send contributions towards expenses.

It is impossible to stop these practices at once in a crowd of thousands. However, reforms can be brought about by making an attempt on every occasion. On such occasions, dealers of foreign cloth sell large stocks of foreign cloth too. Propaganda for khadi can well be carried on instead. If all this is to be achieved, preparations should be made in advance, and there should be a large number of good, intelligent and self sacrificing volunteers. If these steps are taken, such fairs can be well utilized for educating the public.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 28-10-1928

191. MORE ABOUT AHIMSA¹

I

A correspondent writes:

I have read your article "The Fiery Ordeal"² over and over again but it has failed to satisfy me. Your proposal about the killing of monkeys has taken me aback. I believed that a person like you with his being steeped in ahimsa would never swerve from the right path even though the heavens fell. And now you say that you might kill off the monkeys to protect your Ashram against their inroads. Maybe that my first impression about you was wrong. But I cannot describe what a shock your proposal about the killing of the monkeys has given me, and may I also confess, how angry it has made me feel against you? Would you kindly help me out of my perplexity?

I have received several other letters too in the same strain. I am afraid people have formed an altogether exaggerated estimate of me. These good people seem to think that because I am trying to analyse and define the ideal of ahimsa I must have fully attained that ideal. My views regarding the calf and the monkeys seem happily to have shattered this illusion of theirs. Truth to me is infinitely dearer than the 'mahatmaship' which is purely a burden. It is my knowledge of my limitations and my nothingness which has so far saved me from the oppressiveness of the 'mahatmaship'. I am painfully aware of the fact that my desire to continue life in the body involves me in constant *himsa*, that is why I am becoming growingly indifferent to this physical body of mine. For instance I know that in the act of respiration I destroy innumerable invisible germs floating in the air. But I do not stop breathing. The consumption of vegetables involves *himsa*

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-10-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

² Dated 30-9-1928

but I find that I cannot give them up. Again, there is *himsa* in the use of antiseptics, yet I cannot bring myself to discard the use of disinfectants like kerosene, etc., to rid myself of the mosquito pest and the like. I suffer snakes to be killed in the Ashram when it is impossible to catch and put them out of harm's way. I even tolerate the use of the stick to drive the bullocks in the Ashram. Thus there is no end of *himsa* which I directly and indirectly commit. And now I find myself confronted with this monkey problem. Let me assure the reader that I am in no hurry to take the extreme step of killing them. In fact I am not sure that I would at all be able finally to make up my mind to kill them. As it is, friends are helping me with useful suggestions and the adoption of some of them may solve the difficulty at least temporarily without our having to kill them. But I cannot today promise that I shall never kill the monkeys even though they may destroy all the crop in the Ashram. If as a result of this humble confession of mine, friends choose to give me up as lost, I would be sorry but nothing will induce me to try to conceal my imperfections in the practice of *ahimsa*. All claim for myself is that I am ceaselessly trying to understand the implications of great ideals like *ahimsa* and to practise them in thought, word and deed and that not without a certain measure of success as I think. But I know that I have a long distance yet to cover in this direction. Unless therefore the correspondent in question can bring himself to bear with my imperfections I am sorry I can offer him but little consolation.

II

Another correspondent writes:

Supposing my elder brother is suffering from a terrible and painful, malady and doctors have despaired of his life and I too feel likewise, should I in the circumstances put him out of life?

My reply is in the negative. I am afraid some of my correspondents have not even taken the trouble to understand my article. In propounding their conundrums they forget that whilst I have certainly compared the case of an ailing human being with that of an ailing calf and recommended the killing of the former in exactly similar circumstances, in actual practice such a complete analogy is hardly ever to be found. In the first place the human body being much more manageable in bulk is always easier to manipulate and nurse; secondly man being gifted with the power of speech more often than not is in a position to express his wishes and so the question of taking his life without his consent cannot come within the rule. For I have never suggested that the life of another person can be taken against his will without violating the principle of *ahimsa*. Again, we do

not always despair of the life of a person when he is reduced to a comatose state and even when he is past all hope he is not necessarily past all help. More often than not it is both possible and practicable to render service to a human patient till the very end. Whilst, therefore, I would still maintain that the principle enunciated regarding the calf applies equally to man and bird and beast I should expect an intelligent person to know the obvious natural difference between a man and an animal. To recapitulate the conditions the fulfilment of *all* of which alone can warrant the taking of life from the point of view of ahimsa:

1. The disease from which the patient is suffering should be incurable.
2. All concerned have despaired of the life of the patient.
3. The case should be beyond all help or service.
4. It should be impossible for the patient in question to express his or its wish.

So long as even one of these conditions remains unfulfilled the taking of life from the point of view of ahimsa cannot be justified.

III

A third correspondent writes:

Well, the killing of the calf is all right so far as it goes. But have you considered that your example is likely to afford a handle to those who indulge in animal sacrifices and thus accentuate the practice; do you not know that even those who commit these deeds argue that the animals sacrificed gain merit in the life to follow?

Such abuse of my action is quite possible, and inevitable so long as there are hypocrisy and ignorance in this world. What crimes have not been committed in the world in the sacred name of religion? One therefore need not be deterred from doing what one considers to be right merely because one's conduct may be misunderstood or misinterpreted by others. And as for those who practise animal sacrifice, surely they do not need the authority of my example to defend their conduct since they profess to take their stand on the authority of the Shastras. My fear however is that proceeding on my analogy some people might actually take into their head summarily to put to death those whom they might imagine to be their enemies on the plea that it would serve both the interests of society and the 'enemies' concerned, if the latter were killed. In fact I have often heard people advance this argument. But it is enough for my purpose to know that my interpretation of ahimsa affords no basis whatever for such an argument, for in the latter case there is no question of serving

or anticipating the wishes of the victims concerned. Finally, even if it were admitted that it was in the interest of the animal or the enemy in question to be summarily dispatched the act would still be spelt as *himsa* because it would not be altogether disinterested. The fallacy is so obvious. But who can help people who seeing see not, or are bent upon deceiving themselves?

Young India, 1-11-1928

192. THE STUDENTS' INTERROGATORIES¹

(Before Gandhiji commenced reading *Hind Swaraj* with the students of the Gujarat Vidyapith they had addressed him a string of questions for answer. As some of these questions are of general interest Gandhiji had dealt with them in the columns of *Navajivan*². The following assortment out of them will be found useful by the readers of *Young India* .P.)

UNDER SWARAJ

Q. What in your opinion ought to be the basis of India's future economic constitution? What place will such institutions as savings banks, insurance companies, etc., have in it?

A. According to me the economic constitution of India and for the matter of that the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or groups of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today not only in this unhappy land but other parts of the world too. It is this evil that the khadi movement is calculated to remedy. Savings banks and insurance companies will be there even when the economic reforms suggested by me. have been effected but their nature will have undergone a complete transformation. Savings banks today in India though a useful institution do not serve the very poorest. As for our insurance companies they are of no use whatever to the poor. What part they can play in an ideal scheme of reconstruction such as I have postulated is more than I can say. The function of savings banks

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-10-1928.

² Vide "My Notes", 21-10-1928.

ought to be to enable the poorest to husband their hard-earned savings and to subserve the interests of the country generally. Though I have lost faith in most Government institutions, as I have said before, savings banks are good so far as they go but unfortunately today their services are available only to the urban section of the community and so long as our gold reserves are located outside India they can hardly be regarded as trustworthy institutions. In the event of a war all these banks may become not only utterly useless but even a curse to the people inasmuch as the Government will not scruple to employ the funds held by these banks against the depositors themselves. No Government institution can be depended upon to remain loyal to the interests of the people in emergency, if they are not controlled by and not run in the interests of the people. So long therefore as this primary condition is absent banks are in the last resort additional links to keep the people in chains. They may be regarded as an unavoidable evil and therefore to be suffered to exist but it is well to understand where we are in respect even of such harm. less looking institutions.

FOREIGN v. SWADESHI

Q. What is your opinion about the importation of foreign goods other than cloth into India? Are there any foreign commodities which you would like to see immediately laid under prohibition? What do you think should be the nature of India's foreign trade in the future?

A. I am more or less indifferent with regard to trade in foreign goods other than cloth. I have never been an advocate of prohibition of all things foreign because they are foreign. My economic creed is a complete taboo in respect of all foreign commodities, whose importation is likely to prove harmful to our indigenous interests. This means that we may not in any circumstance import a commodity that can be adequately supplied from our own country. For instance I would regard it a sin to import Australian wheat on the score of its better quality but I would not have the slightest hesitation in importing oatmeal from Scotland, if an absolute necessity for it is made out, because we do not grow oats in India. In other words I would not countenance the boycott of a single foreign article out of ill-will or a feeling of hatred. Or to take up a reverse case, India produces a sufficient quantity of leather; it is my duty therefore to wear shoes made out of Indian leather only, even if it is comparatively dearer and of an inferior quality, in preference to cheaper and superior quality foreign leather shoes. Similarly I would condemn the introduction of foreign molasses or sugar if enough of it is produced in India for our needs. It will be thus clear from the above that it is hardly possible for me to give an exhaustive catalogue of foreign articles whose impor-

tation in India ought to be prohibited. I have simply inculcated the general principle by which we can be guided in all such cases. And this principle will hold good in future too so long as the conditions of production in our country remain as they are today.

Young India, 15-11-1928

*193. SPEECH AT THE NEW GUJARATI SCHOOL,
AHMEDABAD*

October 28, 1928

This school owes its existence to Shri Indulal Yajnik, and we would be failing in our duty and be deemed ungrateful if we did not remember him while mentioning it. We cannot forget his major contribution towards creating an interest in Gujarat and its (the school's) activities. This school is the result of his endeavours. The teachers have carried on its work; they need to be congratulated on this. The principal of the school has made a reference to its connection with the Vidyapith. The school has nothing to do with the organizing committee of the Vidyapith. It is my sad experience, however, that Vidyapith and such other institutions do not function well if we do not narrow down the field of their activities, and the present limited scope of the Vidyapith is to ensure its progress and not retard it. I assure you that not the slightest injury will be done to those schools which render service to the nation. The Vidyapith exists in order to foster the educational activities which are being carried on in Gujarat. Its present endeavours are to make all schools self-reliant and to rid them of sluggishness and inertia. So far as this school is concerned, there is no such apprehension; otherwise, I would not have come at all today. I expect much from the students and teachers of this school.

You have enacted a very good play dealing with sacrifice. Luther sacrificed himself for freedom's sake. Similarly, there is a need to risk death for the sake of the national schools, regardless of whether one meets with death or not. We are brave at the outset, but are always ready to abandon our pledge because we lack faith in our work. So long as we lack such faith, we shall be unable to make India's prestige enduring as we want to do.

The Goddess of Independence is like an angel of death. She sits with her mouth open, inviting everyone to enter it. If we are not prepared for this, we shall be unable to fulfil our cherished desires. It is good for you to play, jump and make your bodies and minds healthy, but do not forget the basic difference between national and

governmental schools. The education given at the latter may be good, but one thing these will not give you. Even today I proclaim loudly that those schools are fit to be abandoned by us. You should be determined to offer at the feet of Mother [India] whatever art and physical prowess you acquire in this school. Patriotism should be so taught here that every student should decide that, when he grows up, he will serve the country. If you do so while adhering to truth and ahimsa, it will include service to the family as well. I bless the children and request the teachers to put fully into practice the ideals they have accepted. So long as they do not do this, the children will be unable to respond to them.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 4-11-1928

194. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Silence Day [On or before *October 29, 1928*]¹

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I was disappointed with the draft for an organization to promote swadeshi. I smelt in it merely a commercial spirit. From one point of view, however, what is happening is good. The draft shows the mill-owners as they are, and what can be better than that we should seem what we are?

I should certainly like you to keep yourselves away from this move, if you can. I am surprised to know that Shri Jaisukhlal is associating himself with it. You may, if you wish, show this letter to him and to anyone else who is likely to appreciate my views.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4706. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

¹ From the postmark

195. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[October 29, 1928]¹

CHI. MIRA,

I have a moment to spare while the vegetables are being made ready for shredding.² Now that you are in Bihar I wonder what you will do about Malkhachak khadi work. Krishnadas is living at that place. You will do as the spirit moves you. I am simply telling you *what is which*. Rajendra Babu may not want you to see the place as it has no connection with the A.I.S.A.

Chhotelalji's bread is making much headway and cookery is greatly simplified.³ But this you will see for yourself when you return. You will keep yourself in touch with Devdas and the Jamia.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I must not forget to tell you that I have commenced my own carding. I have begun with the medium bow.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR

From the original: C.W. 5319. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8209

196. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day, October 29, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter, but not the [instalment of] Autobiography. I am sure I shall get it tomorrow, but all the same Pyarelal has undertaken to keep a translation ready. He is all right now. Kusum, too, is all right, but she is still confined to bed. As for me, God keeps my cart going; does not He? Has He stopped anyone's till this day? There is no special merit, therefore, in the fact that mine jogs along.

It was good that Bhulabhai immediately agreed.⁴ If the reports of Anderson and others stand superseded, the burden does not lie on

¹ In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Bapu used to take part in the cutting and shredding of the vegetables for the common kitchen."

² "Chhotelalji had successfully built a brickoven and learnt the art of preparing baker's bread without using yeast" (Mirabehn).

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to D. N. Bahadur", 27-10-1928.

us. It is for the Government to justify the increase.

There was a letter for you, which I am sending with this. I could not read the signature. I hope you have not forgotten about bread and bread-making¹.

Parikshitalal wants to know whether you gave him a copy of *Antyaja Sarvasangraha*. Did you?

Ba has left her sick-bed. She is still weak of course. She is very much reduced. Radha and Santok have gone to Rajkot. They will return after Diwali. Mirabai has reached Muzaffarpur.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Motilalji came yesterday and left today. All the time we talked about the Congress. I am sending the preface separately to Jugatram.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11446

197. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA²

AHMEDABAD,

October 30, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

BIRLA PARK, CALCUTTA

MAHADEV BARDOLI. ON GENERAL GROUNDS INVITATION SOUTH
AFRICAN JOURNALISTS ADVISABLE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7878. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

198. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 31, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters at the same time, one about the Ashram and one describing your Meerut visit I sent you two letters to the

¹ The source has the last four words of this sentence in English.

² Government of India had asked for G. D. Birla's views on a suggestion made by V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, to invite to India a group of journalists from South Africa to give them an idea of Indian culture. Birla, in his letter dated October 27 addressed to Mahadev Desai, had requested him to ascertain Gandhiji's opinion.

Muzaffarpur address, one on Sunday and the other on Monday.

I don't know how the news about the Ashram appears in the papers. Anyway most of it is all false. If there was any violent change I would have surely written to you. I have not dealt with even the change of name in the paper because Mahadev and others were anxious that I should not even announce change of name in the Press. Now, of course, I shall be obliged to do so. But the committee of the Udyoga Mandir would not relax the rule about *brahmacharya*, so that the fundamental rule about *brahmacharya* and all fundamental rules remain as they were. So does the common kitchen remain a fixture irrevocably for at least one year. At the end of the year only, it is now possible to reconsider the question of the common kitchen in the light of the experience that will be gained. The kitchen is going on merrily.

The Gandhi Ashram people in Meerut want carding demonstration and demonstration of other processes at the time of a fair that is to be held on 21st November. If you are not going to Nepal, it might be well to retrace your steps and go to this fair and give them what help you can and then proceed to Kashmir. Apart from everything else, I would like you to visit Kashmir and that you will do only while there is some khadi work going on. And you can take the help of Devdas, Rasik and Navin for arranging the demonstration, in which case it won't be necessary to send anybody from here, and as we are terribly short-handed at the present moment, it will be very inconvenient to send any from the Ashram. Yet I am anxious to help the Meerut people. Having known my views, you will do what suits you best. I have not held out any hope to Muzmudar who is the one to write the letter.

With love,

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABEHN

C/O KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR (BIHAR)

From the original: C.W. 5320. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8210

199. LETTER TO R. KRISHNIER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have seen your letter to Subbiah. I do not think I can go through Bombay to Wardha. Bardoli is the most direct and less expensive route. You may therefore send your collection to me at the

Ashram as I do not know when I am likely to be in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. KRISHNIER
82/24 MIRANDA BUILDING, DADAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13577

200. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

October 31, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I can understand Bipin Babu's attitude.¹ But I stand unmoved. The position is becoming clearer to me day by day, and we must learn to forget that life is everything and that death is nothing. Indeed, we must learn to regard death as a thing of joy.

If the Exhibition is going to be what you suggest,² we are well out of it.

You say nothing about Tarini's health in this letter of yours.

Yours sincerely

SAT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13578

201. LETTER TO J. YESUTHASEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Not all feel the existence of a prevailing spirit or the power of endurance when they are in intense pain; but some undoubtedly do. It is quite true to say that the Creator puts an end to suffering by death when suffering is beyond endurance. The state of

¹ Enclosing a cutting of Bipin Chandra Pal's article in *Englishman* criticizing Gandhiji's views in the calf controversy, Das Gupta had in his letter remarked that there was an attempt in the article to shape out a philosophy of "the joy of the mere fact of living", a favourite theme with the author.

² The Calcutta Congress Reception Committee had adopted a resolution to the effect that Indian mill textiles and needlework on foreign fabrics could be displayed in the Exhibition to be conducted during the forthcoming Congress session at Calcutta.

endurance is a question of degree. And if we do not consider death under every circumstance imaginable a terror, we may under well-defined conditions anticipate it without infringing upon the rule of ahimsa.

Yours sincerely,

J. YESUTHASEN, ESQ.

BELMONT, COONOR, NILGIRIS

From a photostat: S.N. 13579

202. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I had fully intended to be with you all at the time of the Federation in December.¹ But I see that it is not to be. I am thoroughly washed out and I have accepted the invitation of Jamnalalji to be in Wardha for a month just for rest before proceeding to Calcutta during the Congress week. Will you please forgive me?

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK

5 RUSSELL STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13580

203. LETTER TO N. K. S. NOWLAKHA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Shankarlalji has sent your letter to me. I distinctly remember having replied to your letter now over three months ago and therein I stated that the best thing would be to see Satis Babu about your scheme, because I do not know how I shall be able to guide you from here. If that is not the letter but some other letter you are referring to, please let me know and I shall attend to it at once.

I hope you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. K. S. NOWLAKHA

NOWLAKHA BHAWAN, AZIMGANJ (BENGAL)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13581

¹ *Vide* "Letter to R. C. Dewick", 21-9-1928.

204. LETTER TO JACOB SORIS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
October 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I understand that you collected some fund during my visit to Ceylon. These funds went to Allahabad instead of Ahmedabad and the Allahabad office returned them to you and since then the funds are held up there. As your subscriptions were earmarked for khadi, I hope that you will not divert the funds but send them to me for khadi.

Yours sincerely,

JACOB SORIS, ESQ.
MESSRS PAUL SORIS & CO., BADULLA (CEYLON)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13582

205. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

[October, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI KARSANDAS,

Just as a person suffering from jaundice sees the same disease in other people, I may be unjustifiably suspecting in you weaknesses and limitations which others saw in me long ago and which I myself have now slowly begun to see. You and I have to ask ourselves one question: will our respective institutions continue to run in the same or almost the same way after our death? If we feel the slightest doubt about this, we should wake up. If you feel that in your absence Surajbehn or Lakshmibehn or the two together will be able to carry on the work of the Bhagini Samaj, all will be well.

Vandemataram form

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/12

206. CONDOLENCES

I tender my respectful condolences to Mrs. S. R. Das and her family on Sjt. S. R. Das's² death. Though I had little in common with the deceased in politics, I could not but recognize his phenomenal

¹ As placed in the Diary, between letters of October 10 and 21, 1928

² Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

generosity and his open-heartedness. Many do not know how this great man begged himself so that no worthy cause might knock in vain at his door.

Young India, 1-11-1928

207. NOTES

'FREEDOM TO THE FREE'

Whilst we are cutting one another's throats in the name of religion and some of us running to the Statutory Commission¹ in the vain hope of getting freedom, a friend sends me the following from James Allen to remind us that even in the land of so-called freedom, the real freedom has still to come. Here is the passage:

All outward oppression is but the shadow and effect of the real oppression within. For ages the oppressed have cried for liberty, and a thousand man-made statutes have failed to give it to them. They can give it only to themselves; they shall find it only in obedience to the Divine Statutes which are inscribed upon their hearts. Let them resort to the inward freedom, and the shadow of oppression shall no more darken the earth. Let men cease to oppress themselves, and no man shall oppress his brother. Men legislate for an outward freedom, yet continue to render such freedom impossible of achievement by fostering an inward condition of enslavement. They thus pursue a shadow without, and ignore the substance within. All outward forms of bondage and oppression will cease to be when man ceases to be the willing bond-slave of passion, error, and ignorance.

The outward freedom therefore that we shall attain will only be in exact proportion to the inward freedom to which we may have grown at a given moment. And if this is the correct view of freedom, our chief energy must be concentrated upon achieving reform from within. In this much-needed work all who will can take an equal share. We need neither to be lawyers, nor legislators to be able to take part in the great effort. When this reform takes place on a national scale no outside power can stop our onward march.

Young India, 1-11-1928

¹ Simon Commission

208. IN TEN YEARS?

Professor C. N. Vakil's instructive articles published¹ in these pages are supplementary to the series he recently wrote on poverty² and should be read together. I coaxed him to give the reader something more definite on remedies of poverty than what he had done in the article which I ventured to withhold and which he expanded into the four articles above referred to. I do not think that the programme sketched by the learned Professor can be finished in ten years. Perhaps it is impossible to devise a ten years' programme of improvement to cover a vast and impoverished country like ours.

Let us however glance at Professor Vakil's remedies for India's central disease. He rightly says that the problem is how to increase production of wealth and how to distribute it equitably among the people, principally therefore, I presume, among the starving millions. To this end the learned writer

1. would recast small uneconomic holdings,
2. would pay off the debts of the ryot through mortgage and co-operative banks,
3. would revise the revenue law and graduate the land tax so as to bring it in a line with the income tax leaving a minimum of income from land free of tax,
4. would re-employ the population displaced through the recasting of uneconomic holdings by bringing under the plough cultivable waste, i.e., 23 per cent of the total area available and by nationalizing and thus developing large industries,
5. would draw small and large capital by putting the banking system on a basis more in keeping with the requirements of the country than it is now,
6. would improve labour conditions so as to avoid war between capital and labour,
7. would deal with such social abuses as child-marriages, etc., which give rise to over-population and unfit progeny,
8. would radically reform the educational system so as to spread education among the masses and have it answer the needs of

¹ On September 27, October 4, 11 and 18

² In *Young India*, July 12, 19, 26, August 2 and 9; *vide* also "Notes" sub-title *Are We Getting Poorer*", 12-7-1928 and "Our Poverty", 6-9-1928

the people,

9. and would cut down the military expenditure and stop the drain from the country by manning the services with indigenous talent.

This is not an unattractive programme. But as I was re-reading the articles, the question continued to force itself upon me, "Who will bell the cat?" There is hardly an item here which can be tackled without government aid. And a government that is admittedly based on exploitation of the governed will not and cannot, even if it will, undertake the proposed changes with the despatch necessary to create an immediate impression. It can undertake irrigation schemes costing crores, it will not undertake sinking wells costing lakhs. What therefore Professor Vakil wants first is a summary programme of swaraj and having been chiefly instrumental in getting it, he can command the appointment of commissioner of banishment of poverty department.

This however is a heroic remedy and Pandit Motilal Nehru and the co-signatories to his report are the men to tackle it. Our author's [task] was but to place a scheme before any government that would deal with the most pressing problem before the country.

But I had hoped that the learned Professor, especially when he wrote for *Young India*, would have examined the one sovereign remedy that has in season and out of season been advocated through these pages and has, so far as it has gone, been tried with no inconsiderable success. True, the Professor has hidden the tiny wheel in a little unseen arc of his circle of suggestions. I claim for it not a point in a circumference but the centre from which can radiate innumerable other things including many the learned writer has in view. But the fact is, whereas it was possible for him with patient research carried on in a well-stocked library to write convincing essays to prove India's deep and deepening poverty, it was impossible without a close study of a group of villages with an open and receptive mind to spot the seat of the disease and to know the capacity of the patient to bear the remedy. A Gregg¹ took a year of reading and living among the villagers to know the remedy and prove its worth with a freshness of outlook all his own. The cardinal facts to realize are that there is already terrible, forced unemployment among the toiling millions in that they have no work for at least four months in the year. Once that is realized, surely it follows that not a moment should be lost in bringing work to these millions so as to utilize their

¹ Richard B. Gregg

idle hours. The other fact to realize is that if the average income of the inhabitant of this land is seven pice per day, i.e., less than two English pennies per day, at the present rate of exchange, the average income of the toiling millions must *ipso facto* be much less. He who adds two pice per day to their income and that without any great capital outlay makes a princely addition to their income and in addition revives the dying hope within the breasts of these millions. The further merit of this programme is that it is now in operation without government aid. But it needs much greater encouragement and admits of infinite expansion. Pyarelal has shown¹ elsewhere in this issue of *Young India* what America wrought through the wheel during those times of her Revolution. I invite the economists of India to study the movement on the spot. They have nearly two thousand villages to select from for their study and let them then condemn the movement if they can, or give it not a niggardly place that prudence or patronage can grudgingly afford but the central place it deserves.

Young India, 1-11-1928

209. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI

November 1, 1928

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS. WIRE DETAILS ASSAULT
AND CONDITION OF HEALTH.²

The Tribune, 3-11-1928

210. INTERVIEW TO "THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE"³

November 1, 1928

I could still lead India. I shall only lead India when the nation comes to me to be led, when there is a national call.

I shall not go before then. I shall not go unless I am certain of my power over the masses. I could [not] lead India again [until I]

¹ In "A Leaf from American History".

² For the addressee's reply, *vide* "The Inevitable", 8-11-1928.

³ Released by the Free Press of India from Lahore. In a message from Ahmedabad dated November 6, 1928, Associated Press of India said: "Mahatma Gandhi states that the interviews with him which recently appeared in the *Pioneer* and *The Civil and Military Gazette* are inaccurate in many respects. He says that he proposes to deal with the matter in *Young India*." *Vide* "Fact and Fiction", 8-11-1928.

realized that they are numerous enough to pursue a policy of non-violence, nor until I could control them. But I see nothing on the horizon at the moment. That would not make me at all anxious to take that position. Perhaps it will not be in my lifetime. It may be in the time of my successor.

I cannot name one at this moment. There must be one who could lead India today but I cannot name him. Truly I should be ashamed to remain inactive but it may be necessary in my lifetime. It may be there will come a man, but not now.

The Hindustan Times, 3-11-1928

211. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

MIRABEHN

CARE KHADI BHANDAR, MUZAFFARPUR

YOU MAY PASS REMAINING TIME BIHAR BENGAL.
MUST KEEP PERFECT HEALTH. NO NEED RUSHING.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 8211; also C.W. 5321. Courtesy: Mirabehn

212. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall read the report as soon as I get a moment.

If you are yourself an expert typist, you may certainly bring the typewriter with you. You will give me the exact date when I may expect you and give me also the terms you want. I have forgotten all about them.

Mahadev is not here but in Bombay in connection with the Bardoli Inquiry¹.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 889

¹ *Vide* "Evil Genius of Government", 22-7-1928

213. LETTER TO G. S. SHARMA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You must not ride the karma theory to death. Every creature is not only weaving his own new karma, but is acted upon by millions of karmas of others.

I regard the destruction of the body of the calf¹ as unselfish, because I was not afraid of rendering service. Only, I saw that I could render no service.

About the mosquitoes. There is no harm in using a mosquito-net of foreign make. Mosquito-net is not a piece of clothing. I treat it in the same way I treat an umbrella. Of course it is possible to get khadi mosquito-nets, but they are dear.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. S. SHARMA
LECTURER IN ACCOUNTING, SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE
NAWABGANJ, CAWNPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14547

214. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY²

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your letter. I had a chat about the Exhibition with Pandit Motilalji when he was here last Sunday. He showed me too your telegram. I shall repeat what I told him in the course of my conversation. I am sorry that you find my letter to be "vague and guarded". I tried to be as clear as I could with the facts before me. Guarded I should never have to be in writing to friends like you. But my letter was certainly concise and necessarily so.

Now for the purport of the conversation. Whilst your offer to Panditji and repeated in your letter flatters my pride, I would not like you, an esteemed co-worker, to give up your views or principles in order to please me. Such things can only be done once in a lifetime, and even when such personal concessions are accepted, they harm the

¹ *Vide* "the Fiery Ordeal"

² For addressee's letter, *vide* "Letter from Dr. B. C. Roy", 28-10-1928

acceptor, harm the giver and damage the national cause in question. And let me put you absolutely at ease by telling you that I have before Panditji undertaken, all being well, to attend the Congress unconditionally.

I am sorry I cannot say so with reference to the representation of the All-India Spinners' Association at the Exhibition. My argument is this: whilst it is wrong to think that I dislike all machinery as such, I do feel that we are not competent judges of the usefulness or otherwise of machinery however small it may be for the toiling millions. We shall acquire that faculty for judgment when we draw to the Congress stout-hearted and knowing farmers and other business men. Let me tell you that in the Ashram we have a variety of simple machinery in the way of ploughs, grass-cutting machines, grinding-mills, etc. But I am sorry to have to inform you that not much of our investment in this line has proved profitable or promising. This has happened because we are all amateur farmers. And this is a judgment which I give you after an experience extending over a period of 13 years. Therefore I would say, if you have got the courage, you will scrap every bit of machinery for the time being, especially foreign, and you will concentrate your energy upon having your Exhibition with khaddar as the centre-piece and a small but a sufficient number of genuine swadeshi articles of a useful nature.

I have an irreconcilable opposition to the Indian textiles being exhibited in any shape or form. My reason is absolutely simple. The textile manufacturers refuse to come to terms with us. I do not blame them because if they come to terms with us, they have to sacrifice all prospects of Government assistance save what is forced from it by an active public opinion. Moreover these textiles need no advertisement from us. They have got an army of advertisers, inspectors, selling agents and what not. And, lastly, to put mill textiles side by side with khadi is deliberately to put khadi in the shade by inviting undesirable comparisons.

I remind you that the very first exhibition of this type was undertaken at the Ahmedabad Congress in 1921.¹ It drew huge audiences. The entrance fee, a paltry sum, left a good surplus. Wherever there is good and efficient management of exhibitions of an educative character, they are not only useful and instructive but they are remunerative. Such was the case in Bihar. One indispensable condition of Congress Exhibitions should be that we should never undertake them for finding our expenses and leaving besides a handsome sum

¹ *Vide* "The Congress and After" sub-title The Substance

for conducting the business of the year to come. Unfortunately this very undesirable thing was done in Madras exposing us to an evil temptation. I wish that Bengal which has abundant patriotism, self-sacrifice and fine sentiment will rise superior to such temptations.

If this letter seems to you to be lacking in detail, do write to me again. Let there be no mistake about it. I want to take part in the Exhibition. But I can only take part in it consistently with the national interest as I understand it. But I have said to myself that if I cannot take part in the Exhibition, I am not going to say one word of criticism either during the Exhibition or after. I did not feel called upon to impose any such silence on myself in Madras, because the circumstances were different and so I expressed my views freely at the time of opening the Exhibition¹ and still more freely in a leading article² in *Young India* after opening it.

I have a string of letters asking me to give my views freely and now about the forthcoming Exhibition. I have hitherto resisted all these correspondents as I hope to, to the end. I therefore plead with you not to be deterred from your purpose which you may hold to be based on an inviolable principle in the interest of the nation. I assure you that I shall tender the same respect for your principles as I would crave from you and all for mine, however erring they may appear to others.

With reference to the Hospital³, I am glad it is flourishing. I shall certainly perform the opening ceremony of the new ward, and so far as possible make time for it.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
32 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA
From a microfilm: S.N. 14853

215. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

You are now in the thick of the fight, but at the time you receive this letter, the fight will have been over. I am hoping and praying that

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Khadi and Hindi Exhibitions, Madras", 23-12-1927

² *Vide* "The National Congress"

³ Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das Memorial Hospital

you will come out just as successful in Delhi as you did in Lucknow¹.

I enclose herewith a copy of my letter² to Dr. Bidhan Roy about the Exhibition difficulty. I do not need to send you a copy of his letter, because what he writes was contained in the telegram that you read to me. My reply needs no explanation.

How is Kamala faring now ? You will keep yourself fit for the culmination in December.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

PANDIT MOTILALJI

CARE DR. ANSARI, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13716

216. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I knew Sjt. Sastri's suggestion.³ I do think that the South African journalists' coming to India is likely to result in a better understanding.

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH SAHEB BAHADUR, K.C.I.E.

MEMBER, VICEROY'S COUNCIL, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11997

217. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 3, 1928

I have your letter. I sent Dhiren, before I received your letter, my message to him through you.

Here is a letter received by me from Devdhar. I hope you have already met him.

Mahadev is still in Bardoli looking after Bardoli Inquiry

¹ At the All-Parties Conference held on August 28, 1928

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ Of inviting a group of journalists from South Africa

affairs.

I hope the climate of Poona is agreeable to you.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI

JANHAVI VILLA, DECCAN GYMKHANA, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 12978

218. LETTER TO V. K. U. MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad you are helping Krishnaswami. I know Kurur Nilakantan Nambudripad. He is a good man. But I have no knowledge of his business ability, nor am I able to judge the selection of a place. Generally speaking, work like that done in Bardoli can be best done in British India proper. But I would ask you to correspond with Sjt. Rajagopalachariar, Tiruchengodu, South India, and be guided by him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. K. U. MENON

10 SATTAR BUILDINGS, MAHIM, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12979

219. LETTER TO POST MASTER, SABARMATI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 3, 1928

THE POST MASTER

SABARMATI

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your inquiry I may state that the letter referred to in your enquiry was duly delivered at the Ashram and was received by Sjt. C. N. Joshi who is authorized to receive all documents registered or otherwise on my behalf. You may inform the writer of the letter that it does not follow that because letters addressed to me are received at the Ashram they are necessarily all read by me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12980

220. LETTER TO BALAJI RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

MY DEAR BALAJEE RAO,

I have your letter enclosing extracts from the *Indian Textile Journal*. I have read Sjt. Talcharkar's work very carefully. Not being convinced of his argument, I entered into correspondence with him. He is still unable to convince me that charkha yarn is on the whole stronger than mill yarn. In the Ashram we made series of experiments and they went to show that in order to produce hand-spun yarn superior to the mill-spun, we have to take extraordinary precaution which an ordinary spinner has no facility of taking. Sjt. Talcharkar's is a theoretical proposition, appearing sound to read but failing in practice. You can well understand how anxious I should be to know and prove that the average charkha yarn is stronger than the average mill-spun yarn.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13715

221. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 3, 1928

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your letter¹. I have read it carefully. I shall want much stronger proof than you give me to sustain your indictment of Dr. Ansari and Motilalji. You may not see eye to eye with them, but we may not impute motives to those who differ from us. But I shan't argue with you. I know some day you will see the light or if I am under a delusion I shall have my ignorance dispelled, because I have no other end to serve but that of truth, nor, if I know you well, have you any other end.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMITTEE
SULTAN MANSION, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13711

¹ Dated October 23, 1928; for excerpts, *vide* "Extracts from Shaukat Ali's Letter", 23-10-1928

222. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

A[so]Va[d] 6 [November 3, 1928]¹

BHAI VALJI,

I can trust you always to find some cow-protection work to keep you busy. Get all the information from Bhai Nagindas. I am sure that the accounts will have to be kept by you. For the present, you will have to do all the work, the sweeper's as well as secretary's. If the work increases, we shall incur further expenditure. Enrol more members, if you can. I take it that you will hunt up literature on the origin of the cow-protection movement and try to write on the subject. Correspond with *shastris* and with Anandshankerbhai in regard to this. I think there are some books on the subject in the Ashram; go through them.

Collect literature on the trade in hides and skins. I should like you to become a dairy expert² (give me the Gujarati equivalent of this —*dudh shastris*³?) and an expert on hides. Acquaint yourself with what is being done in the Ashram in these fields. Study the goshala here.

What more can I say? Do everything as if the entire responsibility is yours. I said at the very beginning that my taking up cow-protection work meant that I would find out a good secretary, explain my principles to him, make him work in accordance with them and let him use my name. May I expect you to be such a secretary?

Are you living in peace now? Take care of your health.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

PS.

I send with this Gregg's letter and the list of books accompanying it. Read whichever of them you can get. If we have to secure any of them from outside, we shall try and get them from some source. In any case, file both the letter and the list.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7397. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

223. HOW WE LOST INDIA

Just a few days before Deshbandhu's death, while replying to an address of welcome given by the business community of Jalpaiguri, I

¹ The year is inferred from the reference to cow-protection movement.

² Gandhiji uses the English expression.

³ *Dudh*: milk, *shastri*: expert

had said that we had lost India through our merchants and we should regain it also through them. This is not the task of a lawyer, a doctor or a soldier. Many Englishmen proudly say that they took India with the help of the sword and are holding it with the strength of the sword, but there is less than fifty per cent of truth in this statement. If the merchants so desire, they can blunt the edge of that sword. If illustrations of the truth of this statement were wanted, a striking one is furnished by the following circular letter from one mercantile association to another:¹

It is characteristic of the British people that they give up their hold on the country from which they can obtain no wealth. They did so in the case of the Transvaal in the year 1884, and when they saw wealth there they launched a war in 1900 in order to gain possession of it. They gave up Somaliland when they could not make money there. They do not want a country for the sake of possessing it but for the sake of carrying on trade with it. That is why Napoleon criticized them and called them “a nation of shopkeepers”.

British rule, therefore, does not subsist on might, but it would be more correct to say that it functions with the help of our merchants. If our merchants give up the temptation to trade with Britain in cloth, or if the people give up wearing foreign cloth, the British would have no reason to hold on to India.

But is the spirit of sacrifice present in the merchant community? It is found that a man makes many sacrifices, but is seldom prepared to sacrifice that from which he earns money. Merchants are well known for their generosity. But when they are asked to give up their business, they feel aggrieved. Lawyers will be ready to donate thousands of rupees, but there would be few men like Das, who would be ready to give up their legal practice. Doctors will donate large sums but only a few would be prepared to give up their profession.

Despite this, if we want real independence, merchants would have to give up their business and be prepared to serve the country. Such sacrifice will be regarded as their *prayaschitta*². If it is true, and indeed it is, that we lost India because of their greed, then we will get back India only through their sacrifice.

But the sacrifice that I expect from merchants is in fact very small. All I ask for is a change in their business, and not its ruin. I ask for their trade to be carried on within limits. In spite of the boycott of foreign cloth, the business in khadi amounting to crores of rupees

¹ For the circular letter and the two paragraphs succeeding it, *vide* “How We Lost India”, 25-10-1928

² Atonement

would be carried on by business men alone. Without these latter, people would be unable to carry on transactions. The term business implies transactions. Anyone who is good at social intercourse, is a good business man. A merchant is one who enables people to establish contacts with one another.

Today, the ability of the business man is being misused. He earns five per cent while giving away ninety-five to the foreigners. I ask him to put his abilities to good use. He should give ninety-five to the people and keep five for himself. By doing so, he will get his share of five per cent and his earnings will be regarded as pure. The crores that he makes today is tainted money. It is possible that under the new order the crores that fall to the share of a few today may be distributed amongst hundreds of business men. However this should not be regarded as a matter of regret. Everyone will agree that it would be a better scheme if many have a lakh or a thousand instead of a few having crores. And it is my firm opinion that if business men do not understand these simple and commonplace calculations it would be almost impossible to prevent anarchy, plunder and revolution in India. The poisonous wind of anarchy blowing from the West cannot be kept out by, any other means.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

224. *THE ASSAULT ON LALAJI*

This country is poor, there is trouble within it and repression from without, there seems to be deep darkness all round and yet it appears to be fortunate. The symbol of this good fortune is the assault on Lalaji by the police in Lahore. Lalaji was not at fault. The procession which he was leading also was not at fault. Lalaji had full control over the procession, hence the fault or whatever it was of the procession or of Lalaji consisted in the decision they had made. That decision was to offer peaceful opposition to the Simon Commission when it arrived. In order to demonstrate this opposition, the procession was going up to the barrier set up by the police. It had reached the barrier and was uttering deafening cries of "Simon, go back". Besides Lalaji, this procession included other leaders such as Lala Hansraj, Dr. Alam and others.

As this demonstration and the people's determination irritated the police, they decided to teach Lalaji a lesson and assaulted him. The police deserved no credit that the assault did not assume grave proportions. How easy was it for the injury to be inflicted on the eye

instead of near it? To fate alone, and not the police, can be given the credit for the injury to the chest being of a relatively light nature instead of a serious one! According to newspaper reports, the police spared no pains to demonstrate their skill in wielding the lathi.

Lalaji has emphatically stated that the statement made by the police in their own defence is absolutely untrue. The police claim that the procession rushed into the small space that had been left vacant for a passage and that it resorted to stone-throwing. Lalaji denies both these charges and affirms that the police may file a libel suit against him if they wish to do so. He is prepared to prove his own case.

Let us now see if the police are prepared to take up this challenge.

The attention of the public and that of the world is attracted only when warrior leaders such as Lalaji are injured; the assault on Lalaji has drawn and will yet draw a great deal more attention than would have been drawn by the death of an unimportant individual.

We shall have to be careful and see to it that the people by resorting to violence do not lose the game in which victory is within their grasp. If the atrocities of the Government continue despite the innocence of the people, the ship of the Government will sink of its own accord. Hence I hope that the people will not transgress the limits at any place and fully respect all the appeals for maintaining peace that are made by the leaders.

I congratulate Lalaji. He has been well known for many years as the "Lion of the Punjab". The Government's police have themselves helped on this occasion to add to his prestige and the above assault is an addition to the many services he has rendered to the country.

The following telegram¹ has been received from Lalaji after the above article was written:

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

225. MY NOTES

TRUE INDEPENDENCE

At a time when we are cutting one another's throats in the name of religion and are competing with one another in running to the Simon Commission, and so on, in the hope of securing independence, it is worth noting what the British writer James Allen says about

¹ Not translated here. *Vide* "The Inevitable", 8-11-1928.

independence in England. A friend has sent an extract from his article the sum and substance of which is as follows:

As a matter of fact, all acts of repression from without are nothing but a reflection of the atrocities that are perpetrated within. Although for thousands of years men have been craving for freedom, the thousands of laws made by him have been unable to win it for him. The truth of the matter is that freedom alone can bestow freedom. That freedom consists in following the immutable laws framed by God which have been inscribed on our hearts. No one can harm him who has attained the freedom of his soul. If people cease to be cruel to themselves, they will be unable to be cruel towards others. People frame laws for their external freedom, whereas they worship slavery in their hearts. Thus, they run after an external shadow and ignore the real thing within their souls. Man's bondage in all forms and all his atrocities will be automatically eradicated when he frees himself from slavery to his passions, his ignorance and his shortcomings.

This implies that external freedom will always be the means of measuring the freedom of the self within. Hence we often find that laws made to grant us freedom often turn out to be shackles binding us. Hence the dharma of those workers who wish to attain true freedom is to try and attempt an improvement in the self. If we understand this simple and straightforward fact, we shall not even utter the word 'legislature' but engage ourselves in constructive activity day and night. All can take part in such activity. It is not necessary to become either a lawyer or a legislator in order to do so. What strange blindness it is that those who are elected as legislators to represent the people should seem, and in fact are, their rulers! If we are not under an illusion, we would have no fear of the Government or the legislatures, lawcourts or the armies which subsist on it. And no power can come in the way of our upliftment and our independence when we have reformed ourselves in the above manner.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

226. *BUFFALOES FOR SLAUGHTER*

Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai, Vice-president of the Sarvajanic Jivadaya Khatun, Ghatkopar, writes as follows:¹

I have gone through the letters which have been mentioned in the above letter. The reader will feel; as I do, that the municipality is slaughtering buffaloes for the sake of slaughter. The killing of buffaloes whose meat is not eaten by anyone is merely a chaotic state of affairs and it is a matter for surprise that citizens of Bombay tolerate it. This is not a problem which concerns the Hindus alone, but one which concerns all citizens—Muslims, Parsis, Christians and Jews alike. Moreover, it is not one which involves the Department of Animal Welfare alone, but one which involves public welfare and the health of children. On the one hand, the country is becoming increasingly poorer; on the other hand it is being robbed of its cattle-wealth because of the indifference of citizens as for example in Bombay. To slaughter milk yielding cows and buffaloes or to allow their calves to die of hunger and thirst is nothing but robbery and the cause of this robbery is the insignificant income that the municipality derives from it! According to the calculation made by Shri Nagindas, a minimum loss of rupees two crores and twenty lakhs is suffered because of this thoughtless slaughter. And finally, in a country which would have the facility to provide milk in the same way as it provides water, we have to drink imported milk which contains no food value. It is a matter of no small shame for us to have to consume imported milk and to have vegetable oil sold as ghee, because of shortage of fresh milk. In Bombay and other cities, there is a lot of useless clamour, but apart from societies for animal welfare, no one else thinks of raising a protest and launching an effective movement in such an extremely important matter.

As has been suggested in the above letter, the cure for this malady is simple and straightforward. Not a single cow or buffalo will be taken to the slaughter-house if the pens are removed from the city and if the municipality undertakes to supply milk specially to Bombay, whatever the expense it might have to incur in doing so. Is it not a matter for surprise that the farmers of Bardoli welcome the buffaloes which are regarded as useless in Bombay and hope to make

¹ The letter is not translated here. The gist of the correspondent who enclosed other letters was that about 20,000 buffaloes were slaughtered annually in Bombay and Kurla, though this quantity of meat was not required. The Bombay Municipality issued licences to slaughter animals every day and made a yearly profit of Rs. 3 lakhs. The supply of condensed milk from Holland aggravated this problem.

a profit out of them? What is possible in Bardoli should not be impossible in Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

227. THE ALCHEMY OF THOUGHT

The well-known writer, Professor Jacks, has written a book whose title may be interpreted as Alchemy of Thought. Pyarelal has written an article based on this book in the current issue of *Young India* which deserves to be pondered over. Hence this article, which itself is based on the one just mentioned, has been published for the convenience of Gujarati readers.

The alchemy of thought implies that the latter acts as an alchemist. No one can tell whether any alchemist has been able to transmute iron into gold, but thought continuously performs this function. By entertaining a particular thought, man becomes the victim of fear and turns pale; by entertaining its opposite thought, his countenance becomes flushed with pleasure. I shall feel sad if I think, 'I am having a spasm of pain, all will be over with me now.' However, if I ignore the spasm and say to myself, 'What is there in a spasm after all, it will pass away presently' I shall continue to be cheerful. Perhaps a stranger from abroad comes to my house and I suspect him. I assume that he is a murderer and am terribly scared. My son comes and tells me: 'This gentleman is an old family friend, we do not know him as he has been living abroad since his childhood. He is a guest in our house today and has come here to convey some good news.' On hearing this, I regain my composure. Now I embrace with respect one whom I had feared before. All this is the alchemy of thought. Within a fraction of a second, thought can make a king or pauper of us. Such is the empire of thought. Thought is infinitely more powerful than either speech or the bodily processes. Physical activity is the coarsest form that thought assumes, while speech is one of its coarser forms. Both these activities limit thought. It is indeed proper that it should be so. If this were not the case, the world would surely be destroyed. However, this is to prove the power of thought. Hence it may be said that, when devoid of thought, speech or action is something mechanical and it has no value.

Following this line of argument, Professor Jacks goes on to say that a great and all-pervading element like religion is not a game whose rules are laid down in books, it is not a treasure chest which contains affirmations and negations, it is not a collection of

prohibitions. Anyone who wishes to do his dharma, to practise non-violence and to follow the dictates of morality has to walk on the razor's edge. For him there are no lectures on non-violence nor any dictionary of spellings which would enable him to obtain a hundred per cent marks in the test on non-violence. Observing one's dharma is not such a safe thing. It is a gem that lies buried in the mine of experience. Only a few among millions of seekers succeed in digging it out. Mr. Jacks says that dharma is not for those who ask for a guarantee of safety. The field of religion lies between doubt and certainty. One who believes or asserts that this indeed is religion or that this alone is religion does not know what religion is. One who wants to know the meaning of dharma, while admitting that a particular action may or may not be according to dharma surrenders to his inner voice and continues to conduct himself with determination and calmness. Not being omniscient himself, on the one hand he is determined and, on the other hand, he humbly allows for the possibility that he may be making a mistake.

This learned gentleman goes on to say:

Just as we can repeatedly affirm in arithmetic that two and two make four, similarly, in the science of morality, we cannot affirm with conviction that this alone is our duty. The deeper meaning behind dharma or non-violence does not lie in results which can be proved; their mystery is revealed in going beyond such proofs and by taking certain risks where such proofs are impossible.

In our language this is known as faith. Dharma is something that is based on faith. Faith constitutes proof for that which cannot be proved by the five senses. Hence it is only by respectfully honouring the dictates of our inner voice that we may hope to have direct perception of dharma at some time in the future. Hence Mr. Jacks says:

A man who becomes ready to listen to his own inner voice only after subjecting it to a test may be said to have abandoned it and he has failed to recognize the spiritual powers that are within him. Finally, he reaches a state which is so devoid of morality that it may be said of him that he has no such thing as an inner voice.

Therefore, what should man do when he comes across misery or oppression ? The author says:

For me there are only two alternatives, either to experiment or to do nothing. Hence it becomes my dharma to carry out experiments after studying the situation as much as

possible. However, there is the danger that I may have made an error in my calculations. Even if on the day of judgment, I am told that my experiments are wrong, I shall lay down my life in order to complete them. I shall face the risk of there being a possibility of error in certain experiments in order to prove the truth of that which appears to be true to me.

This writer is of the opinion—and we too find—that many truths have been discovered through experiments in which such risks of mistakes were incurred, for such errors arise from pure motives and devotion to truth and mistakes that have been unintentionally made are forgotten in course of time.

Man has been called a creature full of errors. One of the definitions of swaraj is that it is the right to make mistakes and it is true. So long as I do not see my mistakes I must practise the dharma which I consider to be true; if giving in to external pressure I fail to do so, my cowardice and the false image I create will destroy me.

Further, Mr. Jacks suggests that a society in which external rules of morality are alone regarded as binding may well appear to be well-organized in a certain way, the people may be outwardly happy and peaceful, but that society is devoid of courage, of the boldness to make experiments, and of the spirit of research and hence the path of its progress is blocked. The importance of great principles lies in the fact that their meaning is unlimited. Only if we keep digging in that boundless mine can the world be lit up by those principles and also make progress. However, our society at present appears to be bound in shackles. It seems that our dharma is limited to singing praises of our forefathers and observing some outworn, external rituals.

But dharma is not such a lifeless thing. Non-violence is a living force or power. No one has been or will ever be able to measure its limits or its extent. Non-violence means universal love, it implies compassion for all living beings and the resultant strength to sacrifice oneself. Since many mistakes may be made while this love expresses itself we cannot give up the quest for the whole of this dharma. Even the mistakes committed while seeking the pure path take us a step forward in the quest.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

228. SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM

The draft rules¹ of the Ashram were published some time back in *Navajivan*. I had invited outside opinion on these; a big controversy had also begun in the Ashram itself. Suggestions were made to introduce vital changes in it. Some of these were even implemented. Despite this a shocking, fictitious report appeared in the newspaper before the time came for publishing these rules. So I must put before the readers the changes² which are being tried at present.

As the name of the Satyagraha Ashram is suggestive of its qualities, it has always been our endeavour to stick to truth and to rely on its support alone. It cannot be said that we have always succeeded in our efforts. It cannot be claimed that all the inmates of the Ashram have worshipped truth. It can definitely be said that on the whole truth has been adhered to. Even in difficult situations, many in the Ashram, the young as well as the old, have adhered to it.

Ashramites have found one handicap in insisting upon truth. Many difficulties were experienced in minutely observing the rules with a strictness that would do credit to the Satyagraha Ashram. We did not find ourselves capable of coping with the subtler meanings of the rules, a fact which we gradually realize. Hence we arrived at the decision to keep those very rules intact but to change the name. We could hardly find anyone with the mental attitude in which one does not even feel the desire for possessions, in order to do credit to the Satyagraha Ashram. In observing truth in a manner that would do credit to the Ashram, one should never exaggerate even in a state of swoon. In spite of holding this belief we found it difficult to be always free from this fault. Though we realized that for the observance of *brahmacharya*, one should be free even from the thought of lust, we found that our control over our minds was very ineffective. In order to practise ahimsa which would do credit to the Ashram, we should have no anger in us, we should harbour no jealousy of one another. We should have the strength to affectionately embrace a thief if he happens to come along. Let snakes, etc., kill us, but we must have the strength to refrain from killing them. We found ourselves far removed from such ahimsa. Thinking on such lines we decided to maintain the Ashram as an ideal and run all its external activities under another name. Industry and physical work have always been the outward manifestations of the Satyagraha Ashram and we can claim that they have brought considerable credit to it. We therefore, assumed the

¹ *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram"

² *Vide* also "Handicap of Mahatmaship", 8-11-1928.

name of Udyoga Mandir. Satyagraha Ashram would entrust its work to this Mandir and keep for itself a small ground for prayers which are necessary for its existence.

These changes are being implemented since a month or so ago. The managing committee of the Mandir has the right to make whatever changes it wants. Nevertheless, after much thought, it has decided to stick to the rules of the Ashram. The only difference is that these rules will remain as ideals and every member will constantly strive towards their fulfilment. The report that those who are not prepared to observe *brahmacharya* will now be able to join the Ashram is baseless. The managing committee has especially deliberated over this question and decided that without *brahmacharya* the Udyoga Mandir cannot be maintained in the spirit of yajna. Industry of any kind whatsoever does not find a place in the Ashram but only such industries are taken in hand which can sustain the poorer classes among the people, raise them economically and enable them to make progress. The managing committee has unanimously arrived at a firm decision that these activities could be carried on only if the men and women who take part in it observe *brahmacharya*. And this is indeed so. Not a single activity in the Ashram can be pursued for economic gain. These activities are developed solely from the standpoint of how best they could be pursued by the people. Those men and women who are engaged in enlarging their families or satisfying their lust can neither obtain nor impart this training.

The outcome of all this is that those who are working at present in the Satyagraha Ashram in accordance with its rules will carry on the very same activities in the name of Udyoga Mandir. This change of name was necessary for the sake of humility and truth. The organizers will again accept the name Satyagraha Ashram when they gain self-confidence.

Of course one vital change has been introduced which seemed to be impossible for the Satyagraha Ashram. During the last three months an experiment is being made of running a single kitchen for the entire Ashram. Control of the palate is one of the rules of the Ashram. Accordingly spices, etc., were not used. Some found this very difficult. It was felt that it would be undesirable to do away with a common kitchen. Hence while retaining it, two varieties of food, one spiced and the other unspiced, were introduced. When families cooked separately they used spices in the Ashram. According to the new rules spices had no place, but now they have been included.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-11-1928

229. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 4, 1928

You were good enough 13 years ago to take me to the institution for the support and instruction of the blind and to the J. J. Parsi Hospital. I have a half orphan coming from Junagadh. His father is dead, mother is alive. They have no means. Someone directed them to me saying that I might find for them an institution which might accommodate this young man and give him instruction and shelter. He knows no other language but Gujarati. Will you please let me know as early as you can whether your institution can conveniently shelter this blind youth?¹ He had a virulent attack of small pox seven years ago and he lost his eyesight.

The widowed mother and the blind son are hung up here in Ahmedabad. I hope that this young man will realize his life's ambition through some such philanthropic institution like yours.

Yours sincerely,

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
ORGANIZER OF THE INSTITUTION FOR THE SUPPORT
AND INSTRUCTION OF BLIND
PETIT BUILDING, 359 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12984

¹ In his letter dated November 7, 1928, the addressee replied that they were prepared to admit the boy into the Victoria Memorial School for the Blind, Tardeo, provided that he did not belong to the untouchable class according to the rules of the school.

230. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
November 4, 1928

MY DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

This is merely to acknowledge your letter and tell you that you are ever present in my mind. Does the medical prohibition still continue?

With love,

M.K.G.

SRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU
TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM
AROGYAVARAM
S. INDIA

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

231. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

Sunday [November 4, 1928]¹

CHI. MRIDULA,

Mahadev is presently in Bombay in connection with the Bardoli Committee. I am well. I have no fever so far. Even if I get it, I would still be better than I was yesterday. I have received the fruit.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 11264. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

¹ Evidently, the letter was written in November, 1928, when Mahadev Desai had to look after the Bardoli Inquiry affairs and had been in Bombay and Bardoli in the first week of November. The Sunday during this period fell on November 4; *vide* also "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 3-11-1928 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-11-1928

232. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Monday [After November 4, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Chhaganlal has replied in detail. I fully appreciate your and Devdas's being upset. However, the step that has been taken is worthy of our vow of truth. We have no right to retain the name which we cannot live up to. We need not blame anyone for not being worthy of the name, or rather, I should be blamed first and then the others. Everybody tried to give his or her best, but even then they could not live up to the name. Who, then, could be blamed? We will be able to justify the name 'Udyog Mandir'.

My unsteadiness is the cause of my growth. According to me, it is not unsteadiness but rather different responses of my inner voice to changing circumstances. If that is how I view myself, I must view in the same manner the institution of which I am the moving spirit. Necessary changes in the imperfect creations of imperfect men are both a cause and a sign of their growth.

You should do your work there unhurriedly. Do not mind it if you are unable to carry through the plan you had in mind. And never enter into deep waters. Show everything to Mirabehn. Santok has unexpectedly arrived here today. Jamnalal has been here of course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 33008

233. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[November 5, 1928]²

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my wire³. You must [not]⁴ wear yourself out. There is no occasion for rushing. And do not deny yourself what you

¹ From the reference in the letter to 'Udyog Mandir'; Gandhiji announced the change of name of the Ashram from 'Satyagraha Ashram' to 'Udyog Mandir' in *Navajivan* in its issue dated November 4, 1928. *Vide* "Letter to Amarnath", 14-12-1928

² From the postmark

³ *Vide* "Telegram to Mirabehn", 3-11-1928.

⁴ An inadvertent slip

may definitely need for your health. If you see any report about my ill-health do not be alarmed. I had a slight attack of malaria. There is nothing today.

Love.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI
KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR

From the original: G.N. 8212; also C.W. 5222. Courtesy: Mirabehn

234. LETTER TO PRATAP S. PANDIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 5, 1928

MY DEAR PRATAP,

I thank you for your prompt response to my request. Yes, Surendraji is one of the oldest inmates of the Ashram and among the most trusted. He tells me in his letter that you were all kindness; but he adds that he will not be bound to keep the secret¹ he had evidently in mind. The fact is that the Ashram must not possess any secret of any trade. But the Ashram will naturally respect all the confidence that might be given to it. Anyway, perhaps there are so many other things that you will teach Surendraji before he is ready to receive your secret. Meanwhile, I shall correspond with him and provide you with his own undertaking. And when he gives it to you, you may depend upon the undertaking being scrupulously observed. It would be such a joy to me when you are able to certify that Surendraji can handle the tannery of the kind, you know, I want.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PRATAP S. PANDIT

WESTERN INDIA TANNERIES LTD., POST BOX NO. 403, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11400

¹ In his letter dated November 1, 1928, the addressee had said: "Sjt. Surendra brought your letter of introduction. . . . I understand he has been in your Ashram for a long time and as such we can trust him not to disclose our secrets to our competitors" (S.N. 11399).

235. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[November 5, 1928]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been careful about writing this letter when it was due. Do not feel nervous if you hear news of my illness. I took some quinine yesterday. There is no fever today. I don't think I shall get any now.

Last week I did not, after all, get [a chapter of] the Autobiography. It does not matter though, since Pyarelal is pouring out translations. Both he and Subbiah, however, are practically ill. Subbiah is running temperature today. There was a letter calling away Nirmala, so that she could help in the illness. Durga has written back to know [whether it is absolutely necessary that Nirmala should go]. If it is indeed necessary, I will send her.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAHADEV DESAI
SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 1143

236. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Silence Day, November 5, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter. I have not been able to go through all the appendices.

Mahadev does not seem to have conveyed the message. We are experimenting here with bread-making. We also wish to start bee-keeping. Please find some useful books on 'bread-making',² and 'bee-keeping'.³ I wrote to Mahadev about a book on bread-making.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4707. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

¹ From the postmark

² Gandhiji uses the English expressions.

³ *ibid*

237. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 6, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. You must have already received my letter and my blessings. If the climate of Matheran suits you better than that of Deolali, nothing like it. Then I would not be keen about Almora. I shall leave here on the 23rd and proceed to Wardha via Bardoli. Hence I shall not be passing through Bombay. Mahadev is still at Bardoli. He will reach here tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
VICTORIA LODGE
MATHERAN

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

238. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter. I have glanced through the report of the Council of Justice to Animals. I do not think that the kind of work done by the Council will be much appreciated in India.¹ But I can see no harm in an agent of the Council coming to India and asking those who are engaged in slaughter of animals to do so with human[e] methods of killing.

I have never forgotten the promise I made to you that I would give you an article about our dairy. I hope to redeem it some day. I have been too busy with the inner organization of the Ashram and other preoccupations to spare a few hours for the report I promised to prepare for you.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT, BANGALORE
From a microfilm: S.N. 12925

¹ The addressee had asked whether “a society of this kind should be recommended to operate in the country”.

239. CABLE TO ARYA SAMAJ, SUVA¹

[On or after *November 7, 1928*]

ARYA SAMAJ

SUVA

CALF DYING GREAT AGONY. PAINLESSLY KILLED BY
MEDICAL ADVICE ASSISTANCE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14723

240. THE INEVITABLE

Thanks. Assault unprovoked and deliberate. Received two severe injuries but not serious, one on left chest, other on shoulder, other blows warded by friends. Satyapal, Gopichand Hansraj, Mohammad Alam, others received blows and injuries. No cause for anxiety. — Lajpatrai.

This was the prompt reply Lalaji sent me upon my wire to him of congratulations and enquiry.² Lalaji earned the title of Punjab Kesari, i.e., the Lion of the Punjab, when most of the present generation were in their teens. All these years he has survived the title. For whatever may be said of him or against him, he still remains the unchallengeable leader of the Punjab and one of the most beloved and esteemed leaders in all India. He has been President of the National Congress, enjoys a European reputation and is one of the few public men who think aloud at the risk of being often misunderstood and more often being considered indiscreet. He remains incorrigible; for he cannot harbour anything in his breast. He must speak out just as he thinks. When, therefore, I read the headline “Lalaji assaulted” and discovered how and why, I could not help saying: “Well done! Now we shall not be long getting swaraj.” For whether the revolution is non-violent or violent, there is no doubt about it that before we come to our own, we shall have to learn the art of dying in the country’s cause. Authority will not yield without a tremendous effort even to non-violent pressure. Under an ideal and complete non-violence, I can imagine full transformation of authority to be possible. But whilst an ideally perfect programme is possible its full execution is never possible. It is therefore the most economical thing that leaders get assaulted or shot. Hitherto obscure people have been

¹ This was in reply to a telegram received on November 7, 1928 which read: “*Fiji Times* reports you ordered killing calf. Hindus perturbed. Wire truth.”

² *Vide* “Telegram to Lajpat Rai”, 1-11-1928.

assaulted or done to death. The assault on Lala Lajpat Rai has attracted far greater attention than even the shooting of a few men could have. The assault on Lalaji and other leaders has set the politically-minded India athinking and it must have perturbed the Government. I am loath to think that the local Government as a body knew anything of the contemplated assault. If they did and the assault was part of a deliberate plan as in the days of yore, it is so much the worse for the Government. Then of course the Government can only pretend perturbation. I would not mention such a possibility in ordinary circumstances, but holding the view that I do about the Government—the view being based on experience —whilst I should be sorry, it would not surprise me if a discovery was made that the assault was part of a deliberate plan. I admit, that the provocation, viz., the very fact of the boycott, no matter how peaceful, was quite enough without the fraudulent story concocted by the police. I call the police version fraudulent because I would any day trust Lalaji's word against a host of interested witnesses that the police can bring to its assistance. If I was not convinced that this system of Government is based on force and fraud, I should not have become the confirmed non-co-operator that I am. Indeed Lowes Dickinson in his essay "War, Its Causes and Cure" has shown from sufficient evidence that a war cannot be conducted without fraud. *Pari passu* this Government of ours which professes to hold India by the sword and whose foundations were laid in fraud cannot be sustained without either, except when it undergoes transformation and is based upon popular will and confidence.

Nor are we to think that the Punjab incident is to be the last of the barbarities committed during the pendency of the Statutory Commission. The boycott of the Simon Commission is a continuing sore for the Commission and the Government. Sir John Simon and his colleagues cannot be contemplating this boycott with equanimity. They have not the courage to acknowledge defeat. The boycott itself has been given additional momentum by the unprovoked assault on the Punjab leaders. The Government will therefore feel itself bound to suppress the boycott by any means that it can command. The Punjab incident therefore I regard as the first trial of strength, the strength of non-violence against violence. Lalaji had no difficulty in restraining the vast crowd behind him in spite of the police provocation. And if throughout the stay of the unwelcome Commission in India, this non-violent policy can be successfully and efficiently carried out, the Government will find much of its occupation gone and the people would have had a striking demonstration of the effectiveness of mass non-violence. The moral therefore I would have national workers to draw from this incident is not to be depressed or taken aback by the

assault, but to treat it as part of the game we have to play, to turn the irritation caused by the wanton assault into dynamic energy and husband it and utilize it for future purposes.

Young India, 8-11-1928

241. FACT AND FICTION

A friend has sent me a cutting from the *Pioneer* purporting to be a report of an interview with me and I have seen a Press message in the Bombay papers giving a summary of a further report. Both have grieved me. It would have been nice if Mr. Wild¹, who is the author of these reports, had submitted proofs to me before publishing his reports. The late Mr. Saunders of the *Englishman* used to send to interviewed persons proofs for correction or confirmation of the interviews taken by his reporters. I wish that his very laudable and desirable practice was universally followed. It was all the more necessary for Mr. Wild to follow the practice as he had come to the Ashram as an honoured guest sent by his chief and as he had taken no notes while he was interviewing me. Whilst clever reporters have been known to recall from memory an accurate substance of what they had heard without taking notes, even the cleverest will fail to reproduce in full the very words of his victim if he will take no notes. Mr. Wild has been guilty of sins both of omission and commission. He omitted to send me proofs and although he took no notes, he has professed to reproduce my own words. The result is a series of unfortunate misrepresentations. In many respects the reports are a travesty.

I do not however propose to examine the reports in detail. I would content myself with correcting one mischievous representation. Mr. Wild makes me say that "there is not a man in India today whom he (I) can name as a national leader". I could never be guilty of making such a false, arrogant and impertinent statement. Fortunately for India, she has not one but scores of national leaders who are able to give a good account of themselves and who need no certificate from me or anyone else. Probably Mr. Wild has confused the question of successor[s] with leaders. I was taken aback when he put me the question about [a] successor. For I have never thought of successors. I believe that a successor will come without effort when one is needed. But a successor even a poor scavenger or spinner may have. He need not be a leader. Once when I was called upon to name a successor I named Gulnar, the daughter of Maulana Mahomed Ali. But she is no

¹ Of *The Civil and Military Gazette*; vide "Letter to Roland G. Wild", 14-11-1928.

longer now fit to occupy the coveted place. She is no more a baby. My notions of [a] successor remain as primitive now as they were seven years ago when the question was first put to me.

Young India, 8-11-1928

242. HANDICAP OF MAHATMASHIP

The difficulties and afflictions of a “mahatma” are no less serious and very often much more serious than those of misters and *shriyuts*, not excluding knights and baronets. More than once in my life have I had to battle against these difficulties and afflictions created by unfriendly critics and not unoften through misunderstanding on the part of friends who will not take the trouble of ascertaining the true situation after personal inspection but will unhesitatingly accept as gospel truth any rumour that may appear in print.

