

# Young India

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## Boycotts Vs. Construction

(By M. K. Gandhi)

An Andhra friend in his urgent invitation asking me to be present at the forthcoming Ganjam District Conference writes as follows :

"The best part of our Congress work in connection with the constructive programme was done in places round Hiramandalam. Majority of the people wear Khaddar. You are probably aware that Andhradesa is not in love with Councils-work. It belongs to no-change party. It never excuses you for dropping the Boycotts. Our hope lies in Constructive work. People are getting disheartened. Their enthusiasm is at a low ebb. Hiramandalam is a great Khaddar producing centre. The Fiska Congress Committee manufactures several varieties of Khaddar and has one of the best shops in the district. It has also a National School. It is a Vaisya (Banias) centre. They are almost all Khaddar-walahs. But what good? Their enthusiasm for Swaraj is well-nigh extinguished. Without the Boycotts people have no faith in constructive work. Our efforts to rekindle enthusiasm are unavailing. I have surrendered all my worldly prospects, been rendered utterly destitute and still at the work hoping against hope to achieve Swaraj."

I have informed him that it is impossible for me to be present at the Ganjam District Conference however much I should like to be able to do so. I am with great difficulty, and for me in slow stages, finishing the remaining and indispensable part of the tour programme for the year after which I hope to have rest from incessant travelling. I am, therefore, sorry to have to disappoint the Andhra friends. But I have reproduced the foregoing extract not for the purpose of advertising the necessity of rest for my tired limbs, but in order to remove the confusion of thought that has enabled the writer to attribute want of interest in constructive work to the suspension of boycotts by the Congress. In the first place, if Andhra Desh has no love for Council work the Congress does not compel it to manufacture love for Councils. It merely authorises those who believe in Council work to take it up on behalf of and in the name of the Congress. It withdraws the prohibition from those who gave up such work not out of faith but merely out of

loyalty to the Congress. It prohibits people from using the name of the Congress to condemn entry into the legislative bodies and lastly it encourages those who believe in such political work to prosecute it with zeal. But it does not in any way fetter a single Congressman's conscience. Those must have a poor faith in themselves whose zeal is damped for want of extraneous support. Moreover, the writer forgets that the Congress has not only not dropped boycott of foreign cloth, but it will bless and issue a certificate of merit to those who will achieve that boycott. I am striving my best to deserve that certificate and I invite everybody to join me in the endeavour. That boycott can be achieved only when Khaddar becomes popular enough to be universal. Hence the inauguration of the All-India Spinners' Association. Every boycott has its constructive side. The Association will devote its best energy to the constructive effort. What have the other boycotts—for instance that of titles or schools or law-courts—to do with the manufacture and wearing of Khaddar? The beauty of these boycotts lies in their individuality and capacity to stand alone. The individual taking part in any or all of them always benefits, and when a sufficiently large number take part in them the nation becomes fit for Swaraj. Blind enthusiasm and blind faith can lead to no lasting good. It is, therefore, necessary to realise that the constructive programme by itself has an inestimable value even apart from its undoubted capacity to fit us for Swaraj.

The writer has done well in surrendering all his worldly prospects and in rendering himself utterly destitute. But let him consider that sacrifice to be its own reward. Thousands upon thousands will have to do likewise before Swaraj is attained by the nation. He who has sacrificed his all for Swaraj has certainly attained it for himself. There is no need, therefore, for such a one to 'hope against hope,' for if his sacrifice is voluntary and intelligent it is all hope without any disappointment. One's faith has got to be bright and intelligent before it can enkindle faith in others. Those therefore who believe in Khaddar and other parts of the programme of 1921 must be able to stand unmoved inspite of variations in the policy, politics and programme of the Congress.

## Notes

### A Correction

In the issue of 8th October in my Bihar notes I have said, 'In Ranchi I was taken to Golcunda'. This was a stupid slip on my part. The Bihari friends are now laughing at my geographical ignorance and tell me that Golcunda is not near Ranchi but near Purulia. I owe an apology to Purulia for the blunder. When, however, several villages and several places in the same village or town have to be visited in the same day and these performances follow in quick succession it is difficult for one to remember all the places accurately. I am therefore obliged to omit the mention of the names of many places and persons and simply confine myself to narration of events because at the moment I do not remember either the names of places or persons concerned. When therefore people find that the names of persons or places that in their opinion I should have mentioned have been omitted, let them understand that often the omission is unintentional and that it is due purely to my weak memory.

