

1. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 21, 1938

You may settle down there if Vidya keeps well and you have good work. Father you should forget. Not to do so is to irritate the boil.¹

Ask Jeramdas to do it today.

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

*2. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*²

February 23, 1938

I have read the Governor-General's statement³ with the respect and attention it deserves. I had hoped that it would give some satisfaction, as was given at least to me and, if I may say so, a large number of Congressmen when he made a pronouncement upon the Congress demand for certain assurances as a condition precedent to the acceptance of ministerial responsibility by Congress members of the provincial Legislatures. It reads like a special pleading unworthy of a personage possessing unheard-of powers.

No one has questioned the propriety of examining the cases of prisoners to be discharged; but what I have questioned, and the Congress most emphatically questions, is the propriety of such examination by provincial Governors in provinces said to be enjoying complete provincial autonomy. That duty and the right of examination belong solely to responsible Ministers as I understand the Government of India Act and the convention in responsibly governed Colonies. The Governors' duty and right are to advise their Ministers on the question of broad policy and warn them of danger in their exercise of certain powers, but having done so to leave their Ministers free to exercise their unfettered judgment. If such were not the case, the responsibility would become a perfectly meaningless term, and the Ministers responsible to their electors would have as their share

¹ The addressee had consulted Gandhiji in connection with his stay at Nainital and his relations with his father.

² This appeared under the title "How Crisis Can Be Avoided".

³ Dated February 22

nothing but odium and disgrace, if their responsibility had to be shared with Governors in the daily administration of affairs by law entrusted to them. It is hardly graceful for His Excellency to quote against the poor Ministers their non-exercise of their undoubted powers to prevent Governors from examining individual cases. The Congress Resolution¹ describes their forbearance as exemplary patience. I would venture to add that probably it was also the inexperience of the Ministers who were totally new to their task. I am afraid, therefore, that unless this crucial question is decided in favour of the Ministers, it will be difficult for them to shoulder the grave responsibility that the Congress has permitted them to take over.

I am glad that His Excellency has drawn public attention to the method I adopted in Bengal. He might have noted also the difference between Bengal on the one hand and the U.P. and Bihar on the other. In Bengal I was dealing with a Government which was not bound by the Congress manifesto in any shape or form. The Ministers there rightly or wrongly would not listen to a wholesale discharge of convicted prisoners. I was treading upon very delicate ground in pursuance of my promise to the prisoners. My motive was purely humanitarian, and the only weapon that I had at my disposal was an appeal to the human in the Bengal Ministers. And I am glad to be able to testify that I was not speaking to hearts of stone. The situation in the U. P. and Bihar is totally different. The Ministers there are bound by the manifesto which gave them victory at the polls. They had not only examined the cases of all prisoners whose release they were seeking but, being fully aware of their responsibility for the due preservation of peace in their provinces, had personally secured assurances from the prisoners in question that they no longer believed in the cult of violence.

One thing in His Excellency's statement gives me hope that the impending crisis might be prevented. He has still left the door open for negotiations between the Governors and the Ministers. I recognize that the notices were sudden, because in the nature of things they had to be so.² All the parties have now had ample time for considering the

¹ *Vide* "Resolution on Ministerial Resignations", 18-2-1938

² The Viceregal statement read: "In the case of Bihar the demand was received by the Governor at 1 p. m. and cabled for action by the Chief Secretary by 4 p. m. the same day. In the case of the United Provinces the time limit set for compliance was also brief to a degree."

situation.

In my opinion the crisis can be avoided if the Governors are left free to give an assurance that their examination of cases was not intended to be usurpation of the powers of the Ministers, and that since they had armed themselves with assurances from prisoners they were free to release them on their own responsibility. And I hope that the Working Committee will leave the Ministers free, if they are summoned by the Governors; to judge for themselves whether they are satisfied by the assurances they may receive.

One thing I must say in connection with the exercise by His Excellency of his powers under Section 126 (5) in the light of his argument justifying the use of sub-section 5 of Section 126. I have read the whole of it. It is entitled "Control of the Federation over Provinces in Certain Cases". Unless the sub-sections have no connection with one another and they are to be read independently of one another, my reading is that in the present case the exercise of powers under sub-section 5 of Section 126 is a manifest misapplication. But here I am treading on dangerous ground. Let lawyers decide the point. My purpose in making this long statement is to assist a peaceful solution of the crisis that has suddenly appeared.

Harijan, 26-2-1938, and *The Hindu*, 24-2-1938

3. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your intention was not honest, nor was it correct. All the same, it is good that you did not come, since you also needed sleep.

Send the following telegram to Gosibehn.

"Health good. Hope Jalbhai makes steady progress. Love. Bapu."¹

Who sent the wire to A. P. saying that I had not seen the statement? But it does not matter now.

The rest when you come in the evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹The text of the telegram is in English.

[PS.]

Suslhila brought a car when I had walked a little distance beyond the level crossing, and I got in.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11591

4. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA, SEGAON,
February 24, 1938

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I retain the same view that I held in 1920 as to volunteers. You know that at Ahmedabad the Congress had passed a resolution¹ embodying a pledge for volunteers and certain instructions to be followed by them. Experience has proved for me the correctness of the position I then took. It is true that there has not been the response that I wanted. The causes of the inadequacy of response I need not go into at the present moment. Our volunteers for me are, and should be, our non-violent army, irresistible and invincible. Therefore I would expect every adult person to undergo a practical volunteer training for at least three months. I would expect them to give at least one month every year to practical service. Now that in seven provinces the Congress runs the Government the thing should be easy. The first thing, therefore, is to prepare a textbook, giving in minute detail the course of instructions to be imparted to candidate volunteers and then begin the work of instruction not in cities but in villages. I would concentrate all effort on villiages. Whilst I note the marvellous mass awakening that has taken place, I am painfully conscious of the fact that a far greater and a far more solid awakening has to take place before we can confidently say that swaraj is ours for the asking. Any extraneous event may put power into our hands. I would not call that swaraj of the people.

If what I have said appeals to your head and to your heart, you should show this letter to Jawaharlal and if he approves, and only if he approves, you should take the next step. I say this with deliberation. I do not want to take a new step in life of a political nature unless I can secure his approval and co-operation. Secondly, there is not that meeting of our hearts which is necessary for me to give guidance. You

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedaad-I", 28-12-1921

know the reason why. I know that there is no such barrier between you and Jawaharlal. Therefore even though I may say something which appeals to your head and heart, in my opinion I should have Jawaharlal's hearty endorsement before you take any step on the strength of what I say.