Now what has appeared in the Press about the Satyagraha Ashram was wholly unauthorized.¹ When one important change in the Ashram was adopted, opinion was divided as to whether without giving a trial to the great change, we were called upon to take the public into confidence. I yielded to the express wish of some of my trusted co-workers not to announce the change. When I accepted their advice, I knew the consequence. I knew that nothing happening about anything connected with me could escape the attention of newspaper reporters. The published report is altogether misleading.

Here are the plain facts:

The constitution of the Ashram has not suffered any vital change except in its name. The reported change about *brahmacharya* for which I have received from some quarters undeserved congratulations and for which anxious friends have shown nervous concern was never made. I did leave it absolutely free to my co-workers to make whatever change they wished. After full deliberations among themselves over the proposal to relax the *brahm-acharya* vow and at the discretion of the Managing Committee to admit married people unprepared for the observance, they came to the unanimous conclusion that the change could not be made. I must deal at a future date with the reasoning behind this very important decision.

The other reported change relates to the introduction of spices in the Ashram. In the beginning, the Ashram had only one joint board when the food was prepared without spices. Later when many families joined the Ashram separate kitchens were set up for them and they

¹ *Vide* also “Satyagraha Ashram”, 4-11-1928.

were free to use spices. But it was decided some months ago to revert to the joint kitchen. We tried for some time to do without spices but as I held the joint kitchen to be an important thing for corporate life and as many, if they had separate kitchens, would revert to spices, it was decided to have two varieties of food in the joint kitchen, spiced and unspiced. We want to give all the assistance and freedom the women folk need. Many of them have come to the Ashram because they are the wives of their husbands. They have not yet been able to argue out all the pros and cons of everything they do.

The real change in my opinion is the change in the name. It has caused the original founders of the Ashram many an anxious night. We claim to be votaries of unadulterated truth and so new possibilities of the definitions of fundamental truths have dawned upon us. The name Satyagraha Ashram was adopted deliberately and with the intention of giving the fullest effect to its meaning. But the progressive realization of the meaning of the name made us conscious of our unworthiness to bear it. And so we resolved upon voluntary self-suppression and we chose a name in keeping with the evolution of the corporate life at the Ashram. If the Ashram has done nothing else, it has at least demonstrated the necessity and usefulness of labour undertaken not for self only but for the whole nation. Therefore the name Udyoga Mandir, I felt, more answered our present evolution than Satyagraha Ashram. The co-workers accepted the suggestion though not without considerable hesitation. 'Industrial Home' is a poor rendering of the original as 'Dominion Status' or even 'independence', is a poor substitute for 'swaraj' which alone can signify the great mass longing of India as an individual nation. We do not take up any industry that comes our way. We select only such as we must carry on as a consecration, a *yajna* (sacrifice) or a *kurbani*. An industrial home connotes a conglomeration of industries which may appeal to some but which have no universal application. The word 'Mandir' has sacred associations and so has 'Udyoga' read in the light of the *Bhagavad Gita*. I must therefore invite friendly critics with the poetic instinct to present me with an English expression that will exactly fit in with the expression Udyoga Mandir. Till I get some good equivalent it must remain untranslatable.

But the Satyagraha Ashram does not entirely disappear. Whilst it divests itself of its external activities and allows the use of the ground on which the Ashram stands to the Udyoga Mandir—the possession to be resumed at will—the Ashram retains the open prayer ground and therefore its most life-giving activity hoping some day to be able to reabsorb the activities now surrendered. The name Satyagraha Ashram has so many sacred associations, that only the hope of reverting to it

intact has reconciled us to the change of name to the extent indicated.

There is one thing more which I may not omit. It has been openly stated, more secretly whispered, that Mahadev Desai has been appointed Chairman of the Managing Committee owing to the inmates having lost confidence in me and as a concession to weakness. This is altogether untrue. The Managing Committee, if the reader will recall the previous description of the Ashram in these pages, was appointed long ago. I ceased for a long interval officially to guide its deliberations. Then at the invitation of the Committee, I took up the active guidance. But when the change in name came, the responsibility of the Chairman seemed to be eased a bit. Hence I withdrew and Mahadev Desai became Chairman once more. The virtual control of the Ashram however still remains with me and will continue to do so, so long as I continue to deserve the affection of my comrades.

Young India, 8-11-1928

243. VILLAGE ENGINEERS

Mr. Richard B. Gregg, the author of the treatise on *Economics of Khaddar*, who was at the Ashram for a few days before sailing for America, gave a couple of discourses to the students of the Technical School of the All-India Spinners' Association at Sabarmati. The first dealt with solar power and was a resume of his chapter in the treatise to which I must refer the reader. Below is given a summary¹ of the second prepared by one of the audience:

Young India, 8-11-1928

244. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 8, 1928

DEAR MR. PETIT,

I thank you for your very prompt reply. I am sending you now the blind boy.² His name is Daya Arjun. He belongs to Junagarh. He is a blacksmith, not an untouchable.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
PETIT BUILDING, 359 HORNBY ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12984

¹ Not reproduced here

² *Vide* "Letter to Jehangir B. Petit", 4-11-1928.

245. LETTER TO JEHANGIR B. PETIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 8, 1928

DEAR MR. PETIT,

Here is a Copy of the letter¹ I have given to the blind boy. I am posting it to your Fort address as I have asked the boy to take the original to the School. But as you might not have gone there and might not have yet given instructions at the School, I am writing this to you so as to enable you to do the needful.

Yours sincerely,

JEHANGIR B. PETIT, ESQ.
PETIT BUILDING, 359 HORNBY ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12990

246. LETTER TO SATYANANDA BOSE²

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR SATYANANDA BABU,

I have your letter. When I am in Calcutta,³ I shall be besieged as I always am by interviewers and friends seeking advice. I am dreading even now the visit to Calcutta in the present physical state.⁴ I would therefore like to be excused from having to preside at the Social Conference. I am coming to Calcutta simply for the sake of Pandit Motilalji.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATYANANDA BOSE
4 NUNDY STREET, BALLYGUNGE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12985

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² In reply to the addressee's letter dated November 4, 1928, wherein he had requested Gandhiji to preside over the Indian Social Conference to be held in Calcutta during the Congress Week.

³ To attend the A.I.C.C. meeting on December 26, 1928

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-11-1928.

247. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letters. But I have been too busy to be able to reply. I don't need now to tell you everything about the Ashram. You will see everything in the pages of *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

I had a touch of fever, but I am all right now.¹

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHANKARAN
VICTORIA LODGE, MATHERAN, DISTRICT COLABA
From a photostat: S.N. 12991

248. LETTER TO KARIM GOOLAM ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Any interference by an outsider of the kind you suggest is bound to be misunderstood and valueless. Of what value for instance can be to Hindus a balanced opinion from an eminent Christian divine about the misdeeds of Vaishnavite Maharajahs ?

Yours sincerely,

KARIM GOOLAM ALI, ESQ.
KHARADHAR, KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12992

249. LETTER TO A. SAMBUNATHAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will have read all about the Ashram constitution in the pages of *Young India*.

I certainly think that you should not have resorted to abuses in respect of the women. You should have observed perfect silence.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 12-11-1928.

About the *Gita*, you should procure a Tamil translation which can be easily read.

I am too busy just now to write out my own correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

A. SAMBUNATHAN, ESQ.
C/O T. RATNASABHAPATHY MUDALIAR, ESQ.
32 OFFICE VENKATACHALA MUDALI STREET
TRIPPLICANE, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 12993

250. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and for taking me in your confidence regarding the appointment of a successor to Sastriji.

The proposal to appoint Sir K. V. Reddi does not appeal to me at all. I have not the honour to know the gentleman. As you tell me he is a party man, it would be fatal to appoint a party man. The Agent has to enjoy the confidence of all the Indians there and of all the parties here. I hardly think that Sir K. V. Reddi will be able to possess that confidence.

The appointment is a most difficult task and it is not an easy thing to replace Sastriji. My own suggestion to you is that you should appoint yourself.² You know all that Sastriji has done. Therefore there will be perfect continuity. You proved your mettle in South Africa when you led the Deputation.³ So far as I am aware you are not a suspect as a party man. The next few years are most important in the life of the little Indian community in South Africa and any mistake in the appointment will prove disastrous. If, therefore, you have sufficient courage and humility to appoint yourself, the whole diffi-

¹ In reply to his letter dated November 5, 1928, which read: "Sir K. V. Reddy who was a member of the first Ministry in Madras . . . is not perhaps as well known throughout India as Sastri or Jayakar. I happen, however, to have known him intimately now for many years. His lack of renown is really due to the fact that he is comparatively young and that his work has been confined to his own presidency. But both in the sphere of Local Self-Government and his larger field of administration as Minister, he distinguished himself by his earnestness, honesty and patriotism" (S.N. 11998).

² *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 16-11-1928.

³ *Vide* "Honourable Compromise", 24-2-1927

culty is solved. But if you will shirk the duty or your going is utterly impossible, I suggest your making a desperate effort to secure Prof. Paranjpye. If that fails, in spite of Sastriji's advice that no officials should be appointed you should have Kunwar Maharaj Singh. I mention his name not because I know him or have ever met him but because Charlie Andrews swore by him as the man next to Sastriji if Sastriji could¹ not be secured as the first Agent.

If all the three proposals fail, then I would say you should ask Sastriji to appoint his own successor. I can't go any further. May God help you to a right decision. You must not throw away my first suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH SAHEB BAHADUR, K.C.I.E.

MEMBER OF VICEROY'S COUNCIL, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13282

251. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 9, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

The people of Sambalpur are pressing me to take Sambalpur² even if for a day on my way to Calcutta. What do you say to this ?

Have I not sent you a copy of a letter³ from Bijolia about the Utkal khadi work? Thinking that I have sent the letter, I have been waiting for your reply.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRANJAN PATNAIK

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BERHAMPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13719

¹ The second page of the letter ends here but the source has page three of some other letter interpolated.

² *Vide* "Letter to Achyutananda Purohit", 27-11-1928.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Niranjana Patnaik", 27-11-1928.

252. LETTER TO C. V. RENGAM CHETTI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish you could soften down a bit. In any event at the present moment I am not in active charge of the affairs of the Association and I am too much preoccupied in the commitments I have undertaken to attend to anything else. But another non-Brahmin, that is, Seth Jamnalalji is in charge, and I assure you that he is a shrewd and capable business man. If you convince him of your case, he will not hesitate to intervene.

Yours sincerely

SJT. C. V. RENGAM CHETTI
NARAYANAVARAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13720

253. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Friday, November 9, 1928

BHAISHRI MAMA,

I got your letter. I was a little ill and that has delayed this reply. I think this is not a case of Ghanchis¹ against Hindus, but one involving four well-to-do business men. I see no need for us to do anything more about it. It is plain that the Bhangi student was not a votary of non-violence. He adopted a course which he thought best, and I do not think we need do anything more about it. Even if you think it is a case between Ghanchis and Hindus, your ultimate aim is to win over the former by and by. I would not mind even if a few inmates of the Ashram laid down their lives. Anyone who professes non-violence will not deserve a certificate until he passes the supreme test.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3821

¹ A community in Gujarat traditionally engaged in oil pressing

254. LETTER TO F. W. WILSON¹

November 10, 1928

I have your letter for which I thank you. Perhaps you have seen what I wrote in *Young India*² about Mr. Wild's articles which make painful reading.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12987

255. LETTER TO VIOLET

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 10, 1928

MY DEAR VIOLET,

I have your letter. Hinduism should certainly be purged of all the evil and superstition that have crept into it. Nothing then need be a substitute for it. It is, in my opinion, an all-embracing and all-sufficing religion.

I hope your aunt is quite well now.

Yours sincerely,

[MRS. VIOLET

C/O] MISS BABA GUNASEKERA

55 HAMPDEN LANE, WELLAWATTE, COLOMBO

From a photostat: S.N. 12994

256. CRUELTY IN GUISE OF JUSTICE

Offshoots of the riots between Hindus and Muslims in Surat still continue. Although the fighting with sticks and daggers has ceased, the battle now goes on in the law-courts. I am still receiving letters on this subject. However, I am in no position nor have I the ability to become a party to this dispute. Nevertheless, when I received two or three letters about a certain matter, I considered it my dharma to investigate it. This related to a complaint that the editor of

¹ In reply to addressee's letter dated November 7, 1928, which read: "I am most sincerely sorry if I have published anything which is either inaccurate or which conveys a wrong impression. I published (in *The Pioneer*) what Mr. Wild wrote in all good faith, supposing that he had arranged with you as to what he was going to say."

² Vide "Fact and Fiction", 8-11-1928.

the local daily *Hindu*, Shri Chimanlal Joshi, was taken to the court in handcuffs. As I could not believe this report, I inquired of a trustworthy friend about it. The latter writes:¹

Even a person accused of murder should not be treated in this manner; how then can a gentleman be subjected to such treatment? No Hindu-Muslim problem is involved in this case. No Muslim who has a soul would tolerate such treatment of a Hindu. Similarly, no Hindu who has a soul would tolerate such cruelty towards a Muslim. If cruelty is inflicted and tolerated in this manner, law-courts should be sealed as justice would be defamed. Hence this case deserves to be considered dispassionately.

Can an accused who has not yet been convicted be led in this way like an animal? One fails to understand the reason for such conduct. If it is said that this procedure was followed because the allegations against him were of a serious nature, it will amount to sentencing the accused before he is tried. Moreover, one has not heard of any punishment in the Penal Code which involves the putting on of manacles. To do so is not in itself a form of punishment. However, if the prisoner is unruly or if he tries to use his hands threateningly or attempts to escape, he is handcuffed so as to prevent him from resorting to either course. In the present case, there was no danger of the accused, Shri Chimanlal Joshi, raising his hands threateningly or running away. Hence we cannot but conclude that he was handcuffed merely by way of cruelty and for insulting him. It is necessary for both Hindus and Muslims to protest against such callousness.

It is clear that the prison too is in a primitive condition. Previously, too, I had received a protest in this matter and I had commented on it.

Let Hindus and Muslims of Surat fight one another to their hearts' content in the name of Ishwar or Allah; but how can they conclude that neither of these gods exists and tolerate such cruelty and barbaric conduct?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-11-1928

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had confirmed that Chimanlal Joshi had been handcuffed and made to walk five miles to the court, because the police superintendent had forgotten to order removal of the fetters. The condition of bathrooms and lavatories in the prison was awful.

257. LETTER TO ABHAY SHARMA

November 11, 1928

BHAISHRI ABHAY SHARMA,

Your letter. It was not our intention to send away Balbir¹ without a cause. Even though he sleeps near me, I keep him under others' supervision as well. I entrusted him to Somabhai, then to Narandas. At present he is with Krishna Nayar and Gangabehn. Now he tells me that he is being overworked. I see . . .² used to devote quite some time to the charkha work but used little brains. He did work on the farm but could impress none with his diligence. He could not satisfy Gangabehn, moreover she suspected him of being a flatterer. His habit of faultfinding has no limit. For this reason he was always too eager to hear all casual talk. Mirabehn . . .³

I had referred to the Arya Samaj at the Brahmo Samaj function. I mentioned the good as well as bad points because it was pertinent. I do not know what was reported in the newspapers. I made no reference in *Navajivan* because I had no wish to be unnecessarily involved in a controversy. My views are the same as before. The Arya Samaj has done great service but has all the same shown a lack of liberalism.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6757

258. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 12, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your indictment of the Ashram people. You will have read my account in *Young India* of the changes.⁴ If you still retain the horror of return to the Ashram, you shall certainly remain outside and meet me whenever I go out of the Ashram. Wherever you are, I know you will be doing my work. And you will be doing it all the more where you are happy and well. There are so many centres of khadi. You may choose whichever you like.

The Austrian friends will be soon going. They have to sail on 21st. They leave here on 18th or 17th.

¹ A student of Charkha Sangh who had come to learn khadi work

² *Vide* "Handicap of Mahatmaship", 8-11-1928.

³ Some words here are not legible in the source.

I had a touch of malaria. I am free now, have been for the last six days. I am just now living on fruit alone. Mahadev has come for two days. He goes back to B[ardoli] tomorrow.¹

Purbai has gone to Orissa. Chhaganlal and his wife will also be going there presently. Krishnadas is now in Sodepur. Rajendra Babu is here and undergoing fasting cure for asthma. Gregg has sailed for America.

Pyarelal and Subbiah have had their innings of malaria. They seem now to be free though weak.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 8214; also C.W. 5324. Courtesy: Mirabehn

259. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

November 12, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

I read your letter to Ba. I hope your fever has gone now. Here too everyone has had it. I was also caught. Ba and Nimu too had it. Rasik is in Delhi at present and Ramdas is in Bardoli. As you know, Devdas has been in Delhi for a long time now. Navin too has gone there. I trust the children are happy. Chi. Sushila has given birth to a daughter. I shall be leaving for Wardha on the 22nd or the 23rd accompanied by Ba. To both of you a good New Year.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Greetings from Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9712

260. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Amas, November 12, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Having been unable to write to you for so long, I feel ashamed while penning this. Your letters did come.

I do not want to write more as we shall now meet at Wardha.

I had sent a cable in connection with the present hardships in

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Urmila Devi", 14-11-1928.

South Africa.

The incident of the calf and the monkeys did annoy me but it was a good opportunity of understanding human nature and of controlling my temper.

Mahadev told me many things about you and it gladdened my heart, although I am already acquainted with much of it.

I propose to reach Wardha on the 24th instant.

The rest when we meet.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Jamnalalji is going to Bombay today. Mahadev is at Bardoli these days. He has come here for three days.

From Hindi: C.W. 6165. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

261. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN M. PANDYA

November 12, 1928

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYAN,

I have your letter. When we find two leaders divided in their views, and hold both in equal respect, we should accept the view which appeals to our conscience.

During student-life, one should not take active part in politics.

We should feel respect for our teachers and emulate only their good qualities.

I do not respect the traditional practices observed during an eclipse.

Please take this as my message.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI LAKSHMINARAYAN MOJILAL PANDYA

NAGARWADO, LUNAWADA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2658. Courtesy: Lakshminarayan M. Pandya

262. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

*Amas, Silence Day [November 12, 1928]*¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

Today is the new moon day, and also my silence day. I am therefore writing this letter for the pleasure of doing so. I had preserved the statement of account sent by you. I examined it today in the smallest detail. I do find a few things about which I would like to have further explanation, but on the whole there is nothing to object to. My New Year blessings to you that you may follow the path of goodness and keep good health. The same to Navin and Rasik. My health is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI DEVDAS GANDHI

JAMIA MILLIA, KAROL BAGH, DELHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2126

263. LETTER TO NANABHAI R. MASHRUWALA

*Amas [November 12, 1928]*²

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have preserved till this day your sincere letter on the subject of non-violence. When I took it up today, which is both the new moon day and my silence day, in order to reply to it, I asked myself whether it was really necessary that I should engage you in a discussion on this subject. When we are bound to each other through a tie of the heart, we shall in time understand what both of us mean. If either of us is in error, the error will be plain to all and we shall honestly admit it. Since I feel thus, I will not engage you in a futile discussion. If you can leave Akola and come to Wardha, please do so. If you wish we shall have a little talk over the matter.

My blessings to all of you.

BAPU

SHRI NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

AKOLA, C.P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6678

¹ From the postmark

² *ibid*

264. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

*Amas, Silence Day [November 12, 1928]*¹

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have been writing since three and a half in the morning. Having finished the paper, I have resumed the writing. Today is *amas*.

One's body endures only as long as the sense of 'I' lasts. That sense of 'I' is bound to remain so long as the body lives. We have to get out of this state and learn to rid ourselves of the sense of 'I'. Whatever we have done so far with the sense of 'I' is done. But no more of it now. Live in Tadikhet reducing yourself to zero and go on doing daily whatever work comes to hand or you can think of. Do not build castles in the air. Ponder over 'One step enough for me'. Go on praying, 'The night is dark and I cannot see my way. Guard your child.' Instead of being angry or unhappy when somebody insults you, you should rather be pleased. Your duty to Shantilal is simple. If you have not bound yourself to keep him for one year, you should not let him remain for a year. It is obvious that in Tadikhet, you cannot afford to keep him that long. The lesson to be drawn from this is that an agreement even with a friend should be reduced to writing, not because we do not trust him but because memory is a tricky affair.

You should under no circumstances let your health deteriorate. If your work with Mirabehn is over, run to Almora. Chhaganlal and Kashi are at Rajkot. Ramdas has settled down in Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 32981

265. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,

November 13, 1928

MIRABEHN

KHADI BHANDAR, MUZAFFARPUR

YOU MAY ATTEND. SENDING COTTON. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: G. N. 8215; also C.W. 5325. Courtesy: Mirabehn

¹ From the combination of *amas* and *Silence Day* in the dateline; *vide* "Letter to Devdas Gandhi", 12-11-1928

266. LETTER TO A. GORDON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You will forgive me for delaying to reply to your letter of 21st September for such a long time. The fact is that every admission to the Ashram is regulated by a Committee of Management to which I have referred your letter, and I have just learnt the decision of the Committee that in the present state of the Ashram, it is not possible to keep disabled men, the scope of the Ashram being entirely different. I am sorry indeed that the Ashram is not able to provide shelter for the young man,¹ but I am sure you will appreciate the difficulty of the Committee of Management.

But will you be prepared to send him to some other institution if I can find one² that will take charge of him? Of course I should not recommend a single institution about whose ability to take proper care of such cases I was not myself sure.

Yours sincerely,

REV. A. GORDON

CANADIAN BAPTIST MISSION, VUYURU, KISTNA DISTRICT

From a photostat: S.N. 12974

267. LETTER TO ROLAND J. WILD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter³ enclosing the cuttings. You perhaps have seen my comment upon them. And many things you have put into my mouth and views you have ascribed to me I fail to recognize myself, and some of them are so palpably absurd that I cannot imagine how

¹ In his letter dated September 21, 1928, the addressee had said that M. Moses, aged 20, an outcaste and an orphan, had a paralysed leg, which was removed after an operation, had studied up to 8th standard in Vuyyuru Boarding School and could do tailoring, weaving or mat-making.

² *Vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", 28-11-1928.

³ Dated November 7, 1928

you came to attribute them to me. Do you not think you owed it to me to show me the proof ?

Yours sincerely,

ROLAND J. WILD, ESQ.
"THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE"
P.O. BOX NO. 36, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 12988

268. *LETTER TO URMILA DEVI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 14, 1928

Mr. Devdhar sends me copy of letters written to you and reports to me that you have been laid up in bed at Dr. Sen's house. What could the matter be with you? And how are you now ? Who is Dr. Sen

Mahadev was here for three days. He went last night to Bardoli and expects to return on Friday or Saturday.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI
C/O DR. SEN
C/O METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 12997

269. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 14, 1928

Here is a letter and copy of my reply.¹ You will either write to the complainant yourself or enable me to send him a further reply.

I have your telegram which surprises me. I could not possibly go to the length you suggest. Enclosed is a copy of the letter² I sent to Sir Mahomed Habibullah. Please discuss the subject no more with anybody and destroy the enclosed.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

KHADI VASTRALAYA, ESPLANADE, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 12788

270. LETTER TO K. SANTANAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 14, 1928

MY DEAR SANTANAM,

I have your letter. The best thing I could do was to forward your letter to Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai.³ Beyond that you won't expect me to go.

I am sorry about Krishna.⁴ I hope she will soon be well. Is her illness the reason for her long silence?

I note what you say about Punjab politics.⁵

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT K. SANTANAM

THE LAKSHMI INSURANCE CO. LTD.

P. O. BOX. NO. 30, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 12996

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Kannayiram Pillay", 29-11-1928.

² *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

³ In his letter dated November 10, 1928, the addressee had requested Gandhiji to put in a word regarding his Lakshmi Insurance Co., Ltd., to Ambalal Sarabhai who was thinking of insuring his employees in his various concerns.

⁴ She had been unwell for two months.

⁵ The addressee said that he was not taking very active part in politics at that time chiefly due to the fact that there were local factions in the Congress.

271. ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The Association has now been at work for over two years. It has made steady progress on the business side. Its organization is being gradually perfected. Its finances are on a sound footing. It takes or makes no commitments beyond its ability. But on the score of membership, it has not proved attractive. I confess that not much effort has been made to attract members. The Council has thought it unwise to spend public money in carrying on propaganda in that direction, feeling that those who realize the national importance of hand-spinning and the dignity of labour would of their own accord join the Association. Such however has not been the case. People have not been attracted to the constructive side of national work nor have they developed the capacity for unassuming steady work. Many even of those who joined in the beginning have fallen off.

Nevertheless the Council does not feel disposed to alter the terms of membership but is of opinion that some day or other public workers are bound to realize the importance of hand-spinning for the nation and therefore for themselves, and that some day it will be recognized as a matter of shame for anybody not to spin even as it would be today a matter of shame not to protest one's loyalty to the country or not to attend on due occasions public meetings.

But even though the membership has not increased and has not attracted those who would work a big financial corporation like the Association, its finances have grown. It is therefore thought advisable to appoint a permanent Board of Trustees in whom the funds should be vested. With that end in view Sjt. Jammalal Bajaj, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari and Sjt. Rajendra Prasad have drafted the following resolutions:

I. Whereas the All-India Spinners' Association was founded on 23rd September 1925, as an expert and independent organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar and it was endowed with assets by the Indian National Congress for the said purpose:

Whereas the first Executive Council of the All-India Spinners' Association under the constitution so framed was to hold office for five years and authorized not only to deal with its assets and to raise further funds for the purposes of the Association, but also to make such amendments in the constitution as may be considered necessary in the light of its experience:

Whereas the Executive Council since its establishment has raised and in view of the increasing work of the Association must continue to raise from time to time considerable funds from the public:

Whereas it is found necessary often to enter into agreement, raise funds

by way of loans on the security of its assets, and make commitments going beyond its own lifetime:

And whereas for these and other reasons, the experience of the last three years has shown that it is desirable to amend the constitution so as to vest the funds and all the assets of the Association in a permanent Board of Trustees who shall hold them for the purposes of the Association and who shall also be the Governing Body of the Association:

It is hereby resolved as follows:

1. That the funds and assets now held by the All-India Spinners' Association and its various Branches henceforth vest in a Board of Trustees who shall also be the Executive Council of the Association.

2. That the said Board of Trustees and Executive Council shall consist of the undermentioned twelve persons who shall hold office for life, provided they continue to be members of the Association, and three other persons elected annually by the members of the Association from among its A-Class members, provided that for this purpose no one who has not been on the rolls continuously for two years at the time of election shall be entitled to vote.

Names of members of the Board of Trustees and Executive Council:

.....¹
.....

3. That any vacancy occurring by reason of resignation, death or otherwise shall be filled up by the remaining members from amongst A-Class members of the Association:

II. Resolved that if any member fails to send his yarn quota for six months he shall cease to be a member.

III. Resolved that the constitution be amended to embody the foregoing provisions.

IV. Resolved that a meeting of the members of the Association be convened as early as possible to elect three members to the Board of Trustees and Executive Council under Resolution I, clause 2.

It is being circulated among the members of the Council and will be placed before it for adoption at a special meeting to be convened at Wardha on the 18th December next.

I heartily endorse the proposal. One striking feature about the proposal is that it introduces an element of election in the appointment of trustees. This was not contemplated by any of us when the Council was self-formed. The idea is to make the All India

¹ As in the source; for list of trustees, *vide* "All-India Spinners' Association", 27-12-1928.

Spinners' Association a democratic body as early as it is possible to do so. I invite suggestions from the readers of *Young India* on the proposal.

Young India, 15-11-1928

272. AS EVER

The Punjab Government's communique over the unprovoked assault on Lalaji and other leaders exculpates the police from all blame which means that the old policy of excusing the police and the military, no matter how they act, continues to reign supreme as ever. This is not to be wondered at. So long as the Government remains irresponsible and irresponsible to the popular will, so long must it be subservient to the police and the military.

The departmental inquiry proposed by the Government is a further eyewash. It is preposterous to expect Lalaji and the other leaders to stultify themselves by leading evidence before a committee which the people have every reason to distrust. If the Government had been really anxious to know the truth about the incident, they would have appointed a representative committee of a judicial nature which would inspire public confidence and whose findings would command respect. I congratulate Lala Lajpat Rai and his friends on having decided not to lead evidence before the departmental committee. Lalaji has thrown down the challenge. He courts a libel action and undertakes to prove a case which the Government had the hardihood summarily to brush aside.

But the question that arises from this incident is much larger than the mere demonstration of the truth of Lalaji's version. For the public, so long as the Government do not prove otherwise beyond doubt, Lalaji's version stands. The larger question is how are the people to remedy the evil of irresponsible Government. The assault and the bolstering are but a symptom of the great disease of bondage. I wish that we could all seriously deal with the root of the evil rather than set about cutting off the branches which sprout forth like Ravana's heads as soon as they are cut off. In other words we have to develop sufficient strength to resist the main disease.

I dare not enter into the question of remedies. My own remedy is well known. My purpose just now is not to insist upon its acceptance or the acceptance of any particular remedy. I simply plead that it is up to all the leaders of public opinion seriously to concentrate upon finding an expeditious and effective remedy for dealing with the evil of foreign domination.

Young India, 15-11-1928

273. NOTES

FOR REST

After having been at the Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir, for nearly eleven months I propose to go to Wardha during the last week of the month to pass a quiet time at the Satyagraha Ashram there. As usual the newspapers have anticipated me and the date of my departure. They have announced 15th instant as the date. Already correspondents are on my track asking for interviews. I may say that I do not reach Wardha before 24th instant nor leave Sabarmati before 22nd instant.¹ But when I go to Wardha I go there for rest and not for appointments. I would therefore request people living in that neighbourhood to excuse me from all appointments and allow me to have the rest which perhaps I deserve.

KARACHI SWEEPERS

With reference to the discussion that took place recently in Karachi Municipality on the question of khadi wear for its employees, the President of the Sweepers' Union has now sent me the text of a resolution passed by the Sweepers' Union. It runs as follows:

The Union notes with regret the discussion regarding khadi uniforms in a recent Municipal meeting and thanking sincerely the President of the Karachi Municipality for the solicitude shown by him for the sweepers, most respectfully and humbly begs to draw his attention to the fact that as agriculturists sweepers have been wearing *pankorun*, i.e., khadi, for a long time and that the khadi uniforms are not at all inconvenient to them. On the contrary they (the sweepers) appreciate the national sentiment signifying the use of khadi and sympathize with their brothers and sisters, who get much-needed supplementary income by spinning and doing other processes. This Union therefore urges on the Municipality to continue khadi uniforms in future.

I wonder whether this resolution was passed only by half a dozen sweepers or whether it was known and explained to all the sweeper employees of the Municipality. The Secretary informs me that it was fully explained to the sweepers before the resolution was passed. It is a resolution which I can gladly commend to all the municipal employees. No compulsion superimposed upon them about khadi or anything else can possibly last; but if an educative propaganda such as has been carried on amongst the sweepers of Karachi were to be carried amongst the employees of municipalities through-

¹ Gandhiji actually left on November 23; *vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 22-11-1928.

out India and if they were to ask for khadi uniforms, no municipality will be able for any length of time to resist such a demand. I therefore congratulate the Sweepers' Union upon their resolution.

“GOD IS”

Having read this article in *Young India* (11-10-1928) a reader sends the following bracing quotations from Emerson:

A little consideration of what takes place around us every day would show us that a higher law than that of our will regulates events; that our painful labours are unnecessary and fruitless; that only in our easy, simple, spontaneous action are we strong and by contenting ourselves with obedience we become divine. Belief and love—a believing love will relieve us of a vast load of care. O my brothers, God exists. There is a soul at the centre of Nature, and over the will of every man, so that none of us can wrong the universe.

The lesson is forcibly taught that our life might be much easier and simpler than we make it; that the world might be a happier place than it is; that there is no need of struggles, convulsions, and despairs, of the wringing of the hands and the gnashing of teeth; that we miscreate our own evils. We interfere with the optimism of Nature.

If we would but have a little faith we would see God and His love everywhere about us.

GREENS AND DIETETIC AHIMSA

A friend writes from Calcutta:

You have observed in one of your previous articles on dietetics that it is undesirable to cook the greens since cooking destroys their vitamin contents. Now the Jains believe that all vegetable fare with the exception of ripe fruit contains countless germs invisible to the eye which by setting up putrefaction give rise to a variety of diseases unless the vegetables are cooked. Jain sadhus do not even take water unless it is previously boiled. This view is thus in direct contradiction to your view. Which of these views can be correct? Would you throw some light on the matter?

I have already expressed my opinion on this point in *Nava-jivan*.¹ If one may take ripe fruit without cooking I see no reason why one may not take vegetables too in an uncooked state provided one can properly digest them. Dieteticians are of opinion that the inclusion of a small quantity of raw vegetables like cucumber, vegetable marrow, pumpkin, gourd, etc., in one's menu is more beneficial to health than the eating of large quantities of the same cooked. But the digestions of most people are very often so impaired through a surfeit of cooked fare that one should not be surprised if at

¹ Vide “My Notes”, sub-title Disregard for the Living Quern

first they fail to do justice to raw greens, though I can say from personal experience that no harmful effect need follow if a *tola* or two of raw greens are taken with each meal provided one masticates them thoroughly. It is a well established fact that one can derive a much greater amount of nourishment from the same quantity of food if it is masticated well. The habit of proper mastication of food inculcated by the use of uncooked greens, therefore, if it does nothing else, will at least enable one to do with less quantity of food and thus not only make for economy in consumption but also automatically reduce the dietetic *himsa* that one commits to sustain life. Therefore whether regarded from the viewpoint of dietetics or that of ahimsa the use of uncooked vegetables is not only free from all objection but is to be highly recommended. Of course it goes without saying that if the vegetables are to be eaten raw extra care will have to be exercised to see that it is not stale, over-ripe or rotten, or otherwise dirty.

Young India, 15-11-1928

274. LETTER TO K. M. VAIDYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 15, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am tired out. I have no desire to accept any engagement this time whilst I am at Wardha. I want to give myself as much quiet as possible. I would not have the energy to give an address worth listening to. You will please therefore excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. M. VAIDYA

BEHIND HITAVADA PRESS, CRADDOCK TOWN, NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 12998

275. LETTER TO EVELYN C. GEDGE

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 15, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish I could do something for the friend you mention.¹ But it is difficult for me to suit him. All the work we

¹ Miss Gedge had a student, Mrs. Cama, at her settlement whose husband had lost his job in the Provincial Civil Service on the charge of accepting a bribe. He had undergone a sentence at Sabarmati Jail and now upon his release needed rehabilitation in some job. Miss Gedge had suggested that Gandhiji might offer him a job or arrange to obtain one for him through Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai.

have at the Ashram is principally physical labour such as spinning, weaving, farming, dairying and payments we make are also very small.

Yours sincerely,

MISS EVELYN C. GEDGE
UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENT
VACCHAGANDHI ROAD, P.O. 7, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12999

276. LETTER TO MADELEINE R. HARDING

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 15, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter enclosing the introduction from Rev. F. B. Meyor. I should have been delighted to meet personally one bringing a note from Mr. Meyor, and I hope that it will still be possible for us to meet some time. When you write to Mr. Meyor, please send him my kind regards and tell him that the meeting in Johannesburg to which he refers in his note is still fresh in my memory.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MADELEINE R. HARDING
JOSHI VILLA, NAINITAL

From a photostat: S.N. 13000

277. MESSAGE TO ANDHRA CONFERENCES

[On or before *November 16, 1928*]

I wish every success to the Conferences¹ and I hope, in a poor district like yours, the wheel will have its due appreciation.

The Hindu, 16-11-1928

¹ Which were to begin on November 17, 1928 at Nandyala

278. LETTER TO LONGMANS GREEN & CO. LTD.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

MESSRS LONGMANS GREEN & CO. LTD.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON E.C. 4.

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter addressed to Swami Anand about the Autobiography. The rights of English publication were given by me some time ago to the Macmillan Company of New York. Mr. Andrews is now engaged in doing something of the kind of work you propose. I would therefore refer you to Mr. Andrews, 112 Gower Street, London S.W.I.

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14844

279 LETTER TO DEVI WEST

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

I have your letter and the photographs for Ba. I have not the time to say anything more about the activities here, but I am keeping in touch with you through the pages of *Young India*. I have therefore satisfied myself with simply sending you my love.

Yours sincerely,

MISS DEVI WEST
23 GEORGE STREET, LOUTH, LINCOLNSHIRE

From a photostat: S.N. 14406

280. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

I have your two letters. I was delighted to have your description about the opening ceremony¹. I hope you will flourish more and more. Do keep me in touch with your movements.

I should certainly be delighted to see Mrs. Winifred Dickenson²

¹ Of the new prayer hall

² A friend and co-worker of the addressee who was coming over to India to teach in a school near Madras

when she comes.

I don't need to give you any information about the Ashram because you must glean everything about the Ashram from the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL, POWIS ROAD, BOW, E. 3
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14414

281. LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I am sorry that it is not possible for you to accept my first suggestion.¹ I appreciate your objection.²

From your letter I gather that the decision about Sir K. V. Reddi had already been taken.³ I am afraid I shall not be able to support the appointment, and may feel called upon to oppose it. You might have seen in the papers that the matter has already leaked out. I have myself received a letter asking me to protest against the proposal. But I do not yet see my way clear to take any step. Have you ascertained from Sastriji his opinion about the appointment of Sir K. V. Reddi ?

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH SAHEB BAHADUR, K.C.I.E.
NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14854

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

² In his letter dated November 9, 1928, the addressee had said: "My domestic difficulties, however, are such that it is impossible for me even to think of making sojourn outside India for any length of time. A motherless unmarried daughter and a young son in school are living obligations which must claim my attention during the rest of what is left to me of my life, at least until they are suitably settled" (S.N. 12786).

³ In his letter he had also said: "It was after the most careful survey of the whole situation that we decided to select Reddi."

282. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT RAI

November 17, 1928

LALA AMRIT RAI
LAHORE

YOUR WIRE¹ STUNS ME. LALAJI'S DEATH CALAMITY
FIRST MAGNITUDE. MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY WITH
YOU MOTHER OTHER MEMBERS FAMILY. HOPE GOD
WILL GIVE YOU STRENGTH FOLLOW HIS FOOT-
STEPS.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

283. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 17, 1928

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SWARAJ ASHRAM, BARDOLI

LALAJI DIED THIS MORNING HEART FAILURE. HOLD
CONDOLENCE MEETING THERE.

BAPU

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

284. LETTER TO HARRY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letters. I would like you first of all to tell me what you want to confer with me about. I cannot possibly trouble you to come to Sabarmati or to Wardha where I expect to proceed shortly.

With reference to your intention to stay at the Ashram for some days, I am sorry that it will not be possible. The Ashram or rather the Udyoga Mandir is under the control of a board of management.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY, ESQ.

C/O S. K. GHOSH, ESQ.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER'S OFFICE, NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 12790

¹ *Vide* "The Lion of the Punjab Sleeps", 18-11-1928.

285. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

Your letter frees me from all anxiety. So long as you are willing to act as Agent, no change need be made, and certainly not whilst there is rumour of your being spirited away. When that event happens, we shall see. Personally I like the idea of Kripalani becoming Agent when you can no longer shoulder the burden. We shall discuss the matter further if you can come to Wardha on the 18th December or we shall do so in Calcutta.

Sitla Sahai wanted to be in the Ashram for some months for mental adjustment more than anything else. He has domestic and other worries preying upon him. He wanted a quiet time and he is having it.

I am sorry about Kamala.² Evidently she never completely recovered in Switzerland. I am glad you are taking her to Calcutta. She will at least have the best advice possible.

I hope you are not overworking yourself. Lalaji's death is a great calamity.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library;
also S.N. 12791

¹ In reply to his letter dated November 14, 1928, which read: "... for various reasons it would be desirable for the A.I.S.A. Council to have a more competent person than myself as agent in the U.P. . . . I did not mean that I want to get rid of the responsibility of the work. . . . But if it is possible to make better arrangements I shall welcome them.

"... The only person I can think of in the U.P. is Kripalani. He is practically a U.P. man now, is well known in khadi circles here and is a whole-timer. . . .

"There is no immediate hurry in this matter. I wanted the A.I.S.A. Council to consider it largely in view of the rumours of the impending arrest" (S.N. 12787).

² In his letter Jawaharlal Nehru had said: "Kamala has been giving us a great deal of anxiety."

286. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

I have your two letters by me. Mahadev is not here. I am quite out of the wood now though still somewhat weak and have to be careful.

I do not know where I shall stay in Calcutta. Nothing is yet decided, but you will stay with me no matter where I am accommodated. You need not therefore bother about your lodging in Calcutta. Kindly tell me who will be coming. The date of my reaching Calcutta I shall let you know in good time from Wardha and perhaps you will join me by the train that will take me to Calcutta.

MRS. PERIN CAPTAIN

ISLAM CLUB BUILDINGS, CHOWPATTI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12792

287. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 17, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Having allowed Vakil to deal with poverty I cannot very well refuse admission to his articles¹ on remedies. They have done one good. He is interesting himself in this question and he has stimulated a little more interest. My criticism² disposes of his main argument.

I wonder whether you know that Anil Baran Roy has been writing to the *Chronicle* violently against khadi. The article is almost of a same style as the *Welfare* article that appeared some years ago.

About the Social Conference. I had a letter from the Conference people and I was obliged to say no.³

When I come to Calcutta I shall be delighted to go into the Pratishtan affairs and see what should be done.

¹ Entitled "Remedies of Poverty"; these were published in *Young India* on September 27, October 4, 11 and 18, 1928.

² *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Are We Getting Poorer and "Our Poverty", 6-9-1928

³ *Vide* "Letter to Satyananda Bose", 9-11-1928.

I am glad Baidyanathji¹ is coming in close touch with you. He is a good-hearted man and wants to do active service. I must suggest to him coming either to Wardha to discuss his scheme or postpone the discussion till after I am in Calcutta, only there may be no time in Calcutta for a quiet discussion. It is difficult for me to sketch a scheme without cross-examining Baidyanathji and finding out what is exactly at the back of his mind.

I am glad Krishnadas is there with you. I hope he is keeping well. Please give my love to him. I would like him to stay with you for some time if the climate at Sodepur agrees with him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 12793

288. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN PATHAK

November 17, 1928

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

I have your letter. Even sitting still in a cave is a form of action. In that too, there may be attachment or other such evils. So long as we live in the body, we cannot escape exercising the will, that is, action. It is not true that patriotic service is necessarily characterized by attachment. Our *purushartha*² lies in striving to overcome whatever weaknesses we see in ourselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RAMNARAYAN NAGARDAS PATHAK

SHRI GANDHIJI ANTYAJA ASHRAM

CHHAYA (PORBANDAR)

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2784. Courtesy: Ramnarayan Pathak

289. LETTER TO JAL KHAMBHATTA

November 17, 1928

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. It is good news indeed that you have returned and are all right. I am very happy to know that your health is comp-

¹ Kedia

² Endeavour

letely restored. Please let me know if you have had any new experiences about water treatment. Be careful and preserve the health you have recovered. My blessings to you both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5018. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

290. LETTER TO NAGINDAS DALSUKHBHAI SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 17, 1928

BHAISHRI NAGINDAS,

I have your letter. If you come on Tuesday at 4.30, we shall talk.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

SHRI NAGINBHAI DALSUKHBHAI SHAH

VAKIL DALSUKHBHAI SHAH'S HOUSE

GODHRA

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32845

291. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

November 17, 1928

I got the sad news from the deceased patriot's son early this morning. I regard Lalaji's death at this juncture to be a national calamity of the first magnitude.¹ His place is difficult and impossible to fill. Not many public men can today show an unbroken record of public service of such long standing as Lalaji's. Whatever might be said to the contrary, it has been my firm conviction that he was a friend of Mussalmans and sincerely desirous of promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. How I wish that this truth could be realized by us all and that Lalaji's death could be turned to good account by the nation by establishing unity and promoting perfect toleration for which Lalaji always stood. I know that in his heart there was neither rancour nor ill will for anybody. His life was an open book. As a

¹ *Vide* also "Telegram to Amrit Rai", 17-11-1928.

comrade, it was a privilege to work with him; as a friend he was ever faithful. To the student world he was a tower of strength. I know that many will gladly bear testimony to his wise counsel, guidance and patronage. I know that there would be a memorial to the memory of the deceased but I can imagine no truer memorial than work for swaraj and all it implies with redoubled zeal.

The Hindu, 19-11-1928

292. TRIBUTE TO LAJPAT RAI¹

AHMEDABAD,
November 17, 1928

Mahatmaji said that Lalaji's death had left a gap which it was difficult to be filled. His was a glorious death and he died a patriot. Mahatmaji asked the inmates to take lessons from Lalaji's life and emulate his high sense of duty.

I do not believe that Lalaji is dead, but he lives.

The Tribune, 20-11-1928

293. SOME MORE POSERS IN AHIMSA²

Letters in connection with the calf incident still continue to pour in. But I have had my full say already and such letters as needed a reply I have already answered. I however feel in duty bound to deal with some posers addressed to me by some correspondents. Not to do so might lead to consequences not warranted by my action.

I

One of them writes:

My baby is four months old. It fell ill a fortnight after its birth and there seems no end of its ailment in sight. Several vaidyas and doctors have tried their skill upon him, but in vain; some of them now even decline to administer any medicine to him. They feel, and I feel with them, that the fate of the poor thing is sealed. I have a big family to maintain and I feel myself reduced to sore straits as I have an accumulation of debts. Nor can I any longer bear to see the terrible sufferings of the baby. Would you kindly tell me what I should do in the circumstances ?

¹ Released by Free Press with the following introduction: "After prayers in the Satyagraha Ashram this evening Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the inmates of the Ashram, feelingly communicated the sad news of Lalaji's death."

² This is a translation by Pyarelal of Gujarati items which appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-11-1928 and 18-11-1928.

It is clear that this friend has not been reading *Navajivan* carefully or he would not have asked this question. There would be no warrant for taking the life of the baby even if all the doctors in the world were to pronounce the case to be hopeless because it would always be possible for its father to nurse it. He can soothe the baby in a variety of ways, its size unlike the calf's being manageable. It is only when every possible avenue of service however small is closed and the last ray of hope of the patient surviving seems extinct that one is justified in putting him out of pain, and then too only if one is completely free from the taint of selfish feeling. In the present case, not only is the service of the ailing baby possible, but the main consideration that, on the father's own admission, weighs with him is the personal inconvenience involved in nursing the baby. Largeness of the family or one's pecuniary difficulty can never serve as a justification for putting an end to the life of an ailing patient and I have not the slightest doubt that in the present instance, it is the bounden duty of the father to lavish all his love and care on his suffering baby. There is however one thing more which he can do: if he has sense enough to see it, he should resolve forthwith to lead a life of perfect self-restraint and further stop procreating irrespective of whether his present baby survives or not.

II

Another friend writes in the course of a Hindi letter:

I am the manager of. . . goshala. There are in my charge some 500 head of cattle. They are all utterly useless for any purpose and are simply eating their head off. Out of these from 350 to 400 animals on the average are constantly at death's door, destined to die off one by one in the long end every year. Now tell me what am I to do?

As I have already explained, giving the short shrift, from considerations of financial expediency, can never be compatible with non-violence. And if it is a fact that not a day passes in this goshala without some animal or other dying painfully in the manner of that calf in the Ashram, it makes out a strong case for closing the goshala at once for it betrays fearful mismanagement. The calf in the Ashram was reduced to such piteous plight only as the result of an accident but daily instances like this should *ipso facto* be impossible in a well-managed institution. The duty of the management in the present case is thus clear. It is incumbent upon them and upon the organizers of all similarly placed institutions to devise the most effective means of nursing and ministering to the needs of diseased and ailing cattle. I

would also recommend to them for careful study and consideration my description of an ideal pinjrapole and the way it ought to be managed that I have given more than once in these pages.

III

Writes a Kanbi friend:

There is a grazing-ground for the cattle near our village. It is overrun by a herd of deer about five to seven hundred strong. They work havoc upon all our cotton saplings. We are in a fix. We can easily get rid of them by employing professional watchmen who would kill them for the venison they would get. What would be your advice to a man in my condition? Again when insect pests attack our crops the only way to deal with them is to light a fire of hay which means making a holocaust of the insect pests. What course would you suggest in these circumstances ?

This question is of a different order from the other two questions; it falls under the category of the monkey question, not the calf question. I am unable to guide anyone in the path of *himsa*. In fact no person can lay down for another the limit to which he may commit *himsa*. This is a question which everybody must decide for himself according to the measure of his capacity for *ahimsa*. This much however I can say without any hesitation that to use the analogy of the monkeys to justify the killing of the deer would only betray a laziness of thought and lack of discrimination; the two cases are so dissimilar. Besides, I have not yet decided to kill the monkeys, nor is there any likelihood of my doing so presently. On the contrary it has been and shall be my ceaseless anxiety to be spared that painful necessity. Moreover there is quite a number of ways of keeping off the deer from the fields which would be impossible in the case of elusive creatures like monkeys. Whilst therefore reiterating what every farmer knows from his daily experience also to be true, viz., that destruction of small insects and worms is inevitable in agriculture, I am unable to proceed any further, but must content myself by stating generally that it is the sacred duty of everybody to avoid committing *himsa* to the best of one's power.

IV

Still another friend writes:

You say that an absolute observance of *ahimsa* is incompatible with life in the body, that so long as a man is in the flesh he cannot escape the commission of *himsa* in some form or other as the very process of our physical existence involves *himsa*. How then can *ahimsa* be the highest virtue, the supreme duty? Would you set forth as the highest religious ideal a code of conduct which is altogether impossible of being fulfilled in its

completeness by man? And if you do, what would be the practical worth of such an ideal?

My humble submission is that, contrary to what this writer says, the very virtue of a religious ideal lies in the fact that it cannot be completely realized in the flesh. For a religious ideal must be proved by faith and how can faith have play if perfection could be attained by the spirit while it was still surrounded by its “earthly vesture of decay”? Where would there be scope for its infinite expansion which is its essential characteristic? Where would be room for that constant striving, that ceaseless quest after the ideal that is the basis of all spiritual progress, if mortals could reach the perfect state while still in the body? If such easy perfection in the body was possible all we would have to do would be simply to follow a cut-and-dry model. Similarly if a perfect code of conduct were possible for all there would be no room for a diversity of faiths and religions because there would be only one standard religion which everybody would have to follow.

The virtue of an ideal consists in its boundlessness. But although religious ideals must thus from their very nature remain unattainable by imperfect human beings, although by virtue of their boundlessness they may seem ever to recede farther away from us, the nearer we go to them, still they are closer to us than our very hands and feet because we are more certain of their reality and truth than even of our own physical being. This faith in one’s ideals alone constitutes true life, in fact it is man’s all in all.

Blessed is the man who can perceive the law of ahimsa in the midst of the raging fire of *himsa* all around him. We bow in reverence before such a man; he lays the whole world under debt by his example. The more adverse the circumstances around him, the intenser grows his longing for deliverance from the bondage of flesh which is a vehicle of *himsa* and beckons him on to that blessed state which in the words of the poet,

Even the Great Masters saw only in a trance

Which even their tongue could not declare,

a state in which the will to live is completely overcome by the ever active desire to realize the ideal of ahimsa and all attachment to the body ceasing man is freed from the further necessity of possessing an earthly tabernacle. But so long as that consummation is not reached a man must go on paying the toll of *himsa* for *himsa* is inseparable from all physical existence and it will have its due.

Young India, 22-11-1928

294. *IN QUEST OF REST*

As already published in the newspapers, I hope to reach the Wardha Satyagraha Ashram not on the 15th but on or about the 25th of this month. I do not, however, expect to do anything there in addition to carrying out my daily routine. As I wish to get as much rest as possible, no one should expect an interview with me there or request me to make speeches. In view of the present state of my health I shall hardly be able to complete in my spare hours the amount of work that I am taking with me to Wardha. I would request all kindly to bear in mind this appeal of mine.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

295. *THE LION OF THE PUNJAB SLEEPS*

As the pages of *Navajivan* were going to the printing machine on Saturday, the following telegram was received from Lala Lajpat Rai's son: "Following a heart attack this morning, Lalaji has fallen asleep." Lalaji's death means the dissolution of a great planet from India's solar system. Lalaji was the lion of the Punjab, a brave son of India, a true public servant and a true patriot. It is well-nigh impossible to make a precise assessment of Lalaji's services of half a century. At this critical juncture for India, Lalaji's loss is irreparable. Despite this, I would request the people not to be overcome with grief but rather to imbibe his great virtues—his courage, sacrifice, forbearance, generosity, bravery and patriotism, and make a superhuman effort to secure that swaraj for which he lived and died. Blessed indeed is the country which gave birth to such a gem of a son as Lalaji. May God grant peace to his soul and fortitude to his family. The whole of India shares their sorrow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

296. *MISUNDERSTANDING*

A misunderstanding seems to be afloat in Ahmedabad that a deputation consisting of gentlemen belonging to the pinjrapole had come to reason with me regarding calves and monkeys. This is not a fact. The truth of the matter is that I had asked them to see me in connection with the pinjrapole and the nuisance of dogs. They had kindly come over and while they were with me, I told them of my

dilemma in regard to the killing of calves and about monkeys and this led to a pleasant little conversation between us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

297. DIFFICULTIES OF A BOY

A lad of sixteen and a half writes :¹

Many young men must be in such a pitiable plight. What a denial of freedom that they cannot even get letters addressed to them? I do not believe that parents do any good to their sons and daughters who have reached the age of sixteen by imposing such restrictions upon them for keeping a watch upon their activities in this manner. Such young people who have not still outgrown their cradles cannot, it is clear, worship the Goddess of Independence. Those who live in such a deplorable condition cannot by themselves understand the nature of their dharma. Dharma is not something that can be practised simply by imitating others. It implies supreme effort on the part of oneself.

Where the environment is so weak, what advice can I give the youth, except to offer civil disobedience? If this young man has courage, he will courteously point out his dharma to his mother. If the mother forbids him to go to a national school, he may not do so but he should at least never go where the atmosphere is unhealthy. He should sit at home and practise whatever trade he can; he may spin, card or sew; he can buy a few carpenter's tools and practise carpentry; he can read good books and reflect upon them, he can find out the essence of these, he can read to his mother all about Prahlad from the *Bhagavata*, he can go out for walks daily, do exercise and create a pure and fearless atmosphere around his physical and mental self.

A boy of sixteen and a half should never lead the life of a householder. Hence he should politely tell his mother that, until he is twenty-one or twenty-five, she should give up the idea of his living with his wife. If this young man and others like him in a like situation inform their parents of their worthy resolve and at the same time are not disrespectful towards the latter and serve them, they will improve

¹ The letter is not translated here. The boy had written that he had been married at the age of sixteen. His elder brother took him to the pictures and gave him cheap novels to read. As a result, he had bad dreams, and became weak in body. Reading a book *Better Path or Moral Destruction* helped him to cure to some extent. He wanted to attend a national school, but his mother would not hear of it because untouchable boys also went to it.

themselves, the parents too will learn a new lesson and the country and dharma will thereby benefit.

This young man seems to know that human effort by itself is futile. Nothing can be achieved without God's grace. Not a blade moves without His will. This is something that can be perceived directly. Hence those young men who wish to make this effort must realize its limitations and pray to God every day with unflinching faith regarding their worthy resolves. They may well pray to God as Rama or as Krishna or by any other name that is familiar or dear to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

298. I HAVE NOT DONE ANY KILLING

A gentleman writes:¹

I have not read this Jain newspaper. However, if any gentleman who had come to see me has written as above, it is, indeed, a matter of regret. Moreover, it is for me a matter of even greater regret if anyone believes such a story after my denial in *Navajivan*.² The four gentlemen should have realized that I who have on certain occasions advocated the killing of monkeys could not conceivably hide the fact had I killed some. However, who can shut the mouths or stop the pens of those who are bent on speaking or writing ill of others? I repeat here that nowhere in the Ashram or on behalf of the Ashram have monkeys been killed, beaten or injured. There is no doubt in my mind regarding this matter of killing of monkeys or employing others to kill them, as there is still a strict ban on it. I cannot say the same with such certainty about injuring them, because bows and arrows have been used for a day or two and catapults are still being used. As soon as I realized the possibility of a serious injury resulting from the use of bows and arrows, their use was, as I have already written, discontinued. The catapult is still being employed now but I find that the monkeys merely play with it. Nevertheless, I believe that at times it may certainly cause an injury. I do not know, however, of a single instance in which a monkey has been injured in the Ashram as a result of the use of either of these weapons. The killing of monkeys is something that I do not contemplate doing in future either. I know

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to a report in a Jain newspaper that four Jains had seen monkeys killed by Gandhiji despite the latter's assertion to the contrary in *Navajivan*.

² Vide "The Fiery Ordeal", "The Tangle of Ahimsa" and "More About Ahimsa"

that it involves violence. Hence I shall think again and again before indulging in such an extreme act of violence and I shall also try to find out as many ways as I can of sparing myself that form of violence. Despite this, I can give the assurance that the world will certainly come to know, if ever an occasion arises in my life, when I employ violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

299. *ANTYAJAS OF KARACHI*

One of the good results of the discussion that took place recently in the Karachi Municipality on the question of khadi is that the President of the Sweepers' Union has now sent me the text of a resolution passed by the Sweepers' Union. It runs as follows :¹

When this resolution was sent to me for publication, the question arose in my mind whether it was passed with understanding by a large number of *Antyaja* brothers or whether it had been passed for the sake of appearances alone by a handful of them getting together. Moreover, as sweepers were regarded as farmers, the question also arose whether there was any truth in it or was it done for the sake of prestige. So I enquired through the secretary and received the following reply²:

This clarification enhances the importance of the above resolution. And whenever similar resolutions are passed in such associations, their value increases when this is done with understanding and after due deliberation. Because, if such resolutions are passed without proper understanding or if those who pass them or frame them do so for the sake of demonstration, not only do they lose their impact with the passage of time but they are also harmful. Nowadays many such resolutions are passed merely for outward show. I, therefore, felt the need to exercise the above caution. I hope that the *Antyaja* brothers will act according to the resolution that they have adopted. And if they do so, both they and the country will benefit. It is not enough if they wear khadi when working in the municipality, but if they have the feelings for khadi which they have expressed in

¹ For the text, *vide* "Notes", 15-11-1928, sub-title, "Karachi Sweepers".

² Not translated here. The secretary of the Antyaja Sangh had informed Gandhiji that sweepers had been regarded as farmers because farming was their original profession and that, although the resolution was passed by the managing committee, it had been explained to the general body and in any case the importance of khadi was being constantly explained to the *Antyajias*.

the resolution, they will give place to khadi alone even in their homes. It is the task of the Antyaja Sangh to see that durable and cheap khadi is made available. Recently in Mysore, a khadi co-operative association has been set up, and such associations can have within them a khadi store on a co-operative basis and obtain khadi at much cheaper rates. Or, one can also follow the practice adopted in Madras where people are able to get khadi at cheaper rates by the system of chits. There is a saying in English: "Where there is a will there is a way." The truth of this has been proved by experience. Our Bhangi brothers and their leaders can take to heart this saying.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-11-1928

300. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 18, 1928

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I got your telegram. I am not interested in expression of regret. I have received several telegrams from the Punjab and some friends are coming from there for consultations. Rest assured that I shall do all that is necessary.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 7511. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

301. SPEECH AT CONDOLENCE MEETING, AHMEDABAD¹

[November 18, 1928]²

My position is somewhat awkward. My relationship with Lalaji had become so close that just as one feels embarrassed to praise some friend, comrade or brother, I too feel awkward to praise him today. Even so, I feel that I should say a few words. I first met Lalaji in 1914 in England; then his love for the country left a deep impression on me. Although I had heard of him earlier through newspapers, since I always have little faith in them I did not straightway take their reports as true. When he returned to India in 1920, he was elected President of the Indian National Congress. Since then I came into close contact with him. There was a difference of opinion between us at the Calcutta

¹ On the bank of Sabarmati

² From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-11-1928

Congress, but that did not affect our relations at all. How could it, when Lalaji concealed nothing in his heart and expressed everything frankly? Young people have to draw a lesson from Lalaji's life. He has left a will. In a message only fifteen days ago, he had said that he had only a few days more to live, that he had grown old and that he did not want to take much part in the agitation concerning the attack on him. That was the work of young people and they should do it.

Lalaji chanted the *mantra* of swaraj for fifty years. Youths should take up his work of swaraj. In the work of winning swaraj, Lalaji neither enjoyed peace and happiness himself nor did he allow others to do so. In his time it was not fashionable to go to jail or to undergo a sentence of transportation. At that time there was no fearlessness about going to jail as there is today. I was not in India when Lalaji was exiled from the country. He betrayed no weakness during or after his exile. We must observe the dharma which Lalaji has laid down in his will. Various suggestions will be made to make Lalaji's memorial a lasting one. All will be in vain if there is not one about winning swaraj. Winning swaraj is the true memorial to Lalaji.

In the resolution Lalaji has been mentioned as the guardian of the poor and there is significance in it. His heart melted wherever he saw misery. His language was certainly strong, but there was no contempt in it. Lalaji's heart was full of universal love. He concealed nothing from the people, why should he conceal anything from his co-workers? Lalaji was such a kindhearted person that his heart melted if he saw anyone unhappy either in India or abroad. He did not have the slightest enmity towards the Muslims. It was his innermost desire that the Hindus and the Muslims should live as brothers. He wanted that in India there should be neither Hindu rule nor Muslim rule but a rule of all the people. Lalaji's life began with religious activity and social reforms but he felt that as long as India did not get independence, nothing could be done about religious or social reforms. Like Lokamanya Tilak, he was compelled to plunge into politics.

The duty of everyone—young and old—is to free the country from the yoke of dependence. If we do not make our contribution in shouldering that burden, praising Lalaji would only amount to imitating bards and minstrels. He went on working for swaraj single-mindedly for fifty years without ever getting disappointed. Till the last days of his life, he kept on thinking about swaraj. May God give us the strength to achieve the object for which he expended his whole life.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 25-11-1928

302. TELEGRAM TO SATYAPAL¹

November 19, 1928

SATYAPAL

YOUR WIRE. WOULD LIKE YOU OMIT FEEDING POOR.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13326

303. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[November 19, 1928]²

CHI. MIRA,

Too busy to say much. Though I disagree with you in your estimate of the people here, I should be entirely satisfied for you to choose a place in Bihar to work in. The people of Bihar are certainly among the most attractive on earth. The Austrian friends left today.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Your next letter should be to Wardha. I leave here on Friday reaching there Saturday afternoon.

BAPU

SHRIMATI MIRABAI

KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR, BIHAR

From the original: G.N. 8213; also C.W. 5323. Courtesy: Mirabehn

¹ In reply to his telegram dated November 19, 1928, which read: "Provincial Congress requests Doctor Ansari to announce twenty-ninth November Kriya Day of Lala Lajpat Rai to be observed by whole of India as Lajpat Rai Day and to observe following programme. Morning prayer meetings evening procession and public meeting feeding of poor. Please support this in Press."

² From the postmark

304. AWARD ON THE LABOUR UNION SUBSCRIPTION¹

AHMEDABAD

November 21, 1928

The Labour Union shall supply each mill with a list of its members working in the mills and the subscription at the rates prescribed by the Union shall be collected on all pay days from all working people included in the list. In case a dispute regarding the fact of membership or resignation of a member in the mill is not settled between the Labour Union and the mill and regarding which the Mill-owners' Association and the Labour Union also do not come to an amicable settlement, the matter shall be submitted to arbitration and the subscription shall continue to be collected and paid to the Labour Union till the final settlement. The Union shall refund the subscription of any operative in respect of whom it is proved that he was not a member at the time of collection. The arbitrators hold that the current practice in the matter of collection of subscription involves the possibility of indiscipline. The arbitrators, therefore, urge that the formation of a Labour Union must have the fullest support of mill-owners and there should be no subscription of any sort.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-11-1928

305. LONG LIVE LALAJI²

Lala Lajpat Rai is dead. Long live Lalaji. Men like Lalaji cannot die so long as the sun shines in the Indian sky. Lalaji means an institution. From his youth he made of his country's service a religion. And his patriotism was no narrow creed. He loved his country because he loved the world. His nationalism was international. Hence his hold on the European mind. He claimed a large circle of friends in Europe and America. They loved him because they knew him.

His activities were multifarious. He was an ardent social and religious reformer. Like many of us he became a politician because his zeal for social and religious reform demanded participation in politics. He observed at an early stage of his public career that much reform of the type he wanted was not possible until the country was

¹ The Arbitration Board consisting of Mahatma Gandhi and Sheth Mangaldas Girdhardas gave the award in the dispute submitted to them for settlement by the Mill-owners' Association and the Labour Union regarding collection of subscription of members of the Labour Union.

² An article by Gandhiji on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-11-1928.

freed from foreign domination. It appeared to him, as to most of us, as a poison corrupting every department of life.

It is impossible to think of a single public movement in which Lalaji was not to be found. His love of service was insatiable. He founded educational institutions; he befriended the suppressed classes; poverty wherever found claimed his attention. He surrounded young men with extraordinary affection. No young man appealed to him in vain for help. In the political field he was indispensable. He was fearless in the expression of his views. He suffered for it when suffering had not become customary or fashionable. His life was an open book. His extreme frankness often embarrassed his friends, if it also confounded his critics. But he was incorrigible.

With all deference to my Mussalman friends, I assert that he was no enemy of Islam. His desire to strengthen and purify Hinduism must not be confounded with hatred of Mussalmans or Islam. He was sincerely desirous of promoting and achieving Hindu-Muslim unity. He wanted not Hindu Raj but he passionately wanted Indian Raj; he wanted all who called themselves Indians to have absolute equality. I wish that Lalaji's death would teach us to trust one another. And we could easily do this if we could but shed fear.

There will be, as there must be, a demand for a national memorial. In my humble opinion no memorial can be complete without a definite determination to achieve the freedom for which he lived and died so nobly. Let us recall what has after all proved to be his last will. He has bequeathed to the younger generation the task of vindicating India's freedom and honour. Will they prove worthy of the trust he reposed in them? Shall we the older survivors—men and women—deserve to have had Lalaji as a countryman, by making a fresh, united, supreme effort to realize the dream of a long line of patriots in which Lalaji was so distinguished a member?

Nor may we forget the Servants of People Society which he founded for the promotion of his many activities, all designed for the advancement of the country. His ambition in respect of the Society was very high. He wanted a number of young men all over India to join together in a common cause and work with one will. The Society is an infant not many years old. He had hardly time enough to consolidate this great work of his. It is a national trust requiring the nation's care and attention.

Young India, 22-11-1928

306. CONDOLENCES FROM OVERSEAS

'Anavil Yuvaks' send me the following message from Port Louis Mauritius:

Deeply regret Lalaji's death. Irreparable loss national cause. Tender heartfelt condolence bereaved family.

Transvaal Khatri Mandal, Johannesburg, sends the following:

Khatri community deeply mourns death great patriot Lalaji. Kindly convey message condolence to bereaved family.

Patidar Society, Johannesburg, cables:

Patidar community mourns death great patriot Lala Lajpatrai. Kindly convey Society's condolence to bereaved family.

Young India, 22-11-1928

307. AJMAL JAMIA FUND

I know that this Fund has to work under a heavy handicap. It has to cut its way through the hard rock of prejudice. Why should a Hindu pay to perpetuate the memory of a Mussalman and for a fund principally devoted to a Muslim cause will be the argument of many a *kattar*¹ Hindu in these times of mutual hate. Why should a Mussalman subscribe to a fund in memory of one who was pro-Hindu and for an institution partly supported by the idolatrous Hindu will be the argument of a *kattar* Mussalman against supporting the Fund. In spite, however, of this double handicap I must continue to ask for subscriptions for this memorial. The constitution of the Jamia Millia has undergone a radical and desirable change and is placed on a better footing. And I am happy to be able to announce the subscription for this fund of Rs. 10,000 already paid up from a Hindu friend whose trust, I confess, is largely based on my own. I know no other way of promoting nationalism, toleration and friendliness except by trusting and hoping in spite of appearances to the contrary. It matters little that one may have been deceived before or may have built hope on a paper foundation. Hope to be worth anything must "spring eternal in the human breast". Trust can have no limits. It must always give the benefit of the doubt. It is better to suffer a million disappointments than not to have trusted where mistrust was a mistake. A man who permits himself to be deceived is never the loser. Indeed he is the gainer in the end, not the so-called successful deceiver. A thousand deceits would leave me unrepentant. My personal experience is that in

¹ Diehard

spite of some very hard knocks which I can recall at the time of writing, I have no cause to regret the trustful nature with which the world around me has credited me. It is my conviction that I and those whom I have involved in my trustfulness have lost nothing, if we cannot prove to have always gained. A man loses only when he loses his soul and that can never be lost through another man's deceit.