### Spinning Essay

The reader will remember that early this year Sjt. Rewanshanker Jagjivan announced a prize of one thousand rupees to be given to the writer of the best essay on hand-spinning, its history and its use. These were the terms:

(1) The essay should be in English in four parts; the first part to contain the history of hand-spinning and the Khaddar (meaning hand-spun, including the celebrated *Shubnum* of Dacca) trade of India before the British advent, the second part should trace the history of the ruin of hand-spinning and the Khaddar trade, the third part should be an examination of the possibilities of hand-spinning and Khaddar and a comparison between the Indian mill-industry and hand-spinning and hand-weaving, the fourth part should examine the possibilities of achieving boycott of foreign cloth through the spinning-wheel. The essay should be supported by authoritative statistics and should have an appendix containing a list of all the reference books and authorities used by the author in support of his argument.

(2) The essay may be as brief as the competitors wish to make it, consistently with the giving of a full record of facts and figures.

(3) The essay should be sent to the office of *Young India* by registered bookpost with the author's name on a separate sheet and should reach the office of *Young India* not later than 15th March next. The judges will be Messrs. Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal K. Gandhi and myself. The result will be announced not later than 31st March 1925. The judges will reserve to themselves the right of rejecting all the essays if they fall below a certain standard. The prize will be paid to the winner on the announcement thereof. The right of publication will vest in the All India Khadi Board in accordance with the donor's wishes.

Later Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai was invited also to act as judge and he kindly consented. The time fixed for the delivery of the essay was 15th March.

It was subsequently extended to 30th April and over sixty essays were received within the stipulated time. Each one of the judges carried on an independent examination. Two of us awarded the first prize to one, the third awarded the first prize to another and the fourth to a third. After mutual consultation we decided upon splitting the prize and distributing it between Sjt. S. V. Pantambekar and Sjt. N. S. Vardachari and the judges have proposed that either both of them or, if it is not possible for them to do so, whoever has the leisure and the inclination should combine the essays and give for publication the result of the combination. I am sorry that means a little more delay. All the delay that has upto now taken place has been unavoidable. The examination had to be and was thorough. That by itself took a great deal of time. The delay that has now taken place is equally inevitable, the idea being to give to the public a thoroughly good compendium on hand-spinning. I congratulate the prize-winners and I tender my congratulations also to those who have not been able to win the prize, for the effort made by them. For, some of the essays show a great deal of diligence.

### Spinners, Please note

Those who were in charge of the yarn that was received under the All-India Congress Committee resolution last year ask me to warn the spinners who become members of the A. I. S. A. against sending yarn that is not evenly spun and uniform. A quantity of bad yarn still lies unused. Just as bread that is stodgy and ill-baked is no bread, similarly yarn that is not easily woven is no yarn, and the condition of membership is not thousand yards of self-spun yarn merely but thousand yards per month of self-spun yarn *well-twisted and uniform* for A class and two thousand yards yearly of the same quality of self-spun yarn for B class members. Therefore if the Secretaries are to do their duty well, it will be necessary for them not to take yarn that is considered to be below standard and the standard while it need not be stiff will certainly be stiff enough to meet the elementary requirements of good weavable yarn. In cash subscriptions a bad coin cannot be accepted as a proper tender nor can bad yarn be accepted as proper tender when subscription is payable in yarn.

### What have you done?

If you are a believer in spinning and if you have faith in the A. I. S. A. have you joined the Association? If you have not will you write why you have not? If you have already joined, beyond sending your quota of well-spun and uniform yarn of your own spinning what more do you propose to do to make Khaddar universal? Have you invited the members of your own family and friends to join? Are you asking even the youngsters of your family to labour for the sake of the country? It is no mean training for the youngsters to learn during their childhood the lesson of intelligent self-sacrifice and understand the power of organisation. Unorganised half-hour's labour may mean nothing but labour given to an organisation even from the remotest part of India has a potency that can revolutionise national life. It is no mean thing again for little children regularly every day to remember their country in a tangible manner. It will give them priceless discipline. In the act of demonstrating to the children the virtue of the simple little act of labour you will discover for yourself the implications of the Charkha which you have little thought of.



Please do not raise in front of you a mountain of difficulties by asking what use your labour can be when all India is lying supine. It is enough for you to do your little best, the rest will take care of itself. We have not the governance of the universe in our hands but we have our own in our hands and you will find that that is about all it is possible for us to do. But it is at the same time all in all. There is much truth in the homely English proverb: 'Take care of the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves.'