I hope you are now keeping perfect health.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, between pp. 272 and 273

5. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 24, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I thank you for your letter. I have read your letter to Jawaharlal also. I observe that both the letters invite, not written replies but a personal discussion. I do not know whether it will take place in the first instance between you and Jawaharlal or, now that Subhas Bose succeeds him, between you and the latter. If you desire that before this there should be a talk between you and me, I would be delighted to see you in Segaoon any time which is convenient to you before the 10th of March after which, if health permits, I might have to go to Bengal. So far as I am concerned, just as on the Hindu- Muslim question I was guided by Dr. Ansari, now that he is no more in our midst, I have accepted Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as my guide. My suggestion, therefore, to you is that conversation should be opened in the first instance as between you and Maulana Saheb. But in every case regard me as at your disposal.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

¹ For the addressee's reply, *vide* "Letter From M. A. Jinnah", 3-3-1938

6. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 25, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I had your letter. Do stay there if you can remain peaceful. You have my permission to come over. Saraswatibehn is very keen that you should stay on for three months. You should definitely stay on if your health can really improve. I am likely to go that side in April. I have talked to Devdas about your music. He will get in touch with you. When you return you can surely come *via* Ahmedabad. I have already written¹ to you that I had a long chat with Shakaribehn. The whole of last night I dreamt about you. With great impatience and restlessness you said: 'Now please do get me married.' You even showed me the man. I did not know him, nor his name. You did not want to act against my wish but your insistence was tremendous. How is that?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9989. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

7. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,

February 27, 1938

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I opened at Haripura the conversation about Hindu-Muslim unity. You were to have talked to me about it the next day if we could meet again. Unfortunately, I was unable to spare the time. I would like you, if you will, to put down your thoughts in writing and let me hear from you.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ On February 16; *vide* "Letter to Sharda C. Shah", 16-2-1938

8. TELEGRAM TO SHAM LAL

[On or before *March 4, 1938*]¹

PLEASE THANK AND CONGRATULATE THE PRISONERS ON THEIR DECISION IN RESPONSE TO MY APPEAL². I SHALL LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED ON THEIR BEHALF.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-3-1938

9. INTERVIEW TO REPRESENTATIVES OF SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY³

[*March 4, 1938*]⁴

Three representatives of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company had an interview with Gandhiji at Segaon.... They seemed to be worried by the following among a number of things:

(1) The discrimination clauses.⁵ They cited from Gandhiji's article in *Young India* entitled "The Giant and the Dwarf"⁶ the following statements:

"To talk of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf? . . ." And again: "In almost every walk of life the Englishman by reason of his belonging to the ruling class occupies a privileged position.... The cottage industries of India had to perish in order that Lancashire might flourish. The Indian shipping had to perish, so that British shipping might flourish."

Is the shipping not to revive and rise to its full height in a free India?

(2) What are Indian or swadeshi companies? It has become a fashion nowadays to bamboozle the unwary public by adding "(India) Limited" to full-blooded British concerns. Lever Brothers "(India) Limited" have their factories here now. They claim to produce swadeshi soap, and have already ruined several large and small soap factories in Bengal. Then there is the Imperial Chemicals (India) Ltd. which has received valuable concessions. This is dumping foreign *industries* instead of foreign

¹ The report is date-lined "New Delhi, March 4," 1938.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Prisoners' Relief Society, Lahore", 11-1-1938 "Statement to the Press", 14-1-1938, and letter to the addressee, "Leter to Sham Lal", 20-2-1938

³ This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Swadeshi Industries and Discrimination".

⁴ According to *Gandhi—1915—1948: A Detailed Chronology*, Shantikumar Morarjee and Gaganvihari Mehta met Gandhiji at Segaon on this date.

⁵ In the new constitution under the Government of India Act of 1935

⁶ *Vide* "The Giant and the Dwarf"

goods on us!

(3) Then there are companies with Indian Directorate with British Managing Agents who direct the Directorate. Would you call a company with a large percentage of Indian capital and a large number of Indian Directors on the Board, but with a non-Indian Managing Director or non-Indian firm as Managing Agents, a swadeshi concern?

Gandhiji dealt with these points fairly exhaustively in his reply which may be summarized below in his own words:

(1) On this point I am glad you have reminded me of my article written in 1931. I still hold the same views, and have no doubt that a free India will have the right to discriminate—if that word must be used—against foreign interests, wherever Indian interests need it.

(2) As regards the definition of a swadeshi company I would say that only those concerns can be regarded as swadeshi whose control, direction and management either by a Managing Director or by Managing Agents are in Indian hands. I should have no objection to the use of foreign capital, or to the employment of foreign talent, when such are not available in India, or when we need them, but only on condition that such capital and such talents are exclusively under the control, direction and management of Indians and are used in the interests of India.

But the use of foreign capital or talent is one thing, and the dumping of foreign industrial concerns is totally another thing. The concerns you have named cannot in the remotest sense of the term be called swadeshi. Rather than countenance these ventures, I would prefer the development of the industries in question to be delayed by a few years in order to permit national capital and enterprise to grow up and build such industries in future under the actual control, direction and management of Indians themselves.

(3) Answer to this is contained in my answer on the second point.

Harijan, 26-3-1938

10. TALK WITH A FRIEND¹

[Before *March 5, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] The States resolution² is a call to the States people not to go to sleep but to start work in right earnest. The Congress is deeply concerned about the welfare of Indian States, as the Congress resolution³ on the Federation should clearly show. We want the States people to carry on ceaseless work in the States, but not in the name of the Congress. The use of the name of the Congress may expose the Congress to insult. If insult could result in good to the States people, I would court it. But it is far from being so. The Congress cannot in the nature of things step into each and every Indian State and protect those who agitate there. It is better able to protect them by not allowing them to use its name. If the States people have begun to understand and respect the Congress it is a good thing, but then let them work with the moral support of the Congress but avoid the Congress name. Whenever the Congress can effectively help the States people it would do so not by actively meddling with their affairs but by acting as an intermediary. Co-operation from within the States is an impossible proposition, and therefore I have been deliberately advising the States people to refrain from having Congress Committees within the States. Some say: 'We would end the States.' Now this cry does neither these friends nor the Indian States any harm. But it would harm them if they were actively interesting themselves in States affairs and trying to work there in the Congress name. The prestige of the Congress would suffer and not gain by the use of the Congress name. Mysore is a case in point. It had *a bona fide* Congress organization but it could not prevent the Congress flag from being insulted.

"But," said the friend from the States, "all these things have happened in British India?"

¹ Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

² Passed at the Congress session at Haripura

³ Which *inter alia* read: "The Indian States participating in the Federation should approximate to the Provinces in the establishment of representative institutions and responsible government, civil liberties and method of election to the Federal Houses. Otherwise the Federation as it is now contemplated will, instead of building up Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the States in internal and external conflicts."