Young India, 22-11-1928

308. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

AHMEDABAD,
November 22, 1928

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK, CALCUTTA

LEAVING FOR WARDHA TOMORROW MORNING. EXPECT YOUR
AND MALAVIYAJI'S REPLY NOW WARDHA. IN VIEW THIS
CALAMITY¹ WOULD LIKE YOU HASTEN YOUR COMING WARDHA
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7879. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

309. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 22, 1928

Even if we put truth on one scale of the balance and all other qualities and something besides on the other, truth will have more weight. This is the verdict of experienced people and we should not doubt it at all.

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11176. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

310. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
Thursday [November 22, 1928]²

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Your letter. Your decision to have khadi as the hub and impart education through khadi is very much to my liking. If I get from you

¹ The passing away of Lajpat Rai

² Gandhiji left Sabarmati Ashram on November 23, 1928. Thursday fell on November 22.

any khadi news of public interest I shall certainly publish it in *Navajivan*.¹

Yours,

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 754

311. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

November 23, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

Chi. Santok² cannot at present live according to the rule of Rs. 12 which I have suggested, and so she has decided with Chi. Radha³ and Chi. Rukhi⁴ to live permanently in Rajkot. She says that they will need Rs. 60 every month in Rajkot. Though I think this figure exorbitant, I do not wish to hurt her and have therefore agreed to let her have it. While thinking about the matter last night, I felt that the most straightforward course was to treat this sum as pension and pay it from the Ashram account.

I am hoping that Chi. Santok and the girls will be able to bring down this sum to a lower figure.

I hesitated to come to this decision and it has even pained me. At the moment I console myself with the hope that one day they will sincerely accept the ideals of the Ashram and come and live in it.

This case should be treated as an exception. The reasons why I have come to this decision in regard to Chi. Santok are plain. We cannot, therefore, regard this case as a precedent to go by and make similar arrangements in future for other families. Others can get maintenance from the Ashram only if they live in it.

The sum in question should be paid from month to month till I decide otherwise. After my death, the Managing Committee may consult Jammalalji and change the decision if it so wishes.

Chi. Santok will be staying in the Ashram for ten days more. If during this period she asks for anything else, please consult me. My understanding is that she cannot ask for anything beside what is agreed.

Send one copy of this to me and give one to Chi. Santok.

¹ A report sent by Moolchand Agrawal regarding the progress of khadi in Rajasthan was published in *Young India*, 29-8-1929, under the title "Self-spinning in Rajputana". A similar report was later published in Hindi *Navajivan* too.

² Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

³ Daughters of Maganlal Gandhi

⁴ *ibid*

It will be enough if you pay the sum to Chi. Narandas every month.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 8-9

312. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[November 23, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The money asked for by Chhaganlal and intended for the women may be sent out of Women's Fund. Other help required for Orissa may be sent out of the Famine [Relief] Fund with Vallabhbhai and the small balance in the Orissa account lying in the Ashram.

Write to Vallabhbhai. It should be possible to meet Chhaganlal's demand from the Fund with him, since the work which Chhaganlal is doing is all famine relief work. Shri Vithalbhai has written to me and told me that we can draw more from the money he has contributed to the Famine [Relief] Fund. If there is any difficulty in this, pay from our funds.

Pay from the Ashram funds, in addition to Rs. 12, expenses for four students. See Krishnamaiyadevi². Do not omit to do this through oversight.

I wrote to Shardabehn and told her to leave the Ashram in certain circumstances. The letter you have sent is not a reply to my letter. I should certainly be happy if she feels sincerely disinterested in worldly things.

I have been consuming five *tolas* of linseed oil. I shall be able to eat less from today since I have started mixing some almond oil with milk. I do not worry about the taste at all. Nor is it that the oil does not suit me. But I have not been able to gain weight with oil and *rotli* only, and so from today I have added almonds and fruit. If you require linseed oil, please write to me so that I may send fresh supply from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 9-10

¹ As in the source

² Widow of a Congress worker from Nepal to whom Gandhiji had given shelter in the Ashram along with her son and four daughters.

313. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Friday [November 23, 1928]¹

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

I forgot to write about one thing. Call in Dr. Talwalkar or Dr. Kanuga to examine Kashi². I am afraid she has got dysentery. If that is so, she will have to be given injections of ipecacuanha. Place this suggestion of mine before the doctor whom you call in.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 10

314. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SURAT,

November 23, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Read the accompanying letter and hand it over to Parnerkar. After careful thought but with firm decision take whatever steps seem necessary in regard to Jethalal.

Gangadevi has asked for sewing work; give it to her. If nothing else, let her make caps of all sizes and covers of large pillows. I will sell them. If I cannot easily find customers for them, then let her make, if she knows how to, large handkerchiefs with borders, and as many as she can.

When Champabehn arrives there, get her to work with Gangadevi. I am sure you have arranged for someone to sleep near the women's wing. Look after Harasukhrai and also give me news of him from time to time.

I trust you have made the required arrangements for Amina³.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ As in the source

² Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

³ Daughter of Abdul Kadir Bavazeer

[PS.]

Do everything with complete faith and the utmost courage. The burden of winning over Narandas lies on you. Do not think that it is a difficult task.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 10-1

315. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Friday, November 23, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I felt unhappy when leaving you. You are bearing with great courage the burden which has fallen on you, but I see all the same that it has disturbed your equanimity a little. The *Gita*, however, teaches us that we should in no case lose our equanimity.

You may certainly take any quantity of milk that is necessary for your health. Do not feel that you are doing anything wrong in that.

I have left Kusum¹ there. Make her work. She works methodically. You will not at all find it difficult to mix with her freely. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 15

316. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

November 23, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

You should understand that I shall always be where my work calls me.

One should accept as they are the rules and conditions for membership of an organization or an institution. If we live as members of an organization, it becomes necessary for us to obtain the permission

¹ Widow of Haribhai Desai who was Gandhiji's secretary during the early days of Satyagraha Ashram

of others for doing a number of things. Freedom does not mean licence, nor does it mean being dependent on one individual only.

Anyone who lives in a community should submit to its restrictions. This is what an institution means. Anything different from this means the rule of one person. I wish that you should reflect and understand the meaning of this, compose yourself and be devoted to your duty.

Take proper care of your health.

Cultivate friendship with everyone.

Give complete satisfaction to others in regard to Manu, by working in the Bal Mandir and, if you find it congenial to do so, in the kitchen.

Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1853

317. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Friday, November 23, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I can understand your misery. Physical separation will however always be there. Shake off anxiety and be firm and devoted to your duty.

Keep writing to me. Go to Dwarka only if you want to, otherwise don't.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3343

318. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[After November 23, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Work as much as you wish to but don't let it tell on your health. Never grieve over separation. We will always be confronted with the separation from loved ones. "What is unavoidable, thou shouldst not

¹ From the reference to "separation" in this and the preceding letter

regret.”¹ If you don’t understand the meaning of this verse ask Chi. Purushottam. It is from the *Gita*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3325

319. MESSAGE TO KHADI WORKERS, AMALNER²

[After November 23, 1928]³

Gandhiji after asking a few questions about the details of their work and emphasizing the necessity of self-carding, said to them.

Our scriptures say that not to begin any enterprise is the first degree of wisdom but it is folly to give it up after having commenced it. Now that you have commenced your project after due deliberation I hope you will see it through.

Young India, 13-12-1928

320. DISCUSSION WITH SHANKARRAO DEV⁴

[After November 23, 1928]

I have no doubt about it, there are more actual spinners and more genuine khadi wearers in India today than there were in the “white cap” days of 1920-21, and as for organized khadi production it has grown by tenfold at least. But the thing is, we do not see the wood for the trees. Otherwise, where is there another organization in India which is functioning in nearly 2,000 villages as the A.I.S.A. is doing? It is a compact body, it has influence over the masses because it has established a living contact with them. But the khadi worker

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 27; quoted in Sanskrit in the source.

² From Pyarelal’s “Wardha Letter” which explained the work of the Samarth Udyoga Mandir, Mukti (W. Khandesh), thus: “They are trying to organize khadi production on what is known as the ‘integrated system’. The underlying idea is to develop the internal economics of hand-spinning and hand-weaving by assembling as many processes of cloth manufacture as possible under the same roof to be performed as far as possible by the same family. The system has been tried with great success at Bijolia and would mark a new era in the development of khadi organization if it could be successfully introduced elsewhere too.”

³ Gandhiji left Sabarmati on November 23, 1928, and reached Wardha on November 24.

⁴ From Pyarelal’s “Wardha Letter”; Shankarrao Dev travelled with Gandhiji as far as Jalgaon and the discussion turned on the theme “Is khadi really making headway?”

must bide his time. His faith is on trial today. He must refuse to be diverted from his purpose by exciting politics. I have no doubt that the country will remember this perennial source of strength at no distant date. See how one leader after another turns to it for consolation in the darkness of despair. Deshbandhu Das remembered it and declared his faith in it a week before his death, and when a damp fell around the path of Lalaji he too turned to it for strength. You know how he told Mahadev at Simla that he had become a complete convert to khadi and was learning how to spin? I have no doubt that in its hour of darkness it will be khadi alone that will come to the nation's rescue.

Young India, 13-12-1928

321. REPLY TO MARWARI DEPUTATION, WARDHA¹

[After November 24, 1928]

Gandhiji: Is your objection religious and fundamental or is it on the score of social tradition?

We are no learned pundits, our objection is based on the latter ground.

In that case you should bear with Shethji. If you objected to Shethji's dining with such 'untouchables' as were addicted to drink or led unclean lives I could understand you, but for lack of moral courage to hold that food is polluted by the mere touch of one born in a so-called untouchable family, though otherwise he may be a pure and righteous man, is a negation of religion. I admit that social tradition should be respected when it is meant for the protection of society even though personally one may not feel any need for following it, but to respect a tradition even when it becomes tyrannous spells not life but death and it should be discarded.

Jamnalalji has chosen a wider field of service. He cannot exclusively identify himself with any particular community. The world is his family and he can serve his community only through the service of humanity. So let Jamnalalji go his way. One can overcome opposition only by love, untruth by truth, not by compromising truth. See the state of society we are living in, it is full of falsehood,

¹ From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter" under the sub-title "At Grips with Orthodoxy", which explained that Jamnalal Bajaj had caused a flutter in the orthodox Marwari community by throwing open the Lakshminarayan temple at Wardha to the so-called untouchables for which he was excommunicated by the diehard section of his community. The excommunication had left him altogether unrepentant and he had gone a step further by partaking food cooked by the so-called untouchable boys recently at Rewari. It was to understand Gandhiji's views that a deputation of Agrawal Marwaris waited upon him.

hypocrisy, hatred. Our *panchas* should be the Gangotri¹ of our society. But today they have become corrupt. What would be left of the sacredness of the Ganges if its stream were polluted at the very source? Let us therefore try to purify our *panchas*, by doing penance, by suffering for right's sake. That is what Jamnalalji is doing. You should give him your blessings even if you cannot follow him. For, a day will come when not only you but even the orthodox section will recognize that by his action Jamnalalji rendered the truest service to Hinduism and the future generation will thank him for it.²

Young India, 13-12-1928

322. INFLUENCE OF MUSIC³

A student of the Gujarat Vidyapith asks:

What has been the influence of music on your life?

Music has given me peace. I can remember occasions when music instantly tranquilized my mind when I was greatly agitated over something. Music has helped me to overcome anger. I can recall occasions when a hymn sank deep into me though the same thing expressed in prose had failed to touch me. I also found that the meaning of hymns discordantly sung has failed to come home to me and that it burns itself on my mind when they have been properly sung. When I hear *Gita* verses melodiously recited I never grow weary of hearing and the more I hear the deeper sinks the meaning into my heart. Melodious recitations of the *Ramayana* which I heard in my childhood left on me an impression which years have not obliterated or weakened. I distinctly remember how when once the hymn "The path of the Lord is meant for the brave, not the coward" was sung to me in an extraordinarily sweet tune, it moved me as it had never before. In 1907 while in the Transvaal I was almost fatally assaulted, the pain of the wounds was relieved when at my instance Olive Doke gently sang to me "Lead Kindly Light".

Let no one infer from this that I know music. On the contrary it would be more correct to say that my knowledge of music is very elementary. I cannot critically judge music. All I can claim is that I have a natural ear for good homely music.

I do not mean to suggest either that because the influence of music has been uniformly good on me it must act similarly on others.

¹ Source of the Ganga in the Himalayas

² Also published in *Navajivan*, 16-12-1928

³ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-11-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

On the contrary I know that many people employ music to feed their carnal passions. To sum up, therefore, we may say that the influence of music will differ according to temperaments. As Tulsidas has sung:

The Lord of Creation created everything in this world as an admixture of good and evil. But a good man selects the good and rejects the evil even as the fabled swan is said to help himself to cream leaving the water in the milk.

Young India, 10-1-1929

323. MY NOTES

PLAN FOR CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

An experienced *gosevak*¹ from Kathiawar writes:²

This scheme is good and deserves to be put into practice. However, if indeed I had the capacity for inspiring people which this correspondent imagines that I have, I would convert all the States of Kathiawar into places for serving the cow ideally. But, like the people, the States too do not like the constructive work very much. Moreover, such tasks could be easily accomplished if the States were not eager to accumulate wealth, if they opposed cruel customs and cultivated public opinion. Students should be given such problems to study in national schools. Such problems will be solved with less difficulty when the educated classes come into contact with villages.

A CRUEL CUSTOM

A gentleman from Visavadar writes:³

I must admit my ignorance of the practice mentioned in this letter. It is clear that this practice should be ended wherever it is prevalent. Our superstitions have been added to our ignorance of cattle-rearing and hence our task has become doubly difficult. There are wise men in every village. They do not have the leisure to examine minutely the question of how the people can be made happy. They know that the task of increasing the cattle wealth is not one which brings in huge profits but one which at the outset entails a large

¹ Worker for cow-protection

² The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested a scheme for preservation of milch cattle including cows and buffaloes, and wanted Gandhiji to persuade one or two States to take up this work of scientific cattle-rearing and set an example for others to follow.

³ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had referred to the custom of a weak male calf being branded and driven away.

expenditure. Hence who can create an interest in it? Nevertheless, the above-mentioned scheme deserves consideration at the hands both of the ruler and the ruled. Hence after keeping it in my files for many months, I venture to publish it in the columns of *Navajivan* today.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-11-1928

324. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

Express

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 25, 1928

DR. ANSARI

PALACE, BHOPAL

PROPOSE ISSUING LALAJI MEMORIAL APPEAL¹
OVER YOUR SIGNATURE MALAVIYAJI'S AND GHANSHYAM
DAS BIRLA'S AS SECRETARY TREASURER. APPEAL
WILL BE FOR FUNDS TO BE DEVOTED TO
ADVANCEMENT LALAJI'S POLITICAL WORK. YOU
THREE WILL CONSTITUTE TRUSTEES WITH AUTHORITY
DETERMINE EXACT USE FUNDS. PRAY WIRE WARDHA.
AUTHORITY ATTACH YOUR SIGNATURE APPEAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13339

325. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

WARDHAGANJ ,
November 26, 1928

MIRABAI

KHADI BHANDAR, MUZAFFARPUR

YOUR LETTERS. YOU MAY COME. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: G.N. 8216; also C.W. 5326. Courtesy: Mirabehn

¹ *Vide* "Apeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928.

326. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY.

[November 26, 1928]¹

DR. BIDHAN

36 [WELLINGTON STREET]

CALCUTTA

MOTILALJI WROTE LAST WEEK YOU HAD DECIDED
ACCEPT MY VIEW ABOUT EXHIBITION. HEARD NOTH-
ING FROM YOU. WIRE REPLY² WARDHA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13319

327. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,

November 26, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I experienced no difficulty at all in the third class. There was no crowding in the trains during any part of the journey. All of us could sleep for the whole night. Other passengers vacated their seats for us. Since, however, the compartment was never crowded, they suffered no inconvenience because of us. I was extremely happy. In first and second classes I always feel like one imprisoned, besides feeling guilty. I felt happy within and at least thirty rupees were saved for the poor.

As it was my wish that this time I would join in all the Ashram activities here, I had all the three meals of the day in the company of the other Ashram inmates and ate the food served to me, which was the same as what they had. Here after the midday meal everyone helps in cleaning the grains. I too joined in this work. Ghanshyamdas Birla has come here and he too joined. Wonderful peace prevails here at mealtime and when people are working.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 11-2

¹ Vide "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 27-11-1928; vide also "Letter to Motilal Nehru", 28-11-1928.

² The reply dated November 28, 1928 read: "Your wire. Reception Committee meeting tonight. Hope that after mill textiles are banned you and A.I.S.A. will take part in Exhibition. Kindly wire your ideas."

328. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, November 26, 1928

DEAR SISTERS,

We reached Jalgaon an hour late. Consequently we missed the connecting train and reached Wardha late.

I may at once draw your attention to one thing I see here. I am, of course, dining in the Ashram kitchen here. By now I have had three meals; there was an utter absence of all noise. It was perfectly quiet and I thought at that time of the loud din in our Ashram kitchen. There was no noise here of clattering vessels or of people talking. Of course, in our Ashram we have children, while here there are none. That does make some difference, and yet you can teach children not to make noise and you yourselves can withstand the temptation of talking. That we cannot put a stop to the noise in our kitchen is one of our great failings.

I keenly feel the separation from you, because much remains to be done for getting more work from you. You should complete what remains unfinished.

Of course you understand your duties. The kitchen, Bal Mandir (kindergarten) and prayers are even now going on; if you undertake any other responsibility besides these, never give it up out of a sense of failure. To become fit for it the most necessary condition of all is this:

Whatever work you once undertake, carry it out fully, never give up what you have offered to do. If you have to be absent, then make some arrangement for your work; and if no arrangement can be made, do not leave it and go.

Keep ever cheerful; be calm; and make it a point to carry on your share of all the activities of the Ashram equally with men, and as well as men. This is not at all beyond your capacity. You need only desire it, and strive for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

Letters to Ashram Sisters, pp. 61-2

329. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [November 26, 1928]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Do you expect a letter from me by every post? What a girl! Well, I shall try to write.

All the news about me is in the letter to Ashram women and to the [Udyoga] Mandir.¹ So, I will not write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3324

330. APPEAL FOR LAJPAT RAI MEMORIAL FUND²

November 26, 1928

The following appeal has been issued over the signatures of the President of the Congress, Dr. Ansari, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla:

APPEAL FOR FIVE LAKHS

TO THE CITIZENS OF INDIA

It is but meet that there should be a national memorial to the revered memory of a patriot so brave, so great and so self-sacrificing as Lala Lajpat Rai. We the undersigned have therefore taken it upon ourselves to make an appeal to the generous public for funds, which we hope will meet with universal response. If we expect large donations from the rich, we know that Lalaji's spirit would find the greatest solace from the coppers of the poor. We propose to announce later the exact manner in which the funds will be used, but we constitute ourselves as trustees for the funds with power to associate others with us in their administration. We may, however, generally state that we shall use them for the advancement of Lalaji's many political activities to which he so nobly gave the best part of his life. We shall naturally bear in mind his great creation and the instrument of his operations—the Servants of the People Society.

We have fixed the sum of Rs. 5,00,000 (five lakhs) as the mini-

¹ *Vide* the preceding two items (Ashram was being called Udyoga Mandir).

² The appeal was drafted by Gandhiji and carried corrections in his handwriting; *vide* also "Telegram to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 25-11-1928. The appeal was published in *Young India*, 29-11-1928.

mum that a grateful country should give to Lalaji's memory. Regard being had to the bad times through which we are passing, we have chosen the lowest sum consistently with Lalaji's all-India greatness and the cause to which the monies are to be devoted.

Subscriptions should be sent to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, 8 Royal Exchange Place, Calcutta, who has kindly consented to act as Secretary and Treasurer for the Fund.

M. A. ANSARI

MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

26th November, 1928

I have seen also the appeal issued by the President of the Congress fixing the 29th instant for observing in memory of the deceased patriot. I heartily endorse both these appeals, and I trust that meetings will be held throughout the country at which subscriptions will be collected in aid of the proposed memorial. Indeed it would be a striking demonstration if a fixed determination was made by all the public workers to finish on the memorial day the collection of five lacs which the distinguished signatories have asked for as the minimum.

I know that the time left for organizing such an effort is short; but where there is one will and one purpose no time is too short. Let the public recall the palmy days of 1920-21 when not five lacs but even 10 lacs were collected in one single day. After all the crore was collected practically in one month. If trusted volunteers will set apart the 29th for this one single item and go out collecting, there should be no difficulty in making up the amount.

Let the collectors remember that they have all to make their return immediately to Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla at the address given in the appeal. If the collectors will send me the names intimating that they have sent the collections to Sjt. Birla, I shall see that the names are duly acknowledged in *Young India*. They are free to send the collections to *Young India* office from which they will be forwarded to the treasurer. If however the task of collecting the full sum in one single day is considered in our present disorganized state to be beyond our capacity let the collection committee prolong the period for collecting their quota.

In the absence of any other rule, I suggest each district or taluk fixing its own quota according to its own population. That is the least that can be done. The fairest way is for each district, taluk or circle to fix its own quota, in no case less than the minimum on the basis of population and to fix its own period within which to finish that

collection. I suggest also a resolution at each meeting to do some constructive work in terms of swaraj for which the local workers may be best fitted, provided that there is a determination to carry out that resolution. The memory of the deceased patriot will not suffer if no such resolution is passed, but it will suffer so long as the memory is a trust in our charge if after having passed resolutions we forget all about them.

M. K. GANDHI

From photostats: S.N. 13340 and 13341; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 28-11-1928

331. LETTER TO DWARKADAS

WARDHA,
November 26, 1928

DEAR DWARKADAS,

I have your letter. I think it is difficult to give any advice without meeting the lady. For the present I can only say that she should be patient and, giving up the idea of dying after her husband, she must dwell on his virtues.

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/27

332. LETTER TO MADHAVJI

WARDHA,
November 26, 1928

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

From your age I guess that you are married. If so, you should avoid sex with your wife for some time. If you have any other weakness, you should give up that also. Your asthma will certainly be cured.

Another fast will certainly benefit you. Drop the evening meal. Do not take any salt at all for the present. In fruit do not eat anything sour. Tomatoes are not necessary. Try to live on *mosambi*, sweet grapes and milk. Take boiled fruit in case of constipation.

Brown bread is more easily digested than our *chapatis*. Butter is lighter than ghee and probably contains more vitamins. For two or three months you should live in a place with a dry climate. Marwar, Cutch or Kathiawar would be good, except for the ports.

If you do not know *pranayam* learn it. Do it every day on empty stomach. Have Kuhne's bath also every day on an empty stomach. You should take sun-bath in the morning before nine o'clock. Sun-bath has to be had without any clothes on. You can cover the head if you feel the heat. I do not think Calcutta is good at all for sun-bath.

You must go for a walk every day. On rising in the morning drink a glass of warm water immediately after brushing your teeth.

Avoid sugar. You may take honey with water.

One can live only on fresh fruit if confined to bed. But if one wants to be active, it will be sufficient to take a little milk along with fruit.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary: S.N. 32577/27

333. LETTER TO GURUPRASAD

WARDHA,

November 26, 1928

DEAR GURUPRASAD,

You should not leave either home or your wife. You should continue to live there and sleep in a separate room. You should make some arrangement to educate your wife. I feel after reading your letter that you will not be able to save yourself by running away. You have got to solve the problem remaining where you are. You will succeed if you try. But even if you do not succeed, you need not at all lose heart. Tell yourself that that is the way of the World. It will be enough if you do not give up trying.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/25

334. OUR DUTY¹

November 27, 1928

I hope there will be a prompt and whole-hearted response to the appeal which the Congress President, Dr. Ansari, Bharat Bhushan Pandit Malaviya and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla have made to the people in regard to the Lalaji Memorial. There is an English proverb to the effect that he who gives quickly gives double. There is a similar saying among us: "Prompt charity brings greater spiritual merit." Both these sayings are the result of the experience of wise men of

¹ Vide also "Lalaji Memorial", 29-11-1928.

different countries. We have forgotten that saying. Today it is said about us that we always wake up late, that is to say, instead of giving donations or taking action at the right time, we allow time to pass and then become impatient and bewildered and somehow get through charity or work. As a result, this does no credit to us and its value is reduced by half. I hope that this will not happen with regard to this memorial. For a memorial that is to be raised to a popular leader like Lalaji, funds ought to come forth for the asking.

I trust no one will question why there are only three signatories to the appeal. There was difficulty in finding more names and there was a fear that, if time elapsed, the 29th would pass by; moreover, procrastination in such matters is dangerous.

In fact, if the magic is not there in Lalaji's name, the power of three, or even thirty, signatures cannot attract funds. Even great men can get money only for a good cause.

Hence, donors have merely to assure themselves about the safety of their money and its good deployment. From this point of view, nothing could possibly be said against these three persons. Moreover, every donor must rest assured that where a man like Ghanshyamdas Birla is treasurer and secretary, the accounts will be properly kept.

Having thus known the amount needed for the memorial and its guardians, the duty of every patriot and everyone desiring swaraj is clear. Everyone should contribute his share to the Fund according to his capacity. It is my request that the whole sum should be subscribed by the 29th. I am writing this article on the 27th. Though I have said that the entire sum should be subscribed by the 29th, I do not entertain great hopes about it. Hence I write this article assuming that the whole sum has not been collected by the time the reader has this article in his hands and, if my fears prove true, those who have not given their share or who have not got their neighbours to subscribe, should get that money in time and forward it to the treasurer. If anyone wants to subscribe through *Navajivan*, he can do so. His contribution will be acknowledged in *Navajivan* and it will be forwarded to the treasurer.

I hope that every man and woman will contribute his or her share to this Fund. The number of students attending schools and colleges alone is 27,00,000. If all of them donate half the amount of their monthly pocket-money and make a sacrifice of their enjoyments to that extent, they can contribute a huge sum without any effort. It will be more creditable if 5,00,000 men, women, labourers, *Antyajas* and students together donate Rs. 5 lakhs than if five or ten rich men give that amount. It is evident that our strength to win swaraj will grow

in proportion to the increase in our capacity to collect big amounts by virtue of the numerical strength of those able to pay only small sums. One need hardly say that the value of Rs. 5 lakhs received from 5 lakhs of men and women is very much greater than the same sum received from a few wealthy persons. Thus we serve two purposes in collecting funds by taking a little from many people. Hence I hope that, keeping this in mind, every volunteer will collect as much as possible from his friends and relatives.

I also hope that our *Antyaja* brethren will not forget this work. Even if they donate copper coins, they will bring credit to the memorial and to themselves. Lalaji commenced his life with service of the *Antyajias* and, till the end, he got his followers to do this work. I hope our *Antyaja* brethren will not forget this fact.

I hope no one will waste his time in commenting that if the memorial had some other object in view it would have looked better or brought in more funds. In this world nothing done by man is perfect, and there is always room left for criticism. But it will be considered improper to waste time criticizing a good work that has been commenced, or not to assist it because the memorial does not fall in line with one's ideas. It is the dharma of all those who hold that there should be an all-India memorial to Lalaji and that those who have visualized it and ask for contributions towards it are worthy men, to contribute to the best of their ability and make others do so and only afterwards engage themselves in other national activities.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-12-1928

335. TELEGRAM TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 27, 1928

APPEAL	FOR	LALAJI	MEMORIAL	ISSUED ²	SIGNED	BY
ANSARI,	MALAVIYAJI,	BIRLA.	PLEASE	ORGANIZE	COL-	
LECTIONS	TWENTYNINTH.					

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13343

¹ Identical telegrams were sent also to Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad and Jairamdas Daulatram.

² *Vide* "Appeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928.

336. LETTER TO KISHANCHAND BHATIA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 27, 1928

DEAR LALA KISHANCHAND,

Sjt. Banker has sent me a copy of your letter¹ about fixing a Lajpat Rai week for khadi hawking and collections. Nothing would please me better than to do this. But I have not the slightest desire to exploit the great name of Lalaji for khadi or anything else. I can therefore only fix the week if all the members of the Servants of the People Society sincerely desire and feel as Lalaji felt during the recent months that khadi should be the centre of all constructive work in terms of millions. I therefore had not even dreamt about doing anything in the name of Lalaji. But now that you have mentioned it and Dr. Gopichand approves of your suggestion, I discussed it somewhat with Lala Jagannath. You may show this letter to the other members of the Society and if they all sincerely desire the fixing of a week for khadi propaganda and if they will make khadi the central activity in future, I will gladly fix the week. If they have no such faith, I am sure it will be wrong to adopt your proposal. Let khadi wait for the psychological moment which must arrive some day, if even some of those who are now in charge of khadi organizations in various parts of the country have a living faith in khadi are sincere and are devoting all their spare energy to its success.²

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA KISHANCHAND BHATIA
A. I. S. A., PUNJAB BRANCH
ADAMPUR DOABA (JULLUNDUR)

From a photostat: S.N. 13344

¹ Dated November 21, 1928

² A copy of this was forwarded to the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ahmedabad, for information with reference to his letter No. 748 of November 24, 1928.

337. LETTER TO ACHYUTANANDA PUROHIT

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do propose to come to Sambalpur on my way to Calcutta.¹ I hope that you will organize a good khadi demonstration and a good collection for the All-India Spinners' Association.

I am unable just now to fix the exact date, but it will be somewhere near the 20th December and I shall try to give you two days—the day on which I reach there and the next day.

I remember your telling me how I can reach there, but I shall thank you to let me have the timings again.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. ACHYUTANANDA PUROHIT, PLEADER

SAMBALPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13735

¹ The addressee had requested Gandhiji to visit Sambalpur as it had been left out during the Utkal tour in December 1927.

338. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 27, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

I saw your letter to Mahadev. Mahadev is not with me as he had to be in Bardoli with reference to the Bardoli Inquiry. There is no change in my eating periods. Food also almost remains the same. I have cut down the quantity of milk, but no elaborate precautions should be taken to ensure the quantity of goat's milk or fruit. The less expense undergone about personal comfort the better pleased I shall be. Every anna spent on such things is an anna lost to the poor. Let the Sambalpur Committee also know this working of my mind.

I have discovered that the letter I thought I had sent, after all never went to you. I am now trying to have it translated and forwarded to you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13736

339. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 27, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. I note what you say about Baidyanathji.

Rajendra Babu did send a reply to the *Chronicle* about Anil Babu's writings. They may not have any effect on your side, but in Bombay they might have some effect, especially as the *Chronicle* gave his contribution a place of honour. But I quite agree with you that generally all these superfluous writings betraying hostility may be safely ignored.

With me confusion is getting worse confounded with regard to the Exhibition. Motilalji writes to me that the Committee has accepted my view of what an Exhibition should be. But I have heard nothing from Dr. Bidhan. I therefore telegraphed to him yesterday¹ and I am now waiting for his reply. The cutting you sent me is certainly bad.

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Dr. B. C. Roy", 26-11-1928.

I am sorry about Krishnadas. Tell him he must be well and strong. When I come to Calcutta I want to see him in good health.

The progress you have made in the common kitchen is quite encouraging.

We have now installed our own bakery in the Ashram. You will remember I talked to you about it. The bread turned out is extremely good and has proved popular and saved much time, labour and fuel. Making chapatis occupied the best part of the time of the workers in the kitchen. Chapatis still remain, but bread has supplemented them with many. All eat bread only for breakfast and the evening meal. For the mid-day meal many still take chapatis.

I hope Hemprabhadevi is keeping well and cheerful. Tarini must really build up his shattered body.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1599

340. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

November 27, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I have both your letters. I was indeed afraid that you would get fever. See that you do not get it again. It would help if you take *chiretta* or Sudarshan powder regularly; or else you may take quinine from time to time and also Kuhne baths. Ba told me today that, after you had recovered, you used to eat cashew nuts. If this is true, it would make me unhappy. I expect you to control your palate. You will be a good girl if you give up the habit of eating things every now and then.

You thought it strange that you had to obtain permission from two or three persons. The Secretary's permission should of course be obtained. But it is also necessary to obtain the permission of the head of the department in which you are working. In a big institution, the Secretary cannot take upon himself the responsibility of granting leave to everyone. The application for leave should be made to him through the head of the department concerned. Anyone who understands his or her responsibility towards the institution will apply for leave only if circumstances are convenient. I did not say all this to you to put you off. I thought you had immediately grasped my point. I am pained to know that you had not, and that you still think that I was putting you off. Now that I tell you that I was not trying to put you

off, you will feel surprised and think the procedure rather strange.

Anyone who wants to do all work in love has no choice but to reduce himself or herself to zero. How often have I explained this to you? Love is the utmost depth of humility. Today I stop this discussion here.

Ba is worrying about Manu. Who will help her now to wash and dress her hair and to wash her clothes? She goes on asking these and no end of similar questions. I have told her that I am sure you are looking after these things either by yourself or with somebody's help.

Sarojini Devi must be doing her share of work. Does she remain cheerful?

A handkerchief of mine is left behind there. Prabhavati probably knows where it is. Inquire about it. If you get hold of it, keep it somewhere carefully.

I will not like it if you let your health suffer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1854

341. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

November 27, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I got both your letters. Chi. Santok cannot be given any money for the grain she is returning. That grain and whatever else she has in her possession is the property of the Ashram. Explain this patiently to Chi. Rukhi, etc., or ask Narandas to do that. If truth is combined with love, your decision will always be correct. But do not fail in your duty out of fear of committing mistakes.

The persons who had been working with Narandas are leaving him one by one. Put others in their place, if necessary. It is essential that you two should work in complete harmony. How this can be brought about is for you to consider.

Gangabehn never told me what you write to me concerning . . . behn¹. I am shocked by what you write. Despite that, however, we should continue to serve her in a disinterested spirit. If Shripatrao stays on, it would be very good indeed. I intend to write about milk

¹ The names are omitted in the source.

tomorrow. I am trying today to secure ghee. So far nothing has been fixed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 12-3

342. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday [November 27, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I don't have time today to write at length. I was very much pained to read about the affair concerning. . . ² My pain is all superficial, so it has not disturbed me in my work. All the same, the thing fills me with anguish. I have written a letter to him. Probably he will show it to you.

More in the next letter.

You should not lose courage. Acquit yourself well in the post you have accepted. May God help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 64-5

343. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 27, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have both your letters. Do go to Dwarka if you wish to. Do not at all take to heart my absence. Some day this body is bound to leave for ever. Why be distressed over separation from it? We should find happiness in devotion to a cause for which our passing away would have a meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3341

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² *ibid*

344. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your telegram.¹ I sent the following reply:

“Your wire. Having read Exhibition advertisement see great conflict our ideals. Would therefore urge you go your way leaving me alone.—Gandhi”

Before your telegram was received, early in the morning today I dictated a letter to Pandit Motilalji from which I extract the enclosed apposite paragraph.

There remains very little for me to add to it. I have seen the advertisement sheet about which I would like to say one word. It contains no restrictions as to exhibits. It offers among other items a riotous worship of goddess Vani. The Exhibition authorities are said to have approached all local Governments for exhibits. Apart from this indiscriminate permission for all and sundry exhibits, I am unable to endorse the approach to local Governments one of which only the other day dealt shamelessly by one of the bravest sons of India and which had the temerity to bolster up the unprovoked assault. Nor am I in a mood to go in for enchanting music and riotous displays. But I have no business to interfere with your programme. You are the best judges of what is good for the nation from your own standpoint. Only I should find myself absolutely lonely in that Exhibition. There is a clear clash of ideals. I do not expect through correspondence to convert you nor will you expect to convert me. It is surely better therefore to leave me out of account. I would not on any account have you to deflect yourself from your course, simply for the sake of pleasing me.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13303

¹ *Vide* footnote 2 to “Telegram to Dr. B. C. Roy”, 26-11-1928.

345. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter of the 15th instant. I waited all these days for a confirmation from Dr. Bidhan Roy or Subhas, but I have none up to the time of dictating, that is, 28th morning. I wired on Monday to Dr. Bidhan. There is no reply. Meanwhile I have seen a cutting which I send you herewith. They are evidently inviting local Governments' co-operation. Evidently now all distinction has vanished and the Exhibition will be a more spectacular display than an instructive effort designed to educate the poor cultivator and the other public. There is a gratuitous mention there of khadi. But there is no room in this Exhibition for me or khadi in the real sense. Evidently it will not exclude either foreign cloth or foreign anything. I cannot say I am not grieved over this, but I do not want you to carry the matter any further. I write this letter merely for your information. I do not seek your intervention for a mechanical change of opinion or for a mechanical respect for my wishes. I must cut my way through these grievous difficulties with patient toil. After all Dr. Bidhan and Subhas represent a definite school of thought. Their opinion is entitled to my respect as I expect theirs for my own. That which is in the interest of the people will prevail in the long run. Who can decide beforehand which is the correct opinion in terms of the multitude?

I see you are having no end of difficulties with Mussalman friends regarding your report. But I see you are unravelling the tangle with consummate patience and tact. May your great effort be crowned with full success.

From your note I gather that the Convention will meet not on the 22nd December but on the 26th, 27th and 28th, the dates on which the Muslim League is to meet. Or, am I to understand that the Convention will formally meet on the 22nd and continue its session till the 28th? I do not see the slip referred to in the note. Hence the little confusion in my mind. Surely, you do not want me to be in Calcutta all these days.

From our conversation at Sabarmati I had understood that you would want me for the Congress and not the Convention. For myself I do not know what possible service I can render at the Convention. There is utter confusion in my mind created by the kaleidoscopic scenes going on before one in the country. All I can say is that I do not envy your position. But I know you are as much at home with

such things as I am with the charkha. And if you will agree to the arrangement, I should be content to remain at the wheel and leave you to the joys of meandering through the intricate paths of diplomacy. But my fate is in your hands until you give your decision. Meanwhile I drink in the peace and the silence that Jannalaji has provided for me in Wardha.

You will have seen the appeal about Lalaji Memorial. After much telegraphing to the Punjab friends, I decided that there should be no more signatures to the Memorial than the three that have appeared. It would have taken a long time to have got the consent of all the men who were mentioned as signatories. They insisted upon at least your and my name appearing together with the three. But I vetoed the proposal anticipating your approval of the veto. You will however please do whatever you can for the Fund, due regard being had to your taxing appointments.

I see that you have to begin with the first letter of the alphabet about Kamala's treatment. I am glad, however, that she will be in Dr. Bidhan's capable hands, and he will have Sir Nilratan at his beck and call in case of emergency.

Yours sincerely,

ENCL. 1

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

PS.

Since dictating this I got Dr. Bidhan's wire to which I have sent the enclosed letter¹.

From a photostat: S.N. 13302

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

346. LETTER TO T. K. SRINIVASAN¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,²

November 28, 1928

MY DEAR SRINIVASAN,

I have your letter. I do not propose to deal with it in the pages of *Young India* for I am sure no one else is likely to draw the deduction that you and your sister seem to have drawn from my writings. The whole of the case for a humanitarian ending of a creature's life is based upon the assumption that whether belonging to the human species or a lower order if they had consciousness such a creature would not wish to live as I had assumed the calf would not in the circumstances in which it was placed and that there was no other service possible. In your sister's case you and many others are at her beck and call and you all consider it, and that rightly, a privilege to render what service you can and relieve her pain be it ever so little. Her momentary wish to have her life put an end to was purely philanthropic out of regard for the convenience of her nurses. She was wrong in her reasoning. What she considered was an inconvenience to her nurses was a privilege, or should be, in the latter's estimation. And if she desired death, the nurses could not comply with her desire, for that compliance would be tantamount to shirking of an obvious duty.

The question of karma does not arise at all in either case. This has been repeatedly explained in the pages of *Young India*. If we were to bring in the law of karma in such matters, we would put an end to all effort. The working of the law of karma is an incessant, ever-going process; whereas you and your sister evidently assumed that certain actions were set in motion and that the motion in that straight direction continued uninterrupted without the operation of any further actions coming into play. The fact indeed is that every activity in nature is constantly interfering with the law of karma. Such

¹ In reply to his letter dated November 21, 1928, which read: "My sister aged 20 who is suffering from paralytic attack has had all kinds of treatment from various medical experts. No doctor has yet given hope of recovery. . . . She happened to be near me when I was reading your article on the killing of the Ashram calf. She said in an appealing tone, 'Will you allow me to end my life? . . .' She paused for a while, and after some reconsideration said, 'Oh, how can I escape from my karma? I cannot avoid it; I can only postpone it by death. I suppose, then, Gandhiji is not right in killing the calf.' . . . May I request you to consider the matter in *Young India* as I believe that many others may share the same opinion" (S.N. 13729).

² Permanent address

interference is inherent in the law. For the law is not a dead, rigid, inert thing, but it is an ever-living, ever-growing mighty force.

Yours sincerely

SJT. T. K. SRINIVASAN

SAKTI NILAYAM, PALAIYUR, Via MUTHUPET

From a photostat: S.N. 13307

347. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 28, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL ,

I had your long telegram and now I have your long letter redirected to me from Sabarmati. It is for that reason perhaps that I miss *The Tribune* cutting which I have not yet seen. Lala Jagannath tells me he sent no telegram to *The Tribune* or any other paper. Without knowing the contents of the cutting it is difficult for me to say anything more.

About the memorial you will have seen the appeal¹ signed by Dr. Ansari, Pandit Malaviyaji and Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla. I do not think that it is possible to support the Congress out of these funds. Nor should any appeal in the name of a great person be made on behalf of Provincial Congress. Each organization must really stand on its own merits and command the confidence of monied men in its own province. Anyway that is my firm conviction. I do not know what view the signatories will take of your proposal. It comes upon me as a surprise. The only way in which, in my opinion, these funds should be utilized is first to put Lalaji's own creation—the Society—on a firm footing and support such political activities of his, which have an all-India character. There may be other provincial or sectional memorials, but even these can't include the support of a growing and varied organization like a Provincial Congress Committee.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL

DIWAN BHAWAN, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13345

¹ *Vide* "Appeal for Lajpat Rai Memorial Fund", 26-11-1928.

348. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 28, 1928

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I had your wire as also your letter. I have not been writing to you as I had no time. You will see from *Young India*¹ that I have noticed your telegram and made suitable comments upon it. Your telegram is excellent if it fulfils the condition I have laid down in my note in *Young India*. My caution was necessary because, if my recollection serves me right, in the communication that I had from you some months ago during Lalaji's lifetime, you had represented yourself as the injured party. If you still have that sense of injury, your telegram is meaningless. What we want at this critical period in our history is not a mechanical unity, that is a superfluous thing, but a heart unity which can't break under any strain. No other unity, no patched up truce, will answer our purpose when a supreme heroic effort is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

DR. SATYAPAL
42 NISBET ROAD, LAHORE
From a photostat: S.N. 13346

349. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,²
November 28, 1928

I enclose herewith Rev. Gordon's letter. The lame young man whom he mentions is evidently otherwise a capable man. Can you take him up? He won't be a burden and it will be a good thing if we can accommodate him. The Committee at Sabarmati was afraid to have him and as Mr. Gordon says the young man could not have been happy either not knowing Hindi. If you think that he can be taken please write to Rev. Gordon.

I expect to see you here next month. You will do whatever is

¹ *Vide* "Good if True," 29-11-1928.

² Permanent address

possible regarding the Lalaji Memorial. You will have seen the appointment of the new Agent General¹. No comment is necessary.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

GANDHI ASHRAM, TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 13738

350. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 28, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. I shall be sorry indeed if you have to enter the Municipality again, unless you enter it on condition of perfect obedience being rendered to you. If you have to go in for the purpose of settling disputes, it is not worth while. My conviction is that you cannot combine all-India work with solid municipal work. Solid municipal work is a thing complete in itself and requires all the energy that a man can give it and I would not like your work to be anything but solid.

I was to have gone to Mysore to attend the Christian Convention. That was the hope I had given to friends during the middle of the year, but I informed them about a month ago that my going was impossible, if I was to have any rest at all.

The news you had given me about Kamala is bad. I like the idea of her being under treatment in Calcutta. She will have there the best medical advice possible.

I do hope that you will find time to attend the meeting here.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 13739

¹ K. V. Reddi; *vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

351. LETTER TO SARSILAL SARKAR¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,²

November 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the booklet³ for which I thank you. If you knew how pressed I am for time, you would not ask me to read anything outside my line of work.

I hope you do not want me to develop further the theme of the chanting of Ramanama and the so-called autobiographical chapters I am writing.

Could you please send me a brief summary, if not a translation, of the Poet's letter⁴ referred to in your letter? I am sorry to say that it has escaped my attention as I must confess to my shame I do not read Bengali.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARSILAL SARKAR

177 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD

SHYAMBAZAR P.O., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13740

352. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, LATENT LIGHT CULTURE

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

November 28, 1928

THE PRESIDENT

LATENT LIGHT CULTURE, TINNEVELLY

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry that I have not yet been able to reach your book and now that I am again on the move I do not know when I shall be able to look at it. I would really not trouble you to send me the lessons that you have kindly offered to send. I shall have no time to read them. And I do not think that the other members of

¹ In reply to his letter dated November 19, 1928

² Permanent address

³ On Tagore's poems

⁴ On charkha

the Ashram, busy as they are, will have much time at their disposal to tackle new things.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13741

353. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

November 28, 1928

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have shown your letter to Jamnalalji. He would prefer that you should join the Gandhi Seva Sangh. To me it is the same either way. You certainly have the right to draw money from the Ashram, but Jamnalalji thinks that if you come over to the (Gandhi Seva) Sangh, you will be of some help in shaping it. I see only one difficulty in this. If you join the Sangh you should attend the one or two meetings of the Sangh which take place every year. If your health can stand that strain, then there is no harm in joining. From this point of view, the decision will have to be yours. Do not think of any other difficulties. That is, if you can undertake a little travelling occasionally, do join the Sangh. Your activities there will continue as at present. It will mean that you will continue to belong to the Ashram, but will also, in addition, be a member of the Sangh. After I hear from you either by letter or wire I will write to Jamnalalji's firm to arrange about the money.

Tara and Shanti are here at present. I met Nanabhai on the way. I have asked him not even to come here. His health is bad indeed.

I have written to Bhai Karsandas about Surajbehn. I had expected her to be much more patient.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10709. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

354. LETTER TO BALBIR TYAGI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,¹
Wednesday [November 28, 1928]²

CHI. BALBIR,

You should have sent me a letter. Why haven't you written? You should write at least once a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6635

355. WHO SHOULD WEEP?

I have before me notes of Acharya Kripalani's speech delivered at Jabalpur at a public meeting from which I take the following striking extracts³ to show what the British people have lost through Lalaji's death. Though the vast majority of them are today ignorant of Lalaji's genuine friendship towards them, a day will come when they will realize what service patriots like Lalaji have rendered to them.

But there is another party which should participate with us today in this our immense loss though it may be unconscious of what it has lost. Our rulers have a vast empire at stake. And in Lalaji they have lost a friend true and sincere, a friend who helped them even every time that he was punished and insulted by blind and intoxicated authority.

It was in the Partition agitation days that Lalaji was deported without trial by the Government and yet when he returned he resisted the overtures of the so-called extreme wing of the Congress politicians. He helped the Moderates headed by Phirozeshah and Gokhale. Though he was injured the most yet he turned the left cheek to the nominal Christians who no more remember the virtues of their Master. . . .

Once more during the Non-co-operation movement he was sent to jail on a charge which could not bear the light of law and justice. But when he was discharged from jail he again helped his persecutors. He pleaded for entry into the Councils for what is called discriminate support.

. . . Well therefore might the British people weep, and weep they would were

¹ Permanent address

² From the printed letter-head it is evident that this letter was written in 1928. As Balbir lived in Sabarmati Ashram, *vide* "Letter to Abhay Sharma", 11-11-1928, Gandhiji must have written this after reaching Wardha on November 24. Wednesday following this fell on this date.

³ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

they not dazzled and blinded by the pride of power.

If even after the departure of such trusty Indian friends, tried and true, the Englishmen persist in their obstinacy, a time may come when the Indian generations to be will vow eternal enmity to England. It may even be the kind of enmity that Christians vowed and carried out through centuries against the Jews for the Christ who was crucified. It is quite possible that their domination may come to be viewed as a crucifixion of a whole nation and might rouse the worst passions of the generations yet unborn. Let therefore the Empire take thought and take heed, make up while yet there is time for the night cometh when the die will have been cast and retreat and compromise will be out of the question.

Young India, 29-11-1928

356. *LALAJI MEMORIAL*

I invite the attention of readers to the appeal for five lakhs issued over the signatures of Dr. Ansari, Pandit Malaviyaji and Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla. Signatures have been purposely restricted to those only without whose signatures no memorial can be considered truly national. There was great difficulty in choosing other names. Nor was there time enough to consult all the parties whose names should appear, if some of them might. After all if the prestige of Lalaji's name is not enough to induce the public to subscribe liberally, no names however many or distinguished they may be are likely to fetch subscriptions. The only assurance therefore the public need have in respect of memorials such as this is that the appeal must be from those whose names are a guarantee of good faith and honest administration. The three signatories are more than ample guarantee of these essentials.

I hope that the response will be quick and generous. It is to be wished that all those who have come under Lalaji's benign influence will send in their mite. The Memorial will gain in weight for small subscriptions making up the total of five lakhs. If we can collect five lakhs from five lakhs men and women, this collection by itself will be substantial propaganda for swaraj. And if the minimum sum fixed by the signatories to the appeal is made up principally of small subscriptions, no pressure will be felt by anyone during these hard times. If monied men have a special duty in such matters, the others are not on that account absolved from their duty of contributing according to their ability.

I suggest therefore to the various associations and societies that they make immediate collections from all on their rolls or under their influence. We have at least 27,00,000 students in high schools and

colleges. They can always save from their pocket money enough to make a very substantial sum. Nor should the suppressed classes lag behind in tendering their quota.

We often waste time and energy in debating and wrangling over a multitude of suggestions and rehearse many possible improvements. Let such critics remember that perfection is not possible in human undertakings. Let us therefore try to do well things even though we may think of better things so long as what is presented to us for acceptance is not open to any fatal objection and especially when it comes from tried and trusted leaders.

Any subscriptions sent to the *Young India* office will be acknowledged in these columns.

Young India, 29-11-1928

357. GOOD IF TRUE

Dr. Satyapal sent me on 22nd November, 1928, the following telegram:

Lala Lajpat Rai's death causes irreparable loss to Punjab. I offer my most humble and affectionate salutations to the great departed leader at this deplorable and critical juncture. I on my behalf and of other friends who differed from Lalaji assure friends who were offended for differing from Lalaji that we hereby sink all differences and resolve starting with a clean slate. We bear no ill will, we have no prejudice and we offer our hearty co-operation in all political movements started by Lalaji and we place ourselves unreservedly at the disposal of such friends. We offer hearty invitation to all these friends who have remained away from the Congress to join hands with us vigorously to pursue the campaign of swaraj, for which Lalaji lived and died. Henceforth in sacred memory of Lalaji we resolve to present a united front, even if it be possible by our complete surrender.

It reflects great credit upon its authors, if the sentiments expressed in the telegram are heartfelt. I am obliged to utter this note of warning because I have known so many such deathbed repentances that one is never sure whether they are heartfelt or whether they are due to the impulse of the moment, or what is worse, outward pressure. The authors will never be able to bury the hatchet if inside their hearts they feel that their opposition to Lalaji was justified and warranted by circumstances and dictated by no selfish consideration or other unworthy motives but by the purest patriotism. If such was the case there would be no cause for repentance. One can only be just to the memory of a dead man, one cannot wipe from one's memory the wrong he might have really done. Repentance presupposes conviction

of one's own error. If then the authors feel that on the whole they wronged Lalaji in his lifetime or that the motive for their opposition was mixed then the repentance is genuine and should last. Subject to this reservation, I tender my congratulations to Dr. Satyapal and his companions on this patriotic message and hope that there would be a strong, sustained and united effort in the Punjab to carry on the mission bequeathed by Lalaji. In many respects it is possible for the Punjab to give the lead to the whole of India, if only the Punjab wills it, and if party feeling and communalism disappear in that land of five rivers. If the Punjab Press, instead of indulging in vituperation and innuendoes as a portion of it does, will but educate public opinion along right lines, I have no doubt that the rest of India will follow. Nothing can be a greater monument to the memory of Lalaji than that the Punjab should lead all India along the right path.

Young India, 29-11-1928

358. 'A BLOT ON BOMBAY'

Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai of Ghatkopar Sarvajanik Jivadaya Khatun has sent to the President, Municipal Corporation, the following reasoned letter on the question of milk supply to Bombay:¹

Bombay has been called Bombay the beautiful. If Bombay means merely Malabar Hill and Chowpati and beauty is to be referred only to the exterior, then Bombay is certainly beautiful. But if the heart of Bombay is penetrated, like most of our cities it is ugly both in appearance and reality. The indifference of city fathers to the milk supply of their city is truly criminal and the facts carefully compiled in the foregoing letter do constitute a "blot" on Bombay the beautiful. But it seems to me to be useless merely to blame the members of the Municipality. They are after all what the voters make them. If Bombay is to have a cheap supply of pure milk the education of the voters should be undertaken on a wide scale. They should be taught never to vote for any candidate who does not pledge himself to secure a proper milk supply for the city in the quickest possible time. In the language of Blatchford milk should be treated like postage stamps. It should not be left to private enterprise but should be the first care of every municipality.

Young India, 29-11-1928

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had quoted authoritative opinions explaining that high price of milk was due to the faulty system of stabling animals in the heart of the city, their 'costly feeding' and their 'premature slaughter'.

359. HAND-SPINNING IN MYSORE

No State in India has so systematically encouraged hand-spinning as the State of Mysore. I have before me a copy of the note prepared by Sjt. G. Ranganatha Rao Sahib, the Director of Industries in Mysore, for submission to the State Sub-committee "constituted to consider the question of hand-spinning," I give the note¹ below in full:

I congratulate the Director and the Sub-committee on the thoroughness with which they are handling this very important national supplementary cottage industry. Naturally the Director is cautious in his note. Equally naturally every step taken in organizing hand-spinning is being taken with deliberation and due thought. The result is that even from the very commencement the Department has been able to avoid loss on capital. The Department did not disdain to profit by the labours of the All-India Spinners' Association or to accept the technical assistance offered by it. It is quite clear from the report that the field to be covered by the wheel is vast enough to engage the attention of many workers in the field. I hope that the experiments that are being carried on to perfect a village carding machine will succeed. The machine to be of value will have to be such as to be capable of being worked by the villagers. My own humble opinion is that it is not possible to improve upon the carding-bow now in use in our villages. The Technical Department of the All-India Spinners' Association tried to introduce small changes in the original bow, but the foundation seems to be incapable of alteration, if we bear in mind the purpose for which the bow is intended. What is more, if the cotton to be carded is good, well-picked and well-cleaned, carding with the bow becomes an incredibly easy, simple and quick process and capable of being undertaken by even delicately built men and women. And my own experience is that no more than five minutes need be given to carding and sliver-making for an hour's spinning of thirty counts. Half a *tola* of thirty counts gives 320 yards, fine average speed for a good spinner. To card half a *tola* of cotton will not require more than five minutes for a tolerably good carder. And if the thousand spinners whom the Director mentions could be coaxed to learn carding, they could prepare their own slivers and add a little more to their earning per hour, because it will be possible to give spinners who are their own carders a little more wage than to those who spin with slivers prepared for them.

¹ Not reproduced here. It described an attempt in village Badanval "to test by intensive work, the practicability of introducing hand-spinning as a subsidiary occupation to our agriculturists".

Whilst tendering my congratulations to the Mysore State upon its zeal on behalf of the poorest *raiya*s, I venture to remind the well-to-do citizens of Mysore and also the officials that khadi will not find an abiding place in the homes of the people of Mysore unless these two classes adopt khadi for their own wear. They now know that it is possible to get as fine khadi as they wish to possess. Let them not confuse the minds of the unsophisticated villagers by leading them to think that the so-called higher classes are not prepared to practise what they preach. Let them remember the words of the *Bhagavad Gita*:

The simple folk imitate the action (not the speech) of excellent men.¹

Young India, 29-11-1928

360. MORE CONDOLENCES OVERSEAS

The following cablegrams have been received from the Kathiawar Arya Mandal and the Saurashtra Hindu Association, Durban, and the Indian Union, Glasgow University, respectively:²

Young India, 29-11-1928

361. LETTER TO J. KRISHNAMURTI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

November 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter³ for which I thank you. I hope that you are completely restored. It will certainly give me much pleasure to see you whenever you can find the time. I am in Wardha up to the 20th December at least, then I shall be in Calcutta for about a week and then I hope to find myself in Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. KRISHNAMURTI

C/O R. D. MORARJI, ESQ.

VASANT VIHAR, MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13006

¹ III. 21

² These are not reproduced here; all these organizations had sent condolences on the death of Lajpat Rai.

³ Dated November 22, 1928, which read: "I was so greatly looking forward to seeing you . . . but most unfortunately I have had to cancel my whole tour on account of my having a bad cold. . . . I hope I may have the pleasure of meeting you soon."

362. *LETTER TO M. K. GOVINDA PILLAI
& WIJNANA CHANDRA SEN*

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 29, 1928

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter. Please give me your respective ages, whether you are married, whether you have parents, whether you know any other language beyond Malayalam, what training you have received in English and where you were trained. What certificate does the head of your institution give you? And you should send all the other particulars which I should know.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. K. GOVINDA PILLAI
SJT. WIJNANA CHANDRA SEN
ARYA SAMAJ, KOTTAYAM (TRAVANCORE)

From a photostat: S.N. 13008

363. *LETTER TO KANNAYIRAM PILLAI*

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

As promised in my last letter to you, I made enquiries and I am now satisfied that in mentioning certain depots there was no question of favouritism. Only those depots were mentioned where large sales were expected. The leaflet was circulated only in the places which were on the list. There was no question of slighting private merchants. The Charkha Sangh Vastralaya does sell in retail full dhotis and pieces. You should really discuss your grievances with Sjt. Varadachari with and under whom you are working.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KANNAYIRAM PILLAI
TAMIL NAD KHADI VASTRALAYA, TIRUPPUR (S. INDIA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13292

364. LETTER TO HANNA LAZAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
November 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very touching letter. I am glad that you have given me your confidence. It is very difficult for me to guide you from this distance without knowing full circumstances. But, generally speaking, I would say 'no divorce'. But if your temperaments are incompatible, you should live in voluntary separation.

In any case, I hope you will have mental peace.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HANNA LAZAR

WEST BANK, VICTORIA STREET, OUDTOBAARA, C. P.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13743

365. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 29, 1928

I have your cable redirected to me from Sabarmati. It was received on the 26th. At first I found it difficult to understand it. I thought you did not know anything about Lalaji's death. But then I saw that you had alarming telegrams about Lalaji's death being due to the injuries received. My own opinion is that the physical injury was not serious, though, having been received in the region of the heart, it might have proved fatal. And the injuries would have been very serious had it not been for the intervention of friends who surrounded him bravely and received the blows themselves. But there is no doubt that Lalaji received a nervous shock from which he never completely recovered. All his writings, all his speeches after the incident are eloquent proof of my statement. Government's indifference and elaborate statement summarily dismissing Lalaji's challenge ignoring even Lalaji's name added fuel to the fire that was raging in his breast. He did not feel so much the personal wrong as the wrong done through him to the whole nation. The prostration of the people made the insult all the more galling. You will see in the pages of *Young India* the appeal issued for a national Memorial for Lalaji. Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla has started it with a handsome donation of Rs. 15,000. I am hoping that the appeal will meet with generous response.

I am in Wardha at least up to the 20th December. I shall have to

be in Calcutta for a few days. Then I want to go back to Sabarmati. I have not the courage yet to bury myself there. Somehow or other I feel that I must go out for a while and then there is the often postponed European visit. If you have altered your views and think that I should not visit Europe, you will cable so. Your negative decision would be final for me. If you mean yes, you need not cable, because there may be many things in spite of my wish to go to Europe that may prevent me. The going therefore will take its own course.

I enclose herewith copy of a letter received from the Macmillan Company. Having got the copyright, they evidently want the pound of flesh. I wish I had not entered into this. I entered into it because of Rev. Holmes. But it is all right. Perhaps they will give the permission to you. I shouldn't mind if they would only publish the *Autobiography* in volumes. I have no notion when the whole thing will be finished, even though I am omitting many important events and trying to hurry on to the Non-co-operation days. I want to break off after the Special Session at Calcutta, because the events are too fresh and there are so many contemporaries whom I must describe, if I am to write further. I feel too that it would be advisable for me to stop at that stage for thenceforward my life has been too public. Therefore there is no need for further elucidation. And then of course there is *Young India*, a clear mirror through which anybody who cares can look at me.

Mahadev I had to leave at Bardoli this time because of the Bardoli Inquiry which is getting on quite nicely.

I hope you are doing quite well.

I have received your article though belated on Gopabandhu Babu. You will of course send me your reminiscences of Lalaji.

I have your correction about Miss Mayo. It will go in the forthcoming issue of *Young India*.¹

Bristol Times cutting is shocking, but such is modern journalism and such is also the notion about truth of fliers through the air !

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

112 GOWER STREET, LONDON W.C. I

From a photostat: S.N. 15099

¹ Published on December 6, 1928; it read: "I regret that an inaccuracy came unawares into my first article on Miss Mayo's book about India. I had been informed by an authority, on whom I implicitly relied, that Miss Mayo had been 'employed' to write a book for propaganda purposes just after the War. I find now that the word 'employed', which implied some monetary payment, was inaccurate and I wish to withdraw it with an apology."

366. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 29, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

If the meaning you read in 'win over Narandas'¹ is correct, I admit that it should hurt you. But you should never have read that meaning in the remark. How can you know the context in which it was made? It was in continuation of a conversation with Chhaganlal. It is plain that there are reserves between you two. Chhaganlal is the Secretary. He knows his weakness, and I know it too. If at all, I should advise him. The remark 'win over Narandas' was intended to suggest to him that it was his duty to try to understand you, to listen to your point of view and to accommodate himself to you. It does not imply any defect in you. If I had wished to imply any defect in you, I would not have said 'win over'. Instead, I would have said 'reform Narandas through love', or something to that effect, and I would also have first drawn your attention to your defect. I have observed no such defect in you and, therefore, there was no question of my drawing your attention to it. I certainly do not wish that you should remain silent or should not draw attention to any errors you may observe. If you fail to draw attention to them, I would blame you for that. Do you understand my meaning now? Please let me know if there is any other point which requires to be clarified. You can show this letter to Chhaganlal. I think it would be better if you do so. But I leave it to you to decide whether or not you should.

I wish to make a few inquiries about Chalala². I shall, therefore, write about it afterwards.

Pass on the accompanying letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How is Purushottam? Did he derive any benefit from Jivan³?
How is Jamna?

From Gujarati: C.W. 7722. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhari

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 23-11-1928.

² A centre of constructive work in Saurashtra

³ An Ayurvedic tonic

367. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Thursday, November 29, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I am sure you have sent the accompanying papers to me through some mistake. I often receive papers like these which need not have been sent to me.

In your letter you make no suggestion concerning Shankerlal's letter. Should I get another resolution passed here?

I will inquire a little further into the Chalala affair and then write to you. I return with this the letters of . . . behn¹ and . . .lal². It is certainly a painful chapter.

The reason why Mahavir, Durga and Maitri fall ill frequently is nothing but their food.

I wanted to write to you about myself when I had leisure. There is no trace of impatience in the experiments I am making. It was all along my intention to experiment with the use of oil after coming here. I had not been taking fruit even when I was there. Even then I ate nothing but fruits during the journey. Here, too, I do not exclude fruits altogether.

Today being Lalaji Day, and for other reasons, I have eaten only fruits. The only material difference is that I take no milk.

I naturally feel sometimes that I should compete with all of you. But you have no reason to feel worried about this. No one here feels worried. Everyone knows that I will attempt nothing beyond my strength. It is many years since I overcame the attachment to life; this is not a new thing.

It is enough that you keep on striving. You should never worry that you will not be able to attain the level which you say I have done. It is easy enough to attain that level; in any matter in which you find it difficult to do so, put yourself in God's hand. If you stop worrying, your efforts will succeed better. If you lack fitness for anything, you will acquire it by patiently striving for it. If even after this, you have any questions to ask me, ask them.

The problem of Chi. Santok and Keshu is difficult. I have been thinking what to do. At any rate, this sum cannot be paid against wheat.³ I will write about this later.

¹ The names are omitted in the source.

² *ibid*

³ *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 27-11-1928.

You have done well in relieving Somabhai. He cannot be continued for six months, or even for one month.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 13-4

368. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[NOVEMBER 29, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have finished the letter to be read in the presence of everyone. Since you have succeeded in obtaining cow's ghee, I now wish to take no hasty step.

On a day such as Lalaji Memorial Day, may we not reckon the wages for all forms of labour at the same rate? It would be better to apply this rule to items where it can be easily applied. For that purpose, a register such as I have suggested should be maintained. That is, the wage per hour should be fixed at one or three-quarters of an anna, and the register should show the quantum of work per hour for each kind of labour. For instance, for spinning 300 yards per hour, or any other figure that you may fix, and similarly for grinding grain, weaving, digging, cleaning grain, cleaning land, weaving *Pati*², carpentry, etc., calculation would become easy if we had such a table. Everyone maintains a diary, so that we can count up the value of everyone's work for our information. My point is that, if we accept the principle I have suggested, we can thus scientifically examine its working.

I have been thinking about Krishnamaiyadevi. You will have to play a prominent part in this matter. You should speak to her if she shirks work or does anything improper.

It is necessary that you should write to me about what you hear concerning Shardabehn. Sometimes the stories we hear are false. What is the nature of Gangabehn's discontent?

I like the idea that one day in the week everyone should work for a fixed number of hours. There should be no dirt anywhere in the [Udyoga] Mandir.

I shall have a talk with Mirabehn. The issues of "Mandir

¹ "Lalaji Memorial Day" mentioned in this letter fell on this date.

² Bed-tape

Samachar” for both the weeks have been got up so badly that it is impossible to read them.

I see no harm in drawing Shamalbhai’s expenses either from the Mandir or from the Vidyapith. Kaka may do what will give him better peace of mind. I believe Kaka cannot join in the experiment of living within Rs. 12 [a month]. For one thing, he is not an expert in experimenting with his body so that he can take any kind of liberty with it.

There is no letter from Bal. I was taken aback to learn what he had demanded. I was ready to be told that he had asked for something more than Rs. 12, but not as much as Rs. 20. You need not hurt him. I shall thrash out the point with him.

I understand what kind of an agreement we should have with the Spinners’ Association. I shall now write to Shankerlal. You need not worry on this account. You are also doing right in collecting opinions. Think about all aspects objectively.

Cultivate such health that you should never catch cold or any such infection.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 14-6.

369. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

WARDHA,

November 29, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter and the books sent by you. The books are being used. We now make bread in the Ashram. If you come across a simple book about making biscuits, please send it. The book on bread contains no information about making biscuits.

I am making inquiries in regard to Shri Jerajani’s brother. If you come to know about anyone else who knows bee-keeping, please let me know.

I am taking some steps in regard to Sumant. If the facts are as stated by you, I will certainly write in the papers.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4708. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

370. LETTER TO SURENDRA

November 29, 1928

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your postcard. I am pleased by your single-minded devotion to the tannery. If you become an expert in that work, you will be able to do the highest service both to the world and to human beings. Our men of dharma have taken no interest in this field at all, for modern Hindu society has committed the great sin of regarding that work as, from its very nature, tainted with *adharma*. We should atone for this sin by infusing the spirit of dharma in that work. I have been discussing the problem of cow-protection with some rich persons here. These discussions also lead me to the same conclusion. Give me from time to time a detailed description of your experiences there, so that I may gradually get the complete picture. I suppose I told you that Chhotelal had accompanied me here.