### Lohani at last

After I had given up all hope of finding Lohani I received help from an unexpected quarter and I have now before me full details in the shape of newspaper cuttings. I observe that these cuttings are based upon my first reference to Lohani in the pages of *Young India*. The writers of these newspaper reports evidently thought that I would see their references. They are obviously unaware of the fact that I do not get the time to read the numerous newspapers which the kind editors and proprietors send me in exchange for *Young India* or *Navajivan*. I have often requested and I repeat the request that those who seek to give me information or correct me or advise me through their writings in newspapers will kindly send me the cuttings in question. The writer in one of the cuttings expresses his surprise and astonishment that I should not know where Lohani is. I share the regret. But why astonishment? I have before now admitted my ignorance of the geography of my own country. In the vernacular school I had the barest outlines of the geography of India and in the English school from the very first standard I was called upon on pain of being caned to learn by heart the names of all the counties of England and many other foreign names which it gave me headache to pronounce and remember. Nobody taught me and I am sure my teacher did not know where Lohani was. Even Bhiwani near which, I now see, Lohani is situated was unknown to me before I went to the Punjab. Lohani then according to the cutting in my possession is a little Hindu village, six miles from Bhiwani. The Hindu zamindars, the cutting proceeds, introduced in Lohani some Musalmans. The Hindus and the Musalmans are now fighting over a piece of land which, the Musalmans claim, is consecrated and the Hindus claim has never ceased to be their property. The matter is before the courts. And there I must leave it. The writer of the newspaper article invites me to investigate the matter and pronounce my own opinion upon it. If I had the authority which I thought at one time I possessed I would certainly investigate and prevent the quarrel from being decided in a court of law. But I must now plead my incapacity. I would, however, advise both the parties to approach those in whom they have confidence and seek their intervention.

### A Total Denial

With regard to the charges of bribery, corruption and intimidation brought against the Swarajists of Madras in connection with the late Municipal elections and recently referred to in these columns I have a long letter from Sjt. P. S. Doraiswamy Mudaliar totally and specifically denying every one of those charges and on the contrary holding that the defeated party was guilty of the very charges brought against the Swarajists. The correspondent

contends that not only the illiterate masses threw in their lot with the Swarajists but so did also "many lawyers, medical practitioners and many eminent men." And he says that they did so because they were disgusted with the tactics of the other party. I am not reproducing the whole of the letter because I have no desire to interest the readers of *Young India* in a local controversy and to open its columns for an interminable correspondence in it.

### The Goanese under Swaraj

A Goan friend asks, "What would be your attitude and that of all Indians towards the Goanese who reside and earn their living in this country when Swaraj is attained?" In briefest terms the answer is, that the attitude towards the Goanese will be exactly the same as towards any other Indian, for the Goanese are as much inhabitants of India as the inhabitants of any other part. That they are under another foreign Government can make no difference in their treatment. If the fear underlying this question is due to difference of religion then it has been repeatedly stated in these columns that Swaraj is not intended for any one religion only but for all and that those who are not born or domiciled in India would be fully protected, as fully as under the present Government, where they are not unduly favoured. That is the Swaraj of my conception. What it is ultimately going to be depends upon what thinking humanity in India does in the long run. The Goanese population has the making of the India of the future as much in their hands as any other group. No one need therefore ask what will become of him under Swaraj because no one but idiots and the imbecile will live on sufferance. Each one will guard his own individual liberty, if the state encroaches upon it. Not until many people acquire that power of resistance will India obtain real freedom.

### When Crime not Immoral

A fair friend sends me 'Crisp sayings' by Dan Griffiths on crime and wants me to find room for them in these pages. Here are some extracts which a Satyagrahi can readily subscribe to:—

"State law is not necessarily moral. Crime is not necessarily immoral."

"There is a world of difference between illegality and immorality."

"Not all illegalities are immoral and not all immoralities are illegal."

Who can say that whilst not to crawl on one's belly at the dictation of an officer might be an illegality it is also an immorality? Rather is it not true that refusal to crawl on one's belly may be illegal but it would be in the highest degree moral? Another illuminating passage is the following: "Modern society is in itself a crime factory. The militarist is a relative of the murderer and the burglar is the complement of the stock jobber." The third excerpt runs as follows:—

"The thief in law is merely a person who satisfies his acquisitive instincts in ways not sanctioned by the community. The real thief is the person who takes more out of society than he puts into it." But "Society punishes those who annoy it, not those who injure it,—the retail and not the wholesale offenders."

### Seven Social Sins

The same fair friend wants readers of *Young India* to know if they do not already, the following seven social sins:

Politics	without	Principles
Wealth	without	Work
Pleasure	without	Conscience
Knowledge	without	Character
Commerce	without	Morality
Science	without	Humanity
Worship	without	Sacrifice

Naturally, the friend does not want the readers to know these things merely through the intellect but to know them through the heart so as to avoid them.