They have, and the Congress has always stood up to the insult. That is because in British India we can adopt civil disobedience for any good cause, but in the States it is impossible. The Congress Committees will have always to be at the mercy of the States and would be in no better case than, for instance, a Committee in Afghanistan, which would entirely exist on the mercy of the Government of Afghanistan. But of course this is my personal view and interpretation.

When I came to India, I had an offer from three Indian States to settle and carry on my work from there. I had to decline the offer.

But we do not ask for active help from the Congress. We want to organize under the aegis of the Congress. The onus of helping us would be upon the Congress, but we do not ask for the help.

There it is, whether you ask for it or not, the onus would be upon the Congress, and it is not able to discharge it. Without being able to render any active support, the aegis of the Congress would be a superfluous affair. A big organization like the Congress cannot allow itself to be stultified. This is all as plain as a pikestaff to me. I do not know how the States people fail to understand this. The best help that the Congress can render today is to destroy the delusion that it can actively help the Indian States. That will automatically mean that the States people must learn to rely on themselves for all internal reforms.

I understand this very well. But look at the resolution as finally passed. The new rider that has been added is absurd. We are allowed to have Committees in States but they will be allowed to do nothing. The position is anomalous.

It is, I am afraid. It was a concession to the States people, but a useless concession in terms of my interpretation.

Then, what shall be our position? Shall we stop enrolling Congress members and begin to organize a separate national organization which will join the Congress under the present restrictions?

The real job is to build up your own organization. But you may continue to be members of the Congress, attend it and keep in touch with it. But your real work will lie in the States. The resolution is permissive. You need not set up a Congress Committee in the States. But my advice is of no value. You must seek authoritative instructions from the Working Committee

Harijan, 5-3-1938

11. TELEGRAM TO MRS. GEORGE JOSEPH

[On or after *March 5, 1938*]¹

STAGGERING NEWS. WANT YOU TO BE BRAVE AND TRUST
GOD'S LOVE IN EVERYTHING. SEND FULL PARTICULARS. LOVE
FROM US ALL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarclal

12. DISCUSSION WITH SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

*March 6, [1938]*²

SUBHAS BOSE: Bapu, may I ask you a question? What is the future programme of the Board?³

[GANDHI:] The most immediate piece of work before the Board is the preparation of textbooks for teachers.

Next, the Board must approach the different Congress ministers and chalk out the plan of work for each province, with due consideration for the present limitations and capacity of work.

Thirdly, the Board must itself conduct an experimental centre to test the syllabus it has drawn up, and must revise its own recommendations at every step in the light of the experience thus gained.

Fourthly, the Board must organize and conduct as many training schools as possible. Every training school serves a double purpose. It may not only train future teachers, but every training school also means a demonstration school of basic education.

SUBHAS BOSE: What about the expenses of the Board?

[G.] We shall have to beg for it. I do not think it right to expect any financial contributions from the Congress governments, because that would provide an opportunity for the criticisms of the opposition party.

SUBHAS BOSE: Bapu, this is as regards the problem of rural basic education. What is your suggestion as regards the problem of basic education in urban areas?

¹ The addressee's telegram to Mahadev Desai, to which this telegram is a reply, is dated March 5, 1938. It read "Joseph sinking. Inform Bapu."

² The source has these notes placed along with the letters of 1938.

³ All-India Education Board

Some municipalities, e. g., the municipalities of Calcutta and Bombay, are doing some work in this direction and would like to extend their work in progressive primary education. What is your suggestion as regards the problem of primary education in cities?

[G.] According to my educational philosophy, there is no fundamental difference between the basic education in a rural and an urban area. The aim in both is the same—the development of the intelligence through a vocation. The system of training that is evolved for rural areas will also be applicable to urban areas.

I know from personal experience that the products of primary education in urban areas are good-for-nothing, but, for the present, I do not wish to divide the energies of the Board. If it succeeds in solving the problem of rural education, the other problem will also be solved. If ten years of work are devoted to rural education, you may consider that the whole problem of primary education whether rural or urban has been grappled with.

Subhas Bose next asked whether a representative of a city municipality with some experience of municipal education could not be a member of the Board, so that he could attempt, if he liked, to adapt the findings of the A. I. E. B. for the purpose of urban basic education.

[G.] Certainly. The Board will be a representative body. All the members of the Board are representatives of the city. Where shall I find real villagers as members?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

13. TELEGRAM TO GLADYS OWEN

[*March 7, 1938*]¹

GLADYS OWEN
VINONA BUNGALOW
SHOLAPUR

COME ANY DAY BEFORE TWELFTH. LOVE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 194

¹The draft of the telegram was enclosed with the note to Jamnalal Bajaj, dated March 7, 1938; *vide* the following item.

14. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

March 7, 1938

Subhas Babu can come tomorrow at or any time after 1 o'clock as it suits him. Despatch the enclosed telegram¹, the cost to be paid by Mahadev.

BAPU²

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 194

15. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 7, 1938

CHI, MAHADEV,

I am sending all the matter with this. I hope there will be no difficulty in deciphering my revisions. I shall give some time to Manilal. In any case, the time given by you I consider as given by me.

Gole's letter was rather amusing. Do you know that Bhansali has resumed eating? Vijava has had several letters from Nanavati. He is very much hurt. He may perhaps come some time next week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11592

16. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,

March 8, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I thank you for your letter³. I hope you have completely got over your indisposition.

Your letter revives painful memories. I will not discuss at this stage, at any rate, the various debatable points raised in your letter.

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² This is in the Gujarati script.

³ *Vide* "Letter From M. A. Jinnah", 3-3-1938

Suffice it to say that I am at your disposal. If you cannot come to Segaon and my health permits, I will gladly go to Bombay to meet you when you are there. At present I have to go to Bengal and then for a while to Orissa. This will take me through the whole of this month. The earliest, therefore, that we can meet will be in April.

Two questions arising from your letter demand a reply. You ask me whether I have now seen the light. Much to my regret I have to say “no”. If I had, I would proclaim the news from the housetops. But that limitation does not debar me from taking advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty.

You expect me to be able to speak on behalf of ‘the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country’. I am afraid I cannot fulfil the test. I cannot represent either the Congress or the Hindus in the sense you mean. But I would exert to the utmost all the moral influence I could have with them in order to secure an honourable settlement.¹

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

17. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

March 8, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I intended writing to you earlier but could not. You must stay cheerfully in any place where you have got to stay. That is the meaning of a fusion of *shreya*, what is good, and *preya*, what is pleasant. You have the power of attaining such a fusion. Develop it still further. Now you must not come unless Saraswatidevi permits you or when you fear that your health is likely to suffer. Did you do anything about the sitar [lessons]?

I am bound to think about your marriage. Should I not worry about you since you have passed the worry on to me? How can it be that neither you nor I shall worry? And you do not have to worry at all. I mentioned the thing only in jest and to prove that I was not forgetting you.