My work here is progressing satisfactorily. If you have not started keeping a diary, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3093

371. LETTER TO SITARAM PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN

WARDHA,

November 29, 1928

DEAR APPA,

You have raised a good question about the calf. We have of course to give up the fear of death as also of pain. This is true for oneself, but it cannot be applied to others. Our duty is ourselves to shed fear of death and other pains and help others when they are in pain. Thus, on the one hand we have to shed the fear of pain and on the other to follow the dharma of compassion, of relieving others of their pain. The same about death. Some pains can be relieved only through death. If we wish to shed the fear or death, we should have no hesitation in seeking or giving relief from pain through death. At any rate we should not consider it a sin. Why should we have hesitation in hastening the moment of death—that is, where the motive is to help?

Thereby we are not violating any law of nature. . .¹ Everybody who is born is sure to die. We are only changing the moment . . .²

It was necessary to turn the calf on its side and I wanted to do so too. But it was impossible without giving it more pain. So it was impossible to act on the wish. In the case of a child it is always possible to carry out such a wish. If you still do not follow my point, ask me again. Let me know if you do not receive the money from the Charkha Sangh.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/32

372. ADDRESS TO ASHRAM INMATES, WARDHA³

November 29, 1928

Our scriptures tell us that childhood, old age and death are incident only to this perishable body of ours and that man's spirit is eternal and immortal. That being so, why should we fear death? And where there is no fear of death there can be no sorrow over it either. It does not therefore behove us to shed tears over Lalaji's passing away but to emulate and copy his virtues. The central feature of his character was his burning passion for service of the motherland and he began his career with the service of the most downtrodden of his countrymen, viz., the so-called untouchables, whilst he was still a youth. It may not be given to everybody to emulate his career in the Assembly which was but a small incident in his career, but all can develop the spirit of sacrifice which ran like a continuous thread through his life. And sacrifice means self-purification. I would like you therefore on this solemn occasion to resolve to make an ever-increasing effort for self-purification. Through it you will be serving yourselves, your country and the world.

Young India, 13-12-1928

¹ Omission as in the source

² Two sentences following are unintelligible in the source.

³ From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter" under the sub-title "Lajpatrai Day", which explained: "The 29th November, the day of national mourning over the loss of Lalaji, was duly observed here. . . . The inmates of the Wardha Ashram observed the national day after the poor man's way by doing manual labour and contributing the day's wages and denying themselves a week's ration of *gud*, the only item of luxury in their gheeless menu."

373. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
November 30, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your letter. I had your speech at Cawnpore read to me. I do not see substantial difference between the Associated Press report and the report¹ you have sent me. All the terrible threats and still more terrible exaggerations that are in the English report are to be found in the Urdu report. The slavery of the Hindus, the digging out of eyes, the challenge, the unequivocal indictment against the Hindus are all there in their nakedness. If you can spare the time, I would like you to read the cutting that I sent you, or if you have destroyed it, get another copy, and you will see almost every sentence of English report in the report you have sent me. And tell me if you will still call the speaker as per English report “a cad and a very crude performer”, and, if you will do so, I would like you to tell me why and show me the difference between the English report and the Urdu in my possession.

No, the speaker at Cawnpore is not the Maulana with whom I have been so long familiar and with whom I have passed so many happy days as with a blood-brother and bosom friend. The Maulana of Cawnpore is an utter stranger to me. The Maulana I have known vowed that he was so bound to the Hindu for his help during the Khilafat agitation that he would put up with him, even if he ravished his sister, that so far as he and the Mussalmans under his influence were concerned, he was out to suffer at the hands of the Hindus who had done so well. Well, I do not ask him to suffer to the extent that he promised; but I do plead with him on bended knees to revise his Cawnpore speech, admit: that he was out of sorts and bravely apologize to his Hindu brother for wounding his feelings as the Cawnpore speech undoubtedly does. If the Hindu has been a slave of old, you are co-sharer in his slavery by ties of blood, by acceptance of indissoluble partnership. You chose in 1920 to be co-sharer with the Hindu in his virtues as well as his vices for eternity, in his strength as well as his weakness.

I would go all the way with you in accusing the Hindu of his many misdeeds; but I am unable to hold with you that he has been ever the aggressor, ever the tyrant and his Mussalman brother always the injured victim. If I had at all felt like that, you would have found me proclaiming it from the house top. But I am not going into a

¹ Which appeared in Hasrat Mohani's paper *Khilafat*, 18-11-1928

controversy with you. I simply want to tell you that, in my opinion, all your incitement is wrong, your judgment is one-sided and that the Mussalman is at least equally guilty with the Hindu, if not on the whole more so. Assuming that you will impute honesty of motive and statement to me, I would ask you to make room for doubt as to the correctness of your judgment. In your Cawnpore speech you are too terribly dogmatic and emphatic. The assumption of infallibility is unworthy of you. I ask you to disown it for friendship's sake.

One personal thing, I must correct. The Khilafat Committee did pay for a time for my expenses at your instance, not on my request, and certainly not for the reason that you state, for the simple reason that I have never travelled at Congress expense on any single occasion, even when I have done exclusively Congress work. My travelling expenses have always been borne by friends. And when I accepted your offer, I had Rs. 25,000 placed at my disposal by a common friend, whom you know, purely for my travelling as he was most anxious that I should never stint myself about these, nor draw upon any public funds for them. I had given you this information, but I agreed with you that it would be more graceful if I let you pay my travelling expenses. But in the manner in which you now put the matter, I feel inclined to offer to return the whole of these expenses with interest if you will accept them without being insulted or offended. I think that Mahadev will have somewhere a record of these expenses.

Let me also correct another grave error. The Tilak Swaraj Fund is a matter of audited record. Every pie received is accounted for in the printed accounts which have been before the public now for years. You will perhaps be painfully surprised to discover that let alone 20 lacs there are not even two lacs received from Mussalmans for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. I do not make a grievance of this, but I want you to hold truth as a sacred thing. And if you want me to produce the handsome figures of Hindus who have paid to the Khilafat coffers I shall gladly do so and perhaps it would be another surprise for you. I wish you could recall those stirring days of our joint peregrination from shop to shop where Hindus vied with one another to pay even to the Khilafat Fund as to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Do you want me to furnish you with a sample list? If am erring, I would like you to correct me not by a counter assertion but by figures. But if you have none, I want you to tender an apology not to me, not to the public, but to God for having been betrayed into a hasty but painful error.

I had the report of your version of the Cowasji Jehangir Hall meeting read to me. The conduct of the audience was disgraceful beyond words. I have always held this imitation of the West as a

degraded and degrading thing unworthy of us. This wretched imitation may yet prove our undoing. You were entitled to a respectful hearing. Above all at a condolence meeting such conduct was criminal. In spite of what I consider to be a temporary aberration on your part the meeting should have remembered your many and brilliant services to the Motherland. But here my agreement with you ends. I refuse to endorse the deduction that you have drawn in favour of your theory of universal condemnation of Hindus. A purely Mussalman audience has been known before now to behave no better. The conduct of the meeting in question was symptomatic not of Hindu mentality but of the present mentality of city Indians. You and I, Mussalmans and Hindus, have to club together to eradicate this growing evil from our midst and no to fling mud against one another. Just as you remained unmoved in the meeting so should you have remained unmoved when you reached home and found yourself surrounded by friends. You should have laughed at the incident as I have so often generously seen you laugh at such incidents and forgive contrary to my wish what you have called the pardonable indiscretions of exuberant youths. Have you not said so often, let them do so, they have been too long under slavery?

I have done. Personally if you are still your old self, I have no anxiety to see our correspondence in print.¹ But if you think, that there is nothing left for you but war to the knife, by all means publish the correspondence. But if you are still the old gentle brother that I have known you to be, then read this letter again and again if the first reading does not satisfy you. Read it with Mahomed Ali. I am in no hurry. Then lay aside all other work and both of you come down to Wardha, you with a determination still to hold me in your pocket. You will find me easy enough to carry. I am fast losing weight. But if after mature joint deliberation you cannot take any such heroic step, then publish this correspondence and spare me the painful necessity of having to make some statement to the public. And believe that, whether you feel my presence in your pocket or not, I am there. My unchangeable creed is non-violence and universal brotherhood. Therefore I repeat what I have said from a thousand platforms that mine is a unilateral partnership and therefore my partnership with you and the other Mussalmans is indissoluble. Though they may disown me a million times, I shall still be theirs when occasion demands it. May God help so that I am not found wanting.

I appreciate your decision about All-India Spinners' Associa-

¹ In his letter dated November 25 Shaukat Ali had asked: Have I your permission to publish the correspondence or a portion of it . . .", (S.N. 13733).

tion. I won't misunderstand it. Your decision is right and your resignation will be accepted. But I would expect you to come back to the Association when you feel that spinning is part of your duty not only as a nationalist but also as a Mussalman, that you owe it to the millions of your countrymen not merely because you are an Indian but equally because you are a Mussalman, that is, if my reading of Islam is correct.

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
THE CENTRAL KHILAFAT COMMISSION
SULTAN MANSIONS, DONGRI, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13744

374. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Friday [November 30, 1928]

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I had no letter from you today.

I have thought about the Chalala matter. For the present, let the work go ahead according to the budget prepared by Jaisukhlal. I mean by this that you should make the required sums available from the balance in the khadi account. These sums should be debited in the Chalala account and should be recovered from the proceeds of the sale of Amreli khadi lying with us. We would not have to pay anything if all that stock could be sold off immediately. All that I have to decide, therefore, is this: how to help Chalala so that it would not matter if it incurred a loss up to Rs. 800 during the next year. The loss should be met from the profit from Amreli khadi and not by raising the price of Chalala khadi. If you are required to undertake responsibility for anything more than this, let me know.

If you require Shripatrao's help in the Ashram, by all means ask him for it.

The inmates of the Ashram here did physical labour yesterday¹ to be able to contribute something to the Lalaji Memorial Fund and have decided to give up eating jaggery for a week from today. They were served gruel every morning containing three *tolas* of jaggery per head. Instead of jaggery, salt is being added now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14822

¹ November 29; *vide* "Address to Ashram Inmates, Wardha", 29-11-1928.

375. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

November 30, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have had a letter from you after a long time. I can forgive you everything. Certainly you need not spin nor keep a diary. I certainly observe a difference of temper between us but what does that matter? How can I expect that you should look at everything through my eyes, or that your eyes and mine should be alike? I may not give up the spinning-wheel, because I have come to regard spinning as a form of *yajna*. There are other items in our daily programme of work, and I see their results from day to day. It gives me pleasure to see them. The results of the spinning-wheel *yajna* are a matter of faith. Has anyone observed personally that our spinning ends the poverty of the poor? But my faith tells me that it does, and so I keep apart some time for the *yajna* from the other tasks of our daily programme. If I did not do so, I would regard myself guilty of the sin of theft.

About the diary, there is another reason. I keep it because it is part of the discipline of the Ashram, or to be correct, of the [Udyoga] Mandir, to do so. A diary may not be necessary for me, but it is so for others and, therefore, I would not confuse their minds by not keeping one myself.

If anything in the rule which I follow with regard to Santok is not clear to you, please bear with it to that extent. The problem has perplexed me very much indeed.

I do not suffer any hardships. The atmosphere here is very congenial for the work I am doing. I will certainly not do anything at the cost of my health. Do not jump to conclusions from any rumours you may hear. If you have any apprehensions, write to me. If I had time, I would myself write to you about everything. I am not determined to continue at any cost the experiments in which I am currently engaged. The only change I have made is giving up of milk once again. Give it up, and resume it again—this will go on, like ebb and flow alternating with each other, for, as you know, I am not at all happy that I take milk.

I have not received a specimen of the diary. Ghanshyamdas is still here, as also Jagannathji. There are daily additions to the other company.

Tell Ramdas that he should write once in a while.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11442

376. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

November 30, 1928

BHAISHRI RAMNIKLAL,

I send the accompanying cutting for you to read. Will the average Jain accept the views expressed in it? Do you know the editor of *Jain Jagat*? He has also written a pleasant letter to me.

Write to me and give me news about the health of you both.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4143

377. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 30, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the letter I wrote to you yesterday. Can we not supply every month ten to twenty pounds of yarn of between 30 and 40 counts to those women in Poona who want fine yarn? We should feel ashamed if we cannot. If we cannot obtain the quality from anywhere, why cannot we spin fine yarn of that quality in the Ashram? Do not all of us spin one *tola* of yarn every day? Everyone should spin fine yarn and sell that quantity. If necessary, we may supply cotton to all.

In the yarn I spin at present I easily attain a count of 30. To make one *tola* of 30 counts, we should have 480 (lengths of thread). I see, therefore, that we may not be able to maintain that average. But cannot we maintain an average of one half *tola*? The cotton which I spin is grown locally from American seed. I am collecting more information about it.

I enclose a letter from Mirabehn for your information. We should not mind her anger, but should appreciate her sincere criticism. There is no limit to her frankness of heart. She is arriving here today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7723. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chowdhari

378. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 30, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

Prabhavati informs me in her letter that you are not keeping good health at present. If this is true, the cause must be mental agitation and the heavy burden on you. Please lighten that burden. Reduce physical work at any rate. If you fall ill, I shall blame you alone. The path which you should follow is clear and you must not deviate from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8710. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

379. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After November 30, 1928]¹

BHAI CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I sign the one regarding Shardabehn and return it. We must now think what to do about her. I shall not be able to send the letters to you today. I have not been able to read them all.

We ourselves require Narandas's opinion about the Chalala matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 64

¹ From the reference to Chalala matter; *vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 30-11-1928.

380. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
[After November 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter of 26th August. The reason why I got it so late is that it came into my hands after it had wandered among others who read it first one after another. One naturally forgets about a letter which has not been filed. That is what happened in the case of your letter. And once it is filed, it comes into one's hand when its turn comes. However I take it that the delay has caused no inconvenience to you.

As long as you keep yourself within the amount sanctioned by the Managing Board for the expense, you should continue to carry on that same activity in the manner you think fit. I am of the opinion that you do not need the Board's legal consent for that. Even so, I will place your letter before the Board. However, if you can immediately proceed to Bageshwar, you should do so. I see no difficulty in your doing so. Do not do anything in haste.

If necessary, you may lend upto Rs. 200 for completing the construction of the building. Keep in mind the idea of buying some land in Bijoria as a branch of the Ashram and putting up buildings on it, but first test it on the anvil of experience and determine whether it is sound or unsound. You will be able to decide more easily after you have settled down at Bageshwar and, if you remain firm in that idea, I will consider it and have it considered by others also. I will of course not worry about your health, but at the same time, I will be apprehensive that you might not steadily cling to your work. You can remove that fear only by convincing me by your conduct. However, do not sacrifice your health by being over enthusiastic for, if you do so, it will harm your work and we should regard that consideration as more important than the question of your health. The point is that one should look upon one's health as a trust and take as much care of it as possible. You have done well to tell me in your letter that the cow is being neglected for the sake of the pine-tree gum. I will have to think over it. You, on your part, should forget about such things after you have passed them on to me and, regarding them beyond your field of

¹ In the letter, Gandhiji asks Prabhudas to proceed immediately to Bageshwar near Almora. Prabhudas was in Almora in April 1928 and the storm referred to in the last paragraph may have been about the change of the name of the Ashram from Satyagraha Ashram to Udyog Mandir. The change was effected in November 1928; *vide* "Satyagraha Ashram"

work, not let them weigh on your mind. God has not given the necessary strength to any individual or organization to fight all injustice. If He were to do so, He would Himself have produced His rival. We should believe that He is not so stupid as all that and dance in our own circle.

One more storm is raging in the Ashram these days. But it is through such storms that it is purified. I am therefore calm. I do not have the time to give you a description of it. You may read something about it in the Ashram magazine. The rest you will know from what Chhaganlal or Kashi might be writing to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 33052

381. A GOOD BEGINNING¹

Subscriptions for the Lalaji Memorial have begun well with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla heading the list with Rs. 15,000 at Wardha. The fact that a strong provincial committee has been formed in the Punjab and had at the time (1st instant) of writing this already had Rs. 25,000 on their list also augurs well. I wish all the provinces will follow suit and fix their own minimum and set about collecting that sum. Whilst I suggested a method of finding one's quota on the basis of population, it was obviously not intended to apply to those provinces, districts or cities which could bear a far larger proportion. It would be ridiculous for instance for Bombay to fling at the treasurer of the Fund its quota on the basis of population. Its quota can only be fixed according to its world-wide name and fame. Unfortunately we have in our country terrible contrasts. There are the submerged not tenth but fifth who are living in semi-starvation and who can therefore give nothing. Their burden has to be shouldered by the cities and the other prosperous areas.

The rapidity with which the subscriptions for the Memorial are collected will be a measure of people's earnestness about preserving the memory of the Lion of the Punjab whose roar we shall hear no more. But let us remember that even twice the amount asked by the distinguished signatories to the appeal will not meet the requirements of the present day. Evidence is daily gathering round us that if we are to vindicate national honour which was stabbed when Lalaji was so brutally assaulted, we have to devise some means of hastening the

¹ Written on December 1, 1928

advent of swaraj. One such means and the mildest is to finish the work that Lalaji was doing. He had undertaken to popularize the Nehru Report. Surely an effort in this direction is worth making and is quite feasible. To secure unanimity of approval for the Report is but a step in the national march. By itself it will not give even dominion status. But we shall surely need unanimity about some demand of ours before we devise common action to enforce the demand.

In my humble opinion any discussion on the respective merits of dominion status and unadulterated independence is irrelevant to our present purpose. Everybody seems to agree that if we get dominion status it would be a long step in the direction we want to go. But the independence group seem to argue that it is certain that we are never going to get dominion status and that since dominion status is not our final goal, why waste national energy on a fruitless errand and why not straightaway work for independence pure and simple? There would be considerable force in the argument if the attainment of dominion status was an impossibility and if unanimity on independence was possible. As it is, if we can take action for independence with a fair chance of success, the same action plus unanimity which the Nehru Report has made possible on the issue of dominion status should surely make its attainment more possible than that of independence. All therefore I plead for is not cessation of independence propaganda on the part of those who are enamoured of the enchanting formula but whole-hearted support for dominion status even as a stage in their progress. I claim that the two are in no way incompatible provided of course dominion status for India does not mean something quite different from what it means for South Africa or Canada. Memory of Lalaji and reason then demand consolidation of public opinion on the Nehru Report, and that now. For let it be borne in mind that that report is not a permanent or final document. It is a compromise the best attainable which representatives of most parties have endorsed. If public opinion cannot be now focussed upon it, all the effort spent upon it will be reduced to nought and the great document will be out of date and out of place. Its value depends purely upon its immediate acceptance by all the great national organizations.

Young India, 6-12-1928

382. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 1, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

May I not say that you are a little fool? Why should you feel hurt because I asked you? If you feel hurt like this every time, I can ask you nothing.

I want to see you what I have imagined you are. I have no time today to write more. I can have no doubt that you would look after Manu properly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1761

383. LETTER TO FULCHAND

WARDHA,
December 1, 1928

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I for one consider animals and birds as much entitled to live as myself. But though knowing this, I am unable to overcome the desire to live. I have exhibited this cowardice of mine by starting the discussion about the problem of the monkeys.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/33

384. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER¹

[On or after *December 1, 1928*]

SHANKERLAL BANKER

NO OFFICIAL INTIMATION RECEIVED. OTHER OBJEC-
TIONABLE FEATURES RETAINED. ANY CASE TOO LATE
ORGANIZE DECENT SHOW.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13306

¹ In reply to his telegram, received at Wardha on December 1, 1928 which read: "Referring Calcutta Reception Committee resolution excluding mill-cloth from Exhibition. Bihar inquiries whether participation permitted. Kindly wire final decision."

385. TELEGRAM TO K. SANTANAM

[On or after *December 1, 1928*]¹

HOPE YOU WILL TRY COLLECT SUBSCRIPTIONS
WHEREVER YOU CAN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13306

386. "A YOUNG HEART"²

A correspondent who signs himself "A young heart" has addressed me a long letter dealing with a number of subjects. This anxiety to keep the writer's name secret betrays cowardice or lack of moral courage, alas, fast becoming but too common amongst us. It ill becomes those who aspire after swaraj. I would appeal to our young men to shed this moral weakness and speak out their thoughts with courage and yet with humility and restraint. Even if they cannot be sure of their sense of discrimination and courtesy, let them express their thoughts in the language that comes to them naturally. Cowardly silence will not only not teach them discrimination or courtesy but it will demoralize them into the bargain.

REGARDING THE CALF

To come now to the questions adverted to by "A young heart" in his letter: The first one is about the yet unfinished calf episode. After observing that it was a grievous error on my part to have killed that calf, he goes on to give his arguments which I will skip over as they have already been answered in *Navajivan*. He then sums up:

In short if the poor calf had the tongue to speak it would certainly have implored you to spare it the poison injection and let it die a natural death after drawing its allotted number of breaths. It seems to me that in an excess of pity for the suffering animal you betrayed yourself into a great error and soiled your pure hands with the blood of an innocent calf. I am sure that on further reflection the truth of my observation and the magnitude of your mistake will become clear as daylight to you. It would be improper to say anything more to one like you who has seen truth face to face, still I cannot help adding that in case you ever discover your error and according to your nature confess it to the world, the world would feel grateful

¹ In the source this and the preceding item appear on the same sheet.

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 2-12-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

to you and further misunderstanding on the subject would be prevented. As it is, your action is bound to be misinterpreted and the sin of it all will be on your head. The sooner, therefore, you confess your error the better it would be for you and the world. May God vouchsafe to us all light and understanding!

Let me hasten to tell this writer and all those who think like him that I am not in a position to avail myself of their advice. But this much I can promise that the moment I discover that I was wrong I will in all humility confess the wrong and also make for it all the amends possible. Let me also admit that my error, if an error it is found to be in the long run, would be deemed to be no light one as I shall in that event have been guilty of committing an irreligious act—be it in ignorance—in the name of religion. Such a thing would be reprehensible in anybody; in me not the least. For I know that for good or for evil, my conduct is likely to influence many. I have thus a full sense of my responsibility.

But whilst I have not the slightest desire to minimize my responsibility in the matter, I believe that if in spite of the best of intentions one is led into committing mistakes, they do not really result in harm to the world or, for the matter of that, any individual. God always saves the world from the consequences of unintended errors of men who live in fear of Him. Those who are likely to be misled by my example would have gone that way all the same even if they had not known of my action. For in the final analysis a man is guided in his conduct by his own inner promptings, though the example of others might sometimes *seem* to guide him. But be it as it may, I know that the world has never had to suffer on account of my errors because they were all due to my ignorance. It is my firm belief that not one of my known errors was wilful. Indeed what may appear to be an obvious error to one may appear to another as pure wisdom. He cannot help himself even if he is under a hallucination. Truly has Tulsidas said:

Even though there never is silver in mother-o'pearl nor water in the sunbeams, while the illusion of silver in the shining shell or that of water in the beams lasts, no power on earth can shake the deluded man free from the spell.

Even so must it be with men like me who, it may be, are labouring under a great hallucination. Surely, God will pardon them and the world should bear with them. Truth will assert itself in the end.

REGARDING THE MONKEYS

The other question touched by “A young heart” in his letter is regarding the monkeys. He writes:

All that I wish to write regarding the monkeys is that you will, pray, not entertain the idea of killing them even in a dream. If they threaten your crops you may adopt such measures for keeping them from mischief as other farmers do, as for instance pelting them with stones, shouting, etc., but for heaven's sake do not recommend their killing for a paltry few measures of grain. It would be wanton selfishness to compass such destruction for a trifling gain. There cannot be two opinions in this matter: Hindus will always regard your action as *himsa* pure and simple. It is only on such occasions that one's ahimsa is put to the test. Is it not monstrous to deprive a fellow-creature of life for the sake of a miserable little crop? What selfishness and what cruelty! How can such an iniquitous suggestion proceed from your lips at all? Well, you may by your superior brute force kill the monkeys but remember you will have to pay the price for it one day, and before the Great White Throne all your subtle arguments will avail you nothing. In the name of mercy, therefore, I humbly beseech you not to besmirch your hands by such cruel deeds.

That this question should be put to me in this way at this late hour of the day surprises me. I have already admitted that there would be violence in killing the monkeys. But what these professors of ahimsa do not seem to realize is that even so there is *himsa* in stoning or otherwise torturing them. By restricting the meaning of ahimsa to non-killing we make room for nameless cruelties in this country and bring the fair name of ahimsa into disrepute and if we continue like this we shall as a nation soon forfeit our proud title as specialists in ahimsa. What I want is not only to be saved from killing the monkeys but from stoning or otherwise hurting them as well. That is why I have invited suggestions from such readers of this journal as believe in ahimsa. But instead of helping me, most readers have responded only by bombarding me with angry criticisms without even troubling to read my articles, much less to understand them; and even "A young heart" has not been able to avoid this pitfall. I can understand an honest difference of opinion, but what can be the use of advice based on assumptions not in the least warranted by my writings?

THE HINDU-MUSLIM QUESTION

The third question adverted to by "A young heart" is that of Hindu-Muslim unity. I cull the following sentences from his observations:

Thinking that your efforts at establishing Hindu-Muslim unity have proved fruitless you are sitting with your lips almost sealed in this matter. That does not seem to me to be right. You may keep your silence on the question of unity, but do not you think that it is your duty to ascertain facts whenever there is a communal disturbance and after full consideration to express your opinion on merits? You may not take an active part but how will

it injure the interests of the country if after giving an impartial hearing to both the sides you frankly speak to whomsoever might appear guilty in your eyes? The attitude that you have taken up with regard to the Godhra riot and Surat is, to be frank, hardly proper. Where is your valour gone now which you displayed abundantly on other occasions by calling a spade a spade? Good God! I am really surprised at this attitude of yours. I humbly ask you to advise the Hindus, if they cannot observe ahimsa as defined by you, to fight, in self-defence, those who assault or murder them and their dear ones without cause.

I have already explained my position in this matter. I trust it is not out of fear that I do not air my views on this subject nowadays. But when it may be out of place for me to write or when I have not sufficient material to form an opinion or when the matter does not fall within my province, I consider it to be my duty to maintain silence. At present neither of the two parties is prepared to accept my solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. There is therefore no occasion for me to express my opinion.

There remains the question of expressing opinion on the riots that have taken place or might take place in the future. When the subject itself, as I have already pointed out, has gone out of my province, there can be no question of my expressing an opinion on events that may arise. Again, if I proceed to express opinion on such matters before scrutinizing what both the parties might have to say on them, my conduct would be justly held to be improper and even impertinent. There would also be the danger of my misjudging. And how can I set out to make an inquiry into a question when I know that I have no ready solution for it?

Let no one however run away with the idea, from this, that I have washed my hands of this question for good. I am simply biding my time like an expert physician who has faith in his remedy. It is my firm belief that mine alone is the sovereign remedy for this seemingly incurable communal disease and that in the end one or both the parties will willy-nilly accept my cure.

In the mean time those who want will fight, in spite of whatever I might say. Nor do they need any prompting from me. This I have said repeatedly; I do not want any cowardice in our midst. The heroism of ahimsa cannot be developed from cowardice. Bravery is essential to both *himsa* and ahimsa. In fact it is even more essential in the latter for ahimsa is nothing if it is not the acme of bravery.

Young India, 3-1-1929

387. HOW TO MEET BASE INNUENDOES¹

What should a public worker holding a responsible position in public life do if he is subjected to dishonest and malicious innuendoes or is falsely accused of misappropriation of public funds? Should he bring an action for libel against his calumniator in a law-court? Will it not be his duty as a responsible public worker to do so, and is it not likely that if he fails to do so some unwary people would be deceived? And if one may in no circumstance bring an action in a law-court, is there not a real danger that unscrupulous persons might take shelter behind a brazen silence and defy public scrutiny into their malpractices while pretending to follow your advice? Again if recourse to law-courts must be ruled out altogether, does it not follow that some other remedy against the evil of unrestrained libel should be found?

These are some of the questions arising out of the case of a prominent public worker that I have been called upon to answer. My reply is that slander and misrepresentation have always been the lot of public men. The way to overcome the opponent is by non-resistance and that is the remedy needed in the present case. Nor is a successful action in the law-court by any means a conclusive proof of a man's innocence, for do we not meet everyday instances of scoundrels who use the certificates of law-courts as a cloak to hide their sins and to continue with impunity their practices? Again can any penalty that a law-court may inflict stop the poison of evil tongues from spreading? Would not what was said openly before be now, for fear of penalty, propagated secretly and in whispers and thus be rendered all the more insidious? My advice, therefore, generally speaking, is that one should take no notice of baseless and malicious imputations, but pity the calumniator and always hope and pray for his ultimate conversion. As for the public it can always take care of itself against dishonest servants. Corruption will be out one day however much one may try to conceal it, and the public can, as it is its right and duty, in every case of justifiable suspicion, call its servants to strict account, dismiss them, sue them in a law-court, or appoint an arbitrator or inspector to scrutinize their conduct, as it likes. Therefore instead of suing one's calumniator in a law-court for false allegations of corruption, the best and the only right course would be for the public to prevent actual corruption from taking place by maintaining a sleepless vigilance and for the servant to keep the public on the *qui vive*.

If this course is found to be insufficient and some further action is felt to be necessary, the author of a libel can be called upon to bring his charge before a *panchayat*. The aggrieved party can offer

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 2-12-1928. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

at the same time to appear before it to vindicate its position. Of course this remedy would be useless when the calumniator is an altogether unscrupulous person. For he will never agree to appear before the *panchayat*. But where allegations are made by respectable persons offering to produce evidence in support, reference to a *panchayat* would be found to be most useful.

‘But what about the villain who fakes a silent *hauteur* to mask his villainy,’ one may ask. My reply is that if the people are vigilant and wide awake such a person will not be able to maintain his mask for long, while, if on the other hand they allow their vigilance to go to sleep, not all the law-courts in the world will be able to prevent the practice of villainy. For we daily see how law is unable to touch gentlemen rascals dressed in spotless white, and going about in motor-cars. The fact is, as Carlyle has observed, that the fool and the scoundrel go always hand in hand. Where there is one the other is bound to be. But a true and just man need not worry on that account. Let him remember and ponder over what Dadu has sung:

My reviler is like a respected and dear brother unto me.
He labours for my good for nothing,
And helps to purge me of my countless sins
And comes to my aid without expectation of reward.
He loses his own soul but that of others he saves;
He is my dear friend—my saviour;
O Ramdev, pray to God for his long life—may he live for ever.
My reviler is my greatest benefactor, says Dadu,
For he brings home to me my littleness.

It is enough if one is true to one’s own self: one can then safely let the “turbid streams of rumour flow”.

Young India, 6-12-1928

388. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 2, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You are right in what you say about labour and your method of counting the payment is also correct. When such paid labour is required, those who can put off their other work may offer to do such labour after finishing the work which they do as sacrifice. They may let go their study on that day and utilize the time

in labour. The labour which they put in should be of a useful nature, otherwise it would amount to our giving them some charity out of the Ashram funds.

Here, too, it has rained. They say it is normal in this part. You did right when, having missed the post, you did not send a telegram and thereby saved 12 annas.

My letter had two sheets only. You should not have found the continuity broken at any point. I put down the figure 3 for the third page. I do not write the page number on the back, but keep it in mind.

I know that the cloth-lined envelope is very costly. I have not succeeded in getting Subbiah, Pyarelal and Mahadev to use it, but this is how it should be used. It should be opened with a knife and closed every time with a fresh slip of thick paper. On the side on which the address is written, a piece of thick paper should be pasted afresh every time. If used thus, we can make such an envelope last a long time. Do you not know that in prisons some such device is followed in order to save expenditure even on ordinary covers?

If you are not troubled by the question raised by Shankerlal, I certainly am not. If Narandas works in obedience to you and the organizational set-up, our purpose and that of the organization will be met. When Shankerlal raises the question with me, I shall discuss it. The question before me is not how to satisfy him but how to satisfy you. You should, be able to do your work smoothly and may ask me for whatever help you need for that purpose.

It was good news that Shankerbhai has recovered. Tell him that he should not fall ill again.

Have you given any sewing work to Gangadevi? If you have not, please do.

I got today's post in the afternoon. Chi. Narandas is upset. I send his letters to you. If all of you agree, let them all remain [in the Ashram] on the basis suggested by Chi. Narandas and let Radha's name be counted for payment. I have objection against this arrangement, too, but I do not wish to be obstinate. I would certainly not hurt Narandas.

I thought it was decided to retain Shanabhai. If there is nothing more than suspicion against him, it would not be proper to ask him to leave.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 18-9

389. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA
[December 3, 1928]¹

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

RECEIVED LETTER WHICH IS VARIANCE WITH
PUBLISHED REPORTS ABOUT EXHIBITION. SEEMS TO ME
TOO LATE NOW FOR ASSOCIATION DO JUS-
TICE TO EXHIBITION. BUT AM LIFTING BAN LOOK
TO YOU SEE LOCAL KHADI ORGANIZATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13316

390. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
[December 3, 1928]²

KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

RECEIVED OFFICIAL LETTER ABOUT EXHIBITION LIFT-
ING BAN. YOU MAY ARRANGE KHADI COURT IF
POSSIBLE .

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13318

391. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, A. I. S. A., AHMEDABAD

[December 3, 1928]³

CHARKHA
AHMEDABAD

HAVE JUST RECEIVED OFFICIAL LETTER. THOSE EXHI-
BITORS WHO WISH MAY ATTEND. MAKING PRESS
STATEMENT³.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13317

¹ Vide "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 3-12-1928.

² In reply to his telegram received on December 3 at Wardha; vide also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

³ Vide "Telegram to Free Press and Associated Press", 3-12-1928.

392. TELEGRAM TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[December 3, 1928]

BANKER

MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

ASSOCIATION BHANDARS SHOULD EXHIBIT IF THEY
CAN.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13307

393. TELEGRAM TO FREE PRESS AND ASSOCIATED PRESS

[December 3, 1928]¹

FREE PRESS, ASSOCIATED PRESS

VIEW BENGAL COMMITTEE'S DECISION GANDHIJI ADVI-
SES THOSE KHADI ORGANIZATIONS PARTAKE CON-
GRESS EXHIBITION WHO CAN DURING SHORT TIME
LEFT DO SO.

From a photostat: S.N. 13319

394. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

December 3, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Your letter makes sad reading. It is remarkable you accuse me of not having dealt fairly by the Committee whereas I should be the accuser. I had felt that I had shown the most delicate consideration to the Committee and in the attempt had suppressed myself. Lest at the last moment the Committee might feel offended, I have forced myself on your attention and tried to argue with you all and then to let you decide what you liked without exposing you to any criticism from me in the Press.

But to business now. If the published reports are true, your letter is not. Here is a tit-bit. The Exhibition authorities have approached all local Governments for exhibits! But perhaps you do not know what has happened.

Nor do I like this deference to Panditji's wishes. I have prom-

¹ Vide "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

ised that I shall attend the Congress in any event. Why should the Committee not work out its policy unhampered by personal considerations? Why should there be a public misunderstanding because I do not attend the Exhibition or the A.I.S.A. is not represented?

But there it is. You have rescinded your previous resolution. I have therefore wired to you and the Secretary of the A.I.S.A. as also Satis Babu, the Bengal Agent. I do not know how far it will be possible to organize the khaddar court. You will please now get hold of Satis Babu and other workers and do whatever is possible.

My grief was there. Your decision and letter have not eased it. There is an unreality about the whole thing. O God, lead us from the unreal to the Real.

There is nothing personal in this letter. It is the outpouring of a troubled soul.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13758

395. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 3, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have all your letters. The whole affair is bad. But we must not resist. Therefore I have wired you.¹ Please inform the other centres. You should now do whatever is possible. I have sent a wire² to Shankerlal too and issued a brief Press message³. Here are copies of correspondence.

No more today but love of which you will need now much.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8921

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Shankerlal Banker", 3-12-1928.

³ *Vide* "Telegram to Free Press and Associated Press", 3-12-1928.

396. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 3, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

My love to you. It was all done bravely. You have braver things to do. May God spare you for many a long year to come and make you His chosen instrument for freeing India from yoke.¹

Yours,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 68

397. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA ,
Silence Day, December 3, 1928

SISTERS,

I have your letter written by Gangabehn. There is some point in what you say about the noise. But the responsibility for it lies not only with the children but also with the adults. Again, it should not be difficult for you to observe silence or to make the children observe silence while dining or working. The main point is this: You should not think that if there is no talking, time will hang heavily while dining or working; or that the children cannot be kept quiet. There are millions of men who do their work quietly. You know, do you not?, that labourers in big factories are forced to keep silent while working. Why cannot we voluntarily do what they have to do under compulsion?

Hereafter Kakasaheb will be with you once a week. Do you still insist on Valjibhai too coming there? If I press him, he will come; but I know that he is always too busy and so, as a rule, I do not like to put any more burden upon him, if I can help it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3683

¹ Explaining this in his book, Jawaharlal Nehru had written: "I think this letter was written soon after the incident at Lucknow when many of us demonstrated peacefully against the arrival of the Simon Commission there. We were severely beaten by the baton and lathi blows of the police."

398. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day [December 3, 1928]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. You are busy doing more work even than when you were in the [Udyoga] Mandir. I am happy that you are doing it in the right spirit. Write to me when you can.

I have sent Harker's article for inclusion. She asks questions about *Young India*. I suggest that you yourself should reply to her.

As for other news, please be satisfied with what Pyarelal and Subbiah tell you in their letters.

I have read your note and understood the views you express in it. I am certainly not unhappy that you do not write² or spin. I would feel hurt if I thought that you were not doing something through lethargy. A sincere person may or may not do a particular thing, it is all the same. I include you among such sincere persons.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Send on the accompanying letter to Manilal at his present address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11445

399. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,

December 3, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Sushila has asked us to suggest a name for the baby girl. But Nanabhai has already cabled the name and, therefore, there is no need to give her another name. The name "Dhairyabala" is also a good one. It requires many other virtues to be able to cultivate patience³ which has no taint of lethargy in it. Bhartrihari described patience as father. "He whose father is patience and mother is forbe-

¹ From the reference to Emma Harker's article "The Lion of the Punjab" which appeared in *Young India*, 6-12-1928. The preceding Silence Day was on 3-12-1928.

² That is, keep a diary; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai," 30-11-1928.

³ *Dhairya* means 'patience'.

arance, whose wife is undisturbed peace of mind”, etc. If you do not know the full verse, please let me know and I will give you the text.

Tara and Shanti were here for four days. I met Nanabhai on the way [to Wardha]. Kishorelal will stay for the present at Vileparle.

With me are Ba, Pyarelal, Subbiah and Chhotelal. Mahadev has had to go and stay at Bardoli.

We are all right, all of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you can, collect contributions there for the Lalaji Memorial Fund.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4745

400. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [December 3, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters regularly. I am writing to Babuji² about you.

Are the children regular in coming to Bal Mandir? Are they attentive? Has Bimla fully recovered now?

I think it is time for you to leave for Dwarka.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3338

401. MY NOTES

December 4, 1928

LALAJI MEMORIAL

The reports that I have received while writing this on the 4th December are hopeful. By contributing Rs. 15,000 on his own behalf at the Wardha meeting, Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla has made a good beginning. A committee consisting of worthy persons has been for-

¹ From the reference to Prabhavati's proposed trip to Dwarka; *vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 9-12-1928.

² Brij Kishore Prasad

med in the Punjab and it hopes to collect a good amount. I hope that Gujarat and the Gujaratis will as usual contribute a share which will be worthy of them. If we have genuine feelings for the "Lion of the Punjab", if we accept the worthiness of this Memorial and if we have confidence in those who have formulated the scheme for this Fund as well as in the trustees, it should not take long for it to be fully subscribed. And it is a matter of prestige for us that not much time should elapse before this is done. Hence it is my hope that Gujarat will pay up whatever is to be subscribed as soon as possible. The students of Shradhdhanandji's Gurukul had years ago, by sending for the South Africa struggle Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 earned as wages for working as labourers, answered the question of what should be done in such cases by students and salaried workers, who do not have large sums of money to spare and are hardly able to make both ends meet. Some can contribute their share by working as labourers, while for those who are unable to do so, or though being able do not find such an opportunity, the way is open on such occasions to give up certain pleasures for a specific period of time. If they are addicted to anything, they can save money by giving up their addiction for a short or long period or they may give up an item of food, as was done by the women-teachers and girls of Kanya Gurukul in Dehra Dun at the time of the struggle in Bardoli. Hence there are many ways open to those who wish to contribute to this Fund. We have formed an evil habit that we do not contribute anything until someone approaches us for funds. It is to be hoped that no one will wait for people to approach him for donations in the case of a memorial for a patriot like Lalaji.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-12-1928

402. LETTER TO ACHYUTANAND PUROHIT

WARDHA ,

December 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also your telegram. I have not said anything to you because I am unable to fix the date. It will be somewhere between the 20th and 23rd instant.

There will be besides my wife three or four with me about whom you need not worry to make any special arrangements. They will stay where you put me up. No special arrangements are necessary for me either. I would like you to save every pice you can of the funds that

you may collect. You need not send for any fruit for me. Ordinary simple food will do. All that you may arrange to have ready is two pounds of goat's milk. One thing I do need is a commode kept in a clean place. You will please not send for any fruit from Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13009

403. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

December 4, 1928

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

You must not mind this dictated letter. It is better that I dictate than that I delay writing to you. What on earth are you doing with your health? Is it not more your mind that is at fault? Why can't you make up your mind to be and remain healthy? This set back in your health is bound to trouble the poor old songstress² in America. You must become a good daughter.

SHRIMATI PADMAJA NAIDU

HYDERABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13013

404. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

WARDHA ,

December 4, 1928

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I have just received your letter. If you want an early date and if it is convenient I suggest Thursday next at 4 p.m., i.e., 6th instant; if that day is not convenient, 11th Tuesday at 4 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE

NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13014

¹ In reply to her letter dated November 16, which read: "I have been very bad for the last fortnight" (S.N. 13001).

² Sarojini Naidu

405. *LETTER TO H. M. JAGANNATH*

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The signatories to the appeal propose to raise five lakhs to be utilized for the promotion of the political activities of Lala Lajpat Rai. These naturally include the welfare of the suppressed classes. You may know that some workers of Lalaji are devoting their energy exclusively to the service of the suppressed classes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. M. JAGANNATH

PRESIDENT

THE ALL INDIA ARUNDHATEEYA CENTRAL SABHA, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13016

406. *LETTER TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH*

WARDHA,
December 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. You will note that I have not said one word as yet about the appointment and I propose to retain my silence as long as I can.

Yours sincerely,

SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH KHAN BAHADUR, C. I. E.

MEMBER, VICEROY'S COUNCIL, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15094

407. LETTER TO SECRETARY, KHALSA DIWAN
SOCIETY, VANCOUVER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 4, 1928

THE SECRETARY, KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY
SIKH TEMPLE, VANCOUVER B. C.
DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. We were all wondering what this money was for and from whom.¹ I now enclose receipt for the amount which will be utilized as desired by you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 15116

408. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

Tuesday [On or after *December 4, 1928*]²

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I received both your letters concerning non-violence. I have preserved them. I am despatching the matter about Bhai Becharadas for *Navajivan*. That article could have been more clearly written. Had the tales been given, they would have been useful to scholars. But now I shall not take more of your time in this matter. It is absolutely essential to bring light to the present atmosphere of darkness and depression. I have received another pure-hearted letter from the editor of *Jain Jagat*. He writes that the material provided by him is insufficient. He writes that the present idea of non-violence lacks clarity of conception and is devoid of spirituality. I for one experience this at every step . . . Pure behaviour is the only true means to get over that deficiency. Therefore the article does not interest me. If pure non-violence does not enter our practice, what purpose can be

¹ The addressee had sent Rs. 1,000 for the Bardoli struggle without specifying for what purpose it should be spent. Meanwhile the struggle had come to a successful conclusion. Thereupon he wrote that the money might be used for relief of those who suffered during the struggle in Bardoli.

² From the contents this letter appears to have been written about the same time as the letter to the addressee dated November 30, 1928; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 30-11-1928. The Tuesday following that date was December 4.

served by learned articles? If we can keep our behaviour pure the scholarship of the whole world will come to our help. Hence, preserve your health and allow yourself as little as possible to be dragged into the whirlpool of thoughts. In fact I would say that you should not allow yourself to be so dragged. We should certainly devote ourselves to the thoughts that are necessary to improve our behaviour. The rest of the thoughts are mere whims. I do wish you would give me news of your physical state.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4185

409. LETTER TO SIR JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE

WARDHA,

December 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am stupid and live as in a well not knowing what goes on outside its walls. I came to know of your birthday only yesterday. Though late, pray let me add my greetings to the many you have received. May you be spared long to enable India to share your ever increasing power and greatness.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: G.N. 8736

410. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,

December 5, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I got your letter. I understand the position about honey. I have been witnessing good evidence of our economic, physical and intellectual poverty.

You have thought more than I have about methods of khadi propaganda. If you get financial help in your efforts, you will be able to do better work. That is, you will be able to look after the khadi work in the whole country. See that you acquire excellent health. Instead of remaining in Bombay and getting crushed under the burden of work there, you should better go to Matheran and improve your health. I trust you are not grieving over Velabehn's passing away.

Remember Narasinh Mehta's utterance: "Welcome the snapping of the bond, I shall cultivate *bhakti* for Shri Gopal the more easily."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9765

411. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday [December 5, 1928]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I can get no time at all to write to you. But you should not behave as if you, too, had resolved not to write this time.

Do you remember I gave you a wire about Surajbehn's husband to be sent to Karsandas? I am sure I gave it to someone. But Karsandas does not seem to have received it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I could not send to you any matter from *Young India*. From the articles which appear you may translate any which seem to you worth translating and inform me immediately.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11441

412. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,

Wednesday, December 5, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. I expect to get from you detailed news about the Ashram. Does the kitchen run punctually? Is the noise less? Does everybody help Gangabehn? Is anyone ill? How does Balbir behave? How does Padma fare?

You want to hear about me. If I get some time, I would certainly write. As it happens, however, I get no time here even to talk with anyone. I keep Pyarelal also very busy with work, so he too cannot

¹ From the reference to Mahadev Desai's failure to send the wire to Karsandas (*vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 9-12-1928.), it is evident that this letter was written before the other.

spare time. Be patient for a while.

Prabhavati must have left now, and so I do not write to her.

If I knew that Vidyavati¹ was there, I would have written to her. If she is there tell her that she ought not to fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1762

413. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday [December 5, 1928]²

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I would advise you to show to Narandas all the letters I write to you. This will make your path easy and will help him too. I have written to him advising him that he should not keep aloof.

If Santokbehn wishes to leave for Rajkot, let her do so. You may certainly see her and try to dissuade her. I shall be happy if she likes the Ashram atmosphere and decides to stay on. But I would not like her staying in such a condition of mind that I would have to strive every day to keep her pleased and contented.

It is natural and desirable that one's relations should become one's co-workers in national work. The difficulty comes only when the motive is of self-interest. Once we are convinced that we are pursuing no personal interest, we can invite all our relations to join us; if they do join, it will be only to offer themselves as oblations in a sacrifice.

Rama's co-workers were his relations, and so were Yudhishtira's. The co-workers of Prophet Mahomed, too, were his relations. Jesus's co-workers included a brother of his. Lord Salisbury had surrounded himself with relations. When he was criticized for that, his reply was: "If not my relations, whom else shall I sacrifice? In whom, if not in them, should I put my trust? If I had more relations who were worthy of the honour, I would sacrifice them too. For me, this is a sacrifice and not a means of amassing wealth."

Balfour was a relation of Lord Salisbury's. We find innumerable instances of a contrary nature, too, in which relations are fixed up in

¹ Prabhavati's sister, daughter-in-law of Rajendra Prasad

² From the reference to "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 29-11-1928. Wednesday following November 29 fell on this date.

places to help them serve themselves. The upshot of this is that to one who is prompted by unselfish motives, relations and non-relations are the same. When one is prompted by selfish motives, what difference does it make if the co-workers are not relations? Even so, all of us, as you say in your letter, should be careful. I am convinced that my experiment has not cost me anything. You may also believe this to be true about our equals. In our country, equals cannot easily work together, because the spirit of self-sacrifice has not yet been fully developed.

I have not understood exactly your question about the goshala. You will have to explain it further before I understand it.

We should let Lahoriram stay with us as long as he is not confined to bed and goes his way. It will be another matter if he cannot control his palate. If we are convinced that he is a good man, we cannot send away a person who has joined us. The case would have been different if we had not admitted him when he first came.

It should be enough if we keep ourselves ready to lay down our lives when robbers raid the Ashram. God will preserve our honour. The best thing would be that one of our men should go and work among the robbers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS .]

I have not revised the letter after writing it. The envelope arrived yesterday in a torn condition. It should have been tied up with a string.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 16-8

414. NOTES

‘HER EYES AS OUR EYES’

Mr. N. M. Bell is the joint editor of a tiny monthly called the *International Sunbeam* published at 2 shillings per annum at 59 Mary’s Road, Christchurch. He has favoured me with a copy of his monthly which contains the following interesting article.¹

India sees life through different windows than we do; but her

¹ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

eyes are as our eyes, and she has the same desires as we have.

Total world disarmament, the only material safeguard of peace, should be the outward and visible sign of that inward mental disarmament on which alone outward peace can rest secure. So long, however, as one people is actually subjecting another to itself by superior military might, even the very first step towards this inward mental disarmament has not been taken.

What has this got to do with India? Everything.

When the Russian delegates made their historic proposals for total world disarmament before the Special Disarmament Committee of the League of Nations, what really prevented Great Britain from agreeing? India. In India are some 70,000 British troops and some 1,40,000 native levies, costing some £70,000,000 a year keeping some 350,000,000 Indians subject to British rule. When the Egyptians make their periodic attempt to secure peaceably the independence of their country from British domination, what prevents Britain from granting their request? India. The Suez Canal is the main route to India.

Disarmament would mean to Great Britain the loss of the 'brightest jewel' in the British imperial crown . . . It is a disagreeable saying, but true, that *empires rest on armaments*. . . .

Young India, 6-12-1928

415. ITS GORY CAREER¹

The certificate granted by the Punjab Government to the police seems to have emboldened the Lucknow police to outdo the Punjab police in the free use of the baton and the spear. The Lucknow police seem according to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to have even used brickbats in order to disperse an utterly innocent crowd. Granted that the processionists were defying orders supposed to be legal, the police, I hold, were not justified in charging the processionists unless injury on the part of the latter to person or property was imminent. I rely implicitly on Pandit Jawaharlal's narrative. According to it the crowd was orderly and well behaved. It was not out to do any harm to anybody. Its motive was known to be a peaceful demonstration against the entry into Lucknow of a Commission that has been imposed upon the people against their will. The exercise by the police of punitive powers in such circumstances was arbitrary, uncalled for and brutal. The behaviour of the crowd in the face of this provocation and in the face of a cowardly assault upon their chosen leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his companions was amazingly exemplary.

¹ *Vide* also "The Blood-stained Path," 9-12-1928.

Their self-restraint was as great as their leaders'. I claim that no crowd outside India would have retained the calmness that the Lucknow crowd did.

But this calmness is probably mistaken for cowardice by the brave Commissioners who under the protecting wing of an armed police seem to be bent upon continuing their blood-red progress. Innocent blood was spilt in the Punjab and severer injuries seem to have been inflicted by the police in Lucknow on an equally innocent crowd. Two men are said to have been so badly injured as to be in danger of losing their lives. Difficult as the conduct of the English Commissioners is to understand, that of their subordinate Indian colleagues is still more difficult to understand. They do not seem to perceive the widening gulf between them and the people whom they are supposed to represent and whom (some of them flower of the nation) they are content to see trampled under horses' hoofs, charged with batons and driven with spearheads like cattle for the heinous offence of daring to demonstrate against this unwelcome Commission. Well did the enraged father and patriot Pandit Motilal Nehru give a warning to the Government, that "if a violent disturbance takes place in this city or any other part of the country, the responsibility for that would fall upon such officials as misbehaved themselves for the last three days at Lucknow". My fear is that the Government do not mind, if they would not actually welcome, such a disturbance. If a disturbance takes place, they will have another opportunity of showing the red claws of the British Lion and of terrorizing a docile people into abject submission to their imperious will.

For if the Government do not desire an outbreak of violence on the part of the people and if the Commission will persist in their peregrinations, they should notify to the latter that they should instead of going from place to place summon witnesses to a central place and finish their work. But such wisdom and a consideration for popular will are hardly to be expected of the Government.

The duty before the people is clear, to continue their non-violence in the face of the gravest provocation. Then one may safely regard these great demonstrations as so many lessons in non-violence preparatory to the final struggle in which people will willingly and valiantly lay down their lives without the slightest retaliation. That day is fast coming, faster than most of us imagine. So far as I can see, sacrifice of precious lives will have to be made before we come to our own, whether in a struggle wholly non-violent or predominantly violent. I am hoping and praying that non-violence will be maintained even up to the last heat.

Young India, 6-12-1928

416. "FAULT OF MAN"

I know it is very easy of us to give advice; but only those who live amongst the nuisance can realize how destructive monkeys are, and as one who has suffered some small loss at their small, mischievous hands I can sympathize.

And yet is it the fault of man or monkeys—this impasse? Why do monkeys come into the cities, near the dwelling places of men, risking, poor wretches, their lives, and the lives of their dearly loved babies for food?

Said an official to me just recently at Mt. Abu: "The monkeys are too dreadful a nuisance, and yet we are not allowed to shoot them. They get worse and worse every year, I wonder why."

And yet the reason is obvious. From every jungle tree. Jamboo, Karenda and Bod, we see man, with perfect disregard for everything but his own selfish purposes, stripping the trees of their fruit *to the last berry*.

The Bhils of Abu take down hundreds and hundreds of baskets, one sees them rotting at Abu Road.

The sahibs' butlers have learnt to make Karenda jam; it costs only the sugar and the picking.

Man encroaches ruthlessly on the rights of animals and birds, but punishes with severity any encroachment by them on *his* supreme rights.

Do the gods treat men thus? I see in the misery that presses on man . . . the awful reckoning due to this continual encroachment on the privileges of bird and animal.

It is nature's retribution: a retribution that has already come to the sailors on ships who shot the 'Stormy Petrel' whose appearance warned them of storm, shot them to extinction. Men destroyed birds in thousands and saw their dear ones in the grip of the malarial mosquito whose larvae are now too many for man's scope.

Thus writes a fair correspondent who is a lover of bird and beast. Unfortunately for me she adds to my difficulty, does not solve it. Knowing the wrongs done by my kind, am I to give up agriculture and seek the cave, or am I to prevent the monkeys' encroachment? The natural consequence of her reasoning which I do not deny is that the monkeys should have full play of my garden' in other words I should grow for them what my fellowman has robbed them of !!!

Young India, 6-12-1928

417. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Panditji is anxious that I should be by his side as early as possible after his arrival in Calcutta and that I should be staying as near him as possible. He now wires saying that the Reception Committee has arranged to accommodate both of us under the same roof. As you know I have always a large party with me. I am sure therefore that it would be inconvenient for the Reception Committee to accommodate that party under the same roof as Panditji's. I therefore suggest that you reserve a little accommodation for me so that if necessary I may detach myself from my party and stay with Panditji. But if the Committee does not mind, I propose to accept the offer of Sjt. Jiwanlal to accommodate the whole of my party. I have accordingly telegraphed to you today.

I do not know to whom I should really write officially. If necessary therefore you will pass on this letter to the proper quarters.

As at present arranged I reach Calcutta on the morning of the 23rd by Calcutta Mail.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA
From a photostat: S.N. 13312

418. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

I have your letter. Thank you for the consideration underlying it. But I have no choice about volunteers. Any volunteer would do.

I have written to Dr. Bidhan Roy¹ already saying that while some accommodation might be reserved for me under the same roof as Motilalji's, seeing that he wants me near by him, I am accepting the invitation of Sjt. Jiwanlal for myself and party to be accommodated by him. My party would be really too unwieldy for you to take care

¹ *Vide* the preceding item,

of and not all of them would need to be taken care of.

Mohanlal Bhoot may attach himself to me as he has always done so.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
1 WOODBURN PARK, CALCUTTA
From a photostat: S.N. 13313

419. LETTER TO NIRANJAN PATNAIK

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR NIRANJAN BABU,

I have sent you a telegram today about Sambalpur. I leave here on the 20th by passenger and reach Sambalpur on the 21st evening, and leave Sambalpur on the 22nd evening. No great preparations about my comforts need be made. Only goat's milk might be made available. No fruits are to be brought from Calcutta.

I send you now translation of a letter from Sjt. Jethalal Govindji. You have known him through the columns of *Young India*. He is the organizer of the Bijolia centre on the self-sufficiency plan. I would like you to read his letter side by side with the figures you gave me in one of your letters which I reproduced in *Young India*¹ and tell me where he has erred.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure: 1

From a microfilm: S.N. 13762

420. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You must have got my telegram² about the Exhibition. The whole thing is finished now. You will do what you can. I wonder if they are giving you a free hand.

¹ *Vide* "Help Utkal", 6-9-1928

² *Vide* "Telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 3-12-1928.

I reach Sambalpur on the 21st instant, leave there on the 22nd and reach Calcutta 23rd Mail. I shall have to put up with Jiwanlal. Panditji wants me to be available at Calcutta from the 23rd and I am anxious to give him all the help that I can. He is shouldering a tremendous burden.

As you know Sjt. Birla has been with me all these days and we have been discussing many matters, khadi, etc. I suggested to him that he should take up all surplus khadi to relieve the congestion wherever there may be, so as not to interfere with production. He entertains the idea favourably and may make a cautious beginning at once.

He asked me whether, if he made the beginning with Calcutta and started a khadi shop where he could collect khadi from all parts of India, whether you would not object. I told him that in the circumstances placed by me before him, there was not likely to be any objection on your part.

I have revived my original idea of pooling the prices. But you will consider this proposition and if you think that there is any objection, you will please let me know.

Mahavir Prasad whom perhaps you know and who is a very enthusiastic honest worker and who is at present in Gorakhpur has offered to undertake the responsibility of running the new store for Sjt. Birla. He is proceeding today to Calcutta. I have asked him to see you and discuss things with you. This letter will be in your hands 24 hours after he reaches there.

I hope you and Hemprabhadevi are keeping quite fit in spite of the strain that both of you must be undergoing.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR
From a photostat: S.N. 13762

421. LETTER TO R. VENKATRAM

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

MY DEAR VENKATRAM,

I have your letter and the issues of your journal. You fairly guessed my general view about journalistic ventures. If you watched me working for full 24 hours, you would have pity on me and not ask me to read any journal quite apart from my attitude. Much as I should

like to, I am much obliged to deny myself the pleasure of reading the literature that is pouring upon me from all sides. You will please therefore excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. VENKATRAM
EDITOR, "INDIAN STATES JOURNAL"
EMPIRE BUILDING, FORT, BOMBAY
From a microfilm: S.N. 13763

422. LETTER TO ACHYUTANAND PUROHIT

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I telegraphed to you today as I was able to fix the date of departure only today. I hope to leave Wardha by the passenger train on the 20th instant reaching Jarsuguda at 13.53 in the afternoon of the 21st instant. There is a train according to your letter immediately after from Jarsuguda for Sambalpur and I should leave Sambalpur the evening of the next day (22nd instant).

That gives a day and a half which I hope is quite enough. I must reach Calcutta on the 23rd instant,

I am unable to give you the number and names of the party that will accompany me, because I am not yet sure whom I should take with me. But you may take it that there will be at least three with me including my wife.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13764

423. LETTER TO WILLIAM I. HULL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

The Secretary of the Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir, has forwarded your letter to me. I shall be delighted to meet you and Mrs. Hull in Calcutta some time after the 23rd instant. My address in Calcutta will be: C/o Sjt. Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta, where perhaps you would enquire about the time we can meet.

Thanks. I had Miss Adam's introduction forwarded to me from Sabarmati.

There will be no difficulty to buy a visitor's ticket and this can be done after your arrival in Calcutta as you would be reaching Calcutta early enough for making all arrangements. The Congress meets as you know on the 29th instant.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13765

424. LETTER TO WILLIAM SMITH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

When I was in Bangalore you kindly gave me the names of some trustworthy and well-trained young men who could be had for starting dairies. I have not got the correspondence with me and it may be that the young men whose names you gave are already suited. Could you oblige me with giving me such names and their addresses and their requirements if you know them again? Having received their names I shall put myself in touch with them. I want at least two.

I await your observations upon the little experiment I am conducting at Sabarmati.

I am in Wardha till 20th instant, after which my address for the rest of the month will be 44, Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

WILLIAM SMITH, ESQ.
IMPERIAL DAIRY EXPERT, BANGALORE
From a microfilm: S.N. 13766

425. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 6, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I see nothing suspicious in the fact that Chi. Santok retained those bills with her against the price of the wheat. I can understand how Chi. Narandas may have seen this in a different light.

The capacity for self-sacrifice of Chi. Santok and her children cannot be compared with yours or of anybody else. In such matters we can make no comparisons. The sacrifice by one person of all he possessed may seem insignificant in comparison with a small sacrifice by another person. It makes me unhappy that I do not get from Santok and hers as much as I had expected. This last episode, too, is painful. But in this case I do not wish to go further than Chi. Narandas would like and so I have loosened the reins. If, now, Radha works for payment, let her do so.

You, on your part, should always tell me what you think right and, in all matters in which you may exercise your freedom, you should do so. If you act thus, you will feel that your burden of responsibility has become much lighter. After having taken certain steps, never enter into a discussion about them with anyone. It is another matter if you explain the matter to me, when that is necessary. Instead of comparing yourself with anyone, consult your *antaratman*¹; when that is pleased, when your actions or words are not prompted by partiality or aversion, have no fear at all.

About Shanabhai your decision should be accepted as final. I have written to Shankerlal to see you in connection with the weaving section and decide everything in consultation with you. It is three days since I wrote to him. I agree with your view of the matter. All that remains to consider is how to solve the difficulties that may arise in doing what you suggest. Since the problem has come up, I will solve it once for all.

The news that Kusumbehn still gets fever worries me. I think the fact that I have not brought her with me is also a contributory cause of the fever. Mental agitation aggravates every disease. I have observed that its effect is more pronounced in malaria and similar diseases. She has remained behind, though she was extremely eager this time to accompany me. I do believe that from her own and from every other point of view it was desirable that she should remain there. That is why I insisted that she should stay behind.

Here Chhotalal has once again been confined to bed. In his case, too, the mind has had an important share. He has made other mistakes too. The bakery here is ready, but the first lot of bread turned out was not good. How is bread-making progressing there?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro — 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 20-1

¹ Inner self

426. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Thursday, December 6, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

How is this? Fever again? Mental agitation is certainly a contributory cause. I have even left with Ramniklalbhai some Italian pills. If they do not have an adverse effect on you, you should take them for some time. Many persons take these pills in place of quinine. You were probably present when Motilalji praised them. It was he who sent those with Ramniklalbhai. Use them and see if they help you. If you do not wish to take them, I believe you must take quinine for some days. If you take Kuhne bath at the same time, the toxic effects of quinine, if not altogether counteracted, will at any rate be mitigated. My further advice is that, till you are completely all right, that is, for ten days at least, you should live only on milk and fruit. Spend as much as you like. In cases like yours, exclusion of fruit from the diet should be regarded as a crime. You know that during the first spell of fever also it was fruit which had helped you. I assume that you will do what I have suggested.

While the fever is on and as long as the weakness persists, do not be too eager to do physical work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1763

427. TELEGRAM TO KHADI SHOP, SRINAGAR

December 7, 1928

KHADI SHOP

SRINAGAR

YOUR WIRE. KHADI BHANDARS FREE TAKE PART
EXHIBITION.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

428. TELEGRAM TO BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

December 7, 1928

BANARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. ACCEPT PRESIDESHIP ON CONDITION SAMMELAN
MORE BUSINESSLIKE THAN SPECTACULAR.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

429. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

WARDHA,

December 7, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your two letters. The last enclosing a copy from Subhas Bose. But before he wrote I had already capitulated on the receipt of Dr. Bidhan's letter copy of which is in your possession together with my answer. You will have seen that I have also sent instructions to khadi organizations to take part in the Exhibition in so far as at this late time in the day, it is possible for them to do so.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT MOTILALJI NEHRU

ANAND BHAVAN, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13774

430. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,

December 7, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I know the difficulties you raise, but this is again a case of self-suppression. I have said my say. We simply take such part in the Exhibition as is possible and with such detachment as we are capable of.¹ It is quite clear that the Committee had expected to

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 13-12-1928.

make a good deal out of mill-cloth exhibition and therefore it is a great thing from their standpoint to have done away with mill-cloth.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13775

431. LETTER TO AKSEL G. KNUDSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND

I wish indeed that I could at once comply with your request. But it is really almost a physical impossibility. The word ‘almost’ is a polite superfluity. Whilst therefore you have my good wishes, you will please excuse me. But you may select anything you like from my writings for your journal.

Yours sincerely,

AKSEL G. KNUDSEN
BREDGADE
90 SKERN, DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 13776

432. LETTER TO BHAGWAN DAS

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I hope by proper treatment you may yet get rid of your tuberculosis.

I send you a copy of *Navajivan*. If you wish to become a subscriber, you can do so. And if you are able to read Gujarati, why do you not write in Gujarati?

We are trying here for freedom as much as possible.

Yours sincerely,

BHAGWAN DAS, ESQ.
C/O AUSTRALIA-INDIA LEAGUE
SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

From a photostat: S.N. 15073

433. *LETTER TO CARLO LUCCARO*

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am sorry to have left upon you the impression when you came to see me that I was not pleased to receive you. You had come outside the time for visitors and therefore I was unable to give you much time.

Yours sincerely,

CARLO LUCCARO, ESQ.

TAORMINA

SICILY, ITALY

From a photostat: S.N. 15087

434. *LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH*

December 7, 1928

I have your letter subscribed also by Satyavan. Of course you will wear exactly what you like instead of my musts and must-nots. Do keep on smiling.

I am just now in Wardha. Mirabehn has come here to see me. She will presently be on the move again. Ba is with me. We are all well.

I hope both of you are happy there. You must be happy.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. FRANCISCA STANDENATH

GRAZ

From a photostat: S.N. 15091

435. LETTER TO KLAAS STORM

December 7, 1928

MY DEAR STORM¹,

Every letter that comes from you gives me delight and pleasure. I am so glad that you are getting on so well. I was delighted to have the card containing a portrait of your teacher and his family.

Do continue to write to me from time to time.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15107

436. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

December 7, 1928

MY DEAR BHAI,

I have your letter as also the contribution to the Maganlal Memorial. I do not know what other object to commend to your attention. There is of course the untouchability work and there is women'[s] work and there is the general national education work. There is tannery in terms of cow-protection, Hindi propaganda, agricultural improvement; these are the spending departments apart from the activities that can be properly called political. For me the foregoing constructive activities are an integral part of solid political work. The other, that is, the destructive type is absolutely useful and necessary, but it takes up the least part of my time.

What you tell me about Leon does surprise me. With the strictly abstemious life free of excitement that Millie lived when she was bearing Waldo and Leon and the hygienic and natural upbringing that the two boys had, I cannot understand the premature death of Waldo and the trouble with Leon. I suppose that the deadly poisonous atmosphere of London is responsible for shattering even such splendid constitutions as those of your boys. I am glad that Leon has recovered from the serious part of the disease and I hope that he will regain his hearing completely. How I wish it was possible to give Leon an open air life instead of the wretched solicitor's desk.

I am glad you were successful about British Guiana.

The model of the Welsh spinning-wheel had not arrived when I

¹ A trainee in the House of Brotherhood in Holland, an institution which was opened to carry on peace propaganda by Kees Bocke, an engineer and missionary

acknowledged it. It did arrive safely for which many thanks. I have at the Ashram a full wheel of that type. It was sent by some German friend.