M. K. G.

## Young India

### That Eternal Question

(By M. K. Gandhi)

However much I may wish to avoid it the Hindu-Muslim question will not avoid me. Muslim friends insist upon my intervention to solve it. The Hindu friends would have me discuss it with them and some of them say I have sown the wind and must reap the whirlwind. Whilst I was in Calcutta a Bihar friend had written to me in grief and anger telling me of the alleged kidnapping of Hindu boys and specially girls. I had written to him telling him point blank that I did not believe those allegations but that if he had proof and gave it to me I would gladly examine it and if I was satisfied I would denounce it although I might not be able to do any tangible good. Since then I have had cuttings from newspapers describing in harrowing detail cases of kidnapping. I had told the friend that newspaper extracts could not be accepted as any evidence of the crime, that in many cases newspaper paragraphs were inflammatory, misleading and often absolutely false. There are Hindu and Muslim sheets that delight in blackguarding Musalmans and Hindus respectively and if both of them could be accepted as true both the parties were loathsome creatures. But I have proved to my own satisfaction that many of these reported cases are highly exaggerated if they are not false. I have therefore, asked for such incontestable proofs as would be accepted in any court of law. The Titagarh case is certainly such a one. A Hindu girl had been kidnapped. She is supposed to have embraced Islam and in spite of the court's order she has not been yet produced so far as I am aware. What is more, respectable people are concerned in the non-production of the girl. When I was in Titagarh nobody seemed prepared to shoulder the responsibility about the girl. At Patna too some startling information was given to me with corroborative evidence. I refrain at the present moment from going into it because it is not before me in its completed form. Such cases set one athinking and need the attention of all well-wishers of the country. There is then the question of music in front of mosques. I have heard of a peremptory demand for total cessation of music, soft or loud, at any time whatsoever in front of mosques. There is too a demand for the stopping of *arati* during prayer hours in temples in the neighbourhood

of mosques. I heard in Calcutta that even boys passing by a mosque early in the morning and reciting *Ramnam* were stopped.

What is to be done? Recourse to law courts in such matters is a broken reed. If I allow my daughter to be kidnapped and then go to court for protection the latter would be powerless or if the judge got angry over my cowardice he would dismiss me from his presence with deserved contempt. Courts deal with ordinary crimes. General kidnapping of girls or boys is not an ordinary crime. People in such cases are expected to look after themselves. Courts help those who are largely able to help themselves. There is supplementary protection. So long as there are weak people so long will there be some one to prey upon their weakness. The remedy therefore lies in organising for self-defence. I could find it in me to justify the most violent defence in such cases unless the people concerned are capable of a non-violent defence. No doubt where girls or boys of poor and helpless parents are kidnapped, the case becomes much more complicated. There the remedy has to be found not by the individual but by a whole clan or caste. A presentation, however, of authentic cases of kidnapping is a prime necessity before public opinion can be well-organised.

The question of music is much simpler than that of kidnapping. Either continuous music, *arati* or the repeating of *Ramnam* is a religious necessity or it is not. If it is a religious necessity no prohibition order by a court of law can be held obligatory. Music must be played, *arati* must be made and *Ramnam* repeated, cost what it may. If my formula were accepted a procession of the meekest men and women, unarmed even with *lathis* would march with *Ramnam* on their lips, supposing that that was the bone of contention and draw down on their heads the whole of the Musalman wrath. But if they would not accept that formula they would still proceed with the sacred name on their lips and fight every inch of the ground. But to stop music for fear of a row or because of an order of court is to deny one's religion.

But then there is the other side to the question. Is continuous playing of music even while passing mosques at prayer time always a religious necessity? Is repeating of *Ramnam* a similar necessity? What about the charge that the fashion nowadays is to organise processions purely for the sake of irritating Musalmans and to make *arati* just at the time of prayer and to utter *Ramnam* not because it is held religiously necessary but in order to create an occasion for a fight? If such be the case it will defeat its own end and naturally the zest being wanting, a court's order, a military display or a shower of brick-bats would end the irreligious show.

A religious necessity must therefore be clearly established. Every semblance of irritation must be avoided. A mutual understanding should be sincerely sought. And where it is not possible, an irreducible minimum should be fixed making due allowance for the opposite sentiment and then without seeking the intervention of courts or in spite of a prohibition order a fight must be put up for that minimum. Let no one charge me with ever having advised or encouraged weakness or surrender on matters of principle. But I have said, as I say again, that every trifle must not be dignified into a principle.