¹The addressee in his reply dated March 17, 1938, agreed to meet Gandhiji in Bombay some time in April.

You were to tell me about your talk with Hakimji. Why have you not written about it? Do not be lax about your work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9990. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

18. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAIAN GADODIA

March 8, 1938

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

I have your letter. I shall recall Sharda only when you two relieve her. I certainly have faith in nature cure but it is not always that we come by the proper cures. I have not yet full faith in Hakimji's knowledge. Of course, I am keeping well.

How is the dairy going on?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5626

19. TALK WITH A PACIFIST¹

[Before March 12, 1938]

[GANDHI:] For non-violence to permeate as we should have a living faith in God. Non-violence comes to us through doing good continually without the slightest expectation of return. It simply spends itself and it is its own reward, and done in that spirit it is done not merely for friends but certainly for adversaries. That is the indispensable lesson in non-violence. It was thrown my way by God in South Africa in an atmosphere which was as adverse as it well could be. I was in a country where I knew no European or Indian. I had gone there to make a career as a lawyer. But I succeeded in learning the eternal law of suffering as the only remedy for undoing wrong and injustice. It means positively the law of non-violence. You have to be prepared to suffer cheerfully at the hands of all and sundry, and you will wish ill to no one, not even to those who may have wronged you.

Just now a good many people are talking of world peace,

¹This is reproduced from Mabadev Desai's "Notes".

promoting peace societies and passing resolutions. This is good as far as it goes. But it may not be non-violence. An army of non-violence exposes itself to all the risks that an army of violence does. Only the latter expects to retaliate even when it is not the aggressor. An army of non-violence runs risks without the wish to retaliate.

[THE PACIFIST:] But the war spirit is creeping slowly over us. How are we to combat it?

I know how difficult it is for you to combat it in England. You have to approach the problem with faith and determination even though you may be very few. I would recommend the study of Richard Gregg's book¹ on the practice of non-violence. A true pacifist refuses to use the fruit of arms—peace and order. So long as we eat a single grain of wheat grown under the protection of arms we participate in violence. When one realizes this one has to be an exile in one's own country and a rebel. But everything has to be done according to the measure of one's strength. A few people with the courage of their convictions can become perfect nuisances to the whole State. How far it is possible to reduce the whole thing to practice is for each individual to judge.

Our English movement for peace is growing. But shall we simply go on enrolling more and more members?

I am not enamoured of numbers. A peace army does not rely upon numbers unless they understand the implications of non-violence. I would, therefore, concentrate on a few becoming saturated with the spirit of non-violence and disciplining themselves for the utmost suffering.

How exactly to act in particular situations is a matter of waiting on God. The answer comes straight in response to prayer from the heart. Such prayer carries with it the anguish of the soul.

Harijan, 12-3-1938

20. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 13, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I have practically stopped writing these days. I sometimes write a couple of lines to someone like you. I have since long been meaning

¹ *The Power of Non-violence*

to write to you and I satisfy that desire today. As regards A. S., you have swung from one extreme to the other. This is violence. I can understand your unwillingness to keep up your relations with her. But why should it be that you cannot go to any place where she is? Why this cowardice? I do not see in her the faults that you see. She gives me no trouble. She has a number of good qualities. How can I send her away? When asked, Ramachandran told me that he could not see any defect in her. You should cultivate patience and generosity. She cannot ask me anything about you. Nor do I tell her anything. That does not mean that she doesn't keep thinking of you. Saraswati also seems to live in fear. Trust me, be calm and give up your unnaturalness. Do come to Orissa.

Prabha cannot go there. I will explain when we meet. The rest you will hear from Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7333. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

21. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

SEGAON,

March 13, 1938

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I hope you do not expect the customary words of condolence from me. Hira has departed after repaying her debt and receiving her due. What is there for grief in this? Your duty is clear. You should bring up the child and not harbour even the thought of marrying again. If you find this beyond your strength, do what is possible for you. Do not deceive yourself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9518. Also C.W. 434. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

22. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

March 14, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

Read this¹. I hardly think you can any longer refuse to release the prisoners. How are you? Going to Calcutta tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2068

23. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

March 14, 1938

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Here is what you want.² Return soon, bringing with you what is best for you and the country.

I shall send your official letter to Mahavir Prasad.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 928

¹ In his letter to Gandhiji Sham Lal had written: "I am glad to inform you that all the terrorists have lost faith in violence. I had a talk with them. It is not a pretence on their part. I would request you to write to the Madras Premier about Madras political prisoners confined in the Punjab jail. He should have no hesitation in releasing them at once."

² *Vide* the following item.

24. TESTIMONIAL TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 14, 1938

Professor Malkani had been teaching in the National College of the Gujarat National University. He is now in charge of the Delhi Industrial Home for the so-called untouchables of India. He is voyaging to travel in Europe for a time. Any assistance rendered to him by friends will be appreciated by the undersigned.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 929

25. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAL

March 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have added but little to your article. Is it all right? I had gone through yesterday's articles yesterday itself. I have made practically no changes this time in the writings.

We felt no tremors here. The reason may be that our floor is on level with the ground and the walls are of mud. However, such tremors are sometimes wholly local.

Blessings from
BAPU

P.S.

Pyarelal and others had felt the tremors.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11593

26. A DISCUSSION¹

[On or before *March 15, 1938*]²

Gandhiji was discussing with a friend and co-worker his reactions to the Haripura Congress. He said he would make these views known as early as possible for the information and benefit of those who would be responsible for the session in Mahakoshal.

The Congress is a striking testimony to the great organizing ability of the Sardar and his lieutenants as also his ability to command financial help from moneyed friends. But the scale cannot be, must not be, repeated. It is wrong to make lavish use of money even when it is plentiful. I am partly responsible for the use of electricity and motors and motor lorries. For Dev and Dastane's³ importunity had weakened me at Faizpur. Sardar's thoroughness showed me the glaring absurdity of the use of these things for a village Congress. They made the Congress camp look like a bit of Bombay instead of the multiplied village it should have looked and was intended to look like.

Classes were retained at Faizpur. At Haripura the classification was intensified. There were the leaders, ministers, delegates visitors and the villagers. The division was not horizontal but vertical. The Congress is our political Mecca. The annual function is not a *tamasha* or a fair, but a *Haj*, a pilgrimage, at which all distinctions as between rich and poor, learned and illiterate, city-dweller and villager disappear. Why should Working Committee members have more conveniences than others? Why should they have food other than the villagers? Should a villager eat different food and be differently housed when he becomes a member of the Working Committee? Or why should a delegate who happens to be a Minister have a much multiplied hut? It is a wholly different thing when one is ill or is used to special food. Such persons should make their own arrangements or have them made by the Reception Committee by previous appointment. Indeed those who have frail bodies should abstain from attendance, unless their presence is urgently required in the interest of the

¹ Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Haripura Notes-V", 19-3-1938. Apparently this discussion took place before Gandhiji left Segaon for Calcutta on March 15.