The calf incident has provided me with much instruction and an equal amount of amusement. It has thrown on me a tremendous amount of work in that I have to go through dozens of letters or rather essays on ahimsa. The majority of which were not in ahimsa but *himsa* tone. I do not know that I ever held a different view from the one I have now expressed though I had not as clear a perception of it as I seem to have now. You may not remember that when West brought to me a cat whose head was full of maggots and was living in tortures, I endorsed his suggestion that the poor animal's life should be ended by drowning and it was done immediately. And at the Ashram too I allowed Maganlal to destroy rabid dogs.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15108

437. LETTER TO V. G. TCHERKOFF¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,²

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I hope in the near future to deal with the objections so gently raised by you. Even if I don't convince you in the reply that I may attempt, you will please believe me that expediency³, as I understand the word, has no place in my scheme of life. Whatever I have done in connection with war I have done believing it to have been my duty for the moment.

Yours sincerely,

V. G. TCHERKOFF, ESQ.

PRESIDENT, MOSCOW VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

OULITZA OGAREVA 12, MOSCOW 9, U.S.S.R.

From a photostat: S.N. 15109

¹ A friend and follower of Tolstoy whose 'objections' were dealt with by Gandhiji in *Young India*, under the title "My Attitude towards War", 7-2-1929

² Permanent address

³ The source however has 'experience'.

438. LETTER TO GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,¹

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your book² came into my hands long before your letter. It came with several requests from friends to read it. I have been carrying it with me in the hope of snatching a few moments to be able to read it, but I have not yet succeeded in finding the time. As soon as I do, I shall certainly read the book and let you have my opinion.

Yours sincerely,

M. GERTRUDE MARVIN WILLIAMS
35 EAST 30TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY
From a photostat: S.N. 15111

439. LETTER TO A. MIRBEL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,³

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was a perfect pleasure to receive your letter in such good English. I have no difficulty about understanding what you wrote.

Mirabehn is just at present with me, but she has decided for the time being to travel from village to village in the several provinces of India with a view to understanding still more fully the message of khadi as also to assist the khadi movement with the technical knowledge that she has now gained.

Any little thing that you can send for babies will be accepted with grateful pleasure.

Mrs. Gandhi, Devdas and all the rest are quite well.

I am glad that you are trying to observe *brahmacharya*. I am at present staying in the Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha, which is a branch of the parent body. I return to Sabarmati in January.

Yours sincerely,

A. MIRBEL
126 RUE DE DOUAI, LITTLE NORD (FRANCE)
From a photostat: S.N. 15112

¹ Permanent address

² *Vide* "Letter to f. B. Fisher", 26-10-1928

³ *ibid*

440. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,¹

December 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter as also copy of the Macmillan Company's. I must confess that I do not like the tone of their letter. But I suppose they cannot look at this transaction in any other light but that of a business job, whereas I think I have told you I have never entered into any business transactions about my writings. Nor did I enter into this transaction from any pecuniary motive.

Mr. Andrews is in direct correspondence with you and between you two you may do what you can with the Macmillan Company.

The Macmillan Company are mistaken in thinking that the autobiographical articles will be handed to them in a compressed form. When the chapters come to an end, they will be handed to them just as they are. For I should not have the leisure to compress them, and even if I tried, I should not know how to do so for the Western reader.

I am forwarding copy of your letter to Mr. Andrews.

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY
From a photostat: S.N. 15122

441. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,²

December 7, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. I think I sent you a copy of the letter from the Macmillan Company, but not that of the letter from Rev. Holmes. I am now sending you copies of both in order to avoid any mistake. You will enter into communication with Holmes and do whatever you like. Personally I don't want anything from the transaction and, if you can get something for the Pearson Memorial, by all means get it.

You will see from my letter³ to Holmes that I do not like at all

¹ Permanent address

² *ibid*

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

the manner in which the Macmillan Company are looking at this transaction. But I suppose they cannot look at it in any other way.

I am keeping fairly well. If you are going to British Guiana, Fiji and South Africa, I don't suppose you will be back before the middle of next year. But I don't mind that if you will promise to keep well and return stronger and healthier.

Love.

MOHAN

ENCL. 3

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

112 GOWER STREET, LONDON W. C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 2631

442. LETTER TO MESSRS LONGMANS GREEN & CO., LTD.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,

December 8, 1928

MESSRS LONGMANS GREEN & CO., LTD.

BOMBAY

DEAR SIRS,

I note what you say in your letter dated 3rd December that you do not publish or sell Morris' *Imperialism*. I should however thank you to let me know whether you could procure it for me from some other book-seller, or let me know its publisher's name as also whether it is likely to be available from any other bookseller in India.

In the mean time I should feel obliged if you could send me per V.P.P. at your earliest convenience the following books:

1. Lambert's *Imperialism*
2. Adam's *Law of Civilization and Decay*

I would also request you to send me a free catalogue of books on cotton and cotton industry.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 15113

443. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Saturday [December 8, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You should go on patiently doing what you can.

The Hasmukhrai chapter does not surprise me. In outbursts of enthusiasm he wishes to do many things, but cannot do them. I would advise you not to entrust him with outdoor work. If he becomes engrossed in the industrial activities of the Ashram, he will probably forget other things. Let him leave whenever he wishes to. I have no doubt that he is a really good man.

If Shardabehn can sincerely and wholly dedicate herself to service, I would regard the mistakes she has made as the fruit of God's grace towards her. Certainly, she has ability. I am awaiting her letter.

If Radha is ready to work and if the family wishes to stay on, fix her pay. I cannot say whether, after my rather strong letter, they will stay. I expected Radha's letter today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written² to you regarding Kusumbehn. If you feel that by being forced to remain there she will become weaker day by day and if she is very keen on going over here, let her come.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 22

444. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,

Saturday, December 8, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

You never get well how is that? If your only wish is to come to me and if you think you will get well then please do come. I have written to Bhai Chhaganlal [Joshi] about it.³ But think about

¹ As in the source

² *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 6-12-1928.

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

Prabhavati. At present, however, your first duty is to take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1764

445. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After *December 8, 1928*]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I both like and do not like your suggestion. I like it if Santok, Radha and Rukhi have their heart in the Ashram, if they can tolerate a simple life and like the common kitchen. If, however, they are ready to identify themselves with the Ashram, they should indeed have faith in its ideals and try to live within Rs. 12. They could tell me if they found the sum too small. We would certainly not let anyone fall ill and die. If there is excessive expenditure on account of Manjula, it is certainly not Kashi who will meet the excess. What I yearn to see in them is faith in the Ashram and readiness to live in poverty. I have not seen these in them, nor in others. When I don't see them in Santok and Radha and Rukhi, I naturally feel hurt. We should not allow the atmosphere in the whole Ashram to be spoiled because of their attitude. If the Ashram life does not suit the other inmates, they may leave it. If it does not suit Santok, even then the Ashram must provide for her maintenance. This is how I feel in the matter. But what you brothers say will be final with me. Even among the brothers, it is for you to think over the matter and guide the other brothers and me. I have already written² and explained that Radha should be paid a regular salary. I have written to her, but she has not yet replied to my letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Narandas Gandhine, p. 46

¹ From the reference to a regular salary to be paid to Radha, this letter seems to have been written after "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 8-12-1928.

² *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi," 8-12-1928.

446. NOTES¹

AN UNNATURAL FATHER

A young man has sent me a letter which can be given here only in substance. It is as under:

I am a married man. I had gone out to a foreign country. I had a friend whom both I and my parents implicitly trusted. During my absence he seduced my wife who has now conceived of him. My father now insists that the girl should resort to abortion; otherwise, he says that the family would be disgraced. To me it seems that it would be wrong to do so. The poor woman is consumed with remorse. She cares neither to eat nor to drink, but is always weeping. Will you kindly tell me as to what my duty is in the case?

I have published this letter with great hesitation. As everybody knows such cases are by no means unfrequent in society. A restrained public discussion of the question therefore does not seem to me to be out of place.

It seems to me clear as daylight that abortion would be a crime. Countless husbands are guilty of the same lapse as this poor woman, but nobody ever questions them. Society not only excuses them but does not even censure them. Then, again, the woman cannot conceal her shame while man can successfully hide his sin.

The woman in question deserves to be pitied. It would be the sacred duty of the husband to bring up the baby with all the love and tenderness that he is capable of and to refuse to yield to the counsels of his father. Whether he should continue to live with his wife is a ticklish question. Circumstances may warrant separation from her. In that case he would be bound to provide for her maintenance and education and to help her to live a pure life. Nor should I see anything wrong in his accepting her repentance if it is sincere and genuine. Nay, further, I can imagine a situation when it would be the sacred duty of the husband to take back an erring wife who has completely expiated for and redeemed her error.

THE TRAGEDY OF A YOUNG COUPLE

A young man writes:

I am fifteen years of age. My wife is seventeen. I am in a great fix. I was opposed to this ill-assorted union all along, but my father and my uncle instead of paying heed to my protest only flew into a temper and began to

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 9-12-1928. The translation is by Pyarelal.

scold me and call me names, and the father of the girl just for the personal satisfaction of securing a rich alliance married his child to me although I was at that time of tender age and younger than she. How stupid! And why could not my father leave me alone instead of forcing an incompatible match upon me and landing me into a pit? Could I have understood at that time the implications of the thing I would never have suffered myself to be married. But that is now all over and done. What would you now advise me to do?

The correspondent has given his name and address in full but wants the reply to be given to him through *Navajivan* as he is afraid that my letter may not be permitted to reach him. This is a deplorable state of things. My advice to this young man is that if he has the courage he should repudiate the marriage. For neither he nor the girl in question could possibly have had any idea of the vows that were administered to them at the *saptapadi*¹ ceremony when they were married. Since their marriage they have never lived together. It is up to the young man therefore to take his courage in both hands and brave the prospect of being driven out of his home as a result of his repudiation of the so-called marriage. And I would beseech the respective parents of the couple, if my words can reach them, to have pity on their innocent children and not to force a cruel tragedy upon them. A boy of fifteen is just a stripling. He should be going to school or attending a workshop, not be saddled with the duties of a householder. I hope the parents of the couple in question will wake up to a sense of their duty. If they do not, it will be the clear duty of the boy and the girl respectfully to disregard parental authority and follow the light of reason and conscience.

Young India, 3-1-1929

447. THE BLOOD-STAINED PATH

The Government and the Commission do not appear to be satisfied with the senseless beating up of Lalaji and his colleagues. It seems that the Central Government has adjudged the Punjab police to be innocent and given the latter a certificate to this effect. This has provided encouragement to the police in Lucknow, because, if the police in Lahore had no reason to assault Lalaji and his colleagues, the police in Lucknow had even less excuse for attacking Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues. And whereas the police in Lahore used only lathis, their counterparts in Lucknow were found to have used spears besides lathis against innocent and unarmed persons. Further, it

¹ An essential ritual in Hindu marriage; literally, 'seven steps'

also seems from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's account that they demonstrated their courage by showering stones on the people too. Two of these persons are in a critical condition.

In this manner, the Commission's path is stained with the blood of the innocent. The members of the Imperial Commission have, through country-wide strikes, black-flag demonstrations and processions, received due notice that the people do not welcome the Commission although it may have met with the approval of selected Government officials and a few peasants. Some witnesses too may go over to their side. It would be a matter of surprise if from among the population numbering crores in a vast country like India, a few people could not be found to welcome or assist the Commission. It is, however, clear that the majority of the people who take part in politics do not welcome it. The fact that, despite this, it goes round touring from one city to another amounts to nothing but an exhibition of authority. The Commission need not travel from one city to another in search of witnesses. Neither has it to conduct any police inquiry nor make any investigations on the spot, but merely to examine witnesses who have been nominated for that very purpose. It can do this task at smaller cost, with less trouble and without irritating the people who are sufficiently enraged. It looks, however, as if it is ashamed of following this course of action. It wants garden parties to be given for its members, it wants addresses of welcome and deputations to wait on it. All this pomp and show cannot be accomplished by remaining at one place.

However, if the Commission does not realize its limitations and if the Government does not wish to see any violation of law and order, the Government should serve a notice to the Commission, that the people are displeased by its arrival in various cities, that the majority of the people cannot tolerate its presence, that disturbances may break out in cities upon its arrival there, and that therefore it should work sitting at one place. If the Government issue such notice, the Commission would sit in one place but the Government does not wish to have a peaceful atmosphere; it wishes to exercise its authority. Hence it wishes to take round the Commission in procession from one city to another, even at the cost of suppressing the people.

And if my guess is correct, the warning that Pandit Motilal has given the Government will have little effect. Panditji's warning runs as follows: "Your Performance in Lucknow is such that, if any, disturbances now occur there or at any other place, your officers, who for the last three days have been behaving in an atrocious manner, will bear the sole responsibility for them." There is no doubt that despite the indignities perpetrated by these officers, despite the fact that

public leaders have been beaten up, the peaceful atmosphere that the people have maintained can be maintained in India alone. In any other part of the world outbreaks of violence would definitely follow such insults. Some people may well regard this as cowardly conduct. I believe that underlying this is the people's training in peaceful conduct. It is my belief that the people have, to some extent, learnt the lesson of peace which they are being taught since the year 1920. Both the Pandits—father and son—have drawn the very same conclusion and in their speeches have laid emphasis on the need for peace.

If the inferences drawn by Pandit Motilal, Pandit Jawaharlal and me are correct, the peace that has been maintained in Lucknow and Lahore is a good sign. We shall get our verdict much sooner than is generally believed. That verdict may be one which is delivered peacefully or otherwise. The present state of suspense is not going to last long. However, it is also evident that swaraj cannot be secured by the leaders merely suffering blows. There is no alternative before the public but to make great sacrifices, whether violent or non-violent. It is my prayer to God that the people may make sacrifices for upholding the pledge of non-violence which they took in 1920, so that India will gain a prime place in world history in lessons of peace. This so because this world which is filled with violence sorely needs peace, and if today there is any country on the horizon which can show the path of peace it is only India.

While thinking of the blood-stained journey of the Commission, there is one painful fact which is a matter of shame and should not, cannot, be overlooked. Perhaps it may be regarded as something understandable that the insult to the people does not have any effect on the Commission's British members. But it is a matter of shame and sorrow that those Indians who have been appointed subsidiary members of the Commission are putting up with this insult and holding on to their positions. We can see a reflection of our own weaknesses in the behaviour of these members. They are aware that members of all prominent political parties in India have boycotted the Commission. How will the people be able to forget the fact that they have ignored such a boycott?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-12-1928

448. GOOD CARDING

At one time the processing of cotton had become so very common that in all the languages of the world many proverbs and figures of speech which were based on it came into use. If anyone is hypercritical, we say to him: 'You spin yarn which is too fine.' If anyone goes on talking uselessly and is also critical of others, we say: 'Why do you keep carding in this manner?' This indicates that in the art of spinning and carding people knew exactly when the limits had been exceeded either way. As we have forgotten that knowledge today, we have also forgotten the many subtle verbal usages in our language drawn from the processing of cotton. Now as that activity is being revived, those who regard it as a sacrificial act are trying to exalt it as well and are engaged day and night in thinking out ways and means of improving and expanding it. They are aware of the fact that, along with these additions and improvements, the capacity is being gained to supplement the meagre income of the poor. With this idea in view, one who spins in order to serve writes:¹

Till now I myself was under the impression that cotton could be carded well only by drying it. This correspondent is an experienced person. He has made a careful study of the art of carding cotton. He teaches others and I find his argument well grounded. Hence this letter of his has been published in order that we may learn from the experience of experts like him. I hope that those who are interested in such activities and those who spin regularly will write of their experiences and I suggest that those who spin for sacrificial purposes should imitate the interest taken in this activity by the above writer. Those who perform their sacrificial acts should not do so merely as an onerous duty to be done with; they would take the greatest interest in the activity if they hoped to have daily *darshan* of God in it; they would make it more interesting and would be sorry if they were prevented or had to refrain from doing that activity on any particular day. I have seen devoted Vaishnavas worshipping their Master. Every day they add some adornment to the image. They prepare many kinds of delicacies as offerings and feel upset if while travelling or due to ill health they cannot perform this worship. They either give up all food or at least subsist on the very minimum until they can perform their worship. Nowadays ostentation, false pride and the desire to enjoy oneself have crept into it and it has become part of this worship.

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had condemned the common practice of drying cotton in the sun prior to carding.

That form of worship has therefore become the subject of adverse criticism and those performing it instead of purifying themselves very often suffer from lack of character. Such rituals which have originated in the purest of sentiments are being continuously misused in the world. Hence Narasinh Mehta has sung:

What if one has put on a caste mark or worn a string of *tulsi* beads? What if one counts one's beads and repeats the name of God? All these are merely tricks to earn one's living.

May the great sacrifice of spinning never fall into disrepute. This depends on the purity and understanding of those who perform it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-12-1928

449. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

WARDHA,
December 9, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I got your letter. I have no doubt that your experience will prove very useful. I have some share in Mrityunjaya's¹ foolishness. He asked me whether he could write to me to inquire if he would get an agency in case some newspaper reporters accompanied me. I thought there was no harm. I had never expected such a long business letter. How can I protest now that this is too sharp a thrust?

Trivedi had sent to me, about a month ago, the original of the extract he has sent to you. I have preserved it for use on an appropriate occasion.

I have gone through the portion about the spinning-wheel in R. B.'s speech. I will make use of it.

It would be surprising if Vallabhbai did not do what he asked others to do. He is out to win swaraj through Bardoli, and he can succeed in that only if he identifies himself completely with the cause. Tell him that before asking you to learn riding he himself should do that. He is not too old for it.

My health is fairly good. In my experiment, which I am carrying on with great caution, I have now included milk of almond and fruits. Your forgetting to send the wire to Karsandas² is certainly unpardonable. I had to suffer much for your lapse. Karsandas was in extreme distress. Surajbehn did not receive help when she needed it

¹ Son of Rajendra Prasad

² Vide "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 5-12-1928.

urgently. But I have always forgiven even unpardonable lapses by you. Hence I forgive this too. Please do not make such a mistake again. In future, even if such a task is entrusted by me, you may tell me that you would be happier not to be burdened with it when you had come to spend only a day or two with me. I remember now that there was no one in the verandah at that time except you, and so I placed the wire in your hand. But do not grieve over the matter now. I have dwelt on it at this length only in order that you may be careful in future. You had also forgotten to give my message to Shantikumar, but that was about a small matter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11440

450. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,

Sunday, December 9, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. In a sense your inference is correct. At present, I may be said to be busier than I used to be there. I do not get up early in the morning. I go to bed before nine in the evening. However, I used to have some leisure when I was there. Here, on the other hand, I am all the time writing or dictating something, with my head bent low, and even then I can hardly cope with the work. Of course I do not let the work exceed my strength. It cannot weigh me down with worries. I do the best I can. As a rule I go out for a walk twice a day. In this matter I am able to follow the rule more regularly here.

You ought to improve your health. Do not for any reason miss the benefit of milk and fruit. For the present, live only on these two. If, in addition, you take a little quinine daily, you should not get fever again. For some time eat nothing which is of no benefit to your body.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1765

451. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Sunday [December 9, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI

Your letter. Mrityunjaya's letter mentioned Friday as the probable day of your leaving for Dwarka. But having waited for a day and knowing well your nature, I have written.

Do only as much as you can. Do not fall ill through your desire to work to excess. Half the period is over now. I hope to come in January. Learn the rest from the letter to Kusum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3323

452. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Sunday [December 9, 1928]²

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You need not be in a panic if Lakshmidas or Mahadev cannot go over there. After all, it is for the Secretary to shoulder the burden.

I can understand Lakshmidas's view of our relation with the Spinners' Association.³ Both the views, yours and his, can be supported, but your view will be regarded as final since it will be for you to carry out the arrangements decided upon. Whatever arrangements are preferred by the person in charge of a piece of machinery must be made. But the important thing, as I see from here, is that there should be harmonious relations between you and Narandas.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I also feel that Shardabehn's letter is not clear. If you have a talk with her, you will be able to understand her mind better.

¹ From the reference to letter to Kusum Desai; *vide* the preceding item.

² As in the source

³ The relation of the Ashram with the office of the Spinners' Association located in the Ashram

See that you do not imitate others and attempt anything beyond your strength. Take as much milk and other things in your food as you require. God protects my life, for my experiments are inspired from within. What you attempt will be at present imitation. Your duty is to build a strong body with whatever food is necessary for the purpose and to devote yourself to your work. My experiments have not, so far, come in the way of my work. On the contrary, I believe, that they have helped it, for I have gained through them serenity of mind.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 23

453. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 9, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I have credited into the Lalaji Memorial Fund the cheque which you sent.

I see no need for sending the Parsi or the Irish lady to the Ashram. It will suffice if they write out the various methods of making biscuits which they know. Even though no ghee or oil may have been added, the biscuits must be light.

I read in the *Times*¹ about the 6th or 7th (December), a review of a pamphlet about how to recognize poisonous snakes. I forget the author's name. The review appeared in the "Current Topics". If you can get the pamphlet there, please send a copy.

In regard to Sumant, Shankerlal writes and tells me that it is not necessary to publish any statement about him in newspapers. He has been dismissed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have got the name of the book:

Poisonous Terrestrial Snakes of British India and How to Recognize Them by Colonel Wall issued by the Bombay Natural History Society.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4790-a. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji.

¹ *The Times of India*

454. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before December 10, 1928]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a newspaper which contains a report about the Hyderabad State and also a letter from Babu Rupanarayan. I have taken an extract from the report which was relevant to my purpose and drafted a note² and sent it for publication in *Young India*. In my note I have also given a framework of the co-operative scheme advocated by Rupababu. Read it and think over the matter and write to me if you wish to suggest any changes.

As regards spinning yarn of five counts, why do you say that we cannot spin yarn of over 20 counts? If you do not get there cotton of the required quality for spinning fine yarn, we get here any quantity of cotton grown from American seed. These days I spin yarn of not less than 30 counts. I find no difficulty in doing so. I do not get even tired in carding the cotton. I hardly take 15 minutes to card $\frac{3}{4}$ tola weight of cotton and making a sliver from it. I spin yarn of 30 counts from that sliver. I, therefore, require only $\frac{3}{8}$ of a tola weight of cotton. I have not got the strength of the yarn tested yet. I have told Chhotelal to get it tested. It may not perhaps come to much, but it should be good enough after some experience. That we should spin fine yarn is an old idea of mine. I believe that we should wear whatever coarse khadi we can get and should spin fine yarn and give it to those who require it. Think over this.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Narandas Gandhine, p. 48

¹ From the reference to Gandhiji spinning yarn of 30 counts and not having got the strength of the yarn tested, the letter seems to have been written before "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 11-12-1928.

² *Vide* "Khadi in Hyderabad State", 20-12-1928.

455. A MESSAGE

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your wire and letter were received simultaneously. Here is the message:

“Our patience is proverbial. Let it not be said by the future generations it was the patience of the coward.”

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14609

456. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. Do you remember that you received a letter from Bareilly suggesting that there should be a separate department for khadi propaganda and that you sent that letter to me? I thereupon wrote in *Young India* on this subject. In response to that, I received one or two hundred rupees. Ever since that time, I have been thinking about the subject of propaganda. But, then, who would undertake this work? As I reflected over this problem, I thought of you. You are already doing something in Bombay. Moreover, you know from experience about the kinds of khadi produced in the country. Probably, therefore, you will understand what propaganda work needs to be done and you will be able to do it. That is why I asked you because you understand more about the problem [than others are likely to do].

If you still do not follow me, please write to me.

I have not yet been able to finish the article about Kashmir.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9766

457. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 10, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter. It is good that you have started taking quinine every day. What about hip-baths? It is very necessary to take them. They will definitely counteract the toxic effects of quinine.

You can accept service from Kanti¹. One who is always ready to serve may certainly accept service from others. This will do for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1766

458. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

SISTERS,

I have the letter written on your behalf.

You will get information about me from the letter written to the whole Ashram.

All that is required to put a stop to the noise in the kitchen is a firm determination. Once you make such a determination the noise will definitely cease.

If you are not at home with your kitchen work as yet, let me remind you that you cannot think of doing any other for another year. It is best therefore that you make up your mind to like your work.

But the painful incident that has just occurred must set all of you thinking. The incident is not now a secret and it should not be hidden. Therefore I want to discuss it here. Not one but at least three of you were involved in it. It is needless to point the finger of scorn at any of these three because all of us, whether men or women, might be guilty of such misconduct at some time or other or have already been guilty; I want you to learn two lessons from this incident. In the first place we must stick to our kitchen work for it is through it that we came to know about the misconduct. If we live in the shelter of

¹ Harilal Gandhi's son

a home, we can never know our capacity for sin. We realize the extent of it only when a suitable opportunity presents itself. Here such an opportunity occurred, aided by [bad] company. The result was the emergence of the latent sin. The kitchen has in this way proved useful. Secondly there was not enough courage to do things openly, so theft and lying were resorted to. Why should we not do a thing we want to do boldly? Why should we be afraid of appearing as we actually are?

If we like tasty food, why hide the fact? Craving for tasty dishes is no sin. The sin lies in hiding the craving and in secretly indulging in it. Everyone, man or woman, is at liberty to eat whatever he or she desires. That was one of our objects in converting the Satyagraha Ashram into an Udyoga Mandir. Anyone may satisfy his craving for good food, the only restriction is that the good food must be prepared in the common kitchen. None should cook delicacies whether secretly or openly in one's private rooms. One may go out and eat a delicacy at a friend's place, there is nothing to hide in this, or one may keep eatables such as dried fruits and so on in one's room. It is better if such freedom is not availed of, though there is no restriction on such freedom. My earnest request to you is this: Always appear what you really are; whatever you do, do it openly. Never allow yourselves to be unduly influenced by another; if you ever promise to do a thing, never act contrary to it.

Everyone that does kitchen work must strictly follow her routine. It does not look as though you had as yet been able to remove the fears of Gangabehn senior. Every single activity in the kitchen must go on regularly like clockwork.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3684

459. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 10, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

I think all of you would like me to give in my weekly letter the details of my experiments in diet. I started feeling considerably weak from the last Wednesday or Thursday. As I had told you, I did not wish to persist in my experiments if I lost weight because of them. Vinoba, too, felt a little unhappy, for he saw my weakness; the weight also had gone down. On Friday, I started taking oranges and other fruits and included in the diet almond-milk. My weight was taken yesterday and it had increased by one pound. The weakness had begun to disappear from the very day that I included almond-milk and fruits in the diet; there is no trace of it now. I still see, therefore, no need to include milk. I have continued oil. I see no harm done to anyone here through it. The loss of weight and the weakness may be ascribed to no other cause but the sudden reduction of protein in my diet. The only things which are excluded now are milk and ghee. My objection is especially to goat's milk. If I can give it up, I shall have peace of mind. I have no aversion to fruits, fresh or dry. In giving them up I was prompted only by the consideration of expense. I will not, however, insist on excluding either at the cost of my health. All of you will see that the results so far are beneficial. Nevertheless, I wish to make no predictions about the outcome of the experiment. We can judge nothing in fifteen days. We can come to some conclusion only if the same condition is maintained for three months. Let no one, therefore, give up milk in a fit of enthusiasm. But anyone who wishes to try the effect of milk and linseed oil may do so. It is the experience of many here, including of course Pyarelal and Chhotelal, that fresh oil is harmless. It has done Pyarelal and Chhotelal no harm whatever. Subbiah has joined them now, and so has Vasumatibehn. These two have not been in the experiment for many days. It seems, however, that linseed oil, if anyone wishes to experiment with its use, must be fresh. It should not be warmed. You may get the seeds pressed in *ghani*¹ there. The oil can be sent from here, but the railway freight is excessive. If sent by goods train, it will take a long time to reach there. You can instal a *ghani* for about Rs. 100, or Rs. 150. But the best course just now is to arrange with the owner of a

¹ Indigenous oil-mill

ghani in the city. Of course I do not insist that this matter be taken up. We experience many difficulties, and they will remain; that is why I merely set down here the effects of excluding ghee and make a suggestion about how to get the oil. Two other effects of the oil have been observed, and they are these: it acts as a laxative and stimulates appetite. It is Pyarelal's experience that, instead of weakening, it stimulates appetite. It is the experience of the people here that it acts as a laxative. Personally I can say nothing positive about its having such an effect.

And now another subject.

The noise in the kitchen there must stop. I expect to see this outward reform when I return there. It should not be difficult for anyone never to speak, unless quite necessary, while eating. It should also not be difficult to keep the children quiet.

My second suggestion is that some restriction should be placed on the quantity of vegetables served. Whatever the vegetable that is cooked, the quantity per head should not exceed 10 tolas. According to medical science, more than this quantity of green vegetable is not required. I hear that attendance at prayers is again becoming thinner. It should not be necessary for me to explain at this hour of the day that no one should expect someone else to stimulate his or her interest in prayers. The interest should be felt within. As the body needs food and feels hungry, so the soul needs and feels hungry for prayer. Prayer is a form of communication with God. So long as our need for attendance at prayers is not the same as that for attendance at meals, for which we require no one to goad us, so long our faith in God is weak; or, though we subscribe to the rules of the Ashram we do not observe them and to that extent we are unfaithful to it and violate the vow of truth. Anyone who realizes this will not remain absent at prayers—whether morning or evening—without some strong reason.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 24-6

460. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 10, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

On Mondays I write letters in the early morning. The post comes later. I have got today's.

The more attentively you listen to the *antaratman*, the purer will your decisions be, you will become purer, more fearless and calmer, and your health too will improve.

I have written to Vidyavatibehn and told her that. . .¹ [of] Berua², who is a votary of truth, will never disappoint me.

Even the fanciful experiments of Prabhudas³ do not displease me. If nobody else, I shall help to get his woollen khadi sold. Acquaint him from time to time with your views and those of Narandas.

Chhotelal has now recovered. If only he would agree, I would send him away. He is a bit conceited and often interferes with affairs for which he has little aptitude. I am patient with him because he is a lover of truth and *brahmacharya*. Though violent by nature, he sincerely believes in non-violence. I see his many weaknesses every day, still I think well enough of him to be patient with him. And so we cling to each other.

I hope the bread which you make there is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 26-7

461. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day, December 10, 1928

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. Please do not spoil your health by working beyond your strength. And do not feel hurt whether others work or do not work or whether they respect you or insult you. Only when you can do this can it be said that your *tapascharya* in the kitchen has succeeded. As you become less sensitive, the work will be done more smoothly and others, too, will help you. Acknowledge whatever help they give. If you see insincerity and false show in anyone, non-co-operate with that person.

How many persons take their meals in the kitchen these days? Do you run short of milk? Do all the persons come for the meals in

¹ As in the source

² Name of a village in U. P.

³ Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi

time? Is there a little more quiet now? Are you gaining on weight? I put on one pound during this week.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 16

462. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 10, 1928

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. The experiment¹ I am conducting was necessary for my mental peace; I am careful [about it].

On the 20th I leave this place for Sambalpur. I shall reach Calcutta on the 23rd. I hope to reach the Ashram in January.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What shall I do about the Fund?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2361

463. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

WARDHA,

December 10, 1928

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Your club has grown. You have elected a little boy as president and appointed another little boy secretary. Now bring lustre to your club and let the president and the secretary be worthy of their positions.

Do remember this: 1. Never depart from truth in whatever you do. 2. Always maintain cleanliness and tidiness. Know the difference between cleanliness and tidiness. A pupil who washes his towel preserves cleanliness. But if he then puts it anywhere crumpled up he is not tidy. Tidiness means that as soon as the towel has dried it should be properly folded and carefully put in its place.

¹ Of giving up milk and taking almond-milk, oil and fruits; *vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 10-12-1928.

3. Whether you are in the school-room or in the kitchen, for us both are school, and therefore there should be no noise in either place.

4. Keep the rule in everything.

5. Everyone should go for physical exercise and do it according to his capacity.

6. The *yajna* of spinning should be performed everyday. Spinning includes carding. I have suggested to Nara Ondasbhai that everyone should spin yarn of 30 counts.¹ There is a great demand for yarn of that count and we should be able to meet it.

Blessings form

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/35

464. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

WARDHA ,

December 10, 1928

CHI. DURGABEHN² (BALMANDIR),

What have you done? Will you pass the test when I come there? Have you stopped bring troublesome in class? Are everybody's eyes, ears and nails kept clean? Like the body, do you also keep the mind clean? We should not speak untruth even if we have to die. Do you remember that story about the axe of gold? Do you understand that truth is a million times more precious than an axe of gold?

Let those who are creating noise in the kitchen raise their hands and promise not to do so in future and keep the promise.

The boys and girls ought not to quarrel with one another. The older children should never harass the younger ones. What more may I write?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/38

¹ Vide "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 10-12-1928

² Daughter of Dalbahadur Giri

465. *LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA*

WARDHA ,
December 10, 1928

BHAI SAHEB,

I was pained to learn from Ghanshyamdasji that you are being indifferent to your health. You have vowed to live long. You are not going before the attainment of freedom. Then, how is it that you are not taking the necessary care of your health?

I shall meet you in Calcutta.¹

Your younger brother,

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Hindi : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/39

466. *TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL ROY*

WARDHAGANJ,
December 11, 1928

MOTILAL ROY
CHANDERNAGORE

YOU HAVE NOT LOST BUT GAINED YOUR WIFE.
BEING DISEMBODIED SHE WILL CLAIM GREATER AFFECTION.
MAY YOU AND SHE HAVE PEACE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11036

467. *LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI*

WARDHA,
December 11, 1928

BHAISHRI CHHAGANLAL,

The issues of "Mandir Samachar" which I get are still illegible. If there is any defect in the machine, please get it repaired. If the fault lies with the person who takes out copies, find out what it is.

On getting my yarn tested, I find that its count is 30, evenness 93 and strength 68. These days the yarn I spin is uniformly of 30

¹ Where Gandhiji was to attend the Congress session in December

counts. I cannot draw more than 160 lengths an hour.

Are you now taking more cow's milk? Does everyone write his or her diary regularly?

I wrote this last night.

Tuesday

I have got your letter.

I questioned Keshu and he tells me that he did not write what you attribute to him. He merely described my condition and suggested that it would be better if Santok and others left the Ashram. I believe that in such matters Keshu keeps himself within limits. Whether or not he does, you should do your duty with firmness. I have stated my views clearly. Give them the facility which Chi. Narandas has suggested and then let them live as they choose.

Do not attach too much importance to what Shankerlal says. That is his manner of speaking. We should admit, however, that there is some truth in what he says and remove our shortcomings.

The members of every institution which has acquired prestige in society tend to become proud. We are not free from this defect. I shall not, however, feel hurt if the office of the Spinners' Association is finally removed from the Ashram. Our aim is to carry a burden, to do our duty, and not to enjoy authority. When one burden becomes light, we may, if we have the necessary strength, accept another. If the khadi section of the Spinners' Association is removed from the Ashram and if we can lend to it the services of our men, we may do even that. But the position is this: the decision in the present case is to be arrived at jointly by you and Narandas. If you two can unite as milk and sugar mix and become one, the department will work and be a success. If there is a gulf between you, it will never work. In that case, it may as well be removed from the Ashram. I am neutral in this matter.

There is no harm if the totals of the entries in regard to spinning are read on Friday. None of us understood whom you meant by Makarani¹.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not read the letter after finishing it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 27-8

¹ A woman belonging to Makarana community in Saurashtra; Gandhiji had given this name to Ramabehn, the addressee's wife. *Vide* also "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 20-12-1928.

468. LETTER TO KUSUM AND PRABHAVATI

December 11, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter, and Prabhavati's too. Take this letter as meant for both of you. There is little time now before the post is cleared and I have plenty of work lying before me. You have not done right in stopping oranges. It will do you good even if you take them for a week. I think they are necessary for your health, and there is no doubt that they suit you. Papaya cannot take the place of oranges. Lemon and honey do, but only in some degree, as I see from my own experience here.¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I understand what you say about yourself too. There was a letter from Vidyavati today. I wrote to her a long letter only yesterday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1767

¹ What follows was written in Hindi.

469. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
Tuesday [December 11, 1928]¹

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your letter about Rajagopalachari. I like the suggestion. But it is difficult to say whether Rajaji's constitution will stand the strain of this work. Anyway I shall write to him.

How is your health now?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRIYUT GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE, CALCUTTA

From Hindi: C. W. 6163. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

470. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET

PARTY ABOUT TWENTYFIVE CAN EASILY STAY
TENTS. BUT PLEASE LET ME ACCEPT JIWANLAL'S
HOSPITALITY.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

¹ This letter is presumably the reply to the addressee's letter of December 8, requesting Gandhiji to induce C. Rajagopalachari to accept the position of the Honorary General Secretary of the Prohibition League of India, in succession to Rev. Herbert Anderson.

471. A LETTER¹

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have now gone through the copy of the memorandum signed by you all. I have explained what I consider to be the implications of truth and ahimsa. In the memorandum you mention non-co-operation of the Congress which is based on ahimsa, and you mention in the eighth article ahimsa and *satya* as the foundations of religion and yet I saw in our discussion that some of you believe in both truth and non-violence as a policy or, if you like, a temporary creed obligatory only whilst you were attached to the national schools. I have endeavoured to show you that national schools whose foundation is truth and ahimsa cannot be built up when the teachers are half-hearted even regarding the very foundation. At the critical moment they are bound to fail. While, therefore, I honour you for your convictions and the brave manner in which you have stated them, I want you to appreciate my difficulty in trying to find financial support for your institution in any extraordinary manner. It must be also, I suggest, then a matter of honour for you whether you would ask for or accept money through one who is absolutely wedded to truth and ahimsa and for whom they are not a temporary creed but matters of life and death.

In the circumstances, I would like you to consider the whole position and you discuss amongst yourselves what you would have me to do and then Sjt. Tijaray and others who do not believe in truth and ahimsa as their final creed should come over to Wardha and discuss the thing with me and come to a final conclusion. My desire is to help the school to the best of my ability. But I see that there is a moral difficulty which I had not foreseen.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13781

¹ A. R. Tijaray, Principal of Tilak Vidyalaya, Nagpur, in his letter dated November 15, 1928, had invited Gandhiji to inaugurate the annual lecture series of the institution which were to be held between November 20 and 25, 1928. This letter seems to be addressed to the staff and students of the institution.

472. LETTER TO N. C. CHUNDER

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do hope that you are not going to drag me to the Indian National Social Conference.¹ In many respects though I am claimed as a social reformer, I am really a back number and perfectly useless.

In spite of the great weight attached to Sir Sivaswami Iyer's matured views, I am in no sympathy whatsoever with artificial birth-control methods advocated by him so energetically. You may not know that I oppose them uncompromisingly as I consider them to undermine the very moral foundations of society. But of course I have no desire whatsoever to engage in a platform controversy and air my views before the Social Conference. I would therefore ask you to put me out of sight and out of mind for the Social Conference.

Yours sincerely,

N. C. CHUNDER², ESQ.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13782

473. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

I had your letter and the cheque. I know you do not expect any letters from me, though you may write an occasional letter to me. I certainly like this one-sided arrangement.

But are you keeping better now? Are you stronger? I have certainly not been more ill than you had believed. As a matter of fact, the illness was only a slight derangement.

Do write to me whatever you like. Are you not coming to Calcutta? Or are you not strong enough? But, if you don't come, do write the promised long letter. I shall try to read it and I shall not

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Satyananda Bose", 9-11-1928.

² Chairman, Reception Committee of the Conference

attempt to reply to it unless there is something arising from it which I must say.

MISS NARGIS CAPTAIN
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13783

474. LETTER TO E. C. DEWICK

WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I was indeed sorry that I could not be with you in Mysore, but it was not possible. I tried but failed.

I would indeed be delighted to meet Dr. Mott¹. The only suitable time is likely to be between 7th to 15th January, 1929. So far as I am aware, at present, I am likely to be in Sabarmati during those dates, and, if I am, I should be delighted to receive Dr. Mott at the Ashram. It is however just likely that after Congress I might have to go to Burma when the whole of my programme will be disturbed.

My present dates are: up to the 20th at Wardha, from 23rd to the end of the year Calcutta. My Calcutta address would be C/o Sjt. Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

REV. E. C. DEWICK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13785

475. LETTER TO ROLAND J. WILD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I had hoped to be able to give you a reply in full. But I have not been able to get hold of the articles you sent me. I have not them by me in Wardha and I have just discovered that the cuttings that you were good enough to send me were passed on to the Austrian friends who have left India. If you could kindly send me the cuttings again, I would certainly tell you where, in my opinion, I was misrepresented, no doubt quite unconsciously, by you.

¹ Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the World Student Christian Federation

If you will send the cuttings to my present address at Wardha, I shall get them more quickly than if you send them to Sabarmati. I am in Wardha till the 20th instant and then go to Calcutta where my address is:

C/o Sjt. Jiwanlalbai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

ROLAND J. WILD, ESQ.

“THE CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE”, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13786

476. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,

December 12, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have been unconscionably long in replying to your letter. But I know that there was no hurry. In all my plans Jamnalalji is ever with me. I showed your letter to him and told him what I expected of you. He was delighted, but he asked me whether I had made clear to you what the Ashram life means. I told him I had so far as I knew and so far as I could. You know what it is. You know that the vow of *brahmacharya* is obligatory and there is only one kitchen at the Ashram, now Udyoga Mandir. Jamnalalji doubts whether your wife would be able to put up with the Ashram life as it has developed and is developing.¹

I would therefore like you to confer with your wife and make it absolutely plain to her. Go through every clause of the Ashram constitution which is binding on the Udyoga Mandir. For you to come to the untouchability work is to throw in your lot with the Ashram and make complete surrender to the cause for life, because the work is to be developed through a secretary who would give his whole time and attention to this one cause to the exclusion of everything else. Jamnalalji thinks that it is no use your coming to this work unless you think that the work will be sufficiently interesting for you to absorb your whole time, and that your wife would be in sympathy with your being so occupied. Please confer with her and let me know what

¹ In his letter dated November 14, 1928, the addressee had written: “I have consulted my wife about the terms of my future employment. . . . in the Ashram” (S.N. 13723).

conclusion you jointly come to.

I am here till 20th. I reach Calcutta 23rd instant where my address will be C/o Jiwanlalbhai, 44 Ezra Street, Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 890

477. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday, December 12, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

I understand your difficulty. We cannot suspend publication of the papers for a week. I am preparing from now on. I, therefore, don't think that it will be difficult to publish them. I count on three columns by you. May you win success after success there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11437

478. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

Wednesday [December 12, 1928]¹

CHI. KUSUM,

I got your letter and also Prabhavati's. Follow any treatment you like, but do recover and I shall be happy. I have no time to write more today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1768

¹ *Vide* also the following letter.

479. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Not Revised

December 12, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. There is no reason for panic. Write thus to your father-in-law:

“Your wish ought to be a command for me. My father wants me to act in accordance with your command. I am faced with a conflict of loyalties since your son keeps writing from America telling me to live in the Ashram and study. He also wants me to study English too very well. I am quite comfortable in the Ashram. Bapuji treats me like a daughter. Ba too is good to me. Arrangements have been made for my stay in the women’s section after Rajbanshi Deviji¹ leaves this place. I am quite safe in the women’s section. I therefore wish to stay in the Ashram as your son bids. But then I shall do as you say. And I may assure you that you need not worry on my account. While I live here I am quite alert, there are many women in the Ashram and I am on good terms with them all.”

You may, if necessary, improve upon the language. Inform your father also regarding the developments. Give all details to Mrityunjaya and send him a copy of your husband’s letter.

Whatever happens you should be unperturbed. Remember the *shloka*: “Hold alike pleasure and pain”², etc. Be courageous and recite Ramanama.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3342

¹ Wife of Rajendra Prasad and mother of Mrityunjaya

² *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 38

480. THE PITFALLS¹

Describing the incidents of Lucknow in a private letter Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes:

An incident which took place yesterday morning might interest you. I have not mentioned it in my statement. Soon after the mounted and foot police had driven us back near the station, a young man, whom I took to be a student, came to me and said that he could bring me two revolvers immediately if I wanted to use them. We had just experienced the baton and lathi charges and there was a great deal of anger and resentment in the crowd. I suppose he thought that it was a favourable moment to make the offer. I told him not to be foolish. Soon after I found out quite casually that this particular person was known to be in the C.I.D.

Pandit Jawaharlal was safe as he has no secrets. If he finds any use for revolvers in his scheme for the freedom of the country, he will not need the offer from the outsider to lend him one. He will carry it himself openly and use it effectively when in his opinion the occasion has arrived. So he was safe from the blandishments of the C.I.D. And what applies to Pandit Jawaharlal applies in a measure to all Congressmen. For happily the Congress politics abhor secrecy. Congressmen have ceased to talk with closed doors; they have shed the fear of the C.I.D.

But the C.I.D. will not be itself if it does not have emissaries whose business among other things it is to expose people to temptations and entrap them in the nets prepared for them. It is difficult to imagine an occupation more debasing and degrading than this, and yet it has been reduced to a science by the chief governments of the world and has attracted to it some of its cleverest brains. Britain takes perhaps the first place in this occupation. Lying in the C.I.D. is cultivated as a fine art. Ponsonby's² *Falsehood in War Time* gives a

¹ Gandhiji writing on the same subject in *Navajivan*, 16-12-1928, began thus: "Wherever we turn, the Government has cast their nets far and wide. We do fall into one or the other deadly traps. Some of them are open, some are concealed, and some are tempting. The liquor bars are the open traps, the hidden traps are the C.I.D.; schools, legislative assemblies, courts, etc., are the tempting traps . . . I know this much that only God can save us from these. And to ask for protection of God one should have extreme faith and unlimited determination." He concluded: "If we create in ourselves the spirit of dedication then we can deliver our country this very moment and the liberation of many countries of the world lies in our liberation."

² Member, House of Commons

painful record of lying on the part of all the powers that were engaged in the pastime of mutual destruction on the false plea of philanthropy. It is a black record of crimes committed by the nations of whom Britain was not the least but probably the greatest offender. She could have stopped the War if she had been less greedy and less selfish.

Wherever you turn in India you encounter pitfalls. To me every institution—be it the most philanthropic—run by and in the name of the Empire in India has an unmistakable taint about it. That we run to and hug most or some of them is no test of their goodness. It is test of our helplessness, short-sightedness or selfishness. We have not the courage to sacrifice much, in order to save ourselves from criminal participation in sustaining an Empire which is based on fraud and force, and whose chief, if not one, aim is to perpetuate the policy of ever-growing exploitation of the so-called weaker races of the earth.

In a way the C.I.D. is the least dangerous of the traps so cleverly laid by the builders. Those whose exterior is attractive are really the most dangerous of all. We often fall into one of these enticing but deadly traps, before we hardly know where we are. It was for some such reason that the Romans said: "Beware of the Greeks, specially when they bring you gifts." When an enemy comes to you bearing the look of philanthropy, he is to be most dreaded. Would that the youth of the country learnt this simple truth and avoided the pitfalls into which they daily fall even whilst they are cursing the Empire and hoping to deliver the country from the intolerable yoke which is not only ruining the nation economically but is also causing unfathomable moral mischief.

Young India, 13-12-1928

481. JUSTICE RUN MAD

I reproduce elsewhere in this issue the first instalment of a sample of the translation of the Tamil songs of the late Bharati, the Tamil poet, whose songs were the other day confiscated by the Madras Government acting under instructions, or, it is perhaps more proper to say, orders from the Burma Government. The Burma Government it appears in its turn suppressed these songs not by any order of court but by executive declaration. It appears that under that declaration the books of this popular Tamil poet which have been in vogue for the last 30 years and which, as appears from the evidence before the High Court of Madras, were under consideration by the Education Department of Madras for introduction in the school curriculum, are liable to confiscation in any part of India. I must confess that I was

unaware of any such wide executive powers being held by Provincial Governments. But these are days in which we live and learn. This was no doubt a matter falling under the jurisdiction of the Education Minister. But it is becoming daily more and more clear that these Ministerial offices are a perfect farce, even as the legislative chambers are and that the Ministers are little more than clerks registering the will of the all-powerful I.C.S. Therefore the poor Education Minister could do nothing to save these popular books from confiscation. Probably at the time the confiscation took place, he had even no knowledge, or if he had, he was not even told what it was that he was really signing. In due course however the confiscation attracted public attention. Pandit Harihara Sharma of Hindi Prachar Karyalaya and publisher of Bharati's songs, on behalf of his poor widow, could not sit still under the confiscation. He therefore moved the public and the matter was naturally debated in the Legis-lative Council which condemned the confiscation. Pandit Harihara Sharma even petitioned the High Court for an order to set aside what was clearly an illegal confiscation, and because of some understanding that the order of confiscation will be withdrawn, that the books will be returned and that the Madras Government will make reparation to the poor widow, the petition has been withdrawn. But the wrong still remains. One can only hope that the expectations of Pandit Harihara Sharma will be fulfilled and that the wrong will be remedied by the return of the books. But whatever reparation is made by the Madras Government, the sense of wrong will abide and so will the sense of insecurity created in the public mind by the action of the Madras Government in slavish obedience to the Burma Government.

Young India, 13-12-1928

482. LETTER TO SARASI LAL SARKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I shall certainly bear your suggestion¹ in mind and try to enter into a greater self-analysis wherever possible. I have to deal with a concrete question of that character and if you are following the pages of *Young India* fully, you will notice it.

¹ In his letter dated December 1, 1928, the addressee had said that in his opinion the psychological factors were very real things in Gandhiji's life but he did not deal with these factors in his autobiographical and introspective writings.

If you can without inconvenience get hold of the journal¹ referred to by you, I would certainly look at it and if I find anything to controvert, I shall do so.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARASI LAL SARKAR
177 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, SHYAMBAZAR P.O., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13790

483. LETTER TO SUHASINI NAMBIAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You have given me a big commission. Whatever answer I may give will be incomplete unless I enter into details for which I have no time. I am sorry. But if you will refer to the pages of *Young India*, you will certainly find the majority of these questions answered and for the rest you will be able to frame your own answers after having read the *Young India* articles. They are to be had in book-form, except the current year numbers, from Sjt. S. Ganesan, 18 Pycrofts' Road, Triplicane, Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI SUHASINI NAMBIAR
441 1ST ROAD, KHAR, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13791

484. LETTER TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

WARDHA ,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. Why do you think that those who make no mention of Anglo-Indians take no interest in them or their doings? You don't think that because I make no mention of many important things in the pages of *Young India* I am not interesting myself in them. Sometimes mention means not a friendly

¹ *International Journal of Psycho-analysis* published from London, in which Berkely Hill, Superintendent, European Mental Hospital, Ranchi, had published a paper about the unconscious ideas in Gandhiji's mind concerning charkha.

interest but hostility. I could offhand tell you of a dozen things in which I am deeply interested, but which never found any mention in the pages of *Young India* or in my speeches.

My views remain the same that I expressed to you when I had the pleasure of meeting you in Calcutta.

If you have anything special in mind which you think I should deal with please do not hesitate to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13792

485. LETTER TO REVA DATTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter containing interesting information.

It was a severe disappointment to me that I could not join the Convention¹ at Mysore, where I expected to see many friends. But I could not make time for it.

It is just likely that I should be in Calcutta on the 2nd January and I should be delighted to meet you in Calcutta.² My own dates after then would be uncertain, though according to present arrangements, I should expect to be the whole of January at Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. R. DATTA
C/O MRS. HENSMAN
LOCOCK'S GARDENS, MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13793

¹ Of the World Student Christian Federation

² In her letter dated December 7, 1928, the addressee had said that she would be in Calcutta from January 2 to 20, 1929.

486. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 13, 1928

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I am passing on your reflections on pooling¹ to Ghanshyamdasji.

I am glad you are already in touch with Mahavirprasadji. If you have not known him before, I would like you to come in intimate contact with him. He is an extremely fine man sharing most of our ideals, if not all of them.

Krishnadas is here now, and I am drinking in all the many things that he has to say about you and Hemprabhadevi and Sodepur in general. Only you and Hemprabhadevi may not kill yourselves with work. Those who work in the *Gita* spirit never overwork themselves, because they work with complete detachment and compete detachment means utter freedom from anxiety. When we work purely as His instrument with an absolute self-surrender there can be no cause for anxiety or fretfulness whatever the result or however black may be the horizon for the time being. Jesus summed up the same lesson in one sentence: "Be careful of nothing." Krishnadas tells me Hemprabhadevi is wearing out her body. She may not do so and let her not deny herself the ordinary creature comforts which may be essential for keeping her body up to the mark.

¹ In his letter dated December 10, 1928, the addressee had written: "If it is intended to reduce the price of the khaddar of any Province then it may be done by mixing with local khadi the cheaper khadi of other Provinces. But the pooler in this case is to guarantee sale of all the production of the Province in which the pooler operates. . . . The pooler in this instance wants to dispose of as much as possible without disturbing the local market. Pooling can be applied here by keeping the local prices as the standard and buying some dearer and some cheaper khadi from outside and selling them at the local standard price along with the local khadi. . . Injurious pooling is pooling in a producing Province without taking the responsibility for the disposal of its whole output. For example, Mr. Jerajani may buy the best khaddar from all over India, pool the prices and sell at a standard price at Bombay. This is harmless in Bombay where there is no local khadi."

I note what you say about the Exhibition.¹ I do not mind it. It is enough we do not resist and hold ourselves in readiness to help where need be and this we must do in a spirit of utter goodwill and without irritation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13794

487. LETTER TO KALI KRISHNA NARAIN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am of opinion that these demonstrations if they continue to be disciplined and strictly non-violent, they have an immense educational value and therefore should not be abandoned, so long as there is a guarantee as perfect as is humanly possible that there will be no violence on the part of the demonstrators whatever the nature of the provocation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KALI KRISHNA NARAIN
LUCKNOW

From a photostat: S.N. 14827

488. LETTER TO MATHURADAS

WARDHA,
December 13, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The way before you is not clear. Read the accompanying letter. I have even suggested to Ram Sahay that he should have a talk with you. Show unlimited love. If you exercise patience and do not give up in despair, ultimately victory is yours. Do not be easily satisfied with

¹ The addressee had also said: "The Exhibition authorities have not communicated with me. . . . Agents of the Committee went about the country and secured non-Association khaddar from Bengal, Bihar, Andhra, etc. They arranged to run spinning shows also in the same way. That the A.I.S.A. is coming now is something additional and therefore the old arrangement continues."

your work. Show love to both; that is what is meant by an equal mind. When we give bread to a hungry person and advise another suffering from indigestion to fast, in both cases we are prompted by love; this, therefore, is showing an equal mind and treating an ant and an elephant with equal consideration. Do not assume, in dealing with him, that your new method has succeeded completely. If you patiently explain it to those who insist on following the old method and carry them with you, there will be minimum friction.

Whether the method adopted is the old or the new one, it must be followed faithfully. Write to me from time to time about the difficulties which you experience. Never feel worried in the smallest measure. If you feel at any time that my conclusions are based on inadequate data or incorrect reasoning, draw my attention to the fact. You may have faith in the principles which I lay down, but the conclusions which I draw from certain facts cannot be a matter of faith.

Faith has no place in a matter which can be grasped by reason. Hence, whenever you see my ignorance as regards facts and find the reasoning vitiated by that ignorance, please do correct me. If you make this a regular practice, I shall be able to write to you more freely and guide you better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4213

489. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 13, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have started from today using 'Chi.' in place of 'Bhai'; let this be a permanent change.

It was not my fault that you received no letter on the 11th. I did write to you. You must have received two letters on the 12th. This happens sometimes when letters are given to be posted when it is about clearing time.

It is a serious illness indeed which Ramabehn has brought with her. Do not get nervous. Take necessary measures to get her cured and everything will be all right. Other illnesses, too, will go in their due time. For Kailas's illness, it is Dahibehn and Nanubhai who are responsible. Even children's stomachs cannot bear any burden for ever. The same is true about Dharmakumar. The moment he is all right, he starts taking all sorts of liberties. As for Velanbehn, illness is

part of her constitution. She, too, cannot control her palate, and Sabar-mati's water will not let us take any liberty. From one point of view, this is for our good.

I see nothing wrong in charging to the khadi section the expenditure of Rs. 12 on account of those inmates of the Ashram who are being trained exclusively for khadi work.

Whatever difficulties, internal or external, you may have to face, see that you are ever vigilant. Do not lose patience, and do not undertake any task beyond your strength. Go on doing silently whatever is necessary, and you will feel no burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 29

490. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

Thursday [December 13, 1928]¹

CHI. RAMABEHN,

You have returned to the [Udyoga] Mandir with illness in the family. By the time you get this letter, the children will no doubt have recovered. If, however, you cannot bring them up well, that will be a discredit to you and to the Mandir. You should give to the children not what they ask for but what is good for them. In refusing to give them what they ask for, you need not be harsh with them. You can reason with them. I have often explained this to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 277

¹ From the reference to Ramabehn and children's illness; *vide* also the preceding item.

491. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Thursday [December 13, 1928]¹

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter about Lalaji. I am happy to learn that khadi work is progressing. In this connection there is a letter from Satis Babu. I send it to you for perusal. You need not return it.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6164. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

492. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

ASHRAM, WARDHA,

December 13, 1928

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter to hand. Neither I nor anyone else has forgotten you. I did not write simply because there was no occasion. What you write about Lalaji is quite correct. You are happy and the hopes of success in the work are ever increasing. I am therefore not worried on your account. God alone knows whether we are actually successful or not. Our duty is only to have faith. These days I am at the Wardha Ashram. Ba and others are with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI TULSI MAHER, CHARKHA PRACHARAK
KOBHALL, PATAN, NEPAL

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6536

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 13-12-1928.

493. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

[About December 13, 1928]¹

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter.

I want you to be in good health no matter how you manage it. You must not overstrain yourself.

I shall try to treat Sodepur on the same footing as Sabarmati. It is because I have my doubts about the feasibility of conducting the same experiments there as at Sabarmati and Wardha that I cannot regard it as such. I do not wish to spoil Sodepur by carrying on experiments there on the lines of Sabarmati. The existence of Sodepur is for the sake of khadi, while that of Sabarmati is for experiments in truth, etc. This does not mean that Sabarmati is superior. I merely defined the fields of work at the two places. I do desire to make experiments at Sodepur, similar to those at Sabarmati. But all this lies in the hands of God. Whatever be the state of affairs at Sodepur, you are in my eyes an Ashram inmate.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1646

494. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

WARDHA,

December 14, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Here is a wire from the A.I.S.A. Agent in Kashmir. I know from personal experience that a great deal of stuff from Kashmir passes on as hand-spun and hand-woven, but the yarn is foreign. There is no question of swadeshi mill yarn in Kashmir. It is either foreign or hand-spun. The foreign yarn was fast displacing the hand-spun. The A.I.S.A. Agent has just gone to stop the rot. How far it can be stopped remains to be seen. But in any case his being posted there has resulted in exposing many a fraud.

¹ The activities of the Sodepur Ashram were being expanded during the year 1928. By December the addressee was apparently trying to immerse herself in work. *Vide* also "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 13-12-1928.

May I hope that nothing will be exhibited which is not certified by the A.I.S.A.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

DR. BIDHAN CHANDRA ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13301

495. LETTER TO AKOOR ANANTHACHARI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to ventilate the grievances referred to by you, there are so many such grievances that it seems to me utterly useless to pick up this one with any hope of getting redress. Such grievances will not be redressed unless the atmosphere around us is purged of weakness and helplessness.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AKOOR ANANTHACHARI
GOWTHAMA ASHRAM
CHENGADU VILLAGE, WALAJAPET

From a microfilm: S.N. 13797

496. LETTER TO RUP NARAYAN SHRIVASTAVA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The calf incident was an isolated case with which I was called upon to deal personally. The rats question is too big a question for me to handle. You will therefore excuse me for not dealing with it in the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely

SJT. RUP NARAYAN SHRIVASTAVA
C/O SETH JAMNADAS, M.L.A.
JUBBULPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13799

497. LETTER TO HARI KRISHAN DASS

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Unless I see the text of the definite promise¹ said to have been made by the British when your town was founded, it is difficult for me to give you any advice. But of course before adopting satyagraha, if it ever becomes advisable, you will exhaust all the constitutional means at your disposal and if you have a strong case, you will also approach good Mussalmans and seek their intervention. By way of example I give you the name of Dr. Ansari.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HARI KRISHAN DASS
EDITOR, "THE BIJLI", FAZILKA

From a photostat: S.N. 13800

498. LETTER TO DR. SACHCHIDANAND SINHA

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I am still keeping your articles on my file.

The supersession of the Gaya District Board did seem to me an extraordinary step on the part of the Minister. I have never been able to find the slightest justification for it, and I hope that you in Bihar have been able to find an effective remedy against such gross abuse of power.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SACHCHIDANAND SINHA
PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13802

¹ That no cow-slaughter would be permitted in the town

499. LETTER TO J. D. ATRE

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is clear that you have not read my articles carefully. B's life cannot be taken by A, because A must be credited with sufficient intelligence to know that B when he seeks to commit suicide is temporarily insane. A must arrive at his own judgment and not rely upon another's, and certainly not upon the one who may be suffering from insanity.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. ATRE, ESQ.
38 ZAOPA'S WADI, BOMBAY 2
From a microfilm: S.N. 13803

500. LETTER TO V. N. KHANOLKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am now corresponding with the khadi bhandar. I quite agree with you that if slivers are supplied, they must be good and workable.

You tell me in your letter that you cannot card, but in the concluding portion you ask for one pound of cotton. Is it carded cotton that you want, or cotton for carding?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. N. KHANOLKAR
GANESH BHUWAN, KHAR, DISTRICT THANA
From a microfilm: S.N. 13804

501. LETTER TO AMARNATH

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry you have lost your wife. I hope that you are now much more cheerful and resigned than you were

when you wrote your letter. If I were you I would not trouble to know the destiny of the soul of your wife. But you should trust that wherever the soul is now lodged, it is well with her.

As to your second question, it is well if your wife lived in detached love in which case, there will be no pangs of separation as there should be none. For we all meet in Him if we yearn for the union with the Divine. Though we seem to be separated one from the other, yet considering the common source we are one and not merely as husband and wife or parents and children but as all life.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. AMARNATH
BATALA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13805

502. A LETTER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is no reason whatsoever for you to grieve over your disease, for impotency is also a disease. But if you live in the fresh air, take a moderate amount of exercise, eat unstimulating food, i.e., milk, wheat, green vegetables without condiments and some fresh fruit, and take Kuhne's baths for sufficient length of time, you may regain your vitality. But you must not be anxious about it.

It will be certainly sinful for you to put an end to your life.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13808

503. LETTER TO C. N. DEVARAJAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. And I am equally sorry to find that there is distress in Jaffna. There is a Government Famine Relief Fund. I do not think that there is any constitution about it. There is a permanent small fund kept by Sjt. Devdhar of the Servants of India Society, Poona. It is a voluntary fund. You may be able to get further information from him if you

write to him. I would also like you to write to Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar (Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu), who did much work during the South Indian flood time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. N. DEVARAJAN
MANIPAY, JAFFNA (CEYLON)

From a photostat: S.N. 15119

504. LETTER TO JEROME DAVIS

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your warm letter. It is not want of funds that is keeping me from going to America. The question is far deeper than one of finance. My expenses have been offered by Indian friends, if I would but go. My difficulty is whether there is a call of duty, whether, that is to say, I have a message to be delivered personally. I wonder if my function is not limited to let the message drip down to America through the life that I am privileged to live in India supplemented or interpreted through my writings. I do not feel the inner urge.

But I have undertaken, if everything is quite clear before me, to go to Europe about the end of April next. Whether I should then take America and whether I should have the time, if I felt the call, is a different matter.

Let me also tell you that friends like Dr. Ward are of opinion that I have been right up to now in my decision not to go to America. They think that I would be a nine days' wonder, would be perhaps lionized for a few days, but that the message for which I stand and which I am trying to live will be lost upon the people.

Yours sincerely,

JEROME DAVIS, ESQ.
YALE UNIVERSITY, 1110 EDWARDS HALL
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 15120

505. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

WARDHA,
Friday, December 14, 1928

CHI. MATHURADAS,

It is surprising that there was no letter from you until today. I too feel tempted by your account of the place. But where do I have such luck? Only yesterday Jamnalalji and I were talking about you. He was thinking of sending his son to you for some time. I am well. Have I written to you that Mahadev is not with me? There is no time to write more.

Blessings from,
BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
EVERGREEN
MATHERAN

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

506. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

December 14, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

There is a Marwari youth¹ who is a B.Sc. and is at present serving in a mill in Amalner; now it is time to get him married. He must be about 22. When Maganlal was alive, I had expressed the view that he must be a pleasure-loving man and very rich, and that, therefore, we should not think about the matter. The proposal, therefore, was not pursued. I have now met him. In my judgment, he is a suitable match for Rukhi. He is not very rich, but is quite well-to-do. His father lives in England; he has to make up the losses which he has incurred. This youth is a lover of khadi and wears khadi. Please ascertain from the mother and the daughter now whether they desire this match. He is a Vaishnava. He will not interfere with Rukhi's way of life. I advise the match. If you think it necessary, you may consult Khushalbai² too; afterwards let me know your decision in time, so that I may pursue the matter further when I visit Calcutta. Neither the

¹ Banarasilal Bajaj

² Addressee's father

young man himself nor anyone else knows who is the girl I have in view and to which place she belongs.

Are things all right with you?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7724. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

507. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

Friday [December 14, 1928]¹

CHI. KASHI,

I keep worrying about you. It is in your hand to remove my worry. You should unhesitatingly ask for whatever your body needs. Only if you do so, will the kitchen deserve to be called a kitchen and continue to function as at present. This is a matter not of a day or two but of all days. Hence, you should start procuring right from today the facilities you need.

Somewhat similar is the case with Nimu. It is not easy to know her needs. You should find out her inclinations and see that her health improves.

Mix with all the women, get to know them and so arrange things that they live peacefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33093

508. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

[WARDHA ,

December 14, 1928]²

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

I have received your letters. There was not the least note of disappointment in my letter. There was no reason either, for me to be

¹ From the contents, it is evident that this letter was written about the same time as the one to the addressee dated December 17, 1928, but since Gandhiji here does not mention the likelihood of his leaving Wardha, it presumably *preceded* that letter. The Friday preceding the Monday on which that letter was written, fell on December 14.

² Place-name and date as supplied in the source

disappointed.

I should like both of you to find time to go out for walks. I look upon it as your good fortune that old people come to you and you have opportunities of nursing the ill.

Do write to me regularly. How can you be lazy about it? One ought not to be lazy about anything, certainly not in writing letters to one's elders.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

509. LETTER TO DIRECTOR, PUSA INSTITUTE

WARDHA,

December 15, 1928

THE DIRECTOR
PUSA INSTITUTE

DEAR SIR,

Could you please let me know whether you have bee-keeping on the Pusa Farm, and if so, whether instruction is given there in bee-keeping and whether there is any literature about bee-keeping in India?

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13810

510. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

WARDHA,

December 15, 1928

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

I dare say Balwantrai Mehta has been writing to you directly. He is already in harness and has made a good beginning.

I write this to you to find out whether scientific bee-keeping is done in the Punjab and if so, where and to what extent and whether it is possible to put oneself in touch with any expert in bee-keeping. I

have just heard that bee-keeping is an extensive occupation in the Punjab.

Yours sincerely,

LALA JAGANNATH
2 COURT STREET, LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13811

511. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 15, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. The news that you have recovered completely has lifted a burden off my mind. Do not fall ill again.

Things are all right with me, more or less. The work is certainly heavy, but I do not feel the burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

From Monday there will be crowds of people here. How many dine in the common kitchen?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1769

512. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 15, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. You may certainly credit half of Sanderstone's £15 in the khadi account and half in the *Antyaja* account.

I should very much like to permit the Bihar lady to come and stay, but that cannot be done at present. We must, however, get ready to admit such women. Let us be fit for that without delay.

Yes, I thought so. There is a mention of my having given the title of Makarani to someone,¹ but I soon forget such humorous inventions of mine. Convey to Ramabehn my apologies.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 30

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 20-12-1928.

513. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[December 15, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Consult Chhaganbhai about Suryamukhi Devi. Write from Dwarka too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2339

514. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

December 15, 1928

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI

I have your letter. Owing to overwork I was unable to write earlier. You should continue with both the jobs, khadi as well as teaching, although I would not call it unswerving devotion to khadi. For that reason my devotion too cannot be regarded as such.