## Bihar Notes

### Function of Local Board Members

At Giridih the addresses presented to me contained interesting references and there was, also, as in Chaibasa, an address from the Goshala Committee. The Local Board address referred to the bad condition of the roads under its charge. The justification given was shortage of funds. I had no hesitation in replying that shortage of funds was no excuse for keeping the roads in bad repair when Congressmen manned Local Boards. After all roads were national property, Congressmen were national servants and when by entering Local Boards they obtained charge of roads they were expected to keep them in good repair whether there were funds or not. They might put up on every good point a valiant fight with the Government but their constructive work should in no way be allowed to be neglected. If they found that they could not properly discharge their trust they must resign. Want of funds was no cause for resignation because that could be made up for by voluntary effort. Let the members of such boards take up the pick-axe and the shovel, gird up their loins and themselves work at the roads and call a party of volunteers to assist them. They will earn the blessings of the public as also of the dumb cattle and command the respect of the superior authority. Indeed in all municipal work everywhere a large part of it is done by the councillors unofficially and with the voluntary support of the public. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain turned Birmingham into a clean city studded with statues and other decorations, not merely through the paid service of the Corporation but by the voluntary support, pecuniary and other, of its citizens. The Municipality of Glasgow dealt with its plague epidemic in a summary and exemplary fashion only because the members of the corporation received the willing and unstinted support of its citizens. The Municipality of Johannesburg, within my own experience, dealt with similar trouble in the same summary manner. It counted no cost too great for the eradication of plague,—burnt down its market buildings and its location and had behind it the resources of its determined citizens. I told my audience that therefore I was asking for nothing heroic of the Local Board members by asking them to do the road repair themselves with the assistance of Congress volunteers if they had not enough funds. If we captured Municipalities and Local Boards we must be able to give a good account of ourselves in all the constructive work that was entrusted to our charge under statutory authority.

### Cow Protection

The Committee of the Giridih Goshala said in its address that it had an annual income of nine thousand rupees in donations and an income of only two thousand rupees from milk etc. The reader will recall that it is the same tale as that of Chaibasa. Much cry but little wool. An ideal Goshala would supply the city of its domicile with cheap and wholesome milk from cattle of its own keeping and cheap and lasting foot-wear not out of slaughtered hide but out of the hide of dead cattle. Such a Goshala will not be on one or two acres of ground in the heart of a city or in its immediate neighbourhood but it would have at some distance, but within easy reach, fifty to a hundred acres of ground where a modern dairy and a modern tannery would be conducted on strictly business but national lines. Thus

there would be no profits and no dividends to be paid and there would be also no loss incurred. In the long run such institutions dotted all over India would be a triumph of Hinduism and would be proof of Hindu earnestness about cow, that is, cattle protection and it would provide decent employment for thousands of men including educated men; for both dairy and tannery work require expert scientific knowledge. Not Denmark but India should be a model State for the finest dairy experiments and India should not to her shame have to export nine crore rupees worth of dead cattle hide annually and for her own consumption use slaughtered cattle hide. If such a state of things is a shame for India it is a greater shame for Hindus. I wish that all the Goshala Committees will take to heart the remarks I made in reply to the Giridih address and make their Goshalas into ideal dairies and tanneries and a refuge for all worn out and maimed cattle.

### Who should spin?

A third interesting reference in the Giridih address was to non-spinning by its labourers. Giridih has several mica mines. It has therefore many labourers working in those mines. These labourers get naturally a higher wage than they can possibly get from spinning and they are therefore not spinning at all. As a matter of fact there need have been no such apologetic reference as was made in the address. The readers of *Young India* know that I have never suggested that those who are more lucratively employed should give up their lucrative employment and prefer handspinning. I have said repeatedly that those only are expected and should be induced to spin who have no other paying employment and that too only during the hours of unemployment. The whole theory of handspinning is based upon the assumption that there are millions of men and women in this land who are idle for at least four months in the year for want of some employment. There are only therefore two classes of people who are expected to spin, those who would spin for hire, whom I have already mentioned, and the thinking part of India who should spin for sacrifice by way of example and in order to cheapen Khaddar. But whilst I could understand labourers not spinning, I could not understand their not wearing Khaddar. There was no excuse for a single person in that vast audience not to wear Khaddar. Giridih can produce and manufacture its own yarn and weave its own Khaddar without any difficulty, and in any case can get all its supply of Khaddar ready-made and comparatively cheap from the other parts of Bihar. But I notice that whilst these addresses admit shortcomings about Khaddar and the Charkha, they are mentioned, I fear, not as an earnest of reform in the immediate future but by way of consolation for continuing the same state of things. A confession is good only when it is intended to be followed up by a retracing; it is worse than useless when it is used to harden oneself against a change. I hope that the confessions made in the many addresses presented to me will be precursors of a definite change.