² *Ibid*

³ Vitthal V. Dastane

Congress. Vertical division of the camps into different classes sets a pernicious example to the vast number of villagers who attend the Con-gress. The Congress management has to go out of its way to show the villagers that before it there is no prince and no pauper and that all are equal. If these artificial differences disappear next year, much expense will be saved.

Electric lights are in no way necessary. Visitors should be expected to bring their own lanterns. The Reception Committee will confine itself to the lighting that may be required for the despatch of Congress work and for the safety of the camp. Much work must not be expected to be done after dark.

Motors and motor lorries are a nuisance, bad education for the villagers, disturbing of peace, a hindrance to the proper despatch of work, and conducive to the raising of dust. The distance of ten miles or less from a railway station must be negotiated on foot or in bullock-carts. None but pedestrian traffic should be permitted inside the camp.

The site selected for the Congress should be a solid square block as far as possible. This will ensure a compact camp avoiding long distance between one end of the camp and the other. The layout can be round the quadrangle where the open session is to take place.

There should be one common kitchen from where food should be served at stated prices per course, not to be eaten on the spot but to be taken to the place of residence of the diner.

If these precautions are not observed, the whole idea of villagers' Congress for their education and for establishing a living and national contact between the city-dweller and the villager is likely to be frustrated.

Harijan, 19-3-1938

27. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
March 16, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

We arrived in Calcutta today. Your work must be going on in full swing. Is your pain any better? What food do you take? What do you read? What about sitar?

I am quite well. There was much disturbance from the crowds on the way.

My address here is: Care Subhas Babu, Congress President, Woodburn Park, Calcutta.

We shall start from here on the 24th to go to Delang, Orissa, for [the convention of] the Gandhi Seva Sangh there. We shall have to stay there till the 31st. Pyarelal, Mahadev, Kanu and Sushila are with me.

One letter from you should reach me here and two or three at Delang.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9991. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

28. TALK WITH HARIJANS¹

CALCUTTA,
March 18, 1938

The Congress which is in a minority today must come to power tomorrow or the day after in Bengal, as its programme is so broad-based as to attract all groups to its fold.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-3-1938

¹ Following Gandhiji's appeal to join the Congress, some members of the Scheduled Castes had asked him how their political and economic interests could be safeguarded if they joined the Congress which was not in power in the Province.

29. DISCUSSION WITH KRISHAK PROJA PARTY MEMBERS¹

CALCUTTA,
March 19, 1938

In the course of the discussion the members of the Krishak Party are reported to have intimated to Mahatmaji their desire to see the political situation in Bengal changed and their readiness to work in co-operation with the Congress Party in the Legislature if the administration of the Province was run on purely national lines and on an economic basis.

Mahatma Gandhi wanted it to be realized that the main object of his visit to Bengal was the release of political prisoners and he would rather not be drawn into local politics. He, however, informed them that he intended returning to Calcutta by the 1st April next from Delang where he would have to attend the annual meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. He proposed to concentrate all his attention during his present trip to Calcutta on tackling the problem of the release of detenus and political prisoners. But on return from Delang he would be free to devote his time and energy to the political problems peculiar to Bengal to which his attention had already been drawn.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-3-1938

30. OUR FAILURE

[Before *March 22, 1938*]²

The communal riots in Allahabad—the headquarters of the Congress—and the necessity of summoning the assistance of the police and even the military show that the Congress has not yet become fit to substitute the British authority. It is best to face this naked truth, however unpleasant it may be.

The Congress claims to represent the whole of India, not merely those few who are on the Congress register. It should represent even those who are hostile to it and who will even crush it, if they could. Not until we make good that claim, shall we be in a position to

¹ Twenty members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and two members of the Legislative Council had about an hour's discussion with Gandhiji in the afternoon.

² From the reference to this article in "Talk with Co-workers", 22-3-1938

displace the British Government and function as an independent nation.

This proposition holds good whether we seek to displace British rule by violent action or non-violent.

Most probably by the time these lines appear in print, peace would have been established in Allahabad and the other parts. That, however, will not take us further in our examination of the fitness of the Congress as an organization ready to displace British authority in its entirety.

No Congressman will seriously doubt that the Congress is not at the present moment capable of delivering the goods if it was called upon to do so. If it was capable, it would not wait for the call. But every Congressman believes that the Congress is fast becoming such a body. The brilliant success at Haripura will be cited as the most conclusive proof of the fact.

The riots and certain other things I can mention should make us pause and ask ourselves whether the Congress is really growing from strength to strength. I must own that I have been guilty of laying that claim. Have I been overhasty in doing so?

It is my conviction that the phenomenal growth of the Congress is due to its 'acceptance and enforcement, however imperfect, of the policy of non-violence. Time has arrived to consider the nature of Congress non-violence. Is it non-violence of the weak and the helpless or of the strong and the powerful? If it is the former, it will never take us to our goal and, if long practised, may even render us for ever unfit for self-government. The weak and helpless are non-violent in action because they must be. But in reality they harbour violence in their breasts and simply await opportunity for its display. It is necessary for Congressmen individually and collectively to examine the quality of their non-violence. If it does not come out of real strength, it would be best and honest for the Congress to make such a declaration and make the necessary changes in its behaviour.

By this time, i. e., after seventeen years' practice of non-violence, the Congress should be able to put forth a non-violent army of volunteers numbering not a few thousands but lacs who would be equal to every occasion where the police and the military are required. Thus, instead of one brave Pashupatinath Gupta who died¹ in the

¹ Mahadev Desai, however, reported in Harijan, 2-4-1938, that Pashupatinath Gupta, though seriously stabbed, was making satisfactory progress.

attempt to secure peace, we should be able to produce hundreds. And a non-violent army acts unlike armed men, as well in times of peace as of disturbances. They would be constantly engaged in constructive activities that make riots impossible. Theirs will be the duty of seeking occasions for bringing warring communities together, carrying on peace propaganda, engaging in activities that would bring and keep them in touch with every single person, male and female, adult and child, in their parish or division. Such an army should be ready to cope with any emergency, and in order to still the frenzy of mobs, should risk their lives in numbers sufficient for the purpose. A few hundred, maybe a few thousand, such spotless deaths will once for all put an end to the riots. Surely a few hundred young men and women giving themselves deliberately to mob fury will be any day a cheap and braver method of dealing with such madness than the display and use of the police and the military.