There is nothing artificial about such devotion.

People like you will serve khadi while teaching. Bhai Jethalal thinks of nothing else. There is room enough for both.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SHRI MOOLCHANDJI

KHADI ASHRAM, REENGUS, RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 751

515. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

[After December 15, 1928]²

CHI. KUSUM,

I do not have the time today to write a long letter. Your health is now all right. Maintain the improvement in your health. There is no

¹ From the reference to Suryamukhi Devi from Bihar this letter appears to have been written at the same time as the preceding letter.

² In *Bapuna Patro-3: Kusumbehn Desaine*, the letter has been placed between those of December 15 and 17, 1928.

letter about Padma¹ yet. But I shall have no objection if she comes to stay there and behaves well. You would know the real state of things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1770

516. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF KHADI

A gentleman from Mombasa who is a khadi lover has written the following letter² to Shri Vithaldas Jerajani, who has sent it over to me:

The implication of this is that those who are proficient in the art of producing several articles of cloth from mill-made yarn should take an interest in khadi and get yarn produced which is twisted in varying degrees. This is a task which can be accomplished. It is being carried out to some extent but only in a very small measure. So far very few persons who have a knowledge of the techniques used in mills have taken any interest in khadi, while those who are engaged in furthering the cause of khadi have not made a study, from the standpoint of khadi, of mill-made cloth and the techniques involved in making it. Many people believe through ignorance that nothing whatever can be learnt from the industrial techniques used by mills, while others have assumed that khadi of any quality would pass muster. Despite this, compared with the first pair of dhoti woven in the khadi cause in 1918 at the Satyagraha Ashram, the price of which was fixed at seventeen annas a yard, which was the actual cost, the khadi of today is vastly different in both quality and price. Hence it may be claimed that some workers in this movement have also paid attention to the quality of khadi. The late Shri Maganlal was the first to begin a systematic study of this matter. It has borne good results. That study is still being continued; however, I must admit that further improvements are needed. There is no doubt that much more improvement can be made if, as the above writer suggests, those who know the mill techniques devote even a little of their time to improving khadi. In order to carry out widespread propa-ganda for khadi, the maximum possible variety of quality and design should be introduced. Nevertheless, something will in the end remain where the limits of both will be marked out and the one cannot and need not resemble the other. For instance, there are some artistic achievements of khadi

¹ Daughter of Sitla Sahai

² Not translated here. The writer had suggested that the quality of khadi should be improved by drawing on the experience of textile experts.

which the mills have to this day not been, and will never be, able to imitate. Similarly, the same quality of khadi cannot be produced in bulk as the fine-looking cloth amounting to crores of rupees which the textile mills can produce at a low cost. And there will be no need to produce it either. Mill-made cloth is produced, whether there is need for it or not, simply in order to make people use it and in order to earn larger profits. Khadi can only be produced in the quantity in which it is required. Khadi cannot have and will never have the capacity for mass production with the intention of making people wear it. That advantageous limit will always be there with regard to khadi because man is not a gross machine which can be worked beyond a certain limit. However, it is the special task of the organizers of the centres run by the Charkha Sangh to adopt all possible improvements in the quality of khadi. Let those who are dimly aware of this become fully awakened to it. Let us hope that those who are familiar with the techniques of mill-made cloth will start taking an interest in khadi and devote their time to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-12-1928

517. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE¹

WARDHA,

December 16, 1928

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I have your letter. If Malaviyaji is too old, don't you think that I am also running a neck to neck race with him? And I am possibly even more kind, more mild, more pliable, more docile, in your sense of these words, than he is. How can a Mahatma living up in the clouds give any lead? But why is a Mahatma wanted at all for "the rough and tumble of a hard matter-of-fact struggle"? And what about men like you who are daily growing younger? Why not let the poor Mahatma have his lonely greatness upon earth be done with? But joking apart, I do want to do my humble share in the service of the religion I profess to own and about this we must talk when you and I have more leisure

I have glanced through your address² and like many things this has also a sting in its tail. If you will take the analogy of Afghanistan,

¹ In reply to his letter dated December 14, 1928, inviting Gandhiji to lead the Hindus

² To All-Parties Conference organized to support the Nehru Report, as Chairman, Reception Committee

why do you expect Mussalmans to be Hindus in Hindustan? Afghans don't expect Hindus to be Mussalmans, but they may expect them to be like Afghans, that is, like the inhabitants of Afghanistan. The corresponding term, therefore, is Indian. For the service of India, Mussalmans, Jews, Christians should be Indians even as Hindus should be Indians. Whilst each group will follow its own religion intact without interfering with those of their fellow groups. Surely that for-mula is quite enough for you and every one of us.

Yours sincerely,

DR. B. S. MOONJE
NAGPUR

From a photostat: S.N. 13814

*518. LETTER TO HONORARY SECRETARY,
ALL-INDIA PRESS CONFERENCE*

WARDHA,
December 16, 1928

THE HON. SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA PRESS CONFERENCE
34 BOWBAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your circular letter. I now understand the meaning of your telegram. Though you do me the honour to consider me a journalist, I can hardly adopt it. In any case I consider myself as quite unfit to guide you on the three questions put by you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13815

519. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
Sunday [December 16, 1928]¹

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. The diet experiment which I made in the Ashram had certainly pleased Rajaji, for it included only *rotli*, milk, ghee and vegetables. He does not care very much for fruit. He will not

¹ In "Letter to Kusum Desai", 15-12-1928, Gandhiji speaks of crowds gathering at Wardha "from Monday", December 17, 1928.

probably like the experiment I am making here. They use oil in the food here, and so I too have started taking it. I do not wish to do anything at the cost of my health. If oil does not suit me, I will stop it.

Kusumbehn can come here for the Gujarati work. She can certainly do justice to it but I felt that she should remain in the Ashram. There is Pyarelal here who attends to some of the Gujarati work. He ought to improve his handwriting. Since Keshu is with me, I can use his services too for this work, if necessary, though in fact I have brought him here for the sake of his studies and his health.

You did well in sending Navin and Rasik to Meerut. They should should write and describe their experiences there.

Pyarelal, Chhotelal, Subbiah, Ba and Keshu are with me here. Many others will come not from the Ashram but from outside. Ghan-shyamdas Birla arrived here only yesterday. Haribhau came today. So I expect we shall have good company here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2042

520. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Sunday [December 16, 1928]

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I have received the book about snakes.¹ If I want another copy, I shall write to you. What was the accident which befell grandmother, and how? Tell her that she has many more years still to live.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Gokibehn that I got her letter.

SHRI SHANTIKUMAR

SHANTI BHUVAN, PEDDER ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4710. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Shantikumar Morarji", 9-12-1928.

521. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 16, 1928

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I am thinking over. There is no cause for anxiety. I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3344

522. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU ¹

December 17, 1928

MOTILAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

DON'T UNDERSTAND RAJAGOPALACHARI'S SUGGESTION
BUT HE MAY REPRESENT SEVA SANGH. JOSHI²
ASHRAM BANKER³ SPINNERS.

GANDHI

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

523. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

December 17, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Your latest letter brings tears of joy to my eyes. Indeed you have surpassed all my expectations and those of most who have known you, your worth [and] your love for the country and humanity.

About the new appointment the less said, the better. I had long correspondence with Sir Mahomed. But he opened it after everything

¹ In reply to his telegram dated December 15, 1928, which read: "At Rajagopalachari's suggestion, I invite representatives of Gandhi Seva Sangh, All-India Spinners' Association and Satyagraha Ashram to All-Parties Convention, Calcutta, as they don't fall under invited organizations. Kindly wire names representatives"
(S.N. 13813).

² Chhaganlal Joshi

³ Shankerlal Banker

was done. He wanted me to bless it. I told him as I did not know the gentleman, I could not bless it.¹ I suggested that they should have your nominee. It was no good. I therefore suspended my judgment and imposed silence on myself. It still continues.

May God keep you for many a long year to come. Well, you are coming to the turmoil. But you wanted to. You shall have it with a vengeance.

With love,

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8816

524. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

WARDHAGANJ,

Silence Day, December 17, 1928

CHI. MAHADEV,

Today is silence day and so this is just to tell you that I remember you. Now that three of us have applied ourselves to work for *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I don't think there will be any difficulty. There is plenty of other material here.

Rani is coming this evening. Miss Royden is also coming. Subbiah does not remember the wire you speak of.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11438

525. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,

Silence Day, December 17, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I got both your letters. You were of course forgiven. If I believe a girl to be foolish, she will certainly be forgiven her foolishness, but it ought to be pointed out to her. To excuse yourself by saying that you did not know how to express yourself in words may not be foolishness, but people call it cleverness or smartness.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sir Mahomed Habibullah", 9-11-1928.

I read today of your getting fever again. There is pride in working beyond one's strength, and the foolishness of doing so is plain enough. Those who have an iron constitution may work beyond their strength, that is, there is no work indeed which is beyond their strength. Those who have reduced themselves to a cypher and trust everything to God, they alone can work like that. When you have such faith and can live like a cypher, you may work as much as you like. For the present, work within limits.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1771

526. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,

Silence Day, December 17, 1928

SISTERS,

There has been no letter from you today. But I gather from your previous letters that there is now comparative quiet in the kitchen. Do not rest till you establish perfect quiet there. This job is mainly yours. Take upon yourselves the responsibility of making the kitchen attractive in every way. It can be regarded as an ideal part of an ideal school only when everyone can eat in perfect peace, when all do their work out of a sense of duty and a love of perfection and remain content with whatever is served in it. The whole institution is a school as you know, and the kitchen is a school too. There the food should be scientifically stored, cooked and eaten. Thus in every detail there should be cleanliness and a spirit of discipline. We do not go there or dine there for sense gratification. The body is a temple of God; as such it has to be kept clean and preserved through nourishment. If you adopt such an attitude all the quarrels we see in regard to kitchen work will disappear. In my letter addressed to the whole of the Ashram, I have made four suggestions. Think over them and try to practise whatever appeals to you.

Kailas, Sheela and other children must not fall ill. If any child is ill, do not think it is the concern and responsibility of its mother alone but assume responsibility for it yourselves. It should be the normal practice in our Ashram whenever a mother is not able or does not know how to nurse a sick child, for anyone who knows the job to

offer to look after the child. No mother should feel that she is alone with no one to help her.

I have nothing more to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Received both your letters.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3685

527. LETTER TO TARABEHN

December 17, 1928

CHI. TARA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. Of course the last letter [between us] was yours. You ought to recover your health completely. I am at present in Wardha. Ba is with me. Among others are Pyarelal, Subbiah and Chhotelalji. Vasumatibehn was here for some time before I came. Within four days I shall leave for Calcutta. You can write to me c/o Jiwanlalbai.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN

C/O MESSRS MOHANLAL KALIDAS & CO.

14 MUGAL STREET, RANGOON

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8783

528. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 17, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Why should you get upset because of children's illness? These things come and go. Sometimes we may even lose one of the children. God gave them and He may take them back; there is nothing strange in this. Besides, everyone in the world has to go along the royal road sooner or later, why, then, should we grieve if anyone leaves early? And rejoice if someone leaves late? There is no difference between Umi's¹ soul and that of a calf. Both are diamonds

¹ Addressee's daughter

from the same mine, drops from the same ocean, leaves of the same tree. One need not be afraid of whooping cough. It always disappears in due time. If we do not harass the child with too many medicines while the attack lasts, he or she lives through the attack all right. Hot water and hot milk—everything hot. The bowels should move regularly. [Give her] light massage with oil on the chest and put her in sunshine early in the morning.

Do not be sure of Chhotelal arriving there till you actually see him of course he will arrive.

Gangabehn should put her feet in hot water with soda bicarb mixed in it and massage them long with vaseline before going to sleep. Besides this, she must put on shoes, of any type, during day time. Since we now look upon the hide of a dead cow as sacred, there will be no harm even if she wears light slippers—not *chappals*—made of it. It will be enough if the slippers meant for use in the kitchen always remain in the kitchen. Slippers of rubber are also available. Slippers of hessian get wet and dirty, and they cannot be washed. Slippers made from leather can be washed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not consider the last issue, too, of “Ashram Samachar” as properly cyclostyled. I leave this place on the evening of Thursday, the 20th. On 21-22 in Sambalpur and on 23 in Calcutta, at Jiwanlal’s place. Address the letter to Sambalpur only once, or not at all.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 30-1

529. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [December 17, 1928]¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letters. It was impossible to write yesterday.

You have displayed much firmness and patience. That is how we should always act. You are on the potter’s wheel, and I am sure God will mould you well. Do not lose heart in regard to *brahmacharya*. Surely it is a difficult task. If we believe that we can succeed in it merely by our own effort, [we should remember that] in the story of

¹ As in the source

the Yaksha,¹ as we saw, the god of wind found it impossible to blow away even a straw by his own strength. But even the most difficult task becomes easy when human effort is supported by divine grace. Both of you should strive, but leave the result to God and you will surely get it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 31

530. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

Silence Day [December 17, 1928]²

CHI. KASHI,

Do something about Nimu's and Bachu's constipation. Bachu is likely to benefit by gentle massage of his abdomen. Similar exercise will benefit Nimu too.

Did you send that chain to Talwalkar? I think we shall be leaving this place (Wardha) on the 20th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S. N. 33092

531. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[December 17, 1928]³

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your nice letters in a beautiful hand come quite regularly and I am highly pleased.

You must not be dejected. Not many days remain for me to return to the Ashram. A few days will pass in your visit to Dwarka and the journey back.

¹ In *Kenopanishad*

² Gandhiji here says he would leave Wardha on 20th. In 1928, he left Wardha for Sambalpur on December 20. Monday, i.e., Gandhiji's silence day, prior to that date, fell on December 17.

³ From the reference to "Kusum's falling ill again", this letter seems to have been written along with the one to Kusum Desai dated 17-12-1928. Year and month from the reference to the addressee's proposed visit to Dwarka.

Ask Vidyavati to write to me; I want to write to her but do not for lack of time.

I feel a little worried over Kusum's falling ill again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Who will be responsible for nursing Kusum in your absence?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3321

532. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[Before December 18, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Your presence there spares me any anxiety on Kusum's account. Rajendra Babu came yesterday. I hope a telegram has been sent cancelling the Dwarka trip. There is no time now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3315

533. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Tuesday [December 18, 1928]²

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I wanted to write about many things today, but have no time.

I do not know what Santok wants. If she wishes to stay on and lives contentedly, it would be very good indeed. You and Narandas should decide about this. It will be best if you leave this decision to Narandas. I will write about Devdas later. I had read Mirabehn's letters. I will write to the Gurukul in regard to Balbir.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 32

¹ From the reference to Rajendra Prasad who came to attend the A.I.S.A. meeting held on December 18 and 19

² As in the source

534. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,
Tuesday, December 18, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I cannot help but get angry with you. Who allowed you to eat everything? Why should you give up coffee? If you attempt to do so in my presence, I will help you. Why do you make such experiments in my absence? May I once again beg you to live on milk and fruits and pick up health? If you wish to eat anything else, ask for my permission.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1772

535. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 19, 1928

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. You may certainly go to Rajkot if you find that necessary. I have experimented with earth treatment for *bamblai*¹ and found it succeed. I cannot say whether the experiment will suit Khushalbhai at his age.

I have made my point of view clear in regard to Santok. If what I think is wrong and if she likes the Ashram, its inmates and its mode of life, I will like nothing better than that she should live there. How can I possibly be happy that she should live elsewhere? If, however, I have to try every day to keep her pleased, the situation will be intolerable to her, to me and to other inmates of the Ashram. I do not want to see her take the last seat; I want to see her in the front seat. But how can she take the first number in the Ashram unless she learns self-sacrifice, gives up love of pleasures and selfishness?

If Rukhi is ready for a match with this Marwari youth, I may proceed further in the matter. I shall certainly obtain a photograph. By "meeting", do you mean that she wants to see the youth or talk with him? In either case, I see nothing wrong in her meeting him. I shall not feel hurt even if she rejects the match. In this case, I believe

¹ A boil in the arm-pit

it my duty to respect her wishes fully. Please let me know if you want any other details. I have no time today to write about other matters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7725. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

536. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

WARDHA,

December 19, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

What shall I tell you now? The doctor's advice to you to eat everything is not correct and should not be followed. If you drink plenty of milk and eat plenty of fruits, your illness will certainly disappear. There is no harm in taking a little coffee with the milk for some time. You should work very little, have enough sleep, and see that you have regular motions. It is my firm belief that if you look to all these things, you cannot but recover health. Do not be afraid to take quinine. If the doctor sends you something to counteract the toxic effects of quinine, there is no harm in taking that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1773

537. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday [December 19, 1928]¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter and the statement of accounts. I will show them to Jamnalalji. I feel unhappy all the time over the affair of Sharda, Kashibehn and Shakaribehn. When I think of Sharda's courage, I both smile and cry. She seems to have put her courage to wrong use. Do you not agree that my boasted skill in understanding people is nothing of the kind? It is good that I know some of my imperfections well enough and God opens my eyes to the rest. He will save.

These clouds trouble me; still bigger ones will come. Remain

¹ As in the source

vigilant. Do not lose heart. Try to fill the place which Maganlal did. Do not give up hope even when all round you lose it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Do not worry about my experiments. I am in God's keeping. With this is a letter from Mirabehn. Henceforward, credit the money received¹ to her name. The expenses incurred for her should of course be debited to the Ashram account. Do not debit it against this money.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7; Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 32-3

538. LETTER TO JETHALAL

December 19, 1928

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I got your letter. I have written to Chi. Narandas at the Ashram. He will reply to you. If his reply does not satisfy you, then write to me.

Blessing from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1347

539. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[After *December 19, 1928*]²

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

We had received through Krishnadas a gold watch costing Rs.500/-. He is here at present. He tells me that if we still have the watch, a friend of the donor is ready to pay that sum for it. If we have it, let me know.

Speak to Krishnamaiyyadevi³ and tell her in strong words that if

¹ From Mirabehn's father, who used to send £50 every month during the early years of her stay in the Ashram

² From the contents it appears that the letter was written towards the end of the year 1928, evidently after December 19. Gandhiji's letter dated December 19, 1928, to the addressee (*vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 19-12-1928) acknowledges receipt of his "letter and the statement of accounts," saying that they will be shown to Jannalal Bajaj.

³ Widow of a Congress worker from Nepal; Gandhiji gave her and her children shelter in the Ashram.

she behaves as she does, she will have to leave the Ashram. Stop paying her cash; instead, supply within Rs. 12/-, such of her needs as you approve of. Do this with immediate effect. Ask her to state the amount she has spent so far. Request all the inmates of the Mandir¹ to have no dealings with her and to give her no facilities. If they feel that you or I are doing her injustice, they should tell you so. All the vegetables which grow should be supplied to the Mandir. If she does not wish to grow them on that condition, she may not. I will of course write to her.

If she cannot digest bread, why does she eat it? She will certainly not digest it if she does not chew it properly or eats it in excess. She will also not digest it, of course, if it is not properly baked. Do people think that it is too dear at one anna a loaf?

Jamnalalji has looked into the figures sent by you. He was sorry to know that the account books were either damaged by moths or lost. Who was at fault in this? Cannot we, however, add up the income from the beginning to this day from the available records, like pass books, etc. If we can, we shall also be able to make up the account of expenditure. Make a greater effort in this regard.

We have no option but to bear the expenditure being incurred on Manjula.² But take care and see that the expenditure is justified. For how many days more will she have to go? Of course she is not to be paid Rs. 12/- separately. Has she recovered her health? Is the injury to her eye healed?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5486

540. *DISCUSSION WITH A CAPITALIST*³

[Before *December 20, 1928*]

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic

¹ Udyog Mandir, under which name the Satyagraha Ashram had begun to run all its external activities, while still maintaining its ideal as an Ashram.

² Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

³ From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter"

exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts. Unless the capitalists of India help to avert that tragedy by becoming trustees of the welfare of the masses and by devoting their talents not to amassing wealth for themselves but to the service of the masses in an altruistic spirit, they will end either by destroying the masses or being destroyed by them.

Young India, 20-12-1928

541. DISCUSSION ON KALI TEMPLE¹

[Before *December 20, 1928*]

He next turns to a khadi worker who is also accompanying him. He must agree to go to Calcutta² where he is wanted in spite of his disinclination. If we could transform Calcutta we should transform the whole of India, he argues. He himself would go there and make it the centre of his activity, but . . . And he then gives out this sorrowful secret that he has harboured in his bosom all these years of his life. It is the Kali temple.

There lies my difficulty. I cannot bear the sight of it. My soul rises in rebellion against the cold-blooded inhumanity that goes on there in the name of religion. If I had the strength I would plant myself before the gate of the temple and tell those in charge of it that before they sacrificed a single innocent animal they should have to cut my throat. But I know that for me to do so would be an unreal, a mechanical thing today because I have not yet completely overcome the will to live. And till I can do that I must bear the cross of my imperfect existence.

Young India, 20-12-1928

542. DISCUSSION WITH A TEACHER³

[Before *December 20, 1928*]

A deputation of the teachers of a national school has come to wait upon Gandhiji. . . . In the course of conversation one of the teachers lets out that he holds non-violence as a creed only for individual conduct. In the political field he holds to non-violence only as a temporary expedient. Gandhiji starts as at a snake in the grass. 'Are there many other teachers in your school who think like this?' he quietly asks. But his countenance betrays what is passing in his mind. The teacher notices this and tries to explain his position. True, he believes in non-violence in politics

¹ From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter"

² For the Indian National Congress session

³ Gandhiji left Wardha on December 20, 1928.

pas a policy but a policy is as good as a creed while it lasts, if it is sincerely and conscientiously adhered to. For the time being therefore there is no difference between his position and Gandhiji's. As for the future, if he should feel like changing his policy he would surely obtain the permission of the school authorities first for doing so. But the explanation fails to satisfy Gandhiji.

Don't you see the difference, with you non-violence is only an intellectual proposition, with me it is an article of faith, the first and the last. You try to make a distinction between individual conduct and social conduct. I do not see how it is possible. Where is the line to be drawn? And who is to decide where the one ends and the other begins? यथा पिण्डे तथा ब्रह्माण्डे 'As with the individual so with the universe.' You say that your abandonment of non-violence would be conditioned by the permission of the school authorities. But let me tell you that in the circumstances postulated by you there should be no room for asking such permission. For then, you would be bound to sacrifice your school at the altar, according to your belief, of your country just as I would my country at the altar of truth and non-violence. And I would honour you for doing so. No, I do not want to blame you. You must follow the light of your convictions. I am only trying to view the question from a different angle. There are at present a number of national institutions in the country with truth and non-violence as their creed. I have my eye upon them constantly. For a time is fast coming, it may, as I wrote in *Young India* the other day, come much sooner than most people expect, when the country will be put upon its trial, and will have to make its final choice. I count upon these institutions in that hour to give a good account of themselves. Maybe a mere handful of workers as we are, we shall have to make a holocaust of ourselves to testify our faith. So far I had believed that I was absolutely safe in your hands. But I now see where I stand. But that need not make you feel unhappy; it is a question for me only to think about.

There is a deep note of sadness in his voice as he utters these words. . . .

Young India, 27-12-1928

543. SPEECH TO KHADI WORKERS¹

[Before December 20, 1928]²

We must distribute production and centralize sales for the time being. We must try the experiment of pooling prices of khadi produced in various centres to bring down the average. Look at the figures of mill khadi. . . .³ What does it indicate? A revolution in the people's taste. They are prepared to make a sacrifice. They ask for coarse cloth. But they are being foully deceived by the mill-owners who do not hesitate to exploit their patriotic sentiment. Spurious khadi is being palmed off on them as Gandhi cloth, even my portrait is put upon it. Could there be a greater fraud or a worse betrayal? But the moral for us in this is that we must increase our production. And to do this we must bring about a general reduction in khadi prices by pooling. Do they ever think what a fierce resentment it will cause among the masses when they discover, as they are bound to one day, that they have been betrayed at every step? I should not be surprised, if in a frenzy of anger they should in that event rise against the mill industry in general.

Young India, 27-12-1928

544. THE ETERNAL DUEL

A friend writes:

In the article entitled "The Tangle of Ahimsa" appearing in *Young India* of October 11th, you have stated most forcefully that cowardice and ahimsa are incompatible. There is not an ambiguous syllable in your statement. But may I request that you tell us how cowardice can be exorcised from a man's character? I notice that all characters are but the sum total of habits formed. How are we to undo our old habits and build the new ones of courage, intelligence, and action? I am convinced that habits can be destroyed, and better and nobler habits can be formed giving birth to a new character in a person. It seems to me that you know prayers, discipline, and studies by which a man can attain a second birth. Won't you kindly tell us about them? Do give us your know-ledge and advice in one of the numbers of *Young India*. Please help us by giving an account of the method of praying and working by which a

¹ From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter"

² Gandhiji left Wardha on December 20, 1928.

³ As in the source

man can recreate himself.

The question refers to the eternal duel that is so graphically described in the *Mahabharata* under the cloak of history and that is every day going on in millions of breasts. Man's destined purpose is to conquer old habits, to overcome the evil in him and to restore good to its rightful place. If religion does not teach us how to achieve this conquest, it teaches us nothing. But there is no royal road to success in this the truest enterprise in life. Cowardice is perhaps the greatest vice from which we suffer and is also possibly the greatest violence, certainly far greater than bloodshed and the like that generally go under the name of violence. For it comes from want of faith in God and ignorance of His attributes. But I am sorry that I have not the ability to give "the knowledge and the advice" that the correspondent would have me to give on how to dispel cowardice and other vices. But I can give my own testimony and say that a heartfelt prayer is undoubtedly the most potent instrument that man possesses for overcoming cowardice and all other bad old habits. Prayer is an impossibility without a living faith in the presence of God within.

Christianity and Islam describe the same process as a duel between God and Satan, not outside but within; Zoroastrianism as a duel between Ahurmazd and Ahriman; Hinduism as a duel between forces of good and forces of evil. We have to make our choice whether we should ally ourselves with the forces of evil or with the forces of good. And to pray to God is nothing but that sacred alliance between God and man whereby he attains his deliverance from the clutches of the prince of darkness. But a heartfelt prayer is not a recitation with the lips. It is a yearning from within which expresses itself in every word, every act, nay, every thought of man. When an evil thought successfully assails him, he may know that he has offered but alip prayer and similarly with regard to an evil word escaping his lips or an evil act done by him. Real prayer is an absolute shield and protection against this trinity of evils. Success does not always attend the very first effort at such real living prayer. We have to strive against ourselves, we have to believe in spite of ourselves, because months are as our years. We have therefore to cultivate illimitable patience if we will realize the efficacy of prayer. There will be darkness, disappointment and even worse, but we must have courage enough to battle against all these and not succumb to cowardice. There is no such thing as retreat for a man of prayer.

What I am relating is not a fairytale. I have not drawn an imaginary picture. I have summed up the testimony of men who have by prayer conquered every difficulty in their upward progress, and I have added my own humble testimony that the more I live the more I realize how much I owe to faith and prayer which is one and the same thing for me. And I am quoting an experience not limited to a few hours, or days or weeks, but extending over an unbroken period of nearly 40 years. I have had my share of disappointments, uttermost darkness, counsels of despair, counsels of caution, subtlest assaults of pride; but I am able to say that my faith—and I know that it is still little enough, by no means as great as I want it to be—has ultimately conquered every one of these difficulties up to now. If we have faith in us, if we have a prayerful heart, we may not tempt God, may not make terms with Him. We must reduce ourselves to a cipher. Barodada¹ sent me a precious Sanskrit verse not long before his death. It means impliedly that a man of devotion reduces himself to zero. Not until we have reduced ourselves to nothingness can we conquer the evil in us. God demands nothing less than complete self-surrender as the price for the only real freedom that is worth having. And when a man thus loses himself, he immediately finds himself in the service of all that lives. It becomes his delight and his recreation. He is a new man never weary of spending himself in the service of God's creation.

Young India, 20-12-1928

545. DINABANDHU'S TRIBUTE

Dinabandhu Andrews writes as follows from Manchester on Lalaji's death:

The news of the death of Lala Lajpat Rai was a very terrible shock to me for it was absolutely unexpected. I reached Birmingham very late on Saturday night and my brother told me about it. Since then I have referred to it and made clear in the *Manchester Guardian* how great the loss must be both to India and to England, and indeed to the world of humanity; for he was the friend of the oppressed in every country and knew no racial barriers. What I am now waiting to hear is how far the death was caused by injuries received at the railway station at Lahore at the time of the boycott of the Simon Commission. This is not at all made clear in the newspapers here, which are very guarded in

¹ Dwijendranath Tagore, elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

their utterances, though there is just a hint about it.

I may add that he cabled to me for correct news to which needless to say I sent a suitable reply.¹

Young India 20-12-1928

546. NOTES

LALAJI'S MEMORY

With reference to my note on Dr. Satyapal's telegram² which was published in these columns, Lala Dunichand of Ambala writes :³

The publication of Dr. Satyapal's telegram in connection with Lala Lajpat Rai's death in *Young India* of November 29, 1928 and your comments thereon have induced me to write this letter to you which I hope you will be able to publish. I am one of those who had been devoted to Lalaji for nearly all their life and it was only during the last elections that serious and even acute differences had arisen between him and myself. . . . But the blows received by him at the hands of the police and his death shortly after that have naturally and rightly changed altogether my mental attitude towards him and his work. . . . Now I look upon the sum total of his life-work too great to let me entertain any kind of ill will and his life too sacred to be remembered with anything but feelings of genuine respect. I feel as if quite a different kind of relations have sprung up between him and myself after his death. If the question of our differences with him is viewed in this light, we who differed from him and those who differed from us on account of him can again become comrades in the fight for winning freedom for our country.

This is undoubtedly the correct attitude to take and I hope that everybody who had some differences of opinion with Lalaji will adopt the same attitude and work for the common cause.

INDIA'S AMBASSADRESS IN AMERICA

The readers of *Young India* will be glad to share with me the following letter⁴ from Mr. R. E. Hume, son of Dr. R. A. Hume of Nagar, regarding the fine work that is now being done by Devi Sarojini Naidu in America:

¹ *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 29-11-1928.

² *Vide* "Good if True", 29-11-1928.

³ only excerpts are reproduced here.

⁴ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

You will be pleased, I am sure, to receive this message concerning the successful start of our friend Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in her visit to the United States.

I heard her at her first appearance in New York city. And I have been testifying that I have never heard either from man or from woman the equal of her platform performance for the beauty and flow of English diction and for the structure and sequence of English sentences. . . .

However, more beautiful and significant than the grammatical structure of English sentences were the beauty and goodness and truth of her utterances. I rejoice that Mother India is being presented to America in the person of this charming and potent woman, who is perceiving the spiritual side of American life, and who is similarly conveying to the people here the spiritual side of the Indian people. . . . But I am especially happy thus to report to you promptly the very successful realization of your plan for Mrs. Naidu to visit the United States as an ambadress from the women and people of India.

AJMAL JAMIA FUND

A Mussalman friend asks the following questions and asks me to reply to them in *Young India*:

I read *Young India* with intense interest especially the news of Islam. But I am puzzled to hear some undesired news about Ajmal Jamia. Will you kindly reply to the following queries and oblige me?

1. On what principle is the Jamia being carried on?
2. Whether it is solely for Mussalmans or the members of every caste and creed are admitted into it?
3. If they are also admitted, how do they manage for their boarding, lodging, etc.?
4. How many and who are the members of the managing body, is there any other than Mussalmans upon it?
5. The Fund which is being collected by you is handed over to the institution or is still with you?
6. If it is still with you, when do you intend to use it and how?

Here are the answers:

The Jamia is carried on, on the broadest principles. The correspondent should study the constitution a copy of which he will get upon application to the authorities in Delhi.

It is in practice solely and naturally for Mussalmans, but members of every caste and creed are freely admitted.

I believe that such students have to make their own boarding arrangements.

Sheth Jamnalalji is one of the trustees. The others are Mussal-mans.

The Fund is in the possession of Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj who is the treasurer.

Young India, 20-12-1928

547. WANTED HINDI TEACHERS¹

The Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha invites applications from educated young men whose mother tongue is Hindi and who are willing to serve as Hindi teachers in South India for a period not less than 2 years. . . . Letters may be addressed to the Secretary, Hindi Prachar Sabha, High Road, Triplicane, Madras.

W. P. IGNATIUS

I hope that there will be sufficient young men from the North to respond to this appeal.

Young India, 20-12-1928

548. EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS²

To a national worker who has been ordered off to far away Orissa where at present cholera is raging, Gandhiji writes:

And do not be afraid of cholera. . . .³ observe proper precautions. . . .⁴ If in spite of all precautions the worst befalls, there is no help for it. There is no place in the world entirely free from danger. . . .⁵ But do as the inner voice prompts you.

To another struggling soul he writes:

With the help of Rama we have got to overcome the ten-headed Ravana of passions within us. Success is bound to be ours if we have faith in Rama and surrender ourselves to His grace. Above all do not lose self-confidence. Avoid indulgence of the palate.

¹ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

² From Pyarelal's "Wardha Letter", sub-title "Tit-Bits"

³ As in the source

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ *ibid*

To another he says:

There is a world of difference between spinning for sacrifice and spinning for recreation. I would advise you to observe a religious silence while spinning. It would give you spiritual peace and if you make it a point always to spin at a particular fixed hour, it will automatically regulate your other appointments too and help you to a well-ordered life.

To still another he writes:

You may not force the wearing of khadi on your mother if she is unwilling. But if your faith in khadi is genuine and strong enough it is bound to prove infectious.

To another correspondent again:

My sovereign panacea (for communal troubles) is well known. If either of the parties were completely to purge itself of ill will and patiently bear any injustice that the other side might inflict, a real heart unity between the two was bound to be established in the end. The injustice would come to an end and both sides would become brave. Today they are pitiful cowards.

Young India, 20-12-1928

549. KHADI IN HYDERABAD STATE

At a Co-operative Conference held the other day in the Hyderabad State, the Finance Minister, Sir Hyder Nawaz Jung Bahadur, delivered an address from which a friend sends me the following translation of his reference to the spinning-wheel:

But the most important thing to which I wish to draw your attention is our home industries. To preserve and help them is the supreme duty of co-operative societies. If co-operative societies could be organized to distribute domestic implements and raw materials amongst the people, it would be a great boon to the country. For the sake of illustration, I would mention spinning and weaving. If they could be revived in our towns and villages, it would be a great achievement. Quite till the other day, spinning and weaving were commonly practised in our homes. Not only in the huts of the poor but also in the homes of the rich and well-to-do, young girls and their matrons used to utilize their leisure time by spinning; and a variety of things for household use, like carpets, sheets, coverlets, table-cloths, etc., were prepared out of the yarn thus spun. Respectable widows who have no other means of livelihood used to support themselves and their children by spinning and sewing. By popularizing this occupation, you would not only augment the slender resources of the people but by providing them with useful work for

filling their spare time save them from falling a prey to many a temptation. I hope that the energetic officials of our Department will make a beginning in this direction this year. I shall carefully go through the next year's report to see how many of us have taken to this good work. . . .¹

We should never forget that man isolated from society is but an animal. He rises to his full estate which has been described as 'little less than the angels' only through mutual aid and co-operation with his fellow-beings. So long as you stand apart, self-sufficing units, so long as 'I' am 'I' and 'you' are 'you', we are only glorified animals called men. When 'I' and 'you' combine to form 'we' we develop a divine force and the process of developing this force is spelt co-operation.

I congratulate the Minister on his pronouncement and trust that the State of Hyderabad will compete with that of Mysore in the spread of the spinning-wheel. Co-operation in spinning is easy and an indispensable thing if khadi is to be placed on a stable basis. A hand-spinning co-operative society will start with a cotton depot where bag cotton, not pressed cotton, will be stored for converting into cards. It will have carders, if the spinners do not themselves card in the initial stages. This depot will keep the necessary furniture, i.e., hand-gins, carding-bows, spinning-wheels, accessories and necessary tools with facility for repairs. The depot will be a distributing, receiving and selling depot and will distribute cotton or slivers as the case may be. It will receive against cash-payment yarn spun by the members and sell to the members khadi woven from their yarn or bought from other places. It will sell khadi at special prices to the spinning members and at ordinary prices to the public. If such societies are formed under State patronage and with State aid, partial or in full, there is really no limit to the possibilities of mass co-operation. Only this presupposes a khadi atmosphere among the officials; in other words, the officials must be converts, lovers and trustees of the masses, not their lords and masters, for whom the masses are born to toil and sweat on starvation wages. If the Finance Minister infects his officials with the zeal which his address shows there is a great future for the people of the State. And Hyderabad unlike Mysore is a vast cotton area.

Young India, 20-12-1928

¹ As in the source

550. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, ASHRAM, SABARMATI

December 20, 1928

MANAGER

SABARMATI ASHRAM

SHIVABHAI'S SUGGESTION ABOUT MOTHER QUITE GOOD. NO CASTE DINNER PERMISSIBLE BUT MAY PAY CASTE LUMP SUM FOR EDUCATION OR OTHER BENEVOLENT USE.

BAPU

From handwritten draft: S.N. 2456

551. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,

December 20, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today too, I am sure I shall not be able to write a letter which will satisfy me. Preparations are going on for leaving the place. Finding some spare time, I am dictating this letter.

First I shall remove a misunderstanding. I certainly did not apologize to Ramabehn for applying to her the name Makarani. I have always been indulging in such jokes, and the victims of the jokes have always enjoyed them. I apologized to her because I forgot this beautiful joke and, when you wrote to me that Makarani had arrived, I had to ask you whom you meant. Is this not an unpardonable lapse?

What will you say of a father who gives pet names to his children through affection and then forgets them? The poor children may for-give the father, but how can the father forgive himself? All that I can say in my defence is that my family is a large one and is growing in size. Such mistakes, therefore, are likely to occur again. Explain all this to Ramabehn, for the name Makarani will now cling to her for ever.

I stop the work here. Jamnalal's whip¹ is here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 33-4

¹ To restrain Gandhiji from overwork

552. A LETTER¹

WARDHA,³
December 20, 1928

. . . Since you have resolved to dedicate yourself completely to service how can I send you away? I do not wish to punish you. It is not for man to punish anybody.... I want to guide you to better ways and, when you Commit unpardonable mistakes, to suffer the punishment myself. I am suffering the punishment now in that I have been pained. Do not give me such pain in future.

. . . also wrote to me about the jewellery. There seems to be a discrepancy in what you said in your earlier letter and what you say in the present letter. But that does not matter.

You will now have to be ready for strictness on my part. I am not any longer going to be soft with you as I have been so far. You will limit your expenditure to . . . rupees as far as possible. But I will do everything necessary for your health.... It will not be for you now to judge ... or somebody else will have to do that. But of course not at the cost of your health. I would hate any expenses except those on your food. For food I will give more than . . . if necessary. Let me know what you eat at present. . . .

If you have overcome your mental tension, you are sure not to fall ill.

Ask me if you wish for further clarification. . . . Keep writing to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/42

553. A LETTER²

WARDHA,³
December 20, 1928

You are really in a moral dilemma. You had a hand in fixing the engagement.... It seems to me that you should write to ... that she should wait till she is eighteen. . . . You may send Chh.'s letter to her. If she is not willing to wait even that long and in spite of Chh.'s letter is keen on getting married right now, you may convey . . .'s wish to her and against your better judgment give her away in marriage on her condition in Uphota and wash your hands of the affair. You

¹ Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

² Omissions in the letters are as in the source.

³ *ibid*

should make all this clear to . . . and say that you have been solely guided by the girl's and her mother's wish. If she agrees, give her in marriage by way of atonement since you had a hand in arranging the engagement. Be clear in dealing with her mother also. This is how I see your duty. But you will be the best judge of what is right.

From a copy of the Gujarati : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/41

554. *SPEECH AT WARDHA ASHRAM*¹

December 20, 1928

You have all set out to become expert spinners, weavers and carders. But that is not enough. Every turn of the spinning-wheel, every throw of the shuttle, every stroke on the carding-bow should awaken a responsive echo in your soul. The task that lies before you is tremendous. You have to reach and establish a living contact with not a few hundred, not a few thousand but millions of the poor that are scattered over the seven lakhs of villages in India. Till that work is accomplished you dare not rest. Then, if you want really to serve the country you must keep your bodies and minds pure so as to make of yourselves a fit instrument for carrying out His work. If you awake every morning with His name on your lips and invoke His aid to help you in your struggles during the day and at night time before retiring take stock of the day's failures and lapses, make a confession of them to your Maker and do a sincere penance for them—the only fitting penance for a lapse is to make a firm resolve not to allow it to happen again—you will thereby build, as it were, a solid wall of protection round you and gradually temptations will cease to assail you.

In the end whilst I shall always recall this period of my stay in your midst with joy and satisfaction, my feeling is not free from a regret; and that is, that in spite of my being in your midst for all these days I have not been able to play with the children of the Ashram, to know them individually by their names, to win their personal friendship and confidence as I would have liked to do. But what could I do? I was so hard pressed by work.

Young India, 10-1-1929

¹ From Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", which explains: "The period of grace and privilege of our stay at the Wardha Ashram came to an end on the 20th December, 1928 and it was not without a wrench that Gandhiji bade goodbye to his peaceful surroundings to plunge into the seething cauldron of Congress politics in Calcutta. Leave-taking was a touching affair. Gandhiji poured all the poignant pathos of the parting in a few brief sentences that he addressed to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram after the evening prayer."

555. INTERVIEW AT NAGPUR STATION¹

December 20, 1928

[QUESTION]: What would be your attitude towards a political war of independence?

[ANSWER]: I would decline to take part in it just as I would refuse to support the British Government in any war that it might engage in tomorrow.

But in South Africa you supported an alien Government in its war against the Boers, although it was at that time oppressing the Indians; again in 1914 you supported the British Government in its War against Germany. How is the situation altered since then that you should refuse to support your own country in a war of independence?

The situation today is radically different for me from what it was at the time of the Boer War or the War in 1914. On both the occasions I was a believer in the Empire. I thought that in spite of its lapses the sum total of its activity was beneficial to the world. And though I was against war at that time as I am now, I had no status or strength to refuse to participate in war. I suppressed my private judgment in favour of the duty of an ordinary citizen. My position is wholly different now. I have become by force of circumstances a teacher of non-violence. I claim to enforce my teaching in my own life to the best of my ability and I feel that I have the strength to resist war in my own person.

Then you would not support a national militia?

I would support the formation of a militia under swaraj if only because I realize that people cannot be made non-violent by compulsion. Today I am teaching the people how to meet a national crisis by non-violent means. But it is one thing to adopt non-violence for a specific purpose in a time of crisis, and quite another thing to advocate its adoption by all for all time as a philosophy of life. Not that I consider such adoption to be impossible. But I lack the strength for such a mission. I may not therefore resist the formation of a

¹ From Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", which explains: "It was a late hour and the friends had come at the fag-end of an exceptionally busy day for Gandhiji . . . and engaged him in an absorbing conversation on some of the burning questions of the day."

national militia. Only I cannot join it myself. I feel quite clearly within me that a militia is unnecessary but I have not the word that would carry conviction to others.

If that be your view, surely you would like our youth to avail themselves of the University Training Corps that have been organized by some universities?

To receive military training under the present Government is to train yourself into a limb of the present system, a limb that is liable to be used against your own people at any time. A Gurkha is an Indian, blood of our blood and bone of our bone, yet he would shoot his own countrymen when ordered to do so.

But our young men will be educated people, they will never consent to do such an unpatriotic act?

You are welcome to that belief if you like but let me tell you that you are living in a fool's paradise. You little realize the demoralizing effect of environment. How many people can you point out in the country today, who having gone under the Government's influence have been able to escape from its hypnotic spell and to keep their independence intact. The British rulers know the workings of human nature. They know that a vast majority of men when they come under a system conform to it especially when it is full of promise for self-aggrandizement. There are educated Indians enough in the Government employ who do the will of their masters even though it may be, as it often is, against national interest. And you do not seem to attach any importance to the fact that the young men who join the corps have to take the oath of allegiance.

Young India, 10-1-1929

556. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 21, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

The fact that you did not get a letter on Sunday means that Kanti is not there. He wanted me to write a personal letter to him, which I wrote and enclosed yours in the same cover. This time there has not been a single day without my writing a letter to you. I can leave you without one only when all your worries disappear and the atmosphere there becomes completely purified. I certainly yearn for a time when I need not write letters to anyone in the Ashram. Such a day will also come. At present, to write letters is no burden to me.

For the Orissa matter you will have to write to Vallabhbai.

Indu Parekh should go to Calicut or stay in Bardoli. He should stop his studies completely.

Umi must now be out of danger. You need not worry even if she is suffering from pneumonia. The treatment for both is the same, rest and hot water. If she feels hungry, give her milk and fruit juice. I shall write a detailed reply later.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 34

557. SPEECH AT SAMBALPUR¹

[December 22, 1928]²

I have only one request to make to you and all others concerned, and that is that whatever days of life on this earth are now left to me, they should be utilized for advancing what I regard as the most fruitful work of my life—and that is khadi—and not frittered away for mere demonstrations. You are at liberty to hold your own view as to what the most fruitful activity of my life is but then you should leave me alone.

Referring to the deepening poverty of the country, he said:

¹ From "Weekly Letter" by Pyarelal. The meeting was held in the morning on the sandy bank of the Mahanadi.

² From the reference to the meeting in the following item

While on the one hand the Government is despoiling the country by an evergrowing burden of taxation, the trader is mulcting it yearly of 60 crores of rupees by dumping foreign cloth on it. Is it any wonder that between the upper millstone of taxation and the nether one of exploitation the masses are being ground to powder? In fact it would be a surprise if things were otherwise.

He then went on to describe how three great leaders to whom Utkal owed a deep debt of gratitude, namely, the late Deshbandhu, the late Lalaji and the late Gopabandhu Das had in their lifetime affirmed an unequivocal faith in khadi as a means for village reconstruction and combating poverty of the Indian masses and how that faith had grown and deepened as they approached the end of their earthly journey. The only way in which Utkal could do justice to their memory was by taking to khadi in right earnest and insuring Utkal against the ravages of nature and of man by its means. Sambalpur had vast potential resources for khadi work in its weaving population. What he therefore wanted of them was to convert Sambalpur into a flourishing khadi centre.

Young India, 10-1-1929

558. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SAMBALPUR,
December 22, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

After finishing the work at a meeting,¹ I had my meal and am now working at the spinning-wheel. I have some quiet time and so have sat down to reply to your letter which was received here. I had kept aside the other letters with the intention of replying to them in detail. You may, therefore, expect a reply to every point.

So far I have been able to keep to third-class travel, and all of us have been travelling in great comfort. From Nagpur, we were given one section of the carriage, the label "reserved" put on it, so that we experienced no difficulty on the way.

In the meeting here, I sold khadi to my heart's content. There are a number of Gujaratis here. They gave more than eight hundred rupees. I expect that they will make up one thousand before I leave this place. The untouchables here gave me self-spun yarn and also khadi woven by themselves.

The question of agency was discussed in the meeting of the Spinners' Association. I did not have to sit through it. But I had liked

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

your suggestion in principle and, therefore, pressed it at the meeting. All the members have approved of it. It has now been finally decided that, if we are to keep the agency, it will be not in the name of an individual but in the name of the institution. They may let the agency remain with the institution so long as they are satisfied with its work. I have told them that if they find some other arrangements more convenient, they may certainly make it, and that, if they do so, it will not displease me or any of us. The committee should do fearlessly what they find, on an objective consideration of the matter, to be in the best interest of khadi. A subcommittee has been appointed to take a final decision, and it will do so and inform us. Narandas is included in that committee. The matter will be settled in a few days.

The Mandir will get some money for the expenses which are incurred for Devdas and others. You should pay Devdas's bills. If you have anything to say with regard to the actual figures of expenditure, you may draw my attention to them or make a suggestion directly to Devdas.

Mirabehn and Chhotelal have stayed back in Wardha. Mirabehn will return to the Ashram after completing the work she has started in Bihar. Chhotelal will go to Bombay in a few days and return to the Ashram after learning some details there about bee-keeping. It has been decided that he should finally return there. All the same, it will be good if you and Gangabehn keep up your efforts to attract him there. I suppose those two have gone out to Savali to see the work being done there. Chhotelal gained five pounds in Wardha. Vasumati's weight, too, has gone up and is still increasing. She has gained nearly eight pounds at least. The causes for the increase in the weight of both are oil and mental peace.

Umi must have recovered now. In whooping cough the most important remedy is proper nursing. And we hear of more and more instances of the wonderful effect of sun-bath. This field, of restoring health through the sun, has hardly been explored so far; all the facts about the power of its rays have not been fully investigated yet. I for one believe that innumerable diseases can be cured mainly through different treatments with the sun's rays. Revashankerbhai's Dhiru recovered through such treatment. One of his bones was infected from within. About one pound of pus used to flow out every day. He has now recovered completely through treatment with the sun's rays. Hence complaints like weakness, cough, getting out of breath with the slightest exertion, etc., can certainly be cured by treatment with the sun's rays.

Kishorelal, too, has come to Wardha. But I may say that as he

arrived I left. We could, therefore, have no talk. His health may be described as so so. I keep very well. Keshu's low fever has gone and he has gained 4_ pounds in weight.

More in the next letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 35-7

559. *LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI*

SAMBALPUR,

December 22, 1928

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Chi. Chhotelal, who has been asked to learn bread-making, had read the literature sent by you and, after observing an ordinary bakery, learnt the work, but it cannot be said that he has mastered the process. It would certainly help if he gets an opportunity of seeing a good bakery and watching the process followed there and the ingredients which are mixed. It would also be good if those ladies demonstrate once the method of making biscuits. Chhotelal will be going there hoping that he will get an opportunity to observe these things and in order to learn about bee-keeping from Vithaldas's brother. Give him whatever help you can. Arrange for him to see a bakery, if you can. If the Tatas have a bakery of their own, probably the manager of the Taj Mahal will help in getting him an opportunity to see it. Please do not be upset if I again and again entrust you with tasks like these. Grandmother must have recovered completely now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4791. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

560. LETTER TO MOHANLAL MISRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,¹

December 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is an association for the very purpose you mention. It was founded by the late Sir Ganga Ram. I suggest your writing to the Association (Lahore). They have on their list some suitable names.

I think that both the bride and her advisers ought to go a step further and not confine themselves to sub-castes. It ought to be enough if a suitable person can be found from among Brahmins all over India.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MOHANLAL MISRA

145 NEW MANDI

MUZAFFARNAGAR

U.P.

From a photostat: S.N. 13022

561. LETTER TO BABAN GOKHALAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,²

December 22, 1928

MY DEAR GOKHALAY,

Here is a letter from Mr. Bhosle and my reply to him. If you think that they will raise a decent sum and a board of trustees can be formed in which you could have a deciding voice, it may be possible for me to find ten to fifteen thousand rupees. But it would be impossible to get the whole 40 thousand rupees that are required³.

I do feel that the hostel to be of any use to these friends has to be in Bombay. They do not live in the suburbs and they cannot afford to go there. It is tragic, but it is true that the suburbs are meant not for the poor but for the well-to-do.

¹ Permanent address

² For the construction of a hostel and a hall for depressed classes; *vide* "Letter to Baban Gokhale", 3-10-1928

³ *ibid*

If you have leisure I would like you to take special interest in this thing, in forming the trust, seeing people like Mr. Velji. I suggest as trustees you, Mr. Velji, Revashankerbhai, Kishorelal Mashruwala, Jammalalji, Avantikabai, Bhosle, Nekaljay, Sir Purushottamdas and Devdhar if he will come in.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 13817

562. LETTER TO K. T. PAUL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,¹

December 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I shall be in Calcutta from tomorrow probably for a week. I shall be staying with Sjt. Jiwanlal, 8 Pretoria Street.

I have the summary of the proceedings of the Conference as also the text of your speech. The speech I have not yet been able to read. As soon as I get the time, I shall certainly read it and if there is anything I have to say on it I shall gladly do so.

Mr. Dewick wrote to me² before you about Dr. Mott. I would also like to meet him. My movements during January and February will be determined in Calcutta.

Yours sincerely,

K. T. PAUL³, ESQ.
5 RUSSEL STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13818

¹ Permanent address

² For Gandhiji's reply to Dewick, *vide* "Letter to E. C. Dewick", 12-12-1928.

³ Chairman of the Committee for Arrangements of the World Student Christian Federation

563. MY NOTES

FOR LOVERS OF SPINNING

With reference to the article¹ which suggests that ginned cotton need not be dried in the sun before carding, Shri Lakshmidas writes:²

This important suggestion has been made, thanks to a mistake I had made out of ignorance. I have now come to realize the distinction between *kapas* (unginned cotton) and *ru* (ginned cotton); however, before acquiring that knowledge I had used the two terms as synonymous. Hence, in the article mentioned above, I happened to write *kapas* instead of *ru*. In this manner, good results come out of innocent mistakes.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-12-1928

564. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before December 24, 1928]³

I have your letter. You should not mind Shankerbhai having written you that letter. It expresses his anger and his frankness. The anger will subside, let us cherish his frankness. At every step you should learn something. You will succeed in your task only if you become a cipher. No one will judge you by a low standard. Swallow all bitter pills; if you do, your body and mind will be as strong as copper.

You did the right thing in arranging for Manjulla to stay in the town. We certainly cannot request a car every day. I have had full experience of Ranchhodbhai's goodness. I am, therefore, not surprised

¹ *Vide* "Good Carding", 9-12-1928.

² The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had pointed out that Gandhiji in his note on carding had mentioned unginced cotton instead of ginned cotton and that cotton could be ginned only after it had been dried in the sun and threshed and cleaned, whereas ginned cotton had neither to be threshed nor dried. He had also suggested that in making slivers the stick used should have a circumference equal to the length of the fibres of the cotton, for only then could the strands easily separate from the sliver while the yarn was being twisted.

³ From reference to the illness of the addressee's children, this letter appears to belong to December 1928 (*vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Gandhi", 17-12-1928 and "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 22-12-1928) and since the girl Umi succumbed to her illness on December 24, this must have been written earlier than December 24.

to learn that he himself comes with the car every day. Tell him that I would have been surprised if he had not done that.

There was nothing about the children in your letter. I believe, therefore, that they are improving. Do not take even a seemingly dangerous illness as really so. Never become panicky. We know a most effective remedy. Whether it is children or grown-ups who are ill, give them nothing except water make the nature of illness is not known.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5485

565. TELEGRAM TO PRINCIPAL, GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

December 24, 1928

PRINCIPAL
VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

CONSULTED VALLABHBHAI. LET ELEVENTH STAND.¹

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 2456

566. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 24, 1928

CHHAGANLAL
UDYOGA MANDIR
SABARMATI

YOU HAVE DONE BRAVELY. HOPE NOW RAMA
REALIZES UMI'S² SOUL NOT DEAD AND ALL ASHRAM
CHILDREN HERS.

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 2456

¹ The seventh convocation of the Gujarat Vidyapith was held on 11-1-1929.

² Who died of pneumonia

567. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON

December 24, 1928

PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK
LAHORE

JUST HEARD YOUR LOSS. GOD GIVE YOU PEACE. YOU
WILL COME IF POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: S.N. 2456

568. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[CALCUTTA,]

December 24, 1928

CHI. MIRA,

I have your note. This is Xmas eve. If Xmas has a special memory and special meaning for you, may you have on that day a purer and greater grasp of the realities of life. You have a sound heart and, therefore, all will be well with you. I knew you were happy and at peace in Wardha and to see you so made me happy.

Motilalji had work cut out for me as soon as I reached the station. So I was able to spin only at night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5327. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 8217

569. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CALCUTTA,

Silence Day, December 24, 1928

SISTERS,

Today I have time only for a short letter.

I have written a letter to Durgabehn¹. Please read it because it applies to all of you. You women should learn a lesson from the death of Umi. All the children of the Ashram are the children of all of you. If any of them dies, take it that God has taken it away. If new ones are

¹ Wife of Mahadev Desai

born, take it that God has sent them to you. Even if new births do not add to the number of children in the Ashram, the coming of new families add to their number. If we learn to cherish equal love for all of them, we shall not feel the pain of separation from Umi, though we should strive to understand its deeper meaning.

We shall meet soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3668

570. A LETTER²

CALCUTTA,
December 24, 1928

CHI

You should surely not leave if you are not getting fever, if your mind is at peace and if you have become accustomed to the work there by this time. It is true that the Bal Mandir does not belong to anyone and everyone. But the Bal Mandir should be the finest part of the [Udyog] Mandir. The experiment we are conducting is unique. Treat it as an experi-ment in non-violence. If all of you sisters shower love on the children, they will dance as you wish and will teach you the art of teaching them. Nothing is impossible for love. Let none of you therefore, think of leaving the Bal Mandir without reason. If you identify yourself with it, your physical illness will also vanish.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/44

571. LETTER TO RAMA C. JOSHI

CALCUTTA,
[December 24, 1928]¹

CHI. RAMA,²

You are being tested well. Since it is natural for you to feel pain at the loss of Umi³ it should of course be so regarded. But we have been trying to forget the habit of grieving over the loss of our dear ones. why should we grieve when we know that union is bound to end

¹ From Kusumbehn Desai's Diary

² Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

³ Urmila, addressee's daughter, news of whose death from pneumonia had just reached Gandhiji; *vide* "Telegram to Chhaganlal Joshi", 24-12-1928

in separation? We feel it natural to grieve because we have got into that habit. There are certain communities which do not feel so. Among the Muslims death causes the least grief. Grief over death is thus not a universal rule. It does of course seem to be regarded as natural by the Hindus. Being contrary to the teaching of the *Gita*, the habit needs to be given up. The first chapter refers to the difference we make between our people and other people. Shri Krishna abolishes that distinction. In the Ashram we have been trying to forget it. You should regard your present misfortune as an occasion for succeeding in our attempt. To whom do the children in the Ashram belong? Loving those children and serving them, you will not feel the loss of Umi and the strength of worldly desires in you will diminish.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 276

572. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day [December 24, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have received your letters. Father is here, his health is fair. I have not been able to see him so far. I am glad to know that you are getting well acquainted with Kusum.

You need not keep anything from her. Being firm herself she can advise you correctly. However much other people may dissuade you, always inform me if anyone falls ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3319

¹ From the reference to the growing acquaintance between Kusum and the addressee, this letter appears to have been written in 1928, and Gandhiji hoped to meet addressee's father in Calcutta where he had gone to attend the session of the Indian National Congress.

573. LETTER TO V. G. JANARDAN RAO

CALCUTTA,
December 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have transferred it to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla who will correspond with you directly.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. V. G JANARDAN RAO
GURU RAJA VILAS
SRIRAMPET, MYSORE

From A copy: S.N. 26908

574. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON NEHRU REPORT,
CALCUTTA CONGRESS— I ¹

December 26, 1928

Mahatma Gandhi in an introductory speech delivered in Hindustani before moving the resolution said that the gravity of the situation demanded that he should also put his views before the country. Although he liked to speak in Hindustani, circumstances demanded that he should move the resolution in English. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru then read out the text of the resolution.

This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report² welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations and whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress adopts the constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country, provided however that the Congress shall not be bound by the constitution, if it is not accepted

¹ At the Subjects Committee Meeting

² As a result of the All-Parties Conference's resolution, a committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to draft the principles of a constitution before 1-7-1928. The report of this Committee, known as the Nehru Report, was submitted at the All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow from August 28 to 30, 1928. *Vide*

on or before the 31st December 1930 and provided further that in the event of non-acceptance by the British Parliament of the constitution by that date the Congress will revive non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and every aid to the Government.

The President is hereby authorized to send the text of this resolution together with a copy of the said report to His Excellency the Viceroy for such action as he may be pleased to take.

Nothing in the resolution shall interfere with the propaganda for familiarizing the people with the goal of independence in so far as it does not conflict with prosecution of a campaign for the adoption of the said Report.¹

(2) Meanwhile the Congress shall engage in the following activities: (a) In the legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks; picketing of liquor and drug shops shall be organized wherever desirable and possible. (b) Inside and outside legislatures methods suited to respective environments shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. (c) Specific grievances, wherever discovered and where people are ready, shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was recently done at Bardoli.

(d) Members of legislatures returned on Congress tickets shall devote the bulk of their time to the constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress Committee. (e) Congress organizations shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing strictest discipline. (f) Measures shall be taken to rid the country of social abuses. (g) Measures shall be taken to remove disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national upbuilding (h) It will be the duty of all Congressmen, being Hindus, to do all they can to remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their condition. (i) Volunteers shall be

¹ To this, amendments were moved by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose. Their aim was to put no time-limit, nor, even by implication, to accept for India Dominion Status as contemplated in the constitution drawn up by the All-Parties Conference (at Delhi). Subsequently, this resolution was withdrawn. For the resolution approved by the Congress, *vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-II", 28-12-1928.

enlisted to take up village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning-wheel and khaddar. (j) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its departments and in order to enable the Congress to secure co-operation in national efforts of the people engaged in different pursuits. In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme every Congressman with a monthly income of Rs. 100 and over shall contribute five per cent of his monthly income provided that in special cases exemption may be granted at the discretion of the Working Committee.¹

Continuing, Mahatmaji said:

Friends, I hope I shall not detain you for many minutes in my introductory remarks. It is an open secret that we have in our camp sharp differences of opinion as to the lead Congressmen should receive in connection with the epoch-making Report. I call it an epoch-making Report of the All-Parties Constitution Committee. We have the Delhi resolution² and the first thing that strikes anybody would be why not affirm or reaffirm the Delhi resolution dealing with this question. If it could have been done consistently with national interest there would have been an end to all new resolutions and certainly I would not have troubled you. I must take you in confidence and tell you that the President himself felt that the Delhi resolution required rethinking and revision. Some of us putting our heads together came to the conclusion that the Delhi resolution was a self-contradictory resolution. So we cast about to find a middle path so that consistently with honesty and with desire to accept the Nehru Report we should frame another resolution. This resolution is the result of it. Even as it is, this resolution is an attempt to satisfy and if not to satisfy at least to conciliate those schools of thought that are prevailing in the Congress with regard to the Report. That we have two schools of thought is no matter of misfortune or grief.

I suggest to you that the purpose of Congressmen should be to adopt the Nehru Report in the same spirit in which it was received by the whole of India at the time it was published. Let me recall to you that at the time of its publication it was not only enthusiastically

¹ This clause on constructive programme was later passed, after a few amendments, as a separate resolution; *vide* "Speech on Constructive Programme, Calcutta Congress", 1-1-1929

² Passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi on November 3, 1928. It reiterated the demand for Complete Independence and accepted the Nehru Committee recommendations for the settlement of communal differences.

received by the nation but it commanded, it extorted, the unstinted admiration of our critics, of our opponents and of outsiders who were disinterested spectators. It is, if you choose to do so, open to you to say that we shall not accept the Report, but I say it would be bad if we came to such a conclusion hastily. But if after the first flash of enthusiasm had died out and after a careful study of the Report we come to the conclusion that the best interests of the nation will not be served by accepting the Report, it would be your bounden duty, though painful, to reject it. I suggest to you either we should give our wholehearted support or we should not support it at all. It is a document which is not an end in itself but the beginning of the end. It is a document which is designed to bring together as many important parties as it is possible with a view to concentrating their attention and efforts upon some common purpose in connection with our political advance.

When the Committee approached its labours you must know that the horizon was dark. I know myself there were tremendous difficulties and there was a time when there was nothing but despair staring the members in the face, but Dr. Ansari and your President were not men who would give in easily to despair. They fought the tide of despair and how successfully you know and the world knows.

You the Congressmen are the authors of this Convention and in the same breath that you adopted complete national independence as your goal you asked the Working Committee to have the Convention of all parties with a view to framing a scheme of swaraj as I call it or call it a constitution that would be acceptable to the majority of the parties and you had a committee consisting of the most eminent men in the country known for their services to the country and you imposed on Congressmen the labours of bringing together all these men and getting them to go as near the Congress goal as they could possibly do. This must have been in your minds at the time you thought of the Convention, and at the time of asking the Working Committee to call a Convention into being.

That being so I suggest that unless there are overwhelming reasons for you not to accept the Report, it must be accepted by you. You cannot take this Report piecemeal or chop it up, for it is an organic whole. Just as you cannot chop a body and say I will have so much of the body and will not have the other half, so you do not chop this Report and say you will accept this part and not the other one. As Dr. Ansari has pointed out if you attack the central theme of the Report you stab the heart itself and the centre is what is known as Dominion Status. I suggest to you that it will be a grievous blunder to Independence against Dominion Status or compare the two and

suggest that Dominion Status carries humiliation with it and that Independence is something that is triumphant. I do not want to go into the controversy just now. I simply say to you as a man of business wanting to serve the nation, wanting to educate the masses and influence the masses and desiring to enlist active co-operation of the masses in order to vindicate the honour of the nation. I suggest if you seek to do all these things you will think fifty times before you will go to the masses and compare these two things. Don't run to the hasty conclusion that the distinguished authors of the Report had the interest of the country less at their heart than any of us, or most of us. Do not run away with the hasty conclusion that they want anything else than Complete Independence for the country. The word 'independence' is much abused and is an equally misunderstood word. The contents of that word would vary with the strength that the nation can call to its aid from time to time. ("Hear, hear.") Independence of Nepal is not attained in the same way as independence of America. Then there is independence of the feudatory States—they flatter themselves sometimes with the belief that they are independent and they are sometimes called semi-independent States—they adopt the role of independence in their relations with their subjects. That is a species of independence. Let us not therefore make too much of that one word and let us not belittle the other two words (Dominion Status). I as a tried worker, as one who knows something of the masses, desire to warn you against confusing the mind of the nation. For you will simply entrap them and leave them in trap holes. Beware of doing any such thing.

I suggest that the utmost that a man desires—independence—has been given to him by this resolution. The Madras resolution gives you the goal of the Congress. It tells you that Independence shall be the goal, but it has not declared independence. You are not now working for independence of the type that the authors of that resolution had in their mind. In one way we are all striving for independence. The Congress creed is the creed of independence. I challenge anybody to deny that. That is the process of evolution, but some of us consider that we should have the word 'independence' incorporated in the same resolution of the Congress so that we can put it before the nation. By all means have it, keep that word; but in considering this resolution I desire to tell you that, in the process of working, the very pace of independence is accelerated by it and not retarded. You might have easily slept over the goal you set before yourselves in Madras. But here by this resolution you dare not sleep over your goal; for at the end of two years you will have to work out your independence and practically you will have to declare independence. Some of us,

and I include myself among them if I survive two years, may have to die in order to give a good account of ourselves for the sake of achieving independence and it may be till it is achieved, you will have to see our carcasses. I yield to none in my desire to attain complete independence. So long as there is any one man who can interfere with my freedom or with the nation's freedom it is intolerable and I consider that I live in vain. The fire of independence is burning within me as much as in the most fiery breast of anyone in the country but the ways and methods may differ and it may be that when I am nearing my destiny on this earth you may say, 'For independence we may wait for fifty years'. If it is so, you will tell me and point out that I am weakened and you will then not listen to me but hiss me out of the Congress platform. And I shall consider myself unworthy to serve the nation. I want to dedicate what little strength I may have to the nation and not my weakness. For my weakness I shall answer before my Maker. For my strength it is all at your disposal. Do not run away with the idea for a single moment that I want to suggest anything less than what the nation can have today or what the nation should have tomorrow. Therefore I suggest that if really you want to work out the resolution of the Madras Congress for Independence you have got the amplest possible scope in this resolution but with one Supreme condition that having called the Convention into being you must be faithful to that Report as you will be faithful to your goal.

I would ask you to interpret that Report in terms of that goal and feel that the authors of that Report have also the goal of Independence in view and remember that the Chairman of that Committee which brought out the Report is the President of your Congress. I do not want to dissect this resolution at this stage but I want you to dismiss, in considering this resolution, all personal factors. I do not want you to become my patron. I want you to treat me as a comrade marching side by side with you and I also want you to outbid me in the march towards the goal. You may say, 'Doctors have ordered rest for you, you can take well-deserved rest, we shall run and if you march side by side with us we may have to crawl.' I say crawling we have buried in that wretched lane at Amritsar. We shall never crawl. I do not ask you to consider this resolution in any patronizing spirit, nor does your President stand in need of any patronage. I can swallow patronage, but not he. Eliminate therefore all considerations and make your own choice.