### National Schools

From Giridih we came to Madhupur. There I was called upon to perform the opening ceremony of its new elegant-looking little Town Hall. In performing the opening ceremony and in congratulating the Municipi-

pality on possessing its own abode I expressed the hope that the Municipality would make Madhupur a beauty-spot worthy of the climate and natural surroundings it possessed. The difficulties in the way of improving big cities like Calcutta and Bombay were very great. But in little places like Madhupur, if Municipalities had a very small income they had also no difficulty to face in keeping their areas spotlessly clean and free from diseases. I visited too the national school which Madhupur boasts. The head-master in the address which he read drew a gloomy picture of the prospects before him,—decreasing attendance and decreasing pecuniary support from the people. He mentioned also that some parents withdrew their boys because handspinning was compulsory. The address asked me to point the way out of the difficulties mentioned. I replied that if the teachers believed in their mission they need not be disappointed. Ups and downs in all new institutions were their natural lot. Their difficulties therefore were the teachers' testing time. Those convictions only could be described as stable which would stand the stress of storms. The teachers should therefore count no sacrifice too great if they believed that they had a message to deliver to their surroundings through their schools. They would then remain unconcerned whether there was only one boy or there were one hundred in the school, provided it was perfectly clear to them that they had done their best for the school and that it was not their shortcomings that estranged the parents and the boys but that the very principle for which they stood was repugnant to them. If they had faith in handspinning they would not mind the parents withdrawing their children from the school. If they had retained spinning only because it was a fashion, or because the Congress resolution required it, and not because they had faith in it, they need not hesitate then to do away with spinning and retain the goodwill of the people. Time has arrived when national teachers have to make a definite choice for themselves, because, when new changes are made there are always some people who resent one or all of them. It is only the teacher with faith in himself and his cause who could resist opposition to the changes which he considers to be necessary and which alone perhaps justify the existence of his new enterprise.

### Miscellaneous

From Madhupur we proceeded to the Purnea District, which meant a new surrounding and a new country. For, Purnea District is on the northern bank of the Ganges, and it lies to the north-east. All that district is really the Himalayan *terai*. The climate and the people are almost like those of Champaran. We crossed from Sakrigali Ghat to Maniari Ghat, a voyage of about two hours duration. We reached Maniari early in the morning. The people of this place presented a purse for the Deshabandhu Memorial. We went from Maniari by train to Katihar junction where there were the usual public meetings. The next day we went to Kishanganj where also there were the usual meetings and a purse. Kishanganj contains a large Marwadi population. They had made a good collection. A deputation came to me complaining that although they were ready and willing to wear Khaddar they could not get any in Kishanganj. They said that the whole of the cloth trade was in the hands of the Marwadi merchants who sold only foreign cloth,

because, the deputation said, the Marwadi merchants told them it paid them best. I told the deputation, however, that whilst I would gladly speak to the Marwadi friends, their excuse was really inadmissible, because if there was a large demand for Khaddar in Kishanganj they could open a cooperative store themselves. It was no use blaming the Marwadi merchants who were after all in Kishanganj for their business. It was for those like the deputation who believed in Khaddar to set the fashion, go to some trouble in stocking it, and then induce Marwadi friends to take it up also. This, however, I saw, they were not prepared to do. I told them too that if they guaranteed a minimum sale I would undertake to persuade Rajendra Babu to open a Khaddar depot in Kishanganj. This they were not prepared to risk. I spoke to the leading Marwadi merchants who told me that as a matter of fact for some time some Marwadis did have some Khaddar in their stores, but there was no great demand for it. And they admitted that there was no special effort made by the Marwadi merchants to push Khaddar before the public.

### Confusion

From Kishanganj we went to Araria, and from Araria to Forbesgunj, the north-eastern extreme point of Bihar near which commences the Nepal border, and from where I was told on a clear day one could see the magnificent snowy range of the Himalayas. Before we reached Forbesgunj I was inclined to congratulate Rajendra Babu and his band of workers upon the excellent control they had obtained upon the people in that, unlike as on previous occasions, the vast crowds of people were orderly, noiseless and exercised exemplary self-restraint by refraining from besieging me to touch my feet. I was, however, disillusioned at Forbesgunj; because the order broke down there. The crowd was immense. The meeting had to take place under the fierce sun. The people had been waiting since morning without any shade overhead. The noise and the din were terrible. It was impossible for me to get any quiet; and volunteers were unable to restrain the vast crowd from coming to touch me. The fact is that not much work had been done there before. The volunteers were new to the task. The poor fellows tried their best. Nobody was to blame. It was a new situation and a new experience for them. And the people were not to be deprived of what they must have considered to be the only opportunity of coming near me and touching me. It is an affectionate superstition; but it is also most embarrassing for me. I spoke to them about Khaddar, about the spinning wheel, about temperance, gambling and the like; but I am afraid that it was all like foreign speech to them. Mysterious are the ways of God. Tens of thousands of people irresistibly drawn to some one or to some thing of whom or which they had but the vaguest idea. I do not know whether they profited by coming to see me, a perfectly strange being to them. I do not know whether it was worthwhile my going to Forbesgunj. Perhaps it is as well that we do not know the results of all we do, if only we do things for the service of God and humanity and do nothing which we know to be wrong.