It has been suggested that when we have our independence riots and the like will not occur. This seems to me to be an empty hope, if in the course of the struggle for freedom we do not understand and use the technique of non-violent action in every conceivable circumstance. To the extent that the Congress Ministers have been obliged to make use of the police and the military, to that extent, in my opinion, we must admit our failure. That the Ministers could not have done otherwise is unfortunately only too true. I should like every Congressman, I should like the Working Committee, to ask themselves why we have failed, if they think with me that we have.

Harijan, 26-3-1938

31. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

WOODBURN PARK, CALCUTTA,
[On or before March 22, 1938]¹

CHI. SHARDA,

In my stupidity I did not bring ink and now I have to write with pencil. I hope you will be able to read my handwriting.

Stay there without bothering yourself. You are not going to lose

¹ Gandhiji left for Delang on March 24, 1938. And since he refers to the day of his departure by the date and not as 'tomorrow' it could not have been written on March 23.

my company now. Are you willing ever to leave my protecting wing? Are you going to abandon me when you get married? Chimanlal has of course put you in my charge. Shakaribehn too handed you over to me at Haripura. Moreover, I am constantly on the move at present, hence you cannot [always] be near me. And I have no occasion to take you round with me.

I am writing to Brijkrishna and Devdas that you have received the books. I can understand your hesitation. It is good that you are able to have some music [lessons].

There is nothing very alarming in your having had [too many] motions. The greatest art about eating consists in eating only what one can digest. Hence even if some unwholesome food is taken it should not do much harm. I am doubtful about uncooked gram. But it would do no harm if taken in quantities you can digest. The same is true about berries.

Does Maulvi Saheb come there? I have not heard from him at all. I am going to Delang, Orissa, on the 24th. I shall be back here on the 1st of April. I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

In the absence of my . . .¹, do you use the same one daily?

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9976. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokha-wala

32. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,
March 22, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I stupidly did not bring the ink-pot and Kanu is not quite as thoughtful and solicitous as you. So I can only give you a pencil letter.

¹ One word is illegible.

The bath¹ has been most useful. That it might not have been with me but for your watchfulness was due to Kanu's thoughtlessness. He is still shaping.

I am really keeping extraordinarily well. I have hazarded an experiment for the love of a good man. That has disturbed the b. p. but I hope that it will come under control today. Sushila must describe the experiment if she will.

I am afraid the stay out of Segaon will be prolonged perhaps by a week. I must come back to C[alcutta] for the Working Committee. You must not feel disturbed. Resign yourself to God. When I can usefully take you with me you shall come. And of course you accompany me if I go away anywhere for months. I hope you are keeping well. How about salad greens?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6397. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9992

33. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

CALCUTTA,
March 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Either I write with a pencil or not at all. Kanu did not bring the ink-pot and I stupidly refrained. There is no fountain-pen by and there is no ordinary pen or ink in this household. This is a mere business letter, no time for more.

There is no likelihood of a vacancy in C. P. But what I suggest is that you may send in a general letter to the President and respective Premiers the names of those women who, in your opinion, are capable of holding responsible offices. There your function as President should end.

As to Delhi, Brijkrishna is worth his weight in gold, so far as honesty is concerned. But I discount his estimates of facts and events. But everything will be fixed up now that the Sardar and Shankerlal are there.

¹ In Bapu's Letters to Mira the addressee says: "A tin bath which used to be taken on journeys when no big bath was likely to be available for Bapu. To lie in hot water was part of the blood-pressure treatment."

My health is good. I have spoiled it a little by an experiment. I must describe it to you. As for my work here, I can report nothing conclusive.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3849, Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7005

34. TALK WITH CO-WORKERS I

[*March 22, 1938*]²

I could not help writing that article³. I want you to read it. I feel ashamed that our Ministers had to call to their aid the police and the military. I am ashamed that they had to use the language that they did in reply to the Opposition speeches. I feel as if the Congress had lost and the British had won. Why does our non-violence fail on such occasions? Is it the non-violence of the weak? Even the goondas should not move us from our faith and make us say: 'We will send them to the gallows or shoot them down if necessary.' They too are our countrymen. If they will kill us, we must allow them to do so. You cannot pit against organized violence the non-violence of the weak, but the non-violence which the bravest alone can exercise. . . .⁴ We have, you will say, been sufficiently non-violent. We were non-violent during the civil disobedience campaign, we received lathi blows and worse. My reply is this: We did, but not sufficiently. We could not get independence at the end of the Dandi March⁵, as ours was not the unadulterated non-violence of the bravest. We did take many a step forward as a result of the sufferings we went through, but there was lurking in us violence. That was why I had to make that statement⁶ in Patna in 1934, and I am sure that if I had not advised the calling off of the civil disobedience campaign, we should have been

¹ Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Need for Self-examination"

² According to Mahadev Desai the talk took place three days before the annual session of the Gandhi Seva Sangh which began on March 25.

³ Vide "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

⁴ Omission as in the source

⁵ In 1930

⁶ Vide "Statement to the Press", 2-4-1934

thoroughly demoralized. We have been moving, since then, further forward step by step. . . .¹ But the time for searching self-examination has come.

Harijan, 2-4-1938

35. FOREWORD²

CALCUTTA,
March 24, 1938

I have read Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy's collection of the sayings of the Prophet with much interest and profit. They are among the treasures of mankind, not merely Muslims.

I am a believer in the truth of all the great religions of the world. There will be no lasting peace on earth unless we learn not merely to tolerate but even to respect the other faiths as our own. A reverent study of the sayings of the different teachers of mankind is a step in the direction of such mutual respect!

M. K. GANDHI

The Sayings of Muhammad

36. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

[AS AT] SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 24, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

Many thanks for your note. As soon as I reach Segaon I shall see the first opportunity of waiting on you in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

¹ Omission as in the source

² To *The Sayings of Muhammad*

37. AN APPEAL¹

CALCUTTA,
March 24, 1938

I am sorry to have to interrupt the negotiations for the release of detenus and political prisoners as I must keep an appointment in Delang. I hope to return on April 1, and resume the negotiations. I would urge workers and the public not to hold demonstrations, meetings and the like while the negotiations are going on. I would also urge the prisoners and detenus to be patient and feel sure that I shall leave no stone unturned to redeem the promise I have made for bringing about the desired relief.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-3-1938

38. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BIRBOI,
March 25, 1938

AMTUL SALAAM
MAGANWADI, WARDHA
YOU CAN CERTAINLY GO BOMBAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 407

39. SPEECH AT VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION²

BIRBOI,
March 25, 1938

Can my voice reach where you are? If it does, please raise your hands. Can those standing over there hear me? (Many hands are raised.) Good. Now please be silent for a few minutes. I do not have

¹ Gandhiji issued the appeal before leaving Calcutta at 8 p.m. for Delang.