The Report is merely the commencement of the end. There is a lot of work to be done to achieve the purpose behind it. There is much spade-work even in this Congress. The Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha and every other organization has got to do its duty before

we can launch out that Report upon the wide ocean. It is necessary for you to chalk out a resolution which will satisfy all needs of that Report and not merely say: 'All right, we accept the Report lest anybody should be offended or in order that diplomats may go on with diplomacy and steal something for us.' It will not come by stealing. Freedom has never come by stealing. It has come by bleeding and you will have to bleed even for getting what is attempted in that Report.

I therefore want you to accept that Report whole-heartedly with the fixed determination to work for that goal. I do not want to wash down your goal. I want you to sustain your goal. If you wish you may misinterpret it or interpret it in any other way. I hope you will approach consideration of this resolution in a national spirit and if I may also say in a prayerful spirit.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-12-1928

575. UNITY IN THE PUNJAB

With reference to my note¹ in *Young India* on Dr. Satyapal's telegram he has sent me the following letter² which I welcome:

I am deeply obliged to you for your letter of 28th November³ (in reply to my telegram and letter) and also for the valuable comments made by you thereon in *Young India*.

I wish to assure you that every word of that telegram is heartfelt and sincere and is not prompted by any momentary impulse and interested reason, or any outward pressure. . . . The passing away of Lala Lajpat Rai throws a very heavy burden of responsibilities on the shoulders of the nationalist workers and they cannot afford to have any split in that camp. . .

One point however I want to make quite clear. I have not been able to appreciate the idea of your finding 'repentance' on our part in that telegram. I have read the telegram several times over and still have not been able to find any words which signify any repentance on my part for my having opposed Lala Lajpat Rai during his lifetime when I felt it necessary to do so. . . .

I pay my heartfelt tribute to the memory of Lala Lajpat Rai but that does not mean that I subscribe to everything he advocated or championed. . . .

Young India, 27-12-1928

¹ *Vide* "Good If True", 29-11-1928.

² Only extracts are reproduced here.

³ *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Satyapal", 28-11-1928

576. CURSE OF ASSASSINATION

The assassination¹ of the Assistant Superintendent Mr. Saunders of Lahore was a dastardly act apart from whether it had a political motive behind it or not. Violence being in the air, there will no doubt be silent and secret approbation of the act, especially if it is discovered to have had any connection with the assault on Lalaji and his utterly innocent comrades. The provocation was great and it became doubly great by the death of Lalaji which was certainly hastened by the nervous shock received by him from the disgraceful conduct of the police. Some will insist, not without considerable justification, on ascribing the death even to the physical effect of the injury received by the deceased in the region of the heart. The provocation received also additional strength from the Punjab Government's defence of the police conduct. I should not wonder if the assassination proves to be in revenge of the high-handed policy of the Punjab Government.

I wish however that it was possible to convince the hot youth of the utter futility of such revenge. Whatever the Assistant Superintendent did was done in obedience to instructions. No one person can be held wholly responsible for the assault and the aftermath. The fault is that of the system of Government. What requires mending is not men but the system. And when the youth of the country have the real determination they will find that it is in their power as it is in nobody else's to kill the system.

English books have taught us to applaud as heroic deeds of daring, even of freebooters, villains, pirates and train-wreckers. Newspapers fill columns with exciting stories real or, in their absence, imaginary, of such deeds. Some of us have successfully learnt this art of applauding as heroic anything adventurous irrespective of the motives or contemplated results behind such deeds.

This cannot be regarded as anything but a bad omen. Surely there is nothing heroic about a cold-blooded robbery accompanied by murder of an innocent wealthy pilgrim carrying treasures for distribution in well-conceived charity. There is equally none in the deliberate secret assassination of an innocent police officer who has discharged his duty however disagreeable its consequences may be for the community to which the assassin belongs. Let us remember that the administrators of the system have held on to the system in spite of previous assassinations. After all the story of the building of the British Empire is not itself wanting in deeds of valour, adventure and

¹ On 17-12-1928. Later, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were accused in the Lahore conspiracy case and sentenced to death.

sacrifice worthy, in my opinion, of a better cause. If we may regard the assassination of Mr. Saunders as a heroic deed the British people would be able to answer this one, I hope, solitary act of so-called heroism with countless such acts enough to fill a volume. But it is time we began irrespective of nationalities to regard deeds with mean motives or meaner consequences with nothing but horror, indignation and disapprobation, no matter how daring they may be. I know that this means a new valuation of such terms as heroism, patriotism, religiousness and the like. No one, I hope, regards the assassinations of Presidents Cleveland¹ and Carnot² as reflecting any credit upon the assassins or the nations in whose cause the mad men carried out their evil plans. Islam is not better for the assassination of so many Caliphs or, to take a modern instance, for the assassination of the late Swami Shraddhanandji. Nor has Hinduism been ennobled by the frenzied deeds one occasionally reads about of so-called protectors of the cow. The curse of assassination and kindred crimes is not advancing the progress to humanity, religion or true civilization.

Let the youth of India realize that the death of Lalaji can only be avenged by regaining her freedom. Freedom of a nation cannot be won by solitary acts of herosim even though they may be of the true type, never by heroism so-called. The temple of freedom requires the patient, intelligent, and constructive effort of tens of thousands of men and women, young and old. Acts such as we are deploring decidedly retard the progress of this quiet building. When it does nothing else, it diverts the attentions of countless builders.

Young India, 27-12-1928

577. ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION³

The draft constitution proposed by Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar and Babu Rajendra Prasad for the All-India Spinners' Association as circulated amongst the members of the Executive Council of the Association and published in the papers was considered by the Council of the Association at its meetings held at Wardha on the 18th and 19th instant and was finally adopted with slight amendments.

The following were appointed as trustees for the permanent

¹ Stephen Grover Cleveland (1837-1908), twenty-second and twenty-fourth President of the United States of America

² Marie Francois Sadi Carnot (1837-94), fourth President of the French Republic

³ Presumably signed by Gandhiji without revising

board: 1. Mahatma Gandhi, 2. Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, 3. Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar, 4. Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande, 5. Sjt. Konda Venkatappayya, 6. Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel, 7. Sjt. Jawaharlal Nehru, 8. Sjt. Manilal Kothari, 9. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta, 10. Babu Rajendra Prasad, 11. Sjt. Shankerlal G. Banker.

The twelfth seat was kept vacant. The elections of the remaining three trustees retireable annually will take place in the due course.

Copies of the constitution can be had from the central office at Ahmedabad.

Young India, 27-12-1928

578. A SINDH CURSE

The Amils of Sindh are probably the most advanced community in that province. But in spite of all their advance, there are some serious abuses of which they seem to have a monopoly. Of these the custom of *deti-leti*¹ is not the least serious. I have more than once remarked upon it in these columns. My attention was drawn to this abuse during my very first visit to Sindh and I was invited to speak to the Amil friends about it. Though no doubt isolated work has been done in the direction of removing this abuse, no organized effort seems to have been made to end the evil. The Amils are a compact little community. The seriousness of the evil is not questioned by anybody. I have not known a single Amil to defend the vile custom. It has persisted because it is a custom patronized by the educated youth among the Amils. Their mode of life is above the means they can honestly command. Hence they have thrown all scruples to the wind and do not mind degrading themselves by prostituting the institution of marriage for their own base ends. And this one vicious habit has told upon the quality of their national work which otherwise by their intellect and education they are capable of doing to the great benefit of the country.

In order to put an end to this evil, a provisional committee has already been formed now of which Acharya A. T. Gidwani has accepted the presidentship. This is as it should be. When he undertook to go to Sindh from Brindaban it was naturally expected that he would throw himself with zest into all desirable movements that conduce to national well-being. It is to be hoped that the provisional committee will soon become a permanent organization and under his able leadership the reform which is already belated will make steady

¹ Dowry

progress.

The Secretary, Sjt. Mirchandani, asks me for suggestions. The only suggestion that I can think of just now is that this organization should create a public opinion against *deti-leti* that would become irresistible. Your educated Amils are able to squeeze the poor parents of marriageable girls only because there is no active public opinion against the custom. There should be work done in the schools and colleges and amongst the parents of girls. The parents should so educate their daughters that they would refuse to marry a young man who wanted a price for marrying and would rather remain spinsters than be party to the degrading terms. The only honourable terms in marriage are mutual love and mutual consent.

Young India, 27-12-1928

579. MILK FOR BOMBAY

A friend on reading the article 'A Blot on Bombay' in *Young India* (29th November) writes to Mahadev Desai as follows:¹

I am afraid that the writer of the letter has misunderstood the article in question. No one has suggested that the question of the slaughter of cattle in Bombay or of the supply of pure milk will be solved by shifting the stables from the city of Bombay to the suburbs of Bombay. What is required and what has been suggested is that Bombay should bravely face the problem as behoves it. Surely the Gujaratis who are not living in Bombay are not the philanthropists who might be expected to come to the rescue of Bombay and solve one of its tremendous and equally urgent problems. The Municipality of Bombay has to take the initiative and make the move and if need be enlist the sympathy and co-operation of philanthropically-inclined Gujaratis. I fear that even if anybody outside Bombay wanted to come to the rescue, he would require special facilities from the Bombay Corporation. But we have not in this country the requisite capacity for private enterprise which would take great risks involved in a big venture that the supply of milk to a large city like Bombay undoubtedly is. Let it be also known that such private effort has been made before now in Bombay and it failed. I think that failure had definite causes. There was not sufficient grit and ability behind those ventures. But I submit that no cost is too great, no enterprise too risky for the Municipality of Bombay to undertake in order to ensure a supply of cheap and pure milk for its citizens and to rid Bombay of

¹ This is not reproduced here.

stables which are a source of danger to its health and which must be always coming in the way of any radical measure for dealing with malaria and other diseases which are rampant in Bombay. I freely admit that Bombay has to travel outside its radius for the organization of a vast dairy scheme. But that every city in the world has done for many of its wants.

Young India, 27-12-1928

580. TELEGRAM TO LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD

December 27, 1928

LABOUR

AHMEDABAD

YOUR LETTER. REACHING AHMEDABAD FOR CERTAIN
BEFORE 11TH JANUARY.¹

BAPU

From a copy: S.N. 2456

581. LETTER TO DR. H. W. B. MORENO

8 PRETORIA STREET,
CALCUTTA,

December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I am so hemmed in that in this place of long distances, much as I should like to, it is not possible for me to go to your house. But if you could take the chance of finding me at the above address, please come tomorrow, the 28th instant at 8 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. B. MORENO, ESQ.

PRESIDENT, THE ANGLO-INDIAN LEAGUE

2 WELLESLEY SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13024

¹ In the dispute between the workers and the management of the Gujarat Ginning Mill, Gandhiji was a member of the Arbitration Board.

582. *LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA*

8 PRETORIA STREET,
CALCUTTA,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to send you an appointment, I am so much pressed for time that I hardly know whether I could give you an appointment before the Congress meets. I would therefore ask you to tell me briefly in writing what you want to say.

Yours sincerely,

THE RAJA OF KANIKA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13822

583. *LETTER TO HOWARD HANLEHURST*

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would not take the responsibility of advising you to come here. Though there is no movement in India called by the name¹ that your movement bears, the spirit of brotherhood is there and works away silently. I fancy that your abilities can be more economically and usefully employed in your natural environments.

Yours sincerely,

HOWARD HANLEHURST, ESQ.
CHESTER-LE-STREET, ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 15101

584. *A LETTER*

AS AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter received during Christmas week. I send you therefore my very best wishes.

I welcome your questions. So long as we indirectly sustain a system and derive our own support from it, so long are we bound to

¹ Brotherhood of the World Association of Youth

give it even direct support, unless we feel that the system being bad presents an effective opportunity for destroying it. The question when the opportunity is effective can only be determined in every individual case by one's own strength of conviction and corresponding self-confidence. At the time of my participation in the Boer War and the late War, I saw neither the effective opportunity nor had I the confidence. Seeker after God which is Truth does not bother when the opportunity is effective or about self-confidence. God gives him the light when his time has come. All that man can do, is required to do, is to keep himself pure, humble to the extent of becoming a cipher in very truth. The light at the correct time is assured for him. Such a seeker confines himself to progressively narrow participation in a system in which he finds himself and from which he is too unable to extricate himself wholly at a bound.

I think that the second question is partly if not wholly answered in the foregoing. I can only add that a silent prayer is often more effective than the spoken word consciously uttered. Therefore in irresponsible surroundings like those of the Wall Street a reliance must be placed exclusively upon silent prayer accompanied by the strictest uncompromising conduct.

I am not absolutely sure of the European visit. But if I do go to Europe next year and if there is a call from within to go to America and if I have the time I would certainly go. But here again I am following my tried prescription within for light and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 15127

585. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*¹

CALCUTTA,
December 27, 1928

Being in the midst of all turmoil I have not much time to send you a love letter much as I should like during this Christmas week. Tucker² has been constantly with me and was anxious to join the morning prayer on Christmas day and give appropriate hymns, but could not as his friends failed him at the last moment.

I am dictating this just for one thing, and that is Lalaji's book.

¹ In his letter dated 28-11-1928, the addressee had enquired about the publication of an English edition of Lala Lajpat Rai's *Unhappy India*, and expressed concern about the misunderstanding created in the West by Miss Mayo's *Mother India*.

² Boyd William Tucker

After very careful consideration I have come to the conclusion that it is unnecessary just now to publish an abridgement of *Unhappy India*. Lalaji's wish about the circulation of a thousand copies in Britain should be respected, not by presenting copies gratis to anybody except those who may want it but by keeping a stock there for sale. The third edition printed here is a well-got-up volume attractively bound. It may be sold even cheap. But it is the Indian copy which should be circulated there.

I do not attach much importance to replies to Miss Mayo's calumny, however able and true they may be, and certainly not much importance will be given in the West to an Indian contribution. What must however be done is to present the West with a very brief and attractive volume containing the life and selections from all Lalaji's writings. Such a volume will illustrate the truth that the most forward nationalists of India have not been haters of the West or of England or in any other way narrow but that they have been internationalists under the guise of nationalism. Such were Lalaji, Tilak, Das. I hardly need to mention many others. It may serve the cause of humanity if the truth can be brought out that the men who have been persecuted and practically done to death by this wicked Government had deserved a better fate.

I have perhaps not yet made absolutely clear what I want to say. But I have no doubt you have understood it.

Ba, Mahadev, Subbiah, Pyarelal, Krishnadas, Chhaganlal, Jamnadas, Keshu, Jamnalal and Rajagopalachari and several others whom you know intimately are with me.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
112 GOVER STREET
LONDON W.C. 1

From a photostat: S.N. 15128

586. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Friday [On or before December 28, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letters come regularly. There are many Bombay friends travelling up and down. Some of them may escort you. I shall write to Mrityunjaya.

I am very careful in conducting my experiment of taking oil. I shall give it up if it does any harm.

Ba is slightly indisposed today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3317

587. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON NEHRU REPORT, CALCUTTA CONGRESS—II ²

December 28, 1928

When Pandit Motilal called upon Mahatma Gandhi to move the new resolution a member objected to this procedure so long as the original resolution³ and the amendments had not been withdrawn.

The President ruled that Mahatmaji might take the permission of the house to substitute his resolution. All other amendments would be considered as amendments to the substituted resolution.

Thereupon Mahatma Gandhi in moving the withdrawal of his original resolution made an important statement giving an idea as to what had happened behind the scenes. He said:

Before I move the resolution which has been circulated to you, I beg leave of the house to withdraw the resolution which I had the honour of moving the other day and to which so many amendments have al-ready been moved. I know that in asking for permission to withdraw my resolution I owe to the house an apology. You have been

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 10-12-1928, mentioning the experiment in taking oil and "Letter to Kusum Desai", 30-12-1928, which mentions Prabhavati's absence from the Ashram.

² At the Subjects Committee meeting

³ *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-I", 26-12-1928.

put to considerable inconvenience and trouble and a great deal of time has been given to the consideration of the amendments. I was going to say that a great deal of time was wasted but it would not be proper to call it a waste of time, because the consideration of these propositions has enabled you to understand more fully than ever before the mental condition of many of the national workers. It is perfectly correct to insist upon leave being granted for the withdrawal of the resolution into which I had put so much force and to which I attach a great deal of importance, but the national life is a perpetual struggle whilst it is growing. It is a struggle not only against the environments that seek to crush us but also a struggle between our own ranks. Often the struggle between our own ranks is more prolonged, more exacting and even more bitter than the struggle against the environment which is outside ourselves. You may depend upon it that we who were behind the resolution which will be withdrawn and those who were behind the principal amendment of Pandit Jawaharlal put their heads together and wanted to avoid a conflict. Mr. Sambamurthi was surprised why Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was not here today. He may very well be surprised and I propose to take you into confidence. He was, as he said at the outset, not in sympathy with much that was going on in our midst. He has become impatient to throw off the yoke. Every twenty-four hours of his life he simply broods upon the grievances of his countrymen. He is impatient to remove the grinding pauperism of the masses. He is impatient against capitalists who are in the country exploiting the masses as he is against the capitalists who rule over this country and exploit and bleed this country in the words of late Lord Salisbury. I may tell you frankly that he is not in sympathy even with this resolution which I seek to substitute for the resolution which will be withdrawn if you give permission. He thinks this resolution itself falls far short of what he wants but, a high-souled man as he is, he does not want to create unnecessary bitterness. Bitterness and worse he is prepared to face if face them he must. He sees deliverance out of it by seeking to impose silence upon himself and remaining absent. Hence you find that even though he is a Secretary, and a faithful and diligent Secretary of the Congress, he feels that it is better for him this morning to absent himself than be a helpless witness to proceedings with which he is not in sympathy. I am sorry because I do not share his discontent over this resolution, while I share all his grief, the intensity of grief over the pauperism of our country and the slavery which is grinding us down. I do not share his belief that what we are doing at the present moment is not sufficient for the present needs of the country. But how can he help feeling dissatisfied? He would not

be Jawaharlal if he did not strike out for himself an absolutely unique and original line in pursuance of his path. He considers nobody, not even his father, nor wife, nor child. His own country and his duty to his own country he considers and nothing else.

Now you understand why he is absent and now perhaps you will also understand why I have to perform the painful duty of withdrawing the resolution which I moved, not because I am sorry for that resolution, not because I am not in love with that resolution, not because the one I am now going to move is a better resolution by any means; I hold that that was far superior to the resolution which is now in my hand. But as I have said, our life is a perpetual struggle against oppressive environments and a perpetual struggle within our ranks. If we want unity, then adjustment and readjustment, a series of compromises honourable to both parties and to variety of opinions, is to be effected. We invest every occasion with the importance of a sacred *siddhanta* or principle from which not an iota should be removed. Many of the things which we call by the name of principles are no more principles than so many details which we do not call principles, and therefore this resolution is a result of attempts on the part of all parties in this house or those parties who are interested in that resolution and its principle amendments. It is a resolution of compromise between them, of a series of adjustment and readjustment between them. Hence, I feel that I am doing nothing wrong, not only that I am doing nothing wrong in asking for permission to withdraw that resolution although I consider it far superior to the resolution which I will presently move before you, but because I know that our national interest will be better served by the resolution which I consider far inferior to the former resolution because it will hold all parties together. They are no more inclined to divide the house than I was or Pandit Motilal was. Both of us were for dividing the house because we thought that we would win, but what would that victory mean if it increased the bitterness, if it increased the weakening of our national unity and our national forces?

There were not three or four people behind my original resolution but two parties behind it and even the principal amendment of Pandit Jawaharlal was a compromise. Even that fell far short of what he held to be dear to him, but he said, "If I could keep together all the different elements in the county I would waive my objection and move this resolution." Hence you see that even that resolution was a result of compromise just as this is. Therefore if you still think that you will shoulder the responsibility and you consider that the interest of the country will be better served by not allowing me to withdraw that resolution, of course you can shoulder that responsi-

bility, but remember what it means. I now leave the proposition in your hands.¹ (Applause)

There are in our midst today those who would stop at nothing, who in their impatience do not mind if they rush headlong even to perdition. What are we to do? What am I to do—a man approaching his end? What am I to say to those flowers of the country who prize its liberty just as much as I do, if not perhaps much more? What am I to say to it? Am I to say I shall no longer come with you because I consider that my principle is better, my method is better, therefore you shall work out your own destiny; you shall work out that without my services? I assure you, it is not without a considerable pain, that I have taken up this position. I could have defied them just as they could have defied me, but they say: 'We do not do it, because we want your services also, if we get them; but not altogether at your price. We want you to pay the same price to us also. We want you to meet us also.' I could not possibly resist it without stultifying myself and without degrading myself. Although I feel it was a better resolution, I will move this with all the force at my command and with all the insistence that I put into the original resolution. This resolution, therefore considering the circumstances, becomes really, for the time being, superior to the resolution that I moved and hence I ask for your leave to withdraw that resolution and let me put before you this resolution for your consideration.

If after what I have told you, if after I have taken you into the secrets and if after I have told you of something which induced me to withdraw my resolution, if after all that you do not want that my original resolution be withdrawn and if you care to take that serious responsibility upon your shoulders, you can say that the resolution shall not be withdrawn. Then your vote will be tantamount to your voting for that resolution. But I warn you against that serious responsibility.²

The President asked the house to signify its desire whether leave be allowed to Mahatmaji to withdraw his former resolutions and move the present agreed one. This was given by the whole house with show of hands. There were only four dissentients.

Mahatmaji then moved his resolution:

This Congress, having considered the onstitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report, welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems, and congratulates the Committee on the

¹ Here a member raised a point of order that Gandhiji should not be allowed to make a speech in withdrawing the resolution.

² After the speech, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opposed the withdrawal of Gandhiji's former resolution.

virtual unanimity of its recommendations, and, whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves of the constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, especially as it re-presents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

Subject to the exigencies of the political situation this Congress will adopt the Constitution, if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before December 31, 1929, but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organize a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

Consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on, in the name of the Congress, of the propaganda for Complete Independence.

In moving the substituted resolution Mahatma Gandhi said:

Friends, I don't want to inflict a long speech upon you but I must confess to you that I have not been able to collect my thoughts, my brain is muddled and I have got to put my thoughts together as I proceed. It is really a fact that my brain is muddled. A physician will tell you what happens to a man who has to undergo an all-night vigil and that anxiously following the delicate proceedings as I had to do in a little tent nearby when the Convention Committee was meeting to which I was dragged, not called, by our Chairman. I had hoped that I would not have to attend that Committee, but a peremptory summons came and I had to jump into a car that brought me to the place which I could not leave before half past two in the morning after which it was no longer possible for me to go and sleep.

You will now see what I mean when I say I have got a muddled brain.

The resolution that I have the honour of moving, you have already heard. I want you first of all to consider what has been omitted from the original resolution. It is necessary to do so not in order to commend this resolution to your attention because I know that this resolution having been accepted by the two parties, large parties in this house, it does not need any commendation. Even if I merely place this resolution before you I feel it is absolutely safe in your hands. There may be a few who may vote against it but it is not my purpose merely to get this resolution passed. That is the least important part of it. But my purpose is to draw your attention upon what is expected of you, why you are having this resolution and not

the original resolution passed and what is expected of the party which is instrumental in having the first resolution watered down. You will find there is a glaring omission for which I am sorry. That is the omission in connection with the sending of the resolution to the Viceroy. I could understand even whilst I was drawing that clause that when it would be read to you some of you would be shocked and say to yourselves: 'Thou too, non-co-operator!' I rehearsed that to myself. But a non-co-operator, the author of non-co-operation, has brought in that clause and if I could even now convince you how important that clause is and if you ask me to restore it I would gladly restore it. I have no time. You do not know how pressed some of us are for time. I had no time even to discuss the reason for putting down that clause to the original proposition. I said to myself when I drew up that clause if I discovered any reluctance on your part I would gladly destroy it. But I want to put my case before this house not because of my reputation as non-co-operator—because that is well able to take care of itself, because there is still action left behind it—but because I want the house to understand the implications of non-co-operation as also the implications of this very resolution.

Somebody has said that this resolution is a challenge and so it is. It is open to the British Government to interpret this as an insolent challenge if they wish. We need not be afraid of it. But if there is the slightest trace of change of heart about these in the governors then it is open to them also to understand the yearnings of the nation which is trying to rise, which is trying to throw off the yoke of thralldom. It would be better for them; it will be better also for the world because they represent a big nation. But we cannot help if they will not put correct interpretation upon this resolution. But as I said if it is a challenge it is also a threat. I am not frightened of going even to the House of Commons. I am not even frightened of going to the Viceroy. But when could I go there? Only when it is honourable for me to do so quite consistently with the creed of non-co-operation. I non-co-operate with the evil, I do not non-co-operate with the good. I do not non-co-operate with persons, I non-co-operate with measures and when measures commend themselves to me I co-operate with them. If the Viceroy today asks me to go to him to discuss things of importance for the country on a footing of equality I will go there barefooted and still defend my non-co-operation. If the time comes—and time must come, it is possible for you to hasten that time—it will be possible for you to hasten that day you have put before you, if you only work out that programme and approach the resolution in the spirit in which it ought to be approached. It is possible for you to have summons to go to the House of Commons and then you will go as

non-co-operators, not as co-operators. Then you will go as national delegates who are required to come to some reasonable terms in respect of what we are demanding. It won't be something degrading to us, it won't be something which is a right of the House of Commons to give and for you to take as beggars. It will be then a matter of "high contracting parties", as the term goes and as it is described, even as South Africa went.

I have been quoting to you things about South Africa, because not being a student of history which is written in dead pages but being a student of history which is now being written, I know more of South Africa than of any other country because I lived there. I tell you that General Botha and General Smuts fought so gallantly and bravely extorted the admiration of King Edward who sent a message saying: "I do not want to fight any longer with these gallant people." It was then that these gallant generals went to England. But as what? They went as delegates and ambassadors of that nation to vindicate their honour, to gain their liberty not on terms dictated by the House of Commons but on terms they had settled at a Convention just like this. Have we got the bravery of those generals?¹

Have we got a General Botha in our midst who is prepared to sacrifice 20,000 acres of his valuable property and so many thousands of his sheep? You do not know perhaps that General Botha was one of the experts of the world in knowing a good sheep from a bad sheep. He was as free with these things as he was free with his life-blood. Have we got a General Botha? Have we got a General Smuts who is just as ready to tuck up his sleeves and work underground as to shoulder his rifle when the country demanded? I feel we have. If we had not I would not place this resolution before you. I would simply retire to Sabarmati.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya asked me: 'What is it that has brought you again out of your den? Is it again to coquet with the Swaraj Party because you were in love with Pandit Motilal Nehru? Is it still your lingering love for Motilal that has brought you?' These are not his exact words. This is the substance of what Dr. Pattabhi said. You will, therefore, take this with some degree of reservation. I told him I would give an explanation of it. It was no lingering love but the burning love for my dear comrade. When he said: 'You were instrumental in putting this crown of thorns upon my head, you will now have to come and see how many bruises that crown of thorns caused to my head and you will have to come and share some of those bruises,' I would be guilty of breach of friendship, I would be guilty of breach of duty to

¹ What follows is from *Forward*, 29-12-1928.

the nation, if after having pressed them to take their share at this critical juncture in the history of the country, I had not responded to his call and said: 'I shall come on the day you fix and I shall leave on the day you ask me.' (Applause) You now understand why I have come here and you now understand the importance I attach to this resolution, compromised though it is, weaker though it is, than the original resolution.

Then coming to this clause about the Viceroy; that is because it was a necessary sequel to that resolution as it is a necessary sequel to this resolution. This resolution is really without its crown, but we are today suffering from what is known in psychology as inferiority complex. We have King Charles' head dangling before our eyes every five minutes. You know the celebrated Mr. Dick who could not possibly think of anything without imagining the head of King Charles. This brand of inferiority is marked on our foreheads, on our breasts. It is always dangling before us and worrying us to death. That we see in every-thing and there is the apprehension lest we might weaken ourselves. Now we are strengthening ourselves. It was, as some papers put it, an ultimatum. But it was a performance of courtesy. I expected those who are the trustees of the honour of the British nation to understand the implications of this resolution, I want them to understand the yearnings of the nation, and therefore I perform this delicate task, the delicate courtesy, of transmitting this resolution to them to do what they like with it. I understand what all these proceedings mean.

I do not want to leave anything open to them to say 'we do not know anything about this resolution'.

Do not make any mistake about it, that this All-Parties Constitution is not a demand to be considered by the British nation, but do not go away with the idea that this is a document which is never to be considered by them. It is not a thing to be submitted to the Simon Commission, but this is a document to be considered by the British Government, by the Imperial Government, by the Viceroy and those who are today supposed to be ruling the destinies of India. It has been drafted for this purpose. I say it is also a Charter of Independence as we consider it today. Friends, I think I warned you against drawing any distinction between Dominion Status and Independence. I call it Independence. I had to say last night "for heaven's sake, do not depart from this document" nor can you contemplate a departure from this document. It is a sacred document. It is nothing more, nothing less. If it is a sacred document, you cannot possibly depart from it. Then you will have a special session of the Convention and the Congress to consider the desirability of removing even a comma if

necessary. Having given that sacred character to that document it does not mean that it has got to be kept in a treasure chest. It is a document which must be circulated and above all to Viceregal ranks. Do not leave it open to them to say: 'You have not sent this for our consideration. Even if it was an ultimatum you should have sent it to us.'¹

I did the same thing in regard to Bardoli. I wrote a letter addressed to the Viceroy but within 24 hours of that letter I had the painful duty of withdrawing it and reshaping it as I considered this was necessary because of the further events². If I was suffering from the fever of inferiority complex I could have given an interview to the Press representatives and expected the Viceroy to send me an answer. But I took the proper course. Similarly, I want to take a proper course in regard to this resolution for thereby you will not weaken but strengthen your case if you are going to do anything at all.

I again repeat that the Nehru Report has got to be considered by the British Parliament and by the Viceroy if it is to result in anything whatsoever. The authors of the Nehru Report knew it. You know it and I know it. It would be a sign of weakness, it would be undignified, not to recognize it. If the Viceroy is a worthy representative of his King and his nation, he will take note of this resolution even though it does not contain the clause which I should have liked to be inserted but from this platform I declare if he cares to read my remarks which I do convey to him that it will be proper for him to take this resolution to heart and to understand that at least some of us mean to vindicate every word of what is contained in it. ("Hear, hear") If you cry "hear, hear" then I ask you to restore that clause for submission to the Viceroy. (Cries of "No, no") If you say "no" then I say you are suffering from inferiority complex. I have had some experience of it myself in South Africa where I was addressed as a cooly.³

I now address my remarks to the impatient young men who have insisted upon 1929 and also to those who want December, 1930. When I put down 1930, I counted the consequences. So many friends have been coming to me and asking me: "If we vote for this resolution and if we vote for this programme, will you repeat what you did in 1920⁴, will you take virtual control of national affairs?" I said I have

¹ What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 29-12-1928.

² The tragedy of Chauri-Chaura on February 4, 1922; *vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922

³ What follows is from *Forward*, 29-12-1928.

⁴ *Vide* "Speech Replying on Non-Co-Operation Resolution, Calcutta", 8-9-1920 and "Swaraj in One Year", 22-9-1920

not got the strength today to fight single-handed. But I will if you come to terms with me and if you will bear the yoke. The yoke will be much tighter and much heavier than it was in 1920. It is a seasoned yoke and it has not worn out by usage. It becomes stronger and stronger by usage. If you give me the discipline that I shall exact, then certainly I will give you my work, so much of it as my frail body can give. Today I have come to perform a sacred duty to my country and after that my back is turned upon Calcutta and I retire to Sabarmati. I say to you that beyond putting this resolution before you, you may not expect anything unless these inexorable terms are granted to me by you, not unwillingly but of your own accord. It will be no use dragging me, no good asking me to take control unless you mean every word of what you say.

I thought two years was a shortening of time to organize our forces, in order to give battle if we must give battle to the Government. One year is nothing, one year will be required to create the discipline in our ranks. Our Congress roll today is nothing but a bogus affair. Let us face facts. It is worth nothing. If I went with inspectors to examine the Congress registers it would be a sad disappointment for me. We want a living register of the Congress. We want to be in a position to say even from day to day, so many more members are enrolled, so much more yarn given, so many more four-anna bits given and whatever it is, but I would expect the figure to come to our Central Office from week to week if not from day to day, showing enhanced subscription and increasing membership.

That will take one year and one year more will be required for giving ourselves confidence and courage, and for consolidation of communal unity. Communal unity is not yet in sight. Much has got to be done. The whole of last night was spent in trying to bring about communal unity. We want some time for the atmosphere to clear. I hold therefore that two years is all too short a time. But I said to myself: 'What does it matter if all these impatient young men want me to share the discredit of showing nothing at the end of one year? I will share it.' I have given the warning that if they do not give a good account of themselves in terms of this resolution and no other, they will earn discredit and I shall gladly share it with them as a comrade and a party to this document. But I give them a warning from this public platform. Let them give themselves night in, night out and day in and day out to work out the constructive part of the programme in terms of the resolution in order to hasten the march towards our goal.

I now come to the Madras Congress approval. It would have needed no commentary on my part but for a discussion we had in the tent. I simply want to clarify the issues. Independence we may

reiterate from a million platforms in the name of the Congress, but we must not treat the report of the All-Parties Committee as something separate from Independence. By approving it, you are not weakening your struggle for Independence. You are using that document as a stage and as a big stage in your progress towards Independence and as you harangue upon Independence from your platforms, it will be your duty, if you are true to this resolution of approval to your constitution, to say, 'We want you to treat this Nehru Report in terms of our goal and consolidate the Nehru Report in the struggle for Independence.' Do not consider the Nehru Report as an excrescence to be deplored but regard it as an integral part of the struggle. I tell you that this resolution commits you to that attitude of mind. Unless you do that, the Nehru Report really will be a halter round your necks, and it will be always like King Charles' head coming before you and you will always seek to hide it behind you. And if somebody says, 'what about the Nehru Report?' you will omit all mention of it or pretend you did not hear him or had forgotten all about it. If that is your attitude towards the Nehru Report, then do not approve it because approval means that you like it, you appreciate their labour, you feel that they have discharged the national trust and they have discharged the trust on behalf of those who want independence and nothing else. They have worked on behalf of them as much as they have worked on behalf of those who are still frightened of Independence, who cannot stand the glare of Independence and they have worked for both parties, they have accommodated both parties, but the Independent-wallah has nothing to be ashamed of in this Report but everything to be proud of. You can make what you like out of that Report and I think you can make much more out of that Report than the man who cannot stand the dazzle and glare of Independence.

You call it special pleading. I have never been guilty of that art. Every word that I say comes out of the deepest recesses of my heart. The heart is responding although the brain is reeling. I ask you to bear in mind what you are doing when you accept the resolution. Do not say that it is a waste paper or a consolation prize to Motilal Nehru lest he be offended with the magnificent ride he had on a chariot drawn by 34 more or less white horses. After that triumphant ride he stands in no need of a consolation prize. Much less do I need a consolation prize.

I want drops of your life-blood to mingle with mine, the drops of Hindu blood to mingle with Muslim blood and Sikh blood, Parsi blood and Christian blood so that a magnificent memorial may rise in Calcutta, if you like, to show what this nation has done in order to earn its liberty, in order to buy its liberty, not with gold but with blood. That is what I want you to read into this resolution. The

resolution calls you to that duty and nothing else. Then there is very little left for me to say.

But I had better explain to you the exigencies of the political situation. Of course it sticks in the throat. It is again an interpolation from that old dame "Inferiority Complex", but sometimes we will have to treat old dames as young maidens. Supposing that a Viceroy or a Secretary of State for India loses his head and says: "What are these insolent men doing, firing these insults against the nation and demanding Dominion Status even at the point of the bayonet?" We have no bayonets. But the points of our pens sometimes feel like bayonets. But how can we avoid it? If yearnings of our hearts, if the miseries or signs of the burning of our hearts, are misread, we cannot help it. But they choose to do so, imprison some of us, or do something worse. Suppose after this resolution and after all we are doing here, we have a demonstration against the Simon Commission whenever it comes officially to Calcutta—the last time I understand it did not come officially and therefore you restrained yourselves and showed how you were capable of behaving yourselves—but when it makes its official entry and you welcome it with black flags, supposing then that some Superintendent of Police in the discharge of his duty as he considers it, uses his rifle, what are we to do? Are we still to say "Yes, we shall accept Dominion Status"? We can say that if we do not want to treat it as an exigency of the political situation and if we do not feel strong enough, we can swallow that injury, and weak we certainly are, and yet we can say: "Yes, we shall accept Dominion Status." But we may get together sufficient courage and have a manifestation of such courage within us that will enable us to say "No more Dominion Status, no more parleying. Now Complete Independence". That is a political exigency that we have provided for.

If the Commission reads these signs aright, it will see the country stands by the Nehru Report. Of course there is no such hope from the Commission to read the signs aright. And I am not such a simpleton to believe it but I am also an irrepressible optimist. If some sudden influx of energy comes to us, the Hindus, and if Mohammedans and Sikhs say after having listened to this mad man and known the fire that was burning in his breast: "Let us shed our mutual distrust and say we don't want communalism at all", we shall trust our Muslim and Sikh friends and if as a result of the trust some of us have to die or to be deprived of our franchise and rights, it does not matter, that will be a step in our march towards our goal; if that kind of courage and conviction comes to you all of a sudden, then I promise that Sir John Simon will say: "That is *my* Report, I understand the situation in Indiaas no other representative of the British Nation does

understand.” Today we have not got that atmosphere, we have not got that trust, we have not got that self-confidence, hence you hedge yourselves round with all the badges of inferiority complex. But the key lies in the resolution which I have placed before you.

(Applause)

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1928 and Forward, 29-12-1928

588 *WHAT IS IN A NAME?*

December 29, 1928

At the time of writing this (forenoon, 29th December) it is too early to give my impressions of the Congress. The events are moving and changing so fast that the impressions of the morning are nullified by those of the evening. Meanwhile, therefore, it may be well to understand the controversy raging round Dominion Status and Independence. The more I hear the arguments of those who have forced the issue, the more clearly do I see the harm that is being done by it. Up to a certain point it was perhaps health giving and necessary. It was certainly good to appreciate the fact that nothing short of independence could possibly be the goal of the nation and that therefore every advance should be interpreted in terms of independence. It follows therefore that every political change or reform that may impede the nation's march towards independence should be rejected.

But what is the meaning of this independence? For me its meaning is *swaraj*. Independence is a word employed for European consumption. And those whose eyes are turned outward, whether it be towards West or East, North or South are thinking of anything but India's independence. For finding India's independence we must look to India and her sons and daughters, her needs, and capacity. It is obvious that the contents of her independence must therefore vary with her varying needs and increasing capacity. India's independence therefore need not have the meaning current in the West. Italian independence is different from that of England, Sweden's differs from both.

One thing that we need is undoubtedly freedom from British *control in any shape or form*. But freedom from such control of any other power is equally our need in terms of independence. The Nehru Report points the way to such freedom and it prescribes the remedy that India can assimilate today. It is a worthless document if it means anything less. Its acceptance is wholly compatible with the national goal and I venture to think that the fiercest champion of national

independence can and should safely work for its full fruition. The Report is not an end in itself. It simply gives us the formula according to which we should work. It presumes concentrated ceaseless work by all the different parties before it can bear fruit.

Great confusion has been created by tearing the much abused expression 'Dominion Status' from its context. It is not an elixir of life to be imported from Westminster to put life into us. The expression has been used by the distinguished authors of the Report to show by analogy what in their opinion is needed for India's political growth. The scheme of government adumbrated in the Report, whether it is known by the expression Dominion Status or any other, whilst it may fully answer our needs today, may easily fall short of them tomorrow. But it contains its own corrective. For it is a scheme to be worked out by the nation, not one to be imposed upon or thrown at her by Britain. If it fructifies, it *contains all we need* for future growth; hence I call it the Charter of our Independence.

After all, if the Nehru Report is consigned to oblivion, we shall still need a charter. It may be known as the charter of India's independence and may still conceivably be much less than the Dominion Status of the Nehru Report.

If what we want therefore cannot be sufficiently described by the swadeshi word swaraj, it cannot be described by any other word that can be coined. All that the man in the street should know is that he wants the scheme of government framed by the nation's representatives without the change of a comma and then he can say with the greatest confidence: 'What is in a name?'

That the Nehru scheme requires endorsement by the British Parliament is no defect in it. Since we are connected with Britain, we shall in every case need some sort of endorsement from her Parliament whether the scheme is to be transmutation of the present bondage into an absolutely equal partnership to be destroyed at will or whether it is to end every sort of connection with Britain. I shall always maintain that the transmutation, complete conversion, is any day a higher status than destruction. But of this later. Enough for us to learn by heart for the moment that any scheme to take us towards swaraj or if you will, independence, must be framed by us and must be accepted without a single alteration dictated by the British Parliament.

Young India, 3-1-1929

589. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Saturday, December 29, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have a few moments to myself today and I give them to this letter. Despite pressure of work and late hours, I have kept good health.

Tell Gangabehn that she should take complete rest and not be in a hurry to resume work. Tell Shankerbhai¹ that he should never spend as much as one hour in the lavatory. In any case he should never strain. He should make changes in his diet and improve his health, or go out to some other place and do so. It will be quite proper for Kamala² to make the kind of chapatis her father requires, but it is not proper to cook his meals separately. We have to learn to run a joint kitchen and overcome all the difficulties which arise. We have taken a vow to continue this experiment for at least a year. I believe, therefore, that we can make no changes.

I expect to leave this place on the 2nd or the 3rd. I hope to reach there before the 11th in any case. Mirabehn is coming here tomorrow and from here she will go to Bihar.

About other things, in the next letter or when we meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 37

590. SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME, CALCUTTA CONGRESS³

December 29, 1928

The President [Pandit Motilal Nehru] then requested Mahatmaji to move his second resolution which runs as follows:⁴

Mahatmaji said that he had no desire of detaining the house for many minutes

¹ An inmate of the Ashram, looking after accounts

² Daughter of Shankerbhai

³ At the Subjects Committee meeting

⁴ For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-I, 26-12-1928, and for the final amended version, *vide* "Speech on Constructive Programme, Calcutta Congress", 1-1-1929

in explaining the resolution. It was plain enough. After what he had listened to for the last half an hour he would only say that the resolution could be worked out only by true Congressmen. It was only by them that the revival and organization of non-co-operation was possible. If they wanted the Nehru Report to fructify, the least that they could do was to work out the resolution with the greatest concentration and with equal integrity during the coming months.¹

Mahatma Gandhi said that he thought that he could take over one or two things from the amendments but when he ran his eye over the amendments suggested, he found nothing which needed to be taken over in the original resolution. The National Volunteers Corps was already in the country. He had proposed an effective use of the National Volunteers. As regards the suggestion about the peasantry and workers, he had been engaged in organizing the peasantry and workers and he did not think there was any person in that assembly there who could claim greater knowledge of the organization of the peasantry than himself. Knowing the matter as well as he did he was not inclined to take over this clause also because the clause in its most effective part was already in the resolution. There was one thing which he would like to clear up and that was with reference to the five per cent. He had never anticipated that the five per cent contribution was to last for ever. What he had anticipated was that this programme would be adhered to for one year and it would prove to be an effective test as to what the nation was capable of doing. If the nation could honestly work out, then the fear that Mrs. Besant had as to non-violent non-co-operation, non-payment of taxes and civil disobedience would be totally dispelled. The probability was that there would be no occasion for any such drastic step or direct action. She will discover that there is no such atmosphere in the country and that there is no untowardness from non-payment of taxes or other forms of civil disobedience. She had no fear of civil disobedience or suspension of taxes in Bardoli, and she thought that the people of Bardoli were justified because she said that the people had a felt grievance and there they could act as one man. But here they did not have a felt grievance or a longing or yearning for swaraj. If they had, they would not find the gross irregularities which had been brought to notice. He was very glad that these irregularities had been reported and hoped the matter would be properly investigated and the complaint effectively dealt with. With regard to the percentage he said it was intended as an acid test of the sincerity of the Congressmen. If they were really sincere about this programme and about getting the Nehru scheme accepted by the British Parliament or on failure of acceptance they were going to work out independence for themselves, and independence could not be gained simply by shouting from the house-tops, then they would not hesitate over this five per cent. He had deliberately excluded anything below Rs. 100, because he knew what difficulties some families had and he had also provided for excluding even this five per cent for the same reason, and left these

¹ After this Dr. Thambe moved an amendment that the term “swadeshi” be substituted for “hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar”. The amendment was, however, lost.

matters to be dealt with by the Working Committee. If Congressmen were prepared to honestly work this programme, this test would show it. But if a proper atmosphere was not created then this would not be forthcoming except from solitary promises. He knew there was the danger of Congressmen leaving in force, of honest Congressmen who would fear that the money would be wasted and not properly applied. He considered all these dangers but unless they incorporated this provision for the purpose of making the Congress effective they would not make much headway. In spite of all these dangers he would take courage in both his hands and say no, as they all knew that he was an irrepressible optimist. He pressed the Resolution for their acceptance. If they liked they might remove that clause.

All the amendments were put to vote and lost and Mahatma Gandhi's resolution put *en bloc* and carried.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-1928

591. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

CALCUTTA,

Sunday, December 30, 1928

CHI. VASUMATI,

Every day I want to write to you, but how could I possibly do so? You did not write to me about [your] weight. By all means go to Bombay and learn everything. When you go to work in the Udyoga Mandir this time, you must preserve your peace of mind absolutely.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 501. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

592. LETTER TO M. T. WALAWALKER

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will have received the acknowledgment of the money order for Lalaji memorial.

As to the solutions you have offered about the monkeys, whilst they are interesting, you will notice that they are not non-violent. What I want to avoid is the slow torture of the monkeys.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MAHADEV TUKARAM WALAWALKER
VENGURLA, KHADI KARYALAYA
From a microfilm: S.N. 13824

593. LETTER TO SAYYID ABDUL LATIF

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have received the magazine. I have glanced through its interesting contents. But I am sorry to say that I have not a moment to spare to give you the kind of article that you want and I should like to give. I am however not sorry for the want of time for the simple reason that unity is not to be reached by any amount of writing but it will be reached by a silent transformation of our hearts which would only come when we are truly desirous of achieving unity.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. SAYYID ABDUL LATIF
OSMANIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)
From a microfilm: S.N. 13825

594. *LETTER TO TARA SHANKER*

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Personally I do think that you should remain firm and cut off all contact even if there is the slightest danger of her dying. In seeking to do the right often we have to risk the death of dearest ones. I am quite clear in my mind that all contact must cease.

I return the Hindi letter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. TARA SHANKER

50 BUTLER HOSTEL

BADSHAHBAGH, LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 13826

595. *LETTER TO SACHINDRA NATH MAITI*

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.¹ I would suggest your studying the constitution of the Ashram published in the pages of *Young India* and I would further ask you to live in accordance with its vows at least for one year and then write to me what progress you have made. It will be then time enough to take stock and consider whether you should join the Ashram or not.

Yours sincerely,

SACHINDRA NATH MAITI, ESQ.

MIDNAPORE, BENGAL

From a photostat: S.N. 13827

¹ The correspondent, a young man of 23, was returning from England and wished to join the Ashram.

596. *LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA*

CALCUTTA ,
December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter¹. I note the contents. The letter shall be treated as strictly private.

Yours sincerely,

RAJASAHEB OF KANIKA
19-A BALLYGUNGE, CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA
From a microfilm: S.N. 13828

597. *LETTER TO LADY R. L. RAMANATHAN*

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your touching letter. It revived all the memories of my visit to your college². It gave me joy to note that you are not forgetting *Daridranarayana*³. The handsome collection made by you should be sent to Sabarmati which I reach about the 6th of January.

Yours sincerely,

LADY RAMANATHAN
RAMANATHAN COLLEGE
CHUNNAKAM (CEYLON)
From a photostat: S.N. 13823

598. *LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI*

December 30, 1928

CHI. KUSUM,

I get your letters regularly. Prabhavati will have returned by the time you get this.

It has reassured me on your account to know that you have been serving everyone. Tell Sarojini Devi that I did not write to her because

¹ In reply to Gandhiji's letter of 27th instant; *vide* "Letter to Raja of Kanika", 27-12-1928

² On November 29, 1927. On the anniversary of that event the college collected Rs. 1,200 to be sent to Gandhiji.

³ God in the form of the poor

I had nothing particular to say. And now we shall be meeting in four or five days. I intend to reach there on the 6th. Letters are now being taken away to be posted, and so I shall not write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1774

599. *LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI*

December 30, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I see that I shall not be able to start from here before the 3rd.

After I return there, you must give yourself some rest from office work.

The problem here has become very complicated this time. I simply cannot say what the outcome will be.

It is a question how long the Mandir should go on supervising khadi work done outside. Lakshmidas's view certainly deserves consideration. We bear Prabhudas's expenses as incidental to his living where he does. About Shantilal¹, I have been thinking. I had a talk with Chhaganlal.

I for one feel that if the parents of any inmates of the Mandir come there and cannot take their meals in the joint kitchen, we cannot make separate arrangements for them. Our decision on this point will depend on our intention as to the direction in which we wish to develop the Mandir. If we wish to develop it into an Ashram, we ought to weaken our personal ties. If we wish to develop in the opposite direction and take interest in worldly life, the number of separate kitchens is bound to increase. If I want *shiro*² for myself, I must get it cooked in the Mandir's kitchen. If my relations come, the only kitchen I have is the Mandir's kitchen. Our uncles should know that our family has grown in the Mandir. I for one feel that we cannot add to the two exceptions³ which we have made. Those who cannot fit into this scheme may leave, and we should reconcile ourselves to their doing so.

¹ Shantilal Joshi, helpmate of Prabhudas

² A sweet made from wheat flour

³ Narandas Gandhi and Valji Desai

I, too, had a letter from Devasharmaji¹ about Balbir. Send him away at the first opportunity.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro- 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 38-9

600 LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CALCUTTA,
Silence Day, December 31, 1928

DEAR SISTERS,

I expect this to be my last letter to you. According to present indications I should be there on Sunday morning.

Today I have only enough time to warn you that on coming there I shall ask all of you to render an account of your activities. Where is the need now to write anything new ? If you have settled down, if you have been able to bring quiet in the kitchen, and if you are regular in attending prayers, I should think that you have done a great deal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3687

601. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [December 31, 1928]²

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I need not write much today. I expect to start from here on Thursday and reach Ahmedabad on Sunday by the train which arrives there at six in the morning. In an hour's time, I have to reach the Congress session. How happy would I be if, when I arrive there, I see everyone carefully attending to all the things I have been writing about!

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are leaving for Bardoli this very day.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 39

¹ A teacher at Gurukul Kangri

² From the reference to Gandhiji's intention to leave Calcutta for Ahmedabad which he did on January 3. The silence day immediately preceding was December 31.

*602 SPEECH ON RESOLUTION ON NEHRU REPORT,
CALCUTTA CONGRESS—III¹*

December 31, 1928

At Monday's sitting of the Congress, Mahatma Gandhi moved the following compromise resolution².

Mahatma Gandhi in moving the resolution delivered a short speech in Hindi. As the loudspeakers failed to work, his speech could not be heard and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru repeated his speech sentence by sentence.

Mahatmaji in the course of his speech said that after due consideration and carefully judging the whole situation he was going to move the resolution before the house. The younger group in the house were eager for Complete Independence.³

If you all wish India to become free you should stop all this controversy about Dominion Status and Independence. You should remember swaraj is what we have outlined here [in this Report]. I have come all the way from Sabarmati Ashram to support the Nehru Committee's recommendation. And that also because the Report is the tangible fruit of the directive given by the Madras Congress. Today we may accept this as swaraj in a way. I don't know what shape it will take tomorrow. We must always insist on truth. If people give up truth and self-respect or break promises and disregard tradition, they cannot secure freedom for they don't deserve it.

You must honour the compromise I have worked out in the Subjects Committee. If you think I am lowering the ideal of Congress, you may repudiate me and not listen to me. I do not want you to accept the resolution simply because I have moved it. You must accept it only if you are prepared to work the specified programme. If you reject this then you will have to find yourself another President, as your present President is the moving spirit behind this resolution. I do not believe in resorting to dirty manoeuvring to obtain a majority vote. It will only delay swaraj. If you want swaraj you must cleanse your mind of all such ideas by voting for this Resolution.⁴

Replying to the debate, Mahatma Gandhi said that his remarks were principally addressed to young Bengal and if they considered for one moment that a mere Gujarati could not understand young Bengal, then young Bengal would commit a most serious blunder.⁵

¹ The speech was delivered at the open session.

² Not reproduced here. *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-II, 28-12-1928

³ What follows is from *Aaj*.

⁴ What follows is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

⁵ Two or three voices cried "No, no".

I will ask you not to interrupt me when I am endeavouring to address a few words to you, as a fellow-worker of yours. If however you want to interrupt me, I shall certainly retire and not address you. If on the other hand you want to listen to me, then listen to me in perfect silence. I want to make it absolutely clear that if you are wise, you will dismiss from your mind the bogey of Independence v. Dominion Status. There is no opposition between Dominion Status and Independence. I do not want a Dominion Status that will interfere with my fullest growth, with my independence. These words, I suggest, are misleading. I would therefore suggest a better method. That is independence whereby we can grow to our fullest height. We are the architects of our own destiny and I suggest that the architects of the Nehru Report are your own countrymen appointed by you. There is no hand on the part of the Government in the framing of this document. This document owes its origin to the Madras Congress and it is through the Madras Congress that this Committee was appointed and it is this Report by which I ask you to stand for the time being. The question has been agitating my mind since yesterday afternoon when I heard that there was going to be seriously put forward an amendment to this resolution on behalf of those who, I thought, were a party to the resolution that I moved.

The resolution that I have submitted to this house is the direct result of a compromise. The resolution that I originally framed, you have not seen. And even the one that was printed and moved in the Subjects Committee was also in a way the result of informal compromise or some kind of understanding, whatever language you might wish to use. That resolution was not framed by me only; there were many heads behind that. There was an attempt to placate as many parties as it was possible to placate. That resolution was discussed by various men, men who were supposed to represent different parties. I do not want to suggest that you are bound by that resolution but I do want to say that those who were supposed to be behind that resolution were honour-bound to support it.

If anybody runs away with the idea that I am here appealing to sentiment, he is in the wrong. You can appeal to one's sense of honour and I am proud of having made my appeal to that sense of honour. I suggest that if those who were behind this compromise subsequently discovered that they have committed a blunder and that they must clear their position before the world and say that they are penitent for what they had done previously, I suggest that penitence is made of sterner stuff. It is not made by amendments. There are other drastic steps to be taken. If those who were behind the compromise consider that they have committed no such blunder but have

committed only tactical blunder or a blunder that involves displeasure of some party, then I suggest that it is their bounden duty to swallow that blunder and abide by that compromise. If you have not got that sense of honour and if, giving a word of honour you are not sure that it should be kept at any cost, then I say that you will not be able to make this nation free.

You may take the name of Independence on your lips just as the Muslims utter the name of Allah or a pious Hindu utters the name of Krishna or Rama, but all that muttering will be an utterly empty formula if there is no honour behind it. If you are not prepared to stand by your own words, where will Independence be? Independence is after all a thing made of sterner stuff. It is not made by wriggling of words. I suggest that if you want to vindicate the honour of this nation, because the Viceroy insults us or president of a European Chamber of Commerce insults us, we say, we want our independence because we want to vindicate our honour, then you are dragging independence into the mire. Do not imagine for a moment that I am trying to snatch a vote from you. Believe me there is no such thing at the back of my mind.

I would fain suffer defeat at the hands of young men, but I am jealous of their honour. If you, young men, who are behind this amendment¹, understand the significance of the message I am delivering to you, you may say for the present that you have committed a blunder but that you want to abide by that compromise because our leaders have entered into compromise. If you think it is not a matter of honour, if you think that the independence of the country will be lost if you accept my resolution, I invite you to throw out my resolution by an overwhelming majority. But if you accept my resolution by an overwhelming majority or even by any majority whatsoever, then those who vote for this resolution should understand that it would be a matter of honour for them to work for it because they pledge themselves for it.

But why are you so oppressed? Why are you labouring under that inferiority complex that within a year we shall not be able to convince the British Parliament that we shall not be able to marshal our forces and summon to ourselves the strength that we need? Swaraj is my birthright just as breathing through the lungs is my birthright. It must be as natural to you as your breath. Why are you so afraid.?

I have got full faith. If you will help me and follow the programme honestly and intelligently, I promise that swaraj will come

¹ By Subhas Chandra Bose, repudiating Dominion Status and declaring Complete Independence as the goal of the Indian people

within one year. I want you to die a proper death. I want you to develop full courage and die with calculated courage. If you have got that courage, if you can stand with your breast bare before the bullet, then I promise, you will get all that you possibly desire. Do not be frightened by the shadow. Do not be afraid of the long-drawn-out agony. I admit that it is a longdrawn-out process, but under the present state of the country when we cannot trust our brothers and sisters, our parents, and party leaders, when we cannot trust anybody, when we have no sense of honour, when we cannot allow our words to remain unaltered for 24 hours, do not talk of independence. But if you will develop that calm courage and honesty of purpose and that determination which will refuse to accept 'no' for an answer to your demand, then I promise what the tallest among us can possibly desire.

Throughout these days we have heard a great deal that we are not able to carry on the Congress election campaign in an honest manner. It cut me to the quick when I heard that delegates' tickets passed hands and were sold like bills of exchange and the rates increased as the days went on and rupee ticket sold for Rs. 15. It is discreditable to the Congress and I tell you that you are not going to get Independence by these methods. On the other hand you are forging your own shackles, from which there will be no escape because it is of your own will.

May God direct you in coming to a decision.

I do not want you to decide the question, because I am the mover of the resolution or because Pandit Motilal is at the back of the resolution. It is you who must decide with your calm reasoning but showing honour with it.¹ (Loud applause)

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-1-1929 and *Aaj*, 2-1-1929

603. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

[1928]²

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have received your letter. Your earlier letter represented the high tide, the present one represents the low tide. But do not worry. We must live as God wishes. You must sing Narasinh Mehta's morning hymns and understand their meaning. Therein you will find the remedy for your restlessness. Even restlessness is something like a

¹ At this stage amendments were put to vote and they were all lost Gandhiji's resolution was then separately put to vote and adopted.

² As noted by the addressee.

ghost. How can the *atman* be restless? But that is not something which can be understood by being explained. It has to be experienced. One day you will certainly experience the peace you are longing for. If you want to go to South Africa I can help you. But will you find peace even there? One's peace does not depend on time and place, which are external things. Very often we have an illusion of peace when we are drunk, but the feeling of peace vanishes when we are sober again. You want that kind of peace which can pass through the severest test. Ordinary things cannot give you that peace. May God grant you patience. Ba is undecided about coming.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana Man, p. 45

604. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

Silence day, [1928]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

The letter addressed to the women is enclosed. Where are you yourself?

Are you occupying with credit the position of the women's organization? Have you found the key to life? Have you acquired control over your mind? I have come to the conclusion that your mental agitation has been the cause of your illness. Know it for certain that God is not to be found in temples or in pilgrimages. God resides in your very heart. He is to be found in your duty. Your energy will be well spent if you go deep and purify your thinking. You do have energy.

I notice diplomacy in your letters. Why diplomacy with me?

A daughter can utter any crazy thing before her father or mother. She does not choose her words to express herself. You have deliberated on your words and sentences. Beware. Do not add to my disappointments. The matter about Sharada is still hurting me like a knife. The wound has not healed. I have myself closed this letter.

If you write 'Personal' on the letter, it will come straight to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3131

¹ From the reference to the matter about Sharada; *vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 8-12-1928 and "Letter to Kusum Desai", 19-12-1928

605. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
[1928]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Improve your health. If there is anything more to be written about Sharada, do write. Discuss things with her.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapune Patro - 6 : Gangabehnne, p. 17; G. N. 11264

606. THE ASIATIC PASSIVE RESISTANCE STRUGGLE — THE FINAL STAGES²

[Before 1929]

He who played an important part in the Indian Passive Resistance Movement did not live to see the final stages. He has described the struggle in his own graphic style in his monograph³ on me, Gandhi.

This chapter is intended to take a brief survey of the movement from where Mr. Doke left it. No Englishman had such a keen grasp of the subject as he, by patient study, had acquired. Busy though he was with the work of his own flock, if a man of his breadth of vision and his all-round humanity could be said to have had a special flock, he made this Indian question as much his own as the work of the Pastorate. He collected and tabulated every scrap of paper upon the subject. He wrote much upon it. He saw the authorities and spoke to them with the certainty of the knowledge of an expert. He took charge of the editorial work of the Passive Resistance organ, *Indian Opinion*, during Mr. Gandhi's and Mr. Polak's absence from South Africa⁴. The leading articles he wrote for the journal during the period are literary monuments. His anxiety to keep up the traditions of the

¹ Period inferred; *vide* also the preceding item.

² Gandhi wrote this for William E. Cursons, who was preparing a biography of the Reverend Doke at the request of his family. It was published as Chapter XV of the biography. *Joseph Doke : The Missionary-hearted*. The date when Gandhiji wrote this is not available; there was a delay of several years before the publication of the biography in 1929 by the Christian Literature Depot, Johannesburg.

³ *M. K. Gandhi : An Indian Patriot in South Africa*; *vide* "Letter to J. J. Doke", 14-10-1908 "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi" and "Letter to Shapurji Saklatvala", 20-5-1927

⁴ The Reverend J. J. Doke was editor for a brief period in 1913.

journal was so great that, in matters of policy, he took the advice of and allowed himself to be guided by, those whom he was not bound to consult. He came in contact with the best and the worst of Indians. All his study was not merely to bring to a close a movement, however great it may have been. He had dreams about the future of South Africa, the part that Indians were to play in it, the part that Christianity had to play in the great drama that was being enacted before him. His Indian work was taken up in answer to the question of his soul. "What am I to do in South Africa in the midst of many races?"

Mr. Doke had intended, if he had lived, to take part in the constructive programme of the Indian community after the struggle was finished. He had intended, too, to write a volume on the lessons of the struggle. But that was not to be.

The readers of these pages will, however, be glad to know the final results of the historical struggle which attracted world-wide attention. Only a bird's-eye view is possible in a single chapter of a book, when a full description would require several volumes. During the last stages it took a most unexpected and brilliant turn. Every act of repression by the authorities only heartened the resisters. The refusal of the Government to recognize the legal status of Indian miners and to abolish the poll-tax on indentured Indians, which it was claimed on their behalf the Government had promised the late Mr. Gokhale to do, brought thousands to the Passive Resistance fold. Indentured Indians, working in the Natal mines and in the sugar fields, struck work and sought imprisonment. This strike must be distinguished from ordinary strikes. It was undertaken, not to usurp the functions of the Government or to paralyse the industries concerned. It was declared simply as a protest against the £ 3 tax. It was an assertion on the part of the strikers, men and women, of their self-respect. They were no longer content to pay a tax, which not only told heavily upon their slender purses, but which was a mark of their degradation and a cause of terror to the womenfolk. At one time, nearly 30,000 men were on strike. The Government and the planters tried every means to bend the strikers, but without avail. They had but one purpose in life, these strikers refused to be left alone. They wanted to fill the prisons. After due notice to the Government, nearly 2,000 of them, men, women and children, marched into the Transvaal. They had no legal right to cross the border, their destination was Tolstoy Farm, established by Mr. Kallenbach for Passive Resisters, the distance to be covered was 150 miles. No army ever marched with so little burden. No waggons or mules accompanied the party. Each one carried his own blankets and daily rations, consisting of one pound of bread and one ounce of sugar. This meagre ration was supplemented by what Indian mer-

chants gave them on their way. The Government imprisoned the leaders, i.e. those whom they thought were leaders. But they soon found that all were leaders. So when they were nearly within reach of their destination, the whole party was arrested. Thus their object (to get arrested) was accomplished. That extreme reasonableness was mixed with such an unbending spirit that was shown when the Indian strikers voluntarily stayed their activity during the strike of the Government railwaymen, which was certainly not a Passive Resistance Movement.

The Indian strikers at once stood aloof, and their self-restraint was much appreciated throughout the Empire, whilst it had not a little to do with the final settlement for which negotiations were opened.

It will be easily imagined that India would not remain supine when a mighty effort was being made by her sons in this far-off continent. Under the splendid leadership of the late Honourable Mr. Gokhale, meetings of protest were held all over the country, and thousands of pounds were collected to aid the Resisters. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, who strongly protested in a public speech at Madras¹ against what was transpiring in South Africa, sent a Commission² to investigate the cause of the upheaval. A local Commission was appointed. Though for high political reasons, the Indian community as a whole refused to give evidence before it, the Commissioners completely vindicated the Resisters by declaring in favour of every one of the main contentions of the aggrieved Indians. And so at last legislation was passed, repealing the poll-tax, restoring racial equality in law, and recognizing the status of Indian wives. Thus ended the great struggle in 1914, after having lasted nearly eight years.

Mr. Doke, along with many, considered it to be a religious or ethical struggle. It was not undertaken in order to gain individual rights but to gain national dignity. The methods adopted were not those of brute force or violence, but those of self-sacrifice and suffering. Repeal of obnoxious legislation was an embodiment of the vital principle that Indian sentiment must not be flouted on Indian matters. It was an admission of the right of the Indians to be consulted in everything affecting their status and intimate well-being. And it was for such an achievement that Mr. Doke laboured during his life time.z time. Who knows how important a part he would have played in the more difficult work of reconstruction? Certainly the Indian community misses the guiding hand.

Joseph Doke : The Missionary-hearted, pp. 147-150

¹ Delivered on November 24, 1913; *vide* "Lord Hardinge's Speech", 3-12-1913.

² The Indian Enquiry Commission set up on December 11.

*607. SPEECH ON CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME,
CALCUTTA CONGRESS*

January 1, 1929

Mahatmaji first spoke in Hindi explaining the resolution. Speaking in English he said:

I do not want to detain you for long over the resolution which is an integral part of the first resolution¹ which you were good enough to endorse yesterday. It was only for the sake of convenience that the Subjects Committee insisted upon dividing this one resolution into two parts; one in connection with the Nehru Committee Report and the second in connection with the programme of work based upon that Report. Hence it is that the second part of the first resolution I am now putting before you today. But it was after all a happy thing for “all’s well that ends well”, and that arrangement enables me to give you the welcome information that a complete agreement without any mental reservation has been accomplished. I don’t propose to read that resolution to you, because you have had that resolution before you and I am trying to economize my voice, energy and time as much as possible. Therefore, let us consider it an arrangement between yourselves and me that I do not read this resolution.

There are two amendments to the resolution and of these amendments Mr. Satyamurthi has chosen the second one. But now as I have agreed to his suggestions, he has authorized me to withdraw his alternative amendment and the suggestions I have accepted are these. You will notice in his alternative resolution that he refers to the organization of the peasantry and workers. So far as the peasantry is concerned you will find in my resolution there is a reference where the volunteers are called upon to enlist themselves in order to do village reconstruction work, and this village reconstruction work is nothing but the organization of the peasantry and workers upon an economic basis. We want to enter into the hearts of the peasants. We want to identify ourselves completely with the masses. We want to make their woes our own. We want to feel with them in everything in order to better the lot of those on whose toil we the people of the city are really living. We must therefore make common cause with the workers. I do not want it for one moment to be understood that the

¹ *Vide* “Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report”, Calcutta Congress-I, 26-12-1928

city workers and labourers are to be neglected; I cannot possibly mean that because I am myself organizing labour, and I have been identifying myself with labour for the last 30 or 35 years of my life. So I have no hesitation in accepting that part. The second suggestion that I have adopted is in connection with the tax; I suggested in my resolution five per cent, on incomes exceeding Rs. 100. Personally, I would like that clause, but many of my friends and many Congressmen have suggested that it would work as a hardship upon people. People cannot really pay so much, they cannot really pay. If they cannot pay, there is a remedy in that clause itself. The suggestion was that they are not yet in the habit of conforming to that exact discipline whereby men or women would automatically recognize it as a compulsory obligation to pay. I have appreciated the force of that argument and therefore I have accepted the suggestion so that that clause will now be remodelled. I am not telling you how it is to be remodelled, because I have not really the text of that clause before me and you do not want me to worry you about it just now. But it will enable you to carry out the meaning of what I am telling you just now. That clause will be so worded as to carry out the formula that was suggested for another thing by Deshbandhu Das that the Congress expects every Congressman to contribute to the Congress coffers month by month in accordance with his ability, in order to advance the cause of the Congress, more especially in order to embark upon a programme that is set forth in the foregoing resolution. That will be the wording instead of the wording in the last clause of the printed paper. I do not want to take up your time any longer but I cannot help giving you a warning note. I want you to take this resolution seriously and I want you to adhere with all seriousness to this resolution. I do not want you to raise your hands as accepting this resolution and then sleep over it for a solid twelve months and expect the A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee or the President to work wonders for you. Neither the President nor the A.I.C.C. have a magic wand. There is no magic wand except your own iron determination and will and that is the magic wand that will alone bring swaraj within your grasp and give the country peace and happiness. Therefore, I would beseech you not to accept the resolution with the two suggestions adopted unless everyone here in his own person means seriously to carry out all the items of the programme which are applicable to them and unless you are determined to take the message of the Congress from door to door ceaselessly for these twelve months.