### Conclusion

From Forbesgunj we proceeded to Vishanpur which is about 25 miles from Purnea. It is a rough motor



ride because there is no proper metalled road. There was a tremendous gathering in this village and I was surprised to see so much public spirit in a place so remote from the railway line. The people presented a good prize for the Memorial. A novel feature of this meeting was that a permanent platform was built for the meeting. It was nearly fifteen feet high. It is brick-built. Underneath is a Khaddar Store. The whole conception combines beauty with use. The most pleasing function in this village was a nicely built library and reading room which I had the privilege of opening. There is a large open enclosure surrounding the library building provided with marble benches and the library itself is a memorial to the deceased wife of Chandhry Lalchand. That in a place like Vishanpur such an up-to-date memorial should have been thought of shows a great advance in political education of the right sort. From Vishanpur we came back to Purnea which is the headquarters of the District where practically the Bihar tour was concluded with the usual functions. The tour really concluded at Hajipur to which I was attracted four years ago by the youthful zeal of a band of workers through whose energy a national school was established. Purnea District has supplied over-seventeen thousand rupees, a part of which is earmarked for the Bihar (National) Vidyapith. The rest about fifteen thousand is for the Doshabandhu Memorial Fund. Throughout the Bihar tour including this sum the total collection for the Memorial amounted to about 50,000 rupees.

It is not without sorrow that I am leaving the simple and good people of Bihar. I hope, if all goes well, to finish the balance of the Bihar tour early next year but I expect that the Biharees will show much further progress in Khaddar and Charkha during the intervening months. The whole of the stock of beautiful Khaddar now lying in its Khaddar stores should be cleared. There must be many members of the A. I. S. A. enrolled and centres where poor people are awaiting volunteers should be organised for spinning. The drink evil should be brought under control.

M. K. G.

### To Spinners

The Secretary A. I. S. A. writes:—

Yarns from the 4 classes A B C D as well as money from Associates are coming in. C & D denote Congress and Donation respectively. The yarns, which are not properly spun, or which are not properly labeled as to their class and which are sent under no special class, are regarded as donations.

The A & B class members are requested to mention clearly whether they wish to be enrolled as Congress members also.

Yarns and money will shortly be acknowledged.

All correspondence regarding yarn or money contributions should be addressed to

"The Technical Department, A. I. S. A.

Sabarnuti".

Persons wishing to have forms of application or copies of constitution should write to

Sgt. Jawaharlal Nehru

Secy. A. I. S. A.

107 Hewett Road, Allahabad

### A Dilemma

A friend finds himself in a dilemma. He is serving in an Indian concern that requires his services from 8 a. m. to 9 p. m., I suppose with a break for dinner. But the employers do not prescribe the kind or the quality of the material of which his dress should be made. And by choice therefore he wears Khaddar. A foreign firm, however, offers him double the salary with fewer hours of service but will not have his dress made of Khaddar. Now the difficulty which faces him is this: If he accepts the foreign service he cannot only improve his material position but get enough time for spinning daily in which he believes but has to deny himself Khaddar-dress which he loves. If he remains where he is he has to slave for 12 hours, pinch himself and get no time for spinning. What is he to do? I have little hesitation in giving my opinion. Apart from the question of Khaddar, for a self-respecting man the foreigner's tempting offer is totally unacceptable for the simple reason that it is coupled with an undue restraint upon one's liberty, especially when that restraint is against national interest and from the facts stated is due to prejudice against Khaddar. On merits too, I would any day prefer liberty to wear Khaddar although for want of time spinning may have to be sacrificed for the time being. If all were obliged to discard Khaddar spinning will have no value. The virtue of spinning is not absolute but relative. If the product of spinning is not marketable it would be a cruel mockery to call upon millions of semi-starved men and women to spin. The need of the time is therefore popularisation of Khaddar wear. Spinning is undoubtedly necessary. But when there is a choice between spinning and wearing Khaddar naturally the latter has the undisputed preference. Spinning is required from those who want to add to their slender resources and that too during spare hours and without payments from those who have time to spare for giving even a few moments' labour in that particular form to the nation. In the case in point the will to spin being there the time will certainly be found in due course. Probably the correspondent has to go by tram or train to his office. Let him take the *Zakki* with him and give the odd moments to it. There are many within my knowledge who are thus utilising their odd moments. I therefore hope that the correspondent will never, for any temptation, give up his Khaddar wear. I had hope that the prejudice against Khaddar had died down in the foreign mercantile firms. The European merchants in Calcutta to whom I had the privilege of talking showed no prejudice against Khaddar wear. I wish that influential European merchants who may see this paragraph will exert their influence to remove the prejudice reported by my correspondent. And it is high time for Indian firms to remodel their businesses so as to curtail the inordinately long hours for which their employees are detained. The world's experience shows that long hours do not mean more but actually less work. It simply requires a little courage and a little initiative to make the much needed reform voluntarily and generously—a reform that is otherwise bound to come in any case. But then when it comes under pressure it will have lost all its grace. Shorter hours for employees is a world movement which nobody can stop. Will not the Indian Chamber of Commerce or some such mercantile Association lead the way? M.K.G.