² Held under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh the Exhibition was declared open by Gandhiji at 8.15 a. m. after a prayer by Gopabandhu Chowdhary and flag-hoisting and the opening address by Vallabhbhai Patel. Some 50,000 people were present. The Hindi report has been collated with the version in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

the strength to speak to you at any great length. You know that in the whole of our country the land of Orissa is the dearest to me. As soon as I returned to India I began to hear of Orissa's poverty and famine. We raised an amount and sent over Thakkar Bapa in the capacity of a servant of this afflicted province and organized famine relief. I also realized that if I could serve Orissa somewhat I would by so doing serve India. Thus Orissa became for me a place of pilgrimage—not because the temple of Lord Jagannath was there—for it was not open to me, as it was not open to the Harijans—but because I thought of a novel way of touring the country for the sacred mission of the abolition of untouchability. I had heard that the so-called sanatanists were enraged at my mission of removing untouchability and would even try to frustrate it with violence. If they were really so minded, I said to myself, I should make their work easy by discarding the railway train and motor-car and trekking through the country. Moreover, people don't go on a pilgrimage in cars and trains. They walk to the sacred place, with the name of God on their lips. Meditating on Him; they proceed along their way, forgetful of the fitful fever of the world, and mindful only of offering their homage to the Lord—the homage of service. At least for me it is not possible to be so engrossed in meditation while on a rail journey. And if there was trouble in Puri because of the anger of the sanatanists, we could not flee from their wrath. It does not behove a satyagrahi to run away. We must face it. I could not do all this in a car or a railway train, and so I decided to perform the rest of the Harijan pilgrimage on foot.¹ The temple of Lord Jagannath has the reputation of being the most famous in India, for there all human distinctions are supposed to vanish, and all sorts of people, Brahmin and pariah, brush shoulders with one another vying for the *darshan* of the Lord and even eat His *prasad* out of one another's hands. But evidently it had outlived that reputation and the description had become a fiction, for the priests would not admit Harijans, but throw them out of the doors of the Lord of the World. I said to myself that so long as these distinctions of high and low endured before the very eyes of the Lord of the World, that Lord was not my Lord, that He was the Lord of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas who exploited his name and kept Harijans out, but certainly not the Lord of the World. My ambition of restoring its old reputation to the temple is yet unfulfilled, and you have to help me in fulfilling it. So

¹ In May 1934; vide "Statement to the Press", 8-5-1934

long as the doors of the Jagannath temple are closed to the Harijans, they are closed to me as well. Ever since my tour along with the local workers and Thakkar Bapa, my contact with the province has been very close.

The people of Orissa have the doubtful reputation of being opium addicts, even learned men not being free from the vice, as I found ten years ago. They are also indolent and lethargic. I know you will not mind my using this language, for you know the spirit in which it is being used. You know what great love I have for you. The people of Orissa are responsible for its poverty. Orissa is the land of poverty because of its opium, indolence and bigotry. The Exhibition gives me the hope that Orissa can rid itself of all these evils and be once again a land of happiness and plenty. After a round of the Exhibition the predominant thought in my mind is that if Oriyas can throw off their indolence they can get rid of poverty. The Exhibition is bound to be a revelation to the villagers attending it of the great capacities and potentialities of the province. All those who have come here should see the Exhibition not once but several times. When it was decided to hold the Exhibition in this place, no one had any idea that the Government might offer help. The workers' co-operation was taken for granted, for after all they are our own people. But the local Government is also ours. There is nothing surprising if they extended their co-operation. Yes, thanks certainly are due to them. The workers with the co-operation of the Government have been able to bring into being an exhibition which is well worth a close study by men and women, young and old. There are so many young people around who, if they chose to pick up a thing and make a study of it so as to learn how it was done, could earn their livelihood without great effort.

Man differs from the beast in several ways. As the late Madhusudan Das used to say, one of the distinctions is the differing anatomy of both. Man has feet and hands with fingers that he can use intelligently and artistically. If man therefore depended wholly and solely on agriculture, he would not be using the fingers that God has specially endowed him with. We will be worthy of being called human beings if we utilize our fingers. Moreover, mere agriculture cannot support us, unless it is supplemented by the work of the hands and the fingers. We see in the Exhibition what man's hands and fingers can produce and how they can supplement the income of the land. I would therefore ask every one of you to go to the Exhibition over and

over again, pick up a handicraft of your choice and help in casting off the poverty of the land.

The A. I. V. I. A. has come into being to turn every home into a workshop. You should visit the Exhibition with the aim of acquiring knowledge and, having learnt one or the other thing that serves your own purpose, serve the province at large.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan (Delang-Orissa) Ka Vivaran, pp. 2-3, and *Harijan*, 2-4-1938

40. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING¹

DELANG,
March 25, 1938

Does my voice reach you there where you are all sitting? Please let me know if you cannot hear me. People have been thinking that I am unwell and that is why I speak in a low voice. It is not so. This is a habit with me. Hence, I would ask you, if you find me inaudible, not to put up with it in order to be kind to me. Even when I was well, I seldom concluded in the same pitch in which I began. While speaking, I often forget that I am speaking to others. Then my voice drops and when I realize the fact I raise it again. When I was physically fit, I did not have to make use of a microphone. Today also, if you cannot hear me because my voice is too low, let me say that it is not my fault but that of the microphone. I have been told that the microphone has such power that the lower the voice the greater the number of people it reaches. Hence one should speak in a low voice into a microphone. The people who operate it are also our own people. They do this work in order to earn their livelihood. Please inform me if my voice is not audible to you.

Today, I am in a pitiable position. Although I have come here, I can take part neither in the Executive Committee nor in the convention. I have become a *dharmadhyaksha*² and am delivering a speech. This is contrary to my nature. I do not regard myself as a religious head. I am a votary of truth and I seek after truth. In this, you are my

¹ Gandhiji arrived at 4 p. m. and addressed the opening session. This is the gist of his speech.

² Religious head

fellow-seekers. The proper thing is to compare notes. If, after deliberations, we can arrive at a conclusion, well and good, if not, it matters little. Although today I have become crippled, so long as God keeps me on the earth I do learn something. And I do long to pass on to you what I possess, whatever knowledge I have acquired. I would like to pass it on to you first of all. But sometimes I become impatient. You will find in *Harijan* what I wanted to say in this regard.¹ There is nothing new in it, but it has been presented in a new form. There is not a trace of arrogance in what I am saying to you—I am impatient to pass on to you whatever occurs to me but does not occur to you. I am a worshipper of non-violence and so are you. Many amongst you have faith in it. I have been a worshipper and servant of non-violence for fifty years. There is no exaggeration here. I shall complete seventy soon. My faith in non-violence and my conscious effort to achieve it has been there since I was fourteen or fifteen. Since then I have had my faith in non-violence, based on reason. And my worship of truth dates even further back. For more than fifty years I have, in all my dealings, been relying on truth alone. Only such dedicated conduct results in knowledge and wisdom. If a person who has always acted in accordance with truth and non-violence for more than fifty years makes the claim that he has this one thing, it cannot be called arrogance. Under this belief I also wrote out a brief article.