At the end of this period I hope to see an atmosphere totally different from the atmosphere of distrust and despondency that I can read in the faces of every one of us today.

With these words I leave this resolution in your hands and I thank you for giving me this very patient hearing.¹ (Loud and continued applause)

The resolution ran as follows:

Meanwhile the Congress shall engage in the following activities:

(1) In the Legislatures and outside every attempt will be made to bring about total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks; picketing of liquor and drug shops shall be organized wherever desirable and possible.

(2) Inside and outside the legislatures, methods suited to respective environment shall be immediately adopted to bring about boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating production and adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

(3) Specific grievances, wherever discovered and where people are ready, shall be sought to be redressed by non-violent action as was done recently at Bardoli.

(4) Members of Legislatures returned on the Congress ticket shall devote the bulk of their time to the constructive work settled from time to time by the Congress Committee.

(5) The Congress organization shall be perfected by enlisting members and enforcing stricter discipline.

(6) Measures shall be taken to remove the disabilities of women and they will be invited and encouraged to take their due share in national upbuilding.

(7) Measures shall be taken rid the country of social abuses.

(8) It will be the duty of all Congressmen, being Hindus, to do all they can to remove untouchability and help the so-called untouchables in every possible way in their attempt to remove their disabilities and better their condition.

(9) Volunteers shall be enlisted to take up the work among the city labourers and village reconstruction in addition to what is being done through the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

(10) Such other work as may be deemed advisable in order to advance nation-building in all its department and in order to enable the Congress to secure the co-operation in the national effort of the people engaged in different pursuits.

¹ The resolution was seconded by Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru read out the resolution as corrected by Mahatmaji in consultation with Mr. Satyamurthi and he then explained it in Hindi, after which it was put to vote and carried with only two dissentients.

In order to finance the activities mentioned in the foregoing programme, the Congress expects every Congressman to contribute to the Congress coffers a certain percentage of his or her income according to his or her ability.

Report of the Forty-third Session of the Indian National Congress, 1928

608. SPEECH AT ALL-PARTIES CONVENTION, CALCUTTA¹

January 1, 1929

Mahatmaji then moved:

This Convention is of opinion that the resolutions it has already passed on the recommendations of the All-Parties Committee contained in clauses one to six of their Report sufficiently indicate the will of the nation as to the nature and main principles of the constitution acceptable to it and is further of opinion that except on points on which notes of dissent have been recorded at the instance of some of the parties present there is a general agreement on the basis of the solution of communal problem recommended by the said Committee.

This Convention adjourns *sine die* authorizing the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress to convene it when necessary for more detailed examination of the recommendations of the Committee.

In doing so Mahatmaji offered an apology for his presence in the Convention but he came as a legal adviser to the President who had met him and Pandit Motilal and requested them to be present in the Convention and help him with advice. To facilitate work he was going to move the present resolution and hoped there should not be much discussion and no amendment. Continuing, Mahatmaji said:

Whilst we have very nearly exhausted the Nehru Report and accepted it without much alteration, yet much still remains to be done. The situation in the country is such that we shall have to keep both the Nehru Report and the Convention alive.

As regards the Mohammedan question, he said the Convention had not been able to placate all parties. The Sikhs also required to be placated. continuing, Mahatmaji said:

Personally I think we have not done full justice to the Sikhs.

¹ Dr. Ansari presided. Among those present were Dr. Moonje, Dr. Besant, Messrs Satyamurthi, Bhagwandas, Vijayaraghavachariar, Bipin Pal, B. Das, Satyen Mitter, Devratan Sharma, S. A. Brelvi, Nilkanta Das, Manilal Kothari, Hirendranath Dutt, Lalit Das and Shyam Sunder Chakravarti.

Hence it is necessary for all of you to put your heads together and make suggestions and evolve order out of chaos. There is the Utkal question which still requires to be solved and is giving trouble. This question is a nightmare. It crops up in all my speeches. The exhibition given by Utkal delegates the other day was like an animal undergoing vivisection.

The Nehru Report can only be touched here and there and not in its entirety. Only in matters of detail can we make alterations. If anything is wanted to satisfy the Muslims then also we have to touch it but if the Muslims spring some surprise it is not for the Nehru Committee to do so. That is the business of some other organization.

Mahatmaji concluded with the hope that the resolution be carried without any amendment.¹

Mahatmaji announced that as a result of discussion he had come to some compromise and agreed to make some verbal alterations in the latter part of the resolution.²

This Convention adjourns *sine die* to meet when necessary for completing its work.

Forward, 2-1-1929

609. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS³

CALCUTTA,
January 2, 1929

The Mahatma had just returned from his morning walk and was surrounded by a score of his followers while we talked. He remarked with a smile in explanation of our audience:

I have no secrets from my friends.

[QUESTION:] What exactly does the Congress stand for—Dominion Status or Independence?

Mr. Gandhi thought for a moment, and then, peering at me keenly through his glasses, replied:

I can realize the Britisher's difficulty in understanding our point of view, but I am glad that he is trying to. My position is very clear. To me Dominion Status means Independence. Others have been led, through suspicion of Britain's good faith, and partly also, I am afraid,

¹ Dr. Annie Besant then moved an amendment.

² The first paragraph of the Resolution is not reproduced here.

³ The interview also appeared in *The Daily Telegraph*, 3-1-1929, as from its special correspondent.

for their own party purposes, to make a distinction between the two. But it has been largely a battle of words. There is no real room for misunderstanding as to what I personally—and the Congress—stand for. We want Home Rule—a Freedom Constitution built up by ourselves—something not imposed from without. The Nehru Constitution is of our own making. If that is accepted it means that we become partners at will and makers of our own destiny.

In that case why did you make what the British people cannot but consider a surrender on your part to those to whom Independence is not the same thing as Dominion Status and frankly implies severance of the British connection ?

Mr. Gandhi pondered the question carefully before he replied.

I have in a sense made a surrender to those who are considered “the extremists”, but it has been a surrender on points which do not seem to me to affect the real position. There has been no surrender of the principle for which I have always stood and always will stand. Severance on any account is not my goal. Power for severance when desired is.

You have, nevertheless, added to your demand for Home Rule on the basis of the Nehru Report a time-limit which you must know to be an impossible one. You have, in effect, presented a pistol at the head of the British Parliament. You declare that unless the Nehru Report is adopted by the 31st of December this year something dreadful is going to happen.

Mr. Gandhi shook his head and said quietly:

You are wrong. We are not in a position to point a pistol at the head of the British Parliament—and I cannot agree with you that the time-limit we have laid down is an impossible one. If Britain today were threatened with another war she would face the situation and deal with it at once. But the Indian situation is not considered serious enough to warrant immediate handling. That is where Britain has been making a very big mistake. She does not consider the Indian situation sufficiently important. It is a minor affair in the business of the Empire, a minor affair that can be put off and off, to be attended to some day when there is nothing else to worry about. That is what we resent, and that is what is aggravating this tragic suspicion that is poisoning the whole atmosphere of our political life. Let the leaders of the British people make some definite, serious and sincere move to meet us within the year and then ultimatums and time-limits need not matter.

If the British Parliament has not conceded the Nehru Constitution by the 31st of December what is going to happen?

Mr. Gandhi smiled [and, said:]

I am an incorrigible optimist. Up to midnight on the 31st of

December 1929, I shall be hoping and hoping—and praying —that the definite move we ask for will be made by Britain.

Q. And if your hopes are not realized?

The Mahatma thought a moment before he answered.

In that case on New Year's Day 1930 I shall wake up to find myself an Independencewallah.

But he has hope and faith that things will so shape themselves that his will not be the responsibility for ringing up the curtain upon another Indian tragedy. Summing up, he said:

Get rid of the suspicion of Britain's good faith that is poisoning the political atmosphere of India and the way will be clear for an understanding between the leaders of the British people and the leaders of my own people that will solve all our difficulties.

The Englishman, 3-1-1929

610. SPEECH AT CHITTARANJAN SEVA SADAN, CALCUTTA

January 2, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi in declaring the new block formally open said that two years ago when the people of Bengal invited him to lay the foundation-stone of the new block, he gladly accepted the invitation and this time they also had extended their invitation to him to open the new block of the Seva Sadan which was built on the foundation which he had laid. From that he realized the real love and respect which they had shown to him and he was really fortunate to attend the function. When he comes to this building he recalls in his mind the sacred memory of Deshbandhu Das, the great leader of Bengal, who had dedicated his life for the cause of his country. Whenever he comes to Bengal, he feels the absence of Deshbandhu and thinks within himself: 'What was Deshbandhu's Bengal and what is today's Bengal'! The enthusiasm which he had seen during his lifetime was unique and Bengal would ever remember the great sacrifice which their leader did for their good and for the good of Bengal. Mahatmaji then thanked Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Sir Nilratan Sarcar and other members of the trust who had worked hard so long for the prosperity of the institution which would be the living memory of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, the karmayogi of Bengal.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that the members of the trust had appealed for more funds for the maintenance and further development of the institution. He also joined with them in their appeal and asked the people of Bengal to contribute according to their means to the Seva Sadan Fund. In conclusion Mahatmaji hoped that middle and higher class women of Bengal would spare no pains to keep this institution alive as a fitting memorial of Deshbandhu Das.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-1-1929

611. SAROJINI DEVI'S LETTER

The following graphic and poetic account of her experiences during her American visit sent by Shrimati Sarojini Devi will be read with interest:¹

. . . I am writing tonight from the charming old town of Cincinnati which is called the Gateway of the South, where long ago lived a very noble woman who dedicated her genius to the deliverance of the Negroes from their pitiful bondage. I have just returned from interpreting to a large audience (whose parents and grandparents knew Harriet Beecher Stowe in the days when she was writing the poignant tale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) the message of the 'Mystic Spinners'

And through me the New World sends back a greeting of love for the Mystic Spinner and admiration for the Land whose people are set out on the way of self-deliverance from their sevenfold bondage.

Young India, 3-1-1929

612. 'BROKEN'²

A friend sends me a number of *Spiritual Life* which contains a beautiful paragraph under the heading "Broken" which reminds one of so many hymns by Tulsidas, Surdas and the other saints that I am tempted to give the following condensation of the paragraph.

God uses most for His glory those people and things which are most perfectly broken. The sacrifices He accepts are broken and contrite hearts. It was the thorough breaking-down of Jacob's natural strength at Peniel that got him where God could clothe him with spiritual power. It was by breaking the surface of the rock at Horeb by the stroke of Moses' rod, that it let out the cool waters to thirsty people.

It was when the three hundred elect soldiers under Gideon broke-their pitchers, a type of breaking themselves, that the hidden lights shone forth to the consternation of their adversaries. It was when the poor widow broke the seal of the little pot of oil, and poured it forth, that God multiplied it to pay her debts and supply means of support.

It is when a beautiful grain of corn is broken up in the earth by death, that its inner heart sprouts forth and bears hundreds of other grains. And thus on and on through all history, and all biography, and all vegetation, and all spiritual life, God must have *broken things*.

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

² This appeared under the title "Notes".

Those who are broken in wealth and broken in heart, broken in their ambitions, broken in their beautiful ideals, broken in worldly reputation, broken in their affections, and broken sometimes in health, and those who are despised, and seem utterly helpless and forlorn, the Holy Ghost is seizing upon and using for God's glory. It is "the lame that take the prey", Isaiah tells us. It is the weak that overcome the devil. God is waiting to take hold of our failures and cleanse away the cause and shine through us in victory. The paragraph shows how religion at its highest is one.

Young India, 3-1-1929

613. LALAJI MEMORIAL¹

After consultation with several friends interested in the Lalaji Memorial we have decided to devote the collections to the following objects:

1. Four lakhs and twenty five thousand for the maintenance of the Servants of the People Society.
2. Twenty five thousand for the completion of the Lajpat Rai Hall which is already half finished.
3. Fifty thousand for the consolidation of the work done through the Society for the uplift of the suppressed classes.

We propose to utilize the first proceeds for the first object and the rest for the second and the third respectively. But it is open to any donor to earmark his donation and it will be utilized according to his or her wish.

The Society was founded in 1920. The object of the Society is to enlist and train national missionaries for the service of the country whose duty it is to work for its educational, political, social and economic uplift. There are at present sixteen life-members who are pledged to devote their whole time and attention to the fulfilment of the object. There are two Assistant members. There are six Associates. Seven members are engaged exclusively in the suppressed classes' work.

Lajpat Rai Hall was conceived and commenced by Lala Lajpat Rai for the purpose of accommodating the library collected by him and for delivering political and other lectures. It was found difficult, if not impossible, to hire, at reasonable rates, a hall in Lahore for political lectures.

¹ This was an enclosure to the following item. It appeared under the title "Notes".

The work among the suppressed classes is distributed in several areas and touches every department of their lives.

It was a serious question as to who should guide the Society and take, so far as possible, Lalaji's place in this connection. Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon enjoyed Lalaji's confidence in the fullest measure. He is one of the earliest associates of the Society and was in close touch with its affairs during Lalaji's lifetime. He has consented to take charge of the affairs of the Society as its president. We feel therefore that the public need have no anxiety or fear as to the character of the future work of the Society and we hope that the appeal for subscriptions will receive a quicker and more liberal response than hitherto.

M. A. ANSARI
MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

Young India, 10-1-1929

614. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 6, 1929

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Here is a copy of a statement¹ I propose to issue on behalf of the trustees of the Lalaji Memorial Fund. Will you please wire your consent? If I do not hear from you to the contrary, I propose to publish the same.

I hope you are none the worse for the terrific strain of Calcutta .

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure 1.

From a photostat: S.N. 15256-a

615. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 6, 1929

This is to introduce Mr. Jiwanlal Motichand to you. He has been a most constant supporter and friend of all my constructive activities. He has a good aluminium business in Calcutta and elsewhere. He has

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

been to England once. This time he is combining business with recreation which he needs very badly. I know that you will give him all the assistance you can and he may need.

With love,

HENRY S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
42, 47 & 48 DANES INN HOUSE
265 STRAND
LONDON W. C. 2

From a photostat: S. N. 14983

616. LETTER TO G. M.¹

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 6, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for your bereavement. You will not meet your child in the flesh. There is therefore no question of recognition in the flesh. But this hankering after meeting in the flesh is surely not true love. Love to be true must be transferred to the soul within and, on that spiritual platform, there never has been separation. But that union transcends earthly relations.

Yours sincerely,

G. M.
C/O CONGRESS KHADI BHANDAR
BHADRAK
ORISSA

From a photostat: S.N. 15257

617. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Sunday, January 6, 1929

BHAI MAMA,

I have your postcard. I arrived here last night. Bring along Jaggu and his wife. We shall lodge her in the women's quarters. Do you still require help for the house? If so, how much?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3822

¹ Addressee's full name is not available.

618. MESSAGE TO CHRISTIAN INDIANS¹

[Before January 7, 1929]

If Christian Indians will not cease to be Indians because they are Christians, they will identify themselves with all national movements and with the starving millions by listening to the message of the spinning-wheel.

The Hindu, 7-1-1929

619. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

January 7, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

No time to write beyond saying we had a most comfortable journey to Delhi and thence to the Ashram.

Hope you had a good time at Santiniketan.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5329. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9384

620. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Tuesday [January 8, 1929]²

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I see no harm in your prolonging your stay there. It is true that I shall have to leave this place about the 20th. Ba and Keshu stayed in Delhi for two days. Travelling *via* Delhi saved eight rupees for each person and eight hours.

Kashi's Address:

Satyabadi, Sakhi Gopal, *via* Cuttack

The work here is going on very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My diet is still the same

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 502. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

¹ This was sent through *The Guardian* of Calcutta.

² From the postmark

621. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

Tuesday, January 8, 1929

MY DEAR BHRRR¹,

I am warned betimes. But remember, the Gujarat mail does not go to Sabarmati and it is the day of convocation. I therefore propose to send somebody's car to Ahmedabad, where you will be received. I can't give Raihana a drive in the royal cart.

Love.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9565

622. LETTER TO TARABEHN

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 8, 1929

CHI. TARA,

Be satisfied that I dictate this letter rather than delay in writing to you. It is not right. I am sorry that you do not keep good health. Keeping good health is an art, which everyone should learn. Why should you not come to the Ashram? If you come and stay here in peace for a few months perhaps you may learn that art. I am planning to go to Rangoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8784

623. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

January 9, 1929

BHAI GANGADHARRAO,

This telegram was received today. What is it about?

I think you will send me an account of Pundalik's satyagraha.²

¹ This was a form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee.

² A satyagraha was launched in Miraj State in Maharashtra against the unreasonably enhanced rate of land revenue. Narayan Tamaji Katagade alias "Pundalik" had to assume its leadership when it took a violent turn.

What was the outcome of the satyagraha?

I hope your health is all right.

Kaka is, of course, quite busy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5225

624. THE CONGRESS

Last year's was a remarkable Congress in more ways than one. It was remarkable for the attendance of delegates, visitors and spectators, it was remarkable for the resolutions it passed; it was remarkable for the compromises the leaders made and broke. There was both reality and terrible unreality about the Congress. But behind the unreality it showed the greatest possibilities for the nation. The bubbling enthusiasm of the people who knew nothing of the unreality was an unmistakable proof of what the nation could do if it was properly harnessed and its energies turned into profitable channels.

Pandit Motilal Nehru's address was eminently practical. It was even great for the boldness with which he defended the Report¹ and for presenting the nation with an unexciting but true programme in spite of the clamour for unadulterated excitement. The whole address is a piece of constructive statesmanship. It promises the substance of independence instead of the shadow of which one hears so much nowadays.

If thus Pandit Motilal Nehru's address is boldly constructive, Sjt. Sen Gupta's is usefully destructive and polemical. He defends and accepts the Nehru Report rightly as a step towards the goal of complete independence. His address clears the ground as if by design for the Presidential address. He successfully explodes the doctrine of Britain's trusteeship and the 'blessings' of British rule. He asserts that Britain has never done justice except under pressure of physical force and concludes by insisting on freedom at any cost. To this end he demands social revolution equally with the political. Both the addresses show that there is no political progress without equal social progress, if the former is to come, as it must to be real, from internal effort and not as a gesture from the British 'trustees' in answer to India's 'prayer'.

Hence the 'tame' programme of social reconstruction and effort. Behind the 'tameness' lies the battery for storing the necessary strength for internal and national political effort.

¹ The Nehru Report

OVERHAUL CONGRESS

The first item of preliminary importance therefore is the overhauling of the Congress. It is owing to my hurried draftsmanship that reorganization of the Congress stands fifth in the list in the second resolution¹ moved by me. It should have stood first by right. For without complete overhauling of the Congress, there will be no other work. If the Congress which is the salt loseth its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? The Congress is the powerhouse from which all the power for all the work is to be derived. If the power-house is rotten, the whole national work must be necessarily so.

The delegates to the Congress were mostly self-appointed. The election procedure laid down by the Congress constitution was discovered to have broken down. This was one of the terrible unrealities about the great annual demonstration. If the fight for swaraj whether defined as independence or dominion status is to be solid and real, the re-formation of the Congress is the first need to which the Working Committee has to devote its attention. Let nothing be hushed. We shall gain nothing by a policy of 'hush hush'. The disease must be made known all over the Congress world before it can be successfully tackled. Every organization to be living must show growth. But the Congress is suffering from internal decay. And even as a patient suffering from tuberculosis often shows ruddiness and plumpness, so is the Congress showing every year the ruddiness and plumpness of a consumptive patient betraying to the seeing eye of the physician the surest signs of approaching decay. As at present constituted, the Congress is unable to put forth real, united and unbreakable resistance. If the Calcutta demonstration were a reality, there was no reason why such a vast mass of people as had gathered there could not wrest power from unwilling hands. But the demonstrators had gone not to demonstrate strength, they had gone as if to a circus as sightseers. And strange as it may appear, the Congress pandal was constructed as an adjunct to and in the midst of an enlarged edition of Filis's circus.

WARNING TO PUNJAB

This must be changed if we are to exhibit reality at the next Congress. The volunteers dressed in European fashion presented, in my opinion, a sorry spectacle at Calcutta and the expense incurred was out of keeping with the pauperism of the nation. They were no representatives of rough and rugged businesslike farmers. The Punjab has to alter this.

¹ *Vide* "Speech on constructive Programme, Calcutta congress", 1-1-1929

The Congress must not be used for making money. If there is to be a surplus, it must be a surplus from the humble offerings of poor but real representatives of a poor nation coming to the annual gathering not as idle sightseers but as soldiers eager to take part in the annual stock-taking and ready to give a good account of themselves on the occasion arriving.

If I had my way I should separate the deliberative portion from the demonstrative and spectacular. I should exclude visitors from the deliberative section; or if they must be allowed, I should have an open air enclosure divided into sections strongly but elegantly fenced. Meetings in the enclosure will then have to be held during the early morning hours and in the evenings. This will at once simplify the labours of the reception committee and result in great economy. Artistic decorations are surely possible in an open air enclosure which is any day preferable from the standpoint of hygiene to a closed pandal which suffocates, no matter how well ventilated it may be.

We are a nation passing through the valley of humiliation. So long as we have not secured our freedom we have not the least excuse at the annual stock-taking season for amusements, riotous or subdued. It is a week of serious business, introspection and heart-searching; it is a week for evolving national policies and framing programmes for giving battle to a power perhaps the strongest and the most vicious the world has ever seen. I submit that it is impossible to do clear thinking or to evolve programmes political, social, economic and educational in the midst of distraction, noise, rush and a lavish display of boisterous amusements fit enough for a children's pantomime, entirely out of place as an appendage to a deliberative assembly intent on preparing for a grim life and death struggle. Our annual exhibition ought therefore to be strictly of an educative character and its organization should be entrusted to an expert body like the All-India Spinners' Association. Indeed, it is the only body fit to handle it, so long as the Congress retains khadi as the centre of its policy of boycott of foreign cloth and of economic reform among the millions of India's peasantry.

PREPARE NOW

If the Punjab is in earnest, it will profit by the lessons of Calcutta. It will give up nothing of the glowing enthusiasm of Calcutta but would shed all its unreality which damped one's hope. If the Punjab begins now in a businesslike fashion to work out every item of the Congress programme, it may even hope to celebrate the attainment of a constitution as portrayed in the Nehru Report. If in spite of its best effort, such a consummation has not come about by the end of

the year, it has to show its preparedness for inaugurating a no-tax campaign and such other direct action as may then be devised by the Congress. If the Punjab means all this, it will begin by putting the Congress organization in perfect order without any prompting from above, it will enroll members by the thousand and show an absolutely honest and clean register of membership and an equally clean record of its accounts. It will hasten to remove all internal friction and squabbles. A year is none too much for the preparation suggested in these lines. Will the Punjab rise to the occasion ? If it cannot, the next best thing it can do is in all humility to advise the Working Committee that it cannot shoulder the responsibility hastily undertaken by its leaders.

Young India, 10-1-1929

625. HINDI IN BENGAL

The Hindi Prachar Conference that met in Calcutta during the Congress Week lasted not more than two hours and had only two speeches, one by Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose who in spite of the busy time he had with his volunteers and the Congress reception work made time for becoming the Chairman of the Reception Committee of this Conference. The other was by me as President. Sjt. Bose's speech was printed. He read the Devanagari script without difficulty. His pronunciation was almost faultless. The address was short and businesslike. He effectively disposed of the calumny that Bengal was indifferent to Hindi by reminding his audience that it was Bhudev Mukerji who strove to popularize Hindi and Devanagari script in Bihar, it was Navinchandra Ray who strove likewise in the Punjab, it was Swami Shri Chintamani Ghosh who was responsible in the United Provinces for the publication of many useful Hindi books, it was Justice Sharadacharan Mitra who was the father of the idea that there should be one script for all India and that it must be Devanagari, it is Amritlal Chakravarti who is issuing a Hindi newspaper, it is Ravindranath Tagore who has published the popular translation of some of Kabir's songs, it is Sjt. Kshitish Mohan Sen of Shantiniketan who has made and is still making researches in the writings of Hindi saints, it is Sjt. Nagendranath Vasu who is issuing his monumental Hindi Encyclopaedia¹ and it is Sjt. Ramanand Chatterjee who is issuing a Hindi monthly called *Vishal Bharat*. He recognized the necessity of Hindi for establishing touch with labour. He ended by promising to be the first to enlist himself for learning Hindi.

¹ *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Khadi Bhandar in Calcutta", 10-1-1929

My speech simply suggested that a beginning should be made by establishing free Hindi classes in Calcutta after the style of Madras and made an appeal for subscriptions on the spot.

A resolution was passed forming a Committee, at least for one year, for the purpose of carrying on Hindi propaganda in Bengal with a view to making it a permanent body. The Committee consists of Sjt. Ghanshyamasdas Birla who has consented to act as Treasurer, Sjt Subhas Chandra Bose, Sjt. Prabhu Dayal, Sjt. Satish Chandra Das Gupta, Sjt Banarasidas Chaturvedi, Editor, *Vishal Bharat*, Sjt. Ranglal Jajodia, Sjt. Baijnath Kedia, Sjt. Mahavirprasad Poddar and Baba Raghavdas, Prachar Mantri, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. The following have offered their services as part-time honorary Hindi teachers:

Sjt. Satyadev	Sjt. Devadatt
Sjt. Ramshankar	Sjt. Madanlal
Sjt. V. K. Ghosh	Sjt. Rameshchandra
Sjt. Bhajavaram	Sjt. Vikasitji
Sjt. Rajaram Pande	Sjt. Krishna Gopal Tewari

There was a handsome response to the appeal for collections, over Rs. 3,000 having been collected on the spot.

Those who offered their services as teachers were duly warned by me of the responsibility they shouldered. They were to be not merely Hindi teachers but interpreters of Indian culture and Indian purity. Hindi was to be taught not merely as any language but as the national language. As Hindi for Hindus it was a language of religion and morals. Millions could not be expected to learn Sanskrit but they could receive the message of the Vedas through Tulsidas, Surdas, Kabir and a host of other saints who kept the well of religion undefiled. They were moreover to teach Hindi as also Hindustani, not as a rival to Urdu. It was to be a blend of Hindi and Urdu. They had therefore to be repositories of purity of character and strength of purpose. Theirs was a noble mission demanding nobility of conduct.

In spite of a resolution of the Congress and its constitution the Congress proceedings are still often carried on in English for the benefit principally of the delegates from the South and Bengal. If in both the provinces those who propose to do national work make full use of the facilities provided in these provinces, the way will be clear for the forthcoming Congress to conduct its proceedings wholly in Hindi-Hindustani—surely a consummation devoutly to be wished for in view especially of the momentous resolution of the Calcutta Congress. There is no independence for the masses if their representatives cannot conduct their proceedings in the national language. When the true yearning for swaraj comes, there will be no need for English

speech in the national assembly. English will still have its place and a place of importance at that. It will be and must remain the language of international diplomacy and intercourse. But it must not be allowed to usurp the function of the national language.

Young India, 10-1-1929

626. NOTES

KHADI BHANDAR IN CALCUTTA

A khadi bhandar was opened in Calcutta, 251 Harrison Road, by me on new year's day in the presence of Pandit Malaviyaji. The bhandar owes its origin to a conversation I had at Wardha with Sjt. Ghanshyamadas Birla. He and his brothers are noted for their silent munificent charities. Among the many causes helped by Sjt. Ghanshyamadas khadi has been one. I have always felt the need of a depot that would relieve the pressure, in times of need, on production centres which are generally made responsible by the All-India Spinners' Association for the sale of the khadi they manufacture. I suggested to Sjt. Birla that he should not only give money but he should also give the use of his mercantile talents to khadi. I told him that if the merchant princes of India took no personal interest in khadi it could not in the near future be made universal merely through the effort of the clerical class who were largely manning the Association. Sjt. Ghanshyamdas appreciated the argument. Hence the khadi bhandar of Calcutta. It has secured the services of a khadi lover in Sjt. Mahavirprasad Poddar of Gorakhpur. Malaviyaji blessed the effort. The arrangement was to sell khadi immediately after the opening ceremony. Nearly five thousand rupees worth of khadi was sold on the spot.

This bhandar is in no way designed to compete with the Khadi Pratishtan and Abhoy Ashram which have large depots. On the other hand, it is designed to supplement and support them. My own opinion is that in the lines which they manufacture there should be no variation in prices by way of pooling or other adjustment. Such adjustment will take place only regarding khadi received from other provinces. I hope that the public will liberally support this bhandar so as to enable it adequately to perform the function for which it is designed. Needless to say that there is behind this effort no idea whatsoever of making profits.

“HINDI VISHVA KOSH”

Reference has already been made to Sjt. Vasu's Hindi cyclop-

edia in my notice of the Hindi Prachar Conference.¹ I knew of this great work two years ago. I knew too that the author was ailing and bedridden. I was so struck with Sjt. Vasu's labours that I had a mind to see the author personally and know all about his work. I had therefore promised myself this pilgrimage during my visit to Calcutta for the Congress. It was only on my way to Khadi Pratishtan at Sodepur that I was able to carry out my promise. I was amply rewarded. I took the author by surprise for I had made no appointment. I found him seated on his bed in a practically unfurnished and quite unpretentious room. There were no chairs. There was just by his bedside a cupboard full of books and behind a small desk. He offered me a seat on his bed. I sat instead on a stool near it.

He is a martyr to asthma of which he showed ample signs during my brief stay with him. "I feel better when I talk to visitors and forget my disease for the moment. When you leave me, I shall suffer more," said Sjt. Vasu.

This is a summary description he gave me of his enterprise: "I was 19 when I began my Bengali cyclopaedia. I finished the last volume when I was 45. It was a great success. There was a demand for a Hindi edition. The late Justice Sharadacharan Mitra suggested that I should myself publish it. I began my labours when I was 47 and am now 63. It will take three years more to finish this work. If I do not get more subscribers or other help, I stand to lose Rs. 25,000 at the present moment. But I do not mind. I have faith that when I come to the end of my resources, God will send me help. These labours of mine are my *sadhana*². I worship God through them, I live for my work."

There was no despondency about Sjt. Vasu but a robust faith in his mission. I was thankful for this pilgrimage which I should never have missed. As I was talking to him I could not but recall Dr. Murray's³ labours on his great work. I am not sure who is the greater of the two. I do not know enough of either. But why any comparison between giants? Enough for us to know that nations are made from such giants.

The address of the printing works behind which the author lives is: 9 Vishvakosh Lane, Bagbazar, Calcutta.

Young India, 10-1-1929

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² Spiritual effort

³ Sir James Augustus Henry Murray (1835-1917), British lexicographer, editor of *New English Dictionary*

627. SPEECH DURING YOUTH WEEK, AHMEDABAD¹

January 10, 1929

As your President has mentioned, I am now so busy with my activities that I can hardly spare even a moment from them. But because of my affection for children and your pressing invitation, I had no alternative but to come here. With regret, I had to make this condition that it would not be possible for me to see all the items on the programme or take part in the children's merriment.

I am watching the work done by the youth associations all over India. I must admit that I cannot say that I like all that is being done. Again, as explained by the President, co-operation between the old and the young is essential. It is pardonable if an old man like me cannot work with you, but I must add, "please do not altogether rule out the old". Bear in mind that you too will grow old and, although we are advanced in age, our minds are as fresh as yours. It is impossible that your soul will always stay in a youthful body. The conduct and efforts of one whose soul is always pure are unique and I wish that everyone living in India has such a soul.

The Government provides for your education from the income received through the excise department. The 25-30-crores that make up the income of this department are extracted from the poor; in other words, the education imparted to you is from the money collected by sucking the blood of the poor.

Condition of youth in India is the same as that of others. They also have the zeal for swaraj. Some seem to dislike this name and have substituted an English name for it—and there is a duel going on between the two names. I wish to protect you from this duel, because perhaps I may have greater enthusiasm and greater zeal for India's independence than you. And why not? You have a whole age before you, while I have passed that age and I am on the brink of death—and therefore if I claim to have a greater desire for the independence of India than you, it cannot be considered wrong.

I wish to give you some advice—and in a field where I have much experience. I merely wish to advise you not to be deceived by names. If I place before you a rose made out of paper and a withered but real rose with only a few petals, you would still like to have the latter though it is shrunken. Similarly if you really wish to test the

¹ The fourth day of the fifth Youth Week at Ahmedabad was observed as Children's Day. Dr. Hariprasad, while reading the report of the activities of the Yuvak Sangh, referred to the victimization and consequent strike of students in the Gujarat College. *Vide* "duty of Resistance", 24-1-1929

pulse of India, do not run after names. Engage yourselves in work. The fragrance of independence lies in work.

You are at present in the midst of a crisis. A struggle should always bring joy. I have not made a study of the entire situation in your college. But from what I have come to know I think that your stand is just. As I am a staunch enemy of the present administration and always hope for its overthrow, I wish that some good people side with you. But even those who are good cannot remain so in the administration under which they work, since injustice lies at the very root of this administration.

I have not met the other party, yet from what I have gathered as a result of my contacts, I feel that your strike is justified. It is not strange that your Principal should find the foundation of the Empire shaken by this insignificant strike. If I were the Principal then I too would have, like him, seen in it the fall of the flag of Empire. I hope that you would justify the fears of the Principal.

When the revolt of 1857 was over, Lord Canning said that they should not be deceived even if a small distinct cloud, not bigger than a thumb, is seen in the skies of India. His warning is justified. I hope that this small cloud of yours is a signal for a bigger one. If you had not taken this step you would not have been blamed, but if you back out now, remember that you will be censured. A brave man fights desperately after entering the battle-field—and would be ready to meet death. Spies alone will go looking behind.

There is no question of death here; at the most you will waste one or two or, perhaps five or seven years. And if this does happen, what are you going to lose? I believe that at the end it will be a gain for you. Do not be disheartened even if you yourselves are totally boycotted. Nothing can be achieved if you do not even sacrifice this much. What even if your number rose from one to ten thousand? What is the value of even those 10,000 pebbles on the other banks of the Sabarmati? It is sufficient if out of the 1,000 even ten turn out to be diamonds. If all of you become pebbles, you will be of no use to anyone. May you achieve victory in your struggle such is my hope and my wish.

Before I conclude I specially wish to warn you that you must never be discourteous. Do not insult the teachers or utter bitter words. Harsh words do no good. They will only create bitterness. And if there is hard work combined with courtesy, you will do credit to yourselves and your name will be cherished in future history. Be courteous at heart as well. Your struggle is a peaceful one, and whatever the provocation, you may not cross the limits of peacefulness.

I hope that Mr. Shirras¹ fear may prove true. The flag of India, and the reins too, are in your hands. An old man like me has no right to hold those reins. I congratulate you for having stood firm in your strike so far.

For the sake of the poor, recognize the importance of the spread of khadi. This also is the main plank of the programme framed by the Congress. I am not at the root of that resolution. Its origin lies in the President's speech and I was only instrumental in bringing forward the resolution.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 13-1-1929

*628. MESSAGE TO THE THIRD GATHERING OF
GRADUATES*

January 12, 1929

The old and the new graduates of the Vidyapith should think and decide what they are going to contribute to the *yajna* of swaraj at this critical juncture.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
Sabarmati, Vol. VII, Number 3

629. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1929

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I instructed Subbiah to send you my answer yesterday in reply to your letter. Your programme stands. I see you are compelling me to travel on Sunday night, that is, whilst I am silent. I would of course have preferred all suspension of travel for 24 hours, that is, during my slent hours. But if it cannot be done, I do not mind.

What about that place in Sind at which through my stupidity I did not see the people who had assembled on the platform to see me at midnight whilst we were going back to Hyderabad? If that place has got to be done, that is, if the people want it, I am prepared to redeem the promise even if it means extension of a day unless you will take the day from the programme already sent.

I do not know the whereabouts of Manilal. You will trace him

¹ Findlay Shirras was then the Principal of the Gujarat College.

and see to his going to Sind. Do you make the visit contingent upon his going to Sind, or am I to take the programme as an absolute fixture?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
BOMBAY VIEW, GOWALIA TANK ROAD, BOMBAY
From the original: C.W. 9251. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

630. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your telegram¹. I had certainly intended to tour in some parts of the U.P. in response to a request made by some workers in Banda and Jhansi. But they withdrew the request, being diffident. The tour, therefore, was cancelled. There is yet another in prospect and that is near Meerut and Delhi. They want me to go there in March. But for March I have so many engagements from which I have got to choose. There is Andhra, there is Karnatak and there is Burma besides Delhi and Meerut; and there is also the Punjab. Lalaji's Society people want me there for their anniversary celebration. I am awaiting Father's decision as to the proposed European visit. If he cancels that visit, then the way will be open for me to satisfy all the demands upon my time. If he wants the European visit to come off, then I may not extend my tour beyond the first week of April. I cannot take the matter any further just now. But I would like you to help me to make my choice. You will consult Father about his wishes and that will enable you to guide me better.

By the time this reaches you, Father will have probably telegraphed to me his opinion. If he has not, please see that he does.

How is Kamala doing now? And how are you yourself faring? You have become Secretary. I want you to throw yourself heart and soul therefore into the programme, and compel obedience to instructions from the Working Committee and try to bring order out of the existing disgraceful disorder.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; also S.N. 15276

¹ Dated January 11, 1929 It read: "Papers announce you touring North United Provinces. Hope you will extend tour South also."

*631. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, BEE-KEEPERS'
ASSOCIATION*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1929

THE SECRETARY
BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION
SANAWAR (PUNJAB)

DEAR SIR,

We in the Satyagraha Ashram are interesting ourselves in the question of bee-keeping. We have learnt about the Bee-keepers' Association from the publication of the Punjab Agricultural Department entitled *A Guide to Bee-keeping*. We will be obliged if you would kindly let me know whether the Bee-keepers' Association at Simla mentioned in the book is still in existence and whether someone from the Ashram can go there for receiving practical instructions in bee-keeping.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14984

632. MY NOTES

THE NATIONAL FLAG

A lover of the nation puts down his thoughts as follows:¹

I have also had the painful experience of which this correspondent has written. There was inconsistency even about the national flag that was unfurled at the hands of Pandit Motilal at the Congress session. There was no spinning-wheel on it. So far the Indian National Congress has not passed a resolution to decide upon the dimensions of the national flag, its colour, etc.² But in 1920 my proposal was accepted almost unanimously. If those who believe in khadi and in the unity of Hindus, Muslims and others stick to my original proposal correctly and voluntarily, the occasion will readily come for the

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained of lack of uniformity in national flags and of the use of mill-cloth and foreign cloth for them.

² The A.I.C.C. adopted a resolution in August 1931, determining the specifications of the national flag. It consisted of saffron, white and green horizontal stripes with the spinning-wheel in dark blue in the centre of the white stripe. The resolution also stated that the colours stood for qualities and not communities.

Congress to decide upon a flag. It would certainly be an unbearable and shameful matter if the spinning-wheel is not the focal point in the flag, and if it is made of foreign or Indian mill-made cloth.

FASCINATION FOR ENGLISH

The same correspondent writes:¹

This is indeed a fact. Not only do pupils and teachers devote a third of their modest talent to English, but many devote all or most of it to English and even after doing all this their greed is not satiated. The efforts to break this spell of English can be directed in two ways: those who love English should stick to it and translate attractively into the national language the literature and the special knowledge found in it and those not knowing English should, despite lack of knowledge of that language, leave the stamp of their own personality on the people and prove that a knowledge of English is not essential for development of character, for intellectual progress, courage or inventiveness.

Let me point out an error in the correspondent's reasoning. He wishes that the propaganda to undermine the status of English should be launched through *Young India*; how can that be? To launch this propaganda through *Young India*, that journal itself should be closed down. The advent of *Young India* has proved to be a sort of headache to me. I believe and a number of my friends believe that the success of *Young India* has, to some extent, added to the fascination for English. Some young men see a consequence in a mere sequence when they infer that I have proved the necessity of a knowledge of English by accepting the editorship of *Young India*. As a matter of fact, my assumption of the editorship can only prove that knowing English and being a practical man, I have made use of that knowledge to suit the circumstances. The conclusion may also be drawn from this that knowledge of English is not to be renounced. But an infatuation for English at the cost of the national language is reprehensible. However, it is difficult for me to explain this distinction so long as I continue to publish *Young India* and, as I believe that the latter too renders some service, it is difficult even to give it up all of a sudden. Hence *Navajivan* alone can take up the task of ending the false status of English and that too not by publishing articles on the need to do so, but by increasingly improving itself, by adding to its usefulness and by proving in practice that nothing more than what is published in it about service to the country could be available in English. I know

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that fascination for English had not lessened and that pupils and teachers of national schools spent too much time on it.

that *Navajivan* falls short from this point of view. The attempt to remedy the shortcoming is going on.

OBSCENITY ON TRAINS

A passenger writes to say:¹

Those who write obscene words will hardly be reading *Navajivan* and hence there is nothing that I can write here for them. But I believe many cultured people read *Navajivan*. I feel the suggestion made to them is quite practicable. It is not that we come across obscene writing in latrines only. I had seen such writing on the walls of a well-known street in Bhuj during my tour of Kutch. One may perhaps come across this even in other cities. The municipality should efface such writings wherever they are found and should paste prohibitory notices in those places.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

633. AHIMSA AMONG THE JAINS

I do not touch upon the matter of the calf ² in *Navajivan*; none should therefore conclude that I have forgotten about it. Two types of people have criticized my action: one, those who are full of anger against me, two, those who are thoughtful. I know that my action which appears to me to be innocent has shocked the second type of people, and chiefly the Jains among them. I have been scrutinizing Jain literature. I believed there ought to be a great deal of support for my action in the Jain books. An expert professing the Jain religion had sent me his opinion and an article in which I found such support. Hence I carried on correspondence with known Jain friends. As a result I have received the following article³. I publish it for the benefit of those who can think objectively.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had urged Gandhiji to write in *Navajivan* appealing to educated readers to efface obscene writings inside latrines on trains.

² The killing of an ailing calf in the Ashram caused great commotion in certain circles. *Vide* "The Fiery Ordeal", sub-title When Killin May Be Ahimsa

³ Not translated here

634. AVERSION TO KHADI

A Brahmin from the South writes:¹

We shall not know how many such wearers of khadi there must be in every nook and corner. It is a matter of sorrow and surprise that those who wear a cap or other garments of khadi are ridiculed by our own people. But those who have accepted the dharma to wear khadi should be able to suffer it. I remember that when I went to England, for fear that I would be ridiculed, I had decided to wear my hair in the English style rather than have it cut in accordance with the native practice. For the same reason, I dispensed with my tuft too. But one to whom his duty has become clear will stick to it, abjuring all fear of ridicule, etc. If khadi is an *Annapurna*² to the starving peasants dwelling in the seven lakh villages of India, the thoughtful will stick to it, despite ridicule, contempt or risk of being beaten up. This Brahmin should never permit himself to think that he is low or contemptible because he is a cook. Neither the profession of a cook nor that of cleaning latrines is low. King Nala had cultivated cooking as an art. Every mother cleans latrines. I hope this Brahmin will stick to his khadi cap, and realize that an essential service can never be degrading.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

635. A FINE SUGGESTION

Shri Mathuradas Purushottam writes as follows on how to make khadi cheap:³

I think this is a good suggestion. If there is true patriotism in the country, if the people have even a little faith in the constructive programme, it should not be difficult to find a lakh of people to undertake the task of sewing. The art of sewing according to a given pattern is both easy and enjoyable. There are sewing machines in a number of houses; if one or two hours of leisure are given to this work for the sake of the country, ready-made garments of khadi will surely sell very cheap and all talk of khadi being expensive will end.

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, who had studied up to the fifth standard, served as a cook. People ridiculed him for wearing a khadi cap.

² Giver of plenty

³ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that if khadi was purchased and made into garments and put up for sale without adding stitching charges, etc., it could compete with garments made out of mill-cloth.

People buy khadi in order to make garments out of it. It is likely that many other ideas will strike us as a result of this suggestion. At the moment I place this attractive suggestion before the reader and I solicit the names and addresses of those who know sewing and are willing to sew as a measure of sacrifice. Tailors can make a very great contribution to this work. The Wadhwan tailor, the late Motilal, used to sew for an hour for his livelihood and utilize the rest of his time to serve others and used to teach sewing gladly to those who were desirous of learning. This noble example is there for all tailors and others to emulate.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

636. WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS DO?¹

A sort of awakening and turmoil have spread among students as among others in the whole country. That is an auspicious sign but it can easily turn into its opposite too. If steam is confined within a limited space, one can make a steam-engine, whose enormous power can haul mighty loads. If, however, it is not harnessed, it either goes waste or causes destruction. In like manner, if the steam that is being produced today among the students is not kept under control, it will either go waste or destroy us all; if it is intelligently harnessed, it will generate great power.

The strike of the students of the Gujarat College that is going on at present, is a product of this steam that has been released. From what I have heard, I believe that both the students' strike and their complaint are just. They had participated in the boycott of the Simon Commission in October last and had absented themselves from the College. For doing so, the Principal had conveyed his decision to them that those who wished to appear for the examination would have to pay a fee of Rs. 3. Those who did not appear for the examinations would not be punished. Despite this decision, I hear that the Principal has adopted another policy and is compelling everyone to pay Rs. 3 and sit for the examination. The strike is against this order and, if the facts are as above, injustice has been done to the students.

But the President of the Youth League says that the Principal is angry and he sees a danger to the Empire in this strike. The strike is harmless, it is a sign of youthful vigour. The Principal can avoid the

¹ *Vide* also "Speech During Youth Week, Ahmedabad", 10-1-1929 and "Duty of Resistance", 24-1-1929

danger by regarding it merely as a youthful exercise. But if by regarding the strike as a danger and a great sin, he persists in meting out some punishment, harsh or otherwise, what is not a danger today is likely to become a great danger tomorrow.

Speaking about the revolt of 1857, Lord Canning had observed that in the Indian skies a cloud no bigger than one's thumb could in a trice assume enormous proportions and no one could say when it would do so. Hence wise men should not underestimate an innocent little cloud but regard it as a symptom and administer necessary remedies.

This strike is a cloud small as a thumb; but it can generate power enough to blow up the sky. I certainly desire that such power should be generated. I have neither respect nor love for the modern British system of government. I have described it as the creation of Satan. I desire the destruction of that system once and for all. It is desirable in every way that such destruction is accomplished by the young men and women of India. It is in the hands of the students to acquire this destructive power. If they store up the steam that is being released among them, they could generate that force today.

The first thing is that the students should make a success of the strike begun by them. Had they not started it, no one would have said anything to them. Having once begun it if they lose it, they will certainly deserve blame and will harm both themselves and their country. The worst result of the strike could only be that the Principal will expel the students for a long time or forever or will impose a fine for their re-admission. The students should face both these gladly. A brave man once in the field of battle never turns back. The students cannot now beat a retreat.

Moreover, students should never give up their good manners. They should not utter a single bitter word about the Principal or the professors. Harsh words harm the speaker and not the one addressed. The students have to keep their pledge and do a difficult task. It will surely have an effect. Out of this will be born the power to destroy this political system; it cannot but be so. Our young men and women should remember the example of Chinese students. Of them not one, nor two, but fifty thousand spread themselves into the villages and in a short while prepared both young and old by imparting to them literary and such other needed knowledge. If students desire to make a significant contribution to the *yajna* of swaraj, they must do something like what was done in China.

As I understand matters, students are desirous of sacrificing themselves in a peaceful struggle. Even if I am mistaken about the

facts, the above applies to both kinds of war—with soul-force and brute force. Even if we want to fight with ammunition, we shall need to observe discipline; we shall have to store up the steam; up to a certain extent both have a common path. The Khalifas offered unique sacrifices for Islam, the Crusaders for Christianity and Cromwell and his warriors for political ends. Taking recent examples, Lenin, Sun Yat-sen and others have placed before the world instances of simplicity, endurance of hardship, sacrifice of enjoyments, single-minded devotion and eternal vigilance that would put even yogis to shame. Their followers have placed before us equally illustrious examples of devotion and discipline.

We must perforce make such sacrifices. Our sacrifices are no sacrifices, they are only trifling. Our capacity to observe rules is small, our simplicity is comparatively little, our devotion is almost insignificant, and our determination and concentration show themselves only in the beginning. Hence youths should remember that they have yet to accomplish much. I have not forgotten what they have achieved; they need no praise from me. If one friend praises another, he ceases to be a friend and becomes a professional pane-gyrist and forfeits the title of friend. A friend's job is to point out failings and try to get these remedied.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-1-1929

637. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday [January 13, 1929]¹

CHI. VASUMATI,

What could I write when the programme was not settled? Now it has been settled. I start from here on the 31st and go to Sind, from where I shall return by the 15th. What I shall do after that has not been decided. My advice is that at present you should stay on there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 503. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

¹ From the postmark

638. LETTER TO JAGANNATH

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

MY DEAR JAGANNATH,

I have your letter. I expect that Manilal will be going to Sind. I do not know where he is at the present moment. I leave on the 31st instant for Karachi. It would be better to send someone on behalf of the Society¹ in advance.

As to my visit² to the Punjab for the opening ceremony, etc. in April, please ask me later. I am awaiting a communication from Pandit Motilalji before I can decide.

Yours sincerely,

LALA JAGANNATH
CARE PEOPLE
COURT STREET, CALCUTTA
From a microfilm: S.N. 15268

539. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

I have your letter.³ I ought to have acknowledged it earlier, but I have been overwhelmed with work. Those Indo-Chinese friends will be welcome whenever they come.

I am sending a short message⁴ to the friends.

Jamnabehn should come here because I go to Sind from here by the rail route. I leave here on 31st instant. Jamnabehn may come whenever she likes before 31st instant. Of course she is bringing with her a choice assortment of fine khadi. It would certainly be extremely nice if you will join me during my trip to Burma, if it ever comes off.

What happened to the balance of the stuff in Calcutta ?

MISS KHURSHED NAOROJI
F 8 NAPEAN SEA ROAD, BOMBAY
From a photostat: S.N. 15264

¹ Servants of the People Society, Lahore

² Gandhiji was requested by the Servants of the People Society to preside over the anniversary of the Society which was to be held in April and perform the opening ceremony of the Lajpat Rai Hall.

³ The addressee had requested Gandhiji on behalf of the Indo-Chinese delegates to give a message to the people of Indo-China (S.N. 15263).

⁴ *Vide* the following item.

640. LETTER TO BUI QUANG-CHIEU

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

Miss Khurshedbai Naoroji has written to me to say that you want a message from me. My message is:

True freedom lies through Truth and Non-violence and nothing else.

Yours sincerely,

BUI QUANG-CHIEU, ESQ.
P 253 SHAHNAGAR STREET
KALIGHAT P.O., CALCUTTA
From a photostat: S.N. 15265

641. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 13, 1929

I have your letter. What is one to do with Prakasam or anybody else ? I have certainly not taken charge. I do not see how I can take the sole charge. I have today a letter from the Working Committee, copy of which I enclose. I shall frame some sort of a scheme. Let us simply do whatever we can in spite of adverse circumstances. In my opinion, dictatorship is out of question. When you receive the formal communication to prepare a scheme, I suppose you will prepare something and send it. If they put you in sole charge, you will ask for absolute powers and ask for the Congress Committees being put in proper order.

The health-god dealt with me most handsomely during the Calcutta strain. I am none the worse. In spite of reduced diet, bad hours, want of sleep, I had lost only one lb., and I have regained all the lost weight during the week I have been here. Yes, almonds, bread and vegetables seem to answer the purpose well. The quantity of almonds is for the last two days 6 ounces, bread untoasted 14 *tolas*. I am keeping well.

Encl.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
GANDHI ASHRAM, TIRUCHENGODU
From a photostat: S.N. 15273

642. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

January 13, 1929

DEAR SATISBABU,

Can you prepare the tricolour national flag with the charkha in it? The question is how to have the three colours nicely on one piece. If you can prepare it, let me have the price also.

You will keep me informed of how the new Khadi Bhandar¹ is going on.

I wish I could have given more days to you. Hemprabha Devi must not overwork herself. What is the cost there per head of feeding and how is it worked out?

Love.

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1601

643. *LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA*

January 13, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. It would have been better if you could have personally come to Allahabad. But now it will do even if a responsible representative of yours comes. A satyagrahi must be absolutely faultless. Then alone can he be invincible. If necessary, we will talk further about this when we meet. I presume that you will definitely come to Wardha if you have not come to the Sabarmati Ashram before that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ *Vide* "Notes" sub-title Khadi Bhandar in Calcutta

644. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

Sunday [January 13, 1929]¹

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter. Have patience. Always remember Rama. He will remove all impurities.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original. Courtesy: National Archives of India; also G.N. 198

645. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 14, 1929

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got your wire and your letter too. I am going to Sind at the end of this month in connection with the Lalaji Memorial [Fund]. Did you collect any subscriptions in Calcutta?

Did you write to the South Indian gentleman whose name I had sent for the dairy? If he does not suit I can suggest a few other names.

As regards the Khadi Bhandar do not let its purpose slip off your mind. It ought not to be run merely on a commercial basis. It is to be conducted from an altruistic viewpoint.

My health is good. These days my diet consists of milk from 15 *tolas* almonds, 14 *tolas roti* (soaked), vegetable, raw tomatoes, 4 *tolas* linseed oil and 2 *tolas* of wheat flour gruel in the morning. I have left off fruit. The increase in weight in one week is 1_ lb.

I am maintaining good strength.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6152. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

646. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Monday [January 14, 1929]²

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. Let me have the date of departure of your ship for Rangoon. I would certainly like to go by it. Most probably it

¹ From the postmark

² *ibid*

will be cheaper to sail from Calcutta. But you can guide me better.

We need not wire for the literature about bee-keeping. There is no urgency about it. The honey you sent is very sweet. Send me a book on chromopathy if you can get one. I hope grandmother is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4711. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

647. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Not revised

Silence Day, January 14, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have all your love letters. I am glad indeed that you liked the poet and his great creation. Your letters soothed me. I have sent them to Mahadev for I know he will like them. I would like you to go there again and, if you will like it, before returning home.

I am satisfied so long as you do not expect long letters from me. But you need not shorten yours to spare me. I like your letters. They give me useful news and they are your temperature chart.

I do not mind your opinion of Krishnadas. I cannot endorse it. But give me the reasons for that terrible judgment. I might be able to correct it or endorse it. If it is the worst, I must know it. But I feel that I shall be able to correct your judgment. No one else has the opinion you have.

Things are going on well here. The kitchen is better ordered. Bread is almost perfect. Chhotelal has returned with more accurate information about bakeries. Surendra will be back in a few days.

I leave here on 31st instant for Sind, returning by 15th February. You shall have the Sind dates in due course.

I have regained my lost weight and added 1_ lb. It was 95_ yesterday after performance at the library. Fruit replaced by tomatoes. No lemon either.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5330. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G. N. 9384

648. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

January 14, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters. I missed one mail as I have been very busy.

If it was left to me to give a name to Dhairyabala¹, I would call her Sita. It is a holy name. It is easy for friends there to pronounce and suggest the virtues we wish her to have. I considered some other names too, but could not think of a better one.

What need is there now to write about Sastriji? Keep me informed how the new Agent² is doing. Since I do not know him, I have not written a single line about him. The other reports that I have received are not favourable, but we should not form an opinion on the basis of these reports. It is possible that he may show only his better qualities there. You should not, any of you, be prejudiced against him from the beginning.

I am doing fairly well. At present I have given up goat's milk and fruits. Fruits I gave up after coming here. I take tomatoes instead, and almond-milk instead of goat's milk.

I hope you write to Ramdas. It appears he and Nimu are doing well at Bardoli. Devdas, Navin and Rasik are still in Delhi. All three are doing well. Mahadev is in Bardoli.

Kishorelal was here for four days. His health can be said to be fairly good. Ba, too, can be said to be well. We can say that she shows her age now. I have already written to you that she was with me at Calcutta. I returned *via* Delhi. Ba came later, having stayed on in Delhi for two days. Keshu had stayed back with her. Brijkishan has come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4749

¹ Daughter of the addressees

² Sir Kurma Venkata Reddi who took over the charge of the office of Agent in South Africa from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri on January 28, 1929

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

COW-PROTECTION TRUE AND FALSE¹

The question of cow-protection is extremely complex. The fanatic, the humanitarian and the economist will of course view it differently. . . . But the Hindu ideal of cow-protection has nothing in common with that of the first and transcends that of the other two.... The camel and the horse occupy the same position in the economic life of the people of Arabia that the cow does in ours.... Yet the ideal of camel-protection or horse-protection never arose in Arabia.... Even in the West the cow has more and more come to be regarded as the “mother of prosperity” and dairying has been developed into an elaborate science, but Westerners have not adopted the ideal of cow-protection in the sense in which we have. The cow-protection ideal set up by Hinduism is essentially different from and transcends the dairy ideal of the West. The latter is based on economic values, the former, while duly recognizing the economic aspect of the case, lays stress on the spiritual aspect, viz., the idea of penance and self-sacrifice for the relief of martyred innocence which it embodies....

The story [in Kalidasa’s *Raghuvamsa*] runs that King Dilip of the famous Raghu line finding himself in his declining years without issue went to seek the advice of sage Vasishtha his preceptor and was told that the attainment of his desire was prevented by a curse pronounced upon him by Surabhi, the Divine Cow, on account of an unintended insult that he had once offered to her and that the only way to remedy it was to propitiate her by personally serving her and by protecting her against all harm in her roamings in the forest. So dismissing all his servants, the King entered upon his penance . . . “offering her palatable mouthfuls of grass, rubbing her body, keeping off the gnats, following her as her shadow, halting where she halted, sitting down where she lay down, moving forth when she moved.” . . . Such was the power of the King’s penance and so all-conquering his love that even wild Nature felt its spell. “When he entered the forest as its protector, forest conflagrations would become extinguished even without any shower of rain . . . the stronger animals no longer oppressed the weaker ones.”

Thus it went on for “thrice seven” days at the end of which, wishing to test the devotion of her protector, the cow entered a cave in the Himalayas . . . and was suddenly seized upon by a lion unnoticed by the King who was lost in contemplating the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding mountain scenery. Startled

¹ Only excerpts are reproduced here.

from his reverie by the plaintive lowing of the cow, the King, ashamed of his absent-mindedness, fitted an arrow to his bow to shoot at the lion, but to his utter amazement and dismay feel himself hold as if by a spell and all his strength paralysed. . . . The lion . . . told him that all his prowess was vain, since he was not an ordinary lion but Kumbhodara the servant of God Siva and was protected by the blessing of that God hi consequence of which no arms could prevail against him.... “I know I am helpless,” replied the King . . . but one thing still remains to me. I offer my body to thee as ransom for the cow and I beseech thee to appease thy hunger on my flesh and let the cow go.”

The lion tries to move him from his resolve by a variety of arguments. “If compassion is your motive,” he expostulates, “then your decision is wrong, since by your death you will save only one cow, whereas if you live you will as their father ever protect your people against all troubles.” . . . The King . . . once more presses his request. “So be it,” replies the lion at last and the King laying down his arms throws himself before the wild beast “like a lump of flesh,” so that it might make a meal of him.... But ... instead of the dreadful leap of the lion which he was expecting, flowers begin to shower from the heavens and he hears a gentle voice speak, “Rise up, my son.” He gets up and finds the cow standing before him like his own mother, with milk overflowing from her udders and “nowhere the lion!” . . .

And since the King has discharged his trust so nobly she grants him his wish. “Do not think I can produce milk alone,” she says to him, “if pleased I can grant any wish”.

Dilip is here depicted as love incarnate. Faced with the dilemma whether to lay down his life to save the cow or to gain the merit of giving crores of cows in charity he unhesitatingly chooses the former and finds that he has thereby propitiated an angel unawares. His relentless pursuit of truth leads him to the discovery of the true way of cow-protection—the way of ahimsa, of perfect love and therethrough everything else is added unto him....

The cow whose service and protection is enjoined by Hinduism as a sacred duty is not cow, the animal merely, but cow that in our sacred lore appears as the personification of the “agony of the Earth”, and that pleads for redress before the Great White Throne whenever the Earth grows weary under its load of iniquity. Its service includes the service of the entire afflicted humanity, of all those “who toil and suffer and are weary and need rest”, the service of *Daridranarayana* . . .

Dilip’s way [is] the way of perfect love . . . self-suffering and selfpurification. It is this spiritual ideal of cow-protection that is exalted by Hinduism as the highest

dharma and with reference to which the promise is held out:

‘न केवलानां पथसां प्रसूतिमवेहि मां कामदुघां प्रसन्नाम् ।’

“Do not think I can produce milk alone, if pleased I can grant any wish.”

Young India, 20-9-1928

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM DR. B. C. ROY

SHILLONG,

October 28, 1928

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I had written to you some months ago to find out from you your directions regarding the Exhibition to be held in connection with the 43rd session of the Congress. I confess I did not get from you any definite instructions for us to follow as your letter was vague and guarded. It is time now (I hope it is not too late) that I received them and shall be grateful if I am told exactly what are the decisions of the Calcutta Committee which embarrass you. I understood from Mr Khandelwal just before I left Calcutta that you had not decided to come to Calcutta during the Congress.

The Calcutta Congress Committee have so far decided (I am speaking from memory)

- (i) not to exhibit any textiles made of foreign yarn or anything of this nature manufactured in any foreign country,
- (ii) not to allow any advertisements re[garding] the same,
- (iii) not to allow the exhibition of any British goods,
- (iv) not to allow any advertisements of these goods,
- (v) to allow the exhibition of small machinery (non-British) good enough for cottage industries,
- (vi) to allow the exhibition of mill-cloth only if the Committee is convinced that the cloth is made of Indian yarn.

While the Committee have come to these conclusions yet I am perfectly cer-

tain that no member of the Committee will insist on the compliance by us of any or all of these conditions if they knew that you had objection to any of these decisions.

We have set apart a large portion of the exhibition grounds for khaddar cloth I am now informed by Pandit Motilalji that the A.I.S.A. have decided to abstain from being represented in the exhibition. This decision is unfortunate. As an humble office-bearer of the Congress I am bound to see that the Association is represented at the exhibition as also to take orders from my Committee. Please do not leave me in this predicament. Kindly revise your decision and come to Calcutta. We shall not accept a 'no' from you. If necessary I will try and close down the exhibition. Please let me know your wishes and I will try and follow them. Only I would request you not to be too unbending.

I am going down to Calcutta in two days and I shall be anxiously awaiting a reply there from you, giving me definite directions. The Seva Sadan is going on well. I do hope you will find time to open the new wards when in Calcutta. We are looking forward to it.

Yours sincerely,

B. C. ROY

From a microfilm: S.N. 14852

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM SHAUKAT ALI'S LETTER

SULTANI MANSION, DONGRI, BOMBAY

October 23, 1928

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I had received your letter of the September 24th all right. . . . I know from the writings in the Press that your name was being dragged in to raise the people's feeling against me. . . . Our Kohat differences and other things had also been mentioned. So I do not feel surprised that at Simla Mahadev heard something about it. Here is what I had said about you and I assure you that in giving the details of the incident I depend not only on my own good memory and also on Shuaib's, but Dr. Ansari or even Pandit Motilal cannot disprove my facts. . . . I had real quarrel with Panditji at Ambalal Sarabhai's and very nearly came to blows, as my blood boiled when in our face he was heaping abuses on us "No-changers". . . . You have forgiven them, may have even forgotten the wrongs they may have done, but most of us cannot do it. . . . You can retire from active politics, being many-sided, but unfortunately we cannot; and I have got to save my Muslim brethren from going to the English fold which means death to them and a great deal of harm to Islam to the

service of which I have devoted my life. . . . I have always liked Srinivasa Iyengar. He is impulsive and open, may be changeable, but he is sincere and good-tempered. Whether his sponsorship of the Madras Resolution was responsible for Panditji's opposition I cannot say. . . . In May last I came for the first time in touch with the All-Parties Conference at Bombay and, you know, in your presence Motilalji and myself differed so strongly. . . . Over this reservation of Muslim seats question he gave out strong views and we had equally strong views on that subject. You were in agreement with Motilalji and wanted the reservation to go both in the case of majority and minority provinces. . . . The Working Committee of the Congress discussed this question for three days and the majority did not want the Madras Resolution to be reopened. There was great fear of the collapse of the All-Parties Conference and to overcome the deadlock you had suggested the formation of this committee to draft the constitution in the *spirit of the Madras Resolution*. Panditji asked you to give the names of the members also and you suggested four names— Dr. Ansari, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Aney. On this Dr. Ansari said that personally he had always been opposed to the reservation of seats but the general Muslim public did not agree with him on this point. He would not be able to find time to work on this committee. . . . Mrs. Naidu and I suggested Shuaib's name in place of Dr. Ansari who could not work on the committee; but you said, "No, not Shuaib", which rather surprised me and I said, "Why not, Sir? There must be someone to represent the Muslim point of view and Shuaib will be the best person." You said in reply that he would not work and give time or some such words; and when we assured you that he would work, you withdrew your objection, and Shuaib's name was added and also, I believe, Subhas Bose's. It is this incident that I have mentioned in the statement which I issued at Delhi on the 4th September on my return from Lucknow Conference. You yourself say in your letter of the 24th referring to this incident, "I do not even remember what I said about him and others." I never said in my statement that you *made every effort to keep Shuaib out*. I only gave the true picture of that scene and said that you objected to Shuaib's name which was proposed but afterwards agreed saying that if Shuaib promises to work I have no further objection. That is all that I have said about you. I did say then and say it now also that the original committee of four as proposed by you—Ansari, Motilal, Jawaharlal and Aney—was composed of men who did not want Muslim reservation of seats, but at the open meeting of the All-Parties Conference, I was surprised that other names were added to the committee, i.e., Sir Ali Imam, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar, Mr. Joshi, Sardar Mangal Singh, so that Shuaib's alone, and possibly Subhas Bose were the only members who could put forward the Muslim point of view, the views of the others being against the reservation of seats.

I am afraid you have been out of touch with all that is going on in this connection. You saw my English letter to Dr. Ansari, but you did not see the reply he issued after reading my statement of the 4th September in *Hamdard* and to which this

letter was a rejoinder. Naturally you would not like two brothers Dr. Ansari and myself fighting over anything. . . . My quarrel really is not with Ansari but with Pandit Motilal, who knowing that I was giving expression to the views of millions of Mussalmans, yet would not listen. . . . It was a big task before us to make them accept Joint Electorates which, I think, in itself was a very great gain. . . .

I am sorry to write this letter to you. . . . Ansari is a gentleman and an honest man and I love him; but he is not strong. . . .

. . . It matters little if any action of mine annoys you today or any action of yours makes me angry. We have fought together side by side and will carry the wounds we earned together to our graves. They are a link between us, but I beg you not to ignore the warning I give you. We cannot allow things to drift because that way lies danger and that terribly ugly thing called civil war which means a brother killing a brother. I must stop it in my own way and I beg you to do the same in your way. . . .

Yours in great sorrow,

SHAUKAT ALI

From a photostat: S.N. 13710