## Practical Vedanta

(By C. F. Andrews)

My own earlier instruction in Practical Vedanta came from a study of the works of Swami Ram Tirath. He was, if I may so call him, my teacher in this subject. One of his disciples asked me to write the preface to his collected works, called "In the words of Self-Realisation". While doing this, I was struck throughout by the practical way in which Swamiji treated his subject, and also by the spiritual strength in his daily life which the Vedanta doctrine gave him. He seemed to gain an inner power from it, which enabled him to go through all manner of hardships cheerfully and joyfully.

Swami Ram Tirath did another thing, which helped me very much indeed. For he related this doctrine of Practical Vedanta to the teaching of Jesus and showed me for the first time how truly Jesus Himself recognised the spirit of unity which underlies the teaching of Vedanta. This he exemplified, in quite a remarkable manner, by his discourse on what the Christians call, 'The Lord's Prayer'. In other ways, also, the Swami related his own teaching to that of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. It was a fundamental principle with him, that religions are not really different, but organically one; that it is the unity, underlying all religions, which is the greatest of all things to realise and practice,—just as it is essential for all true thinking to begin with the unity of God.

When I came to think out the whole subject I found that there are certain sides of Christian teaching which remarkably corroborated the teaching of Swami Ram Tirath. First of all, there was the doctrine of Unity, which Christ Himself taught in the famous words: "I and My Father are one." It should be noticed that, in the Greek Text of the New Testament, the word "One" is in the neuter, not in the masculine. Such a phrase corresponds with the Sanskrit words: "Tat Tvam Asi" 'Thou art that'. This oneness with the Father is really the fountain-head of all Christ's teachings. He emphasised it in a thousand ways. He also acted it out in practice. Compare, for instance, this passage: "Take no thought for the morrow. Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall He clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

This passage about the lilies of the field has reminded me more than anything else of Swami Ram Tirath's own life. For he took no thought for the morrow. He grew, in beauty of soul, like one of the lilies of the field. He was as happy as the birds of the air. Christ spoke also of a Holy Spirit, which should dwell in the hearts of all those who came to Him. It was, he said, His own inner spirit which should be their own inner spirit. This Holy Spirit was the divine light within the soul. Every true Christian believes in this and looks for the Holy Spirit's guidance in all the difficulties of life. Here, again, I find in this Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit within as the kindred teaching to that of the

Vedanta.—"Tat Tvam Asi"—"Thou art that". For, to the Christian, the Holy Spirit is God himself within the soul. The more I have thought over the likeness here to the teaching of Practical Vedanta, the more intimate I have found the connection between the Christian Teaching on the one hand and the Vedanta Teaching on the other.

There is a third practical way in which the follower of Christ learns to understand the Vedanta. For Christ has said again and again, that He Himself is divinely present in all who are poor and sick and in need of our help. He is the 'Daridra Narayan' within humanity.—"I was hungry" Christ says, "and ye gave me food to eat; I was thirsty and ye gave me water to drink; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and in prison and ye visited me; in as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye did it unto me."

Here again, in symbolic language, but in a practical form, I find the identity expressed between the Atma and the Paramatma, which is the ultimate principle of the Advaitam. There is also the direct motive to love and compassion and service, which carries forward the Vedanta ideal into the concrete world of reality.

A whole field of approximation between the best thoughts in the West and the deepest teaching of the East lies open for those who are ready to explore and use it for the fruitful service of mankind.

In the United Provinces, there is a large area of very fertile soil called the Doab. It forms the intervening country between the two great rivers of the Jamna and the Ganges before they meet at Prayag. This vast area depends for its perennial fertility upon the canals which have been cut for irrigation between the two rivers on either side. Similarly, the two great rivers of religious thought, which have their sources far apart in the West and East, are surely approximating today. Christian thought on the one hand, and Hindu Buddhist thought on the other, are drawing nearer and nearer to their true Prayag in the future. We ourselves in this generation can help forward that approximation by cutting cross-channels of inter-connection between them, which shall fertilise the Doab of the modern mind of man.

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