Although the doctors have forbidden me, I could not restrain myself because of what happened in Bihar and the U. P. This time, too, I wish to tell you many things, but only if I get an opportunity and, if the blood-pressure does not rise. Today I wish to put before you only that which is weighing heavily on me. You should give deep thought to it.

Before that I wish to tell you something about what Kishorelal² is going to read out to you. I have gone through his speech. Although weak in body, he has produced a hundred and twenty-three pages. It is in four parts. His idea is to deliver the speech in four instalments on four evenings. In one of these he has generally described our shortcomings and failings. I told him to deliver three of these. At my request, the fourth has been omitted. I shall put before you that which has touched my heart.

Truth and non-violence are the objectives of the Gandhi Seva

¹ *Vide* "Our Failure" 22-3-1938

² Kishorelal Mashruwala, President, Gandhi Seva Sangh

Sangh. But if we practise these only in our struggle against the Government and not in our private dealings or in inter-provincial relationships, what would we gain? This would imply that even members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh are not consciously truthful and non-violent in their dealings with one another. I am giving you a summary of his speech. He says that there are but a few persons in the Gandhi Seva Sangh, and yet there are differences of opinion resulting in mutual bickering. Quarrels as such are to be found throughout the world. But we should be careful about their consequences. Our duty is to keep up our efforts. If anyone says that formerly Mahadev was bad-tempered and arrogant but now he is not what he was a year ago, that now he is changed, has become somewhat humble, and if it is something which not only Mahadev but Durga and their son also feel, then it means the influence of non-violence is growing. But if he thinks that he has now attained perfection, and if he no longer has the thoughtfulness and vigilance which he formerly had, he would be making a grave error. A unique feature of truth and non-violence is that one must daily take some spiritual food. Have not the Upanishads said that this is like walking on the edge of a sword? I claimed that my spiritual striving extended beyond fifty years. If from this I conclude that there is no further need for me to be on my guard, it must be said that my downfall has started from that very moment. If I am lecturing to you, I am also doing it to myself. I do not say this only to impress you. I do not deliver speeches merely for the pleasure of it. I do what the *atman* bids me do. What I am saying to you will have its effect on me too. If that were not so, I would become as insignificant as a blade of grass. Nor should you conclude that I am using these words only to get my work done while sitting with friends. If in our dealings with friends we are not on our guard and do not practise truth and non-violence, but make use of them only in politics, it would amount to practising diplomacy. Truth can also be uttered diplomatically. I do not approve of the English saying "Honesty is the best policy". I do not wish to use truth and non-violence for diplomatic purposes. I am talking of ultimate values. If I am truthful and non-violent in my worldly dealings and if the world responds to me with contempt and if as a result I lose my faith in them, my non-violence is worthless. Then it is merely the best form of diplomacy. You should not take it for an ultimate value. If it is not such a worthless thing, there ought to be love between friends.

Kishorelal and I are sitting side by side. Should Kishorelal have

affection for me only if love is returned with love? I have become old, I lose my temper, I am not prepared to listen to anything; should he then forsake me? On the contrary, he should not be displeased, he should remain non-violent, he should have compassion for me. Non-violence, by increasing one's forbearance and love, teaches one truth. Love is not a matter of bargain or conditions. One who remains non-violent towards a non-violent person can hardly be called non-violent ! In this case, man follows his own nature. The world will call me courageous if I die in an encounter with a murderer. But I should not take this course in order to get such acclamation.

Kishorelal has also given some instances in his speech. But I have omitted them. What use have we for names? I was afraid that the mention of names and personalities might even have an adverse effect. Hence I have left these out. Now understand this. We should also put an end to provincialism. If the Andhras claimed that Andhra is for them alone, if the people of Orissa claimed that Orissa is only theirs, it will give rise to provincialism. The right thing for both Andhra and Orissa is to be prepared to sacrifice themselves for the country and the world. And India must offer herself at the altar of the world. That will be her true test. I am not advancing a new idea, I am only reminding you of it on a suitable occasion. The recent incidents in Kanpur and Allahabad have deeply affected me. Such incidents are not going to bring us swaraj. I have discussed the matter with Subhas Babu, Maulana Azad and others. The conclusion I have arrived at after Haripura is that if matters are as we saw them there, despite all our failings we may be able to see *purna* swaraj within my lifetime. If we can accomplish our task intelligently, the British will have to admit defeat at our hands. There will be only one power in India with whom they can discuss matters, and that power will be the Congress. There will be nothing left for them to do. They will be prepared to help if the people so desire. They will ask us what we expect from them. This strength can be generated within us through truth and non-violence alone. If we can develop this strength within us in a year, the Viceroy will have to invite Subhas Babu and ask him what the latter wanted from him. Even the British Government may send for Subhas Babu because the British are losing in power and prestige in Europe. But that is not what I have in mind. A non-violent person has no enemies. But if one who calls himself an enemy loses his strength, a non-violent person feels compassion for him. He does not wish to take advantage of the former's predicament to mount on his back. He resumes his

fight only when the former is out of his troubles. This is how I worked in South Africa. I found that it happened not only in the U. P. and in Allahabad, but in the Central Provinces and in other places also. Police and even military assistance had to be sought to put down the riots. I do not wish to say that the Ministers were to blame. What could poor Govind Ballabh Pant do? I am not criticizing him. He had to act in his capacity as a Minister. Whatever he did was correct. The fault lies with me. The conclusion which I drew from what I saw in Haripura was erroneous. I felt that we could accomplish whatever we wanted within a year and that we had developed the strength for it. But I now realize that I had made a mistake. I believe that if today the Viceroy sent for Subhas Babu, or Jawaharlal or me and asked us what we wanted, I would reply that I was not equal to the task. Today, we do not have the strength to respond. If we tell the Viceroy that we do not need the police or the army and that we can defend ourselves, that we have the weapon of non-violence, that the Muslims are our friends and so are the Pathans, that we shall ourselves tackle the Princes, that we shall bear with the Sikhs, he would conclude that I was out of my wits. This was not the state of affairs in 1920. When we are ready, we shall have within us the strength to come to a reasonable understanding with the Muslims, the Princes and the zamindars. Today, we have power neither over the Princes nor over the zamindars, neither over the Muslims nor over the Sikhs. Leaving aside others, do we have control even over those who are within the Congress? Not at all. I have seen that there were internal fights to acquire control over the Congress office. I find in the Congress names of persons who were not in the organization at all. But let it be.

I only wanted to say that if this state of affairs continued, we would not win swaraj in thirty years, let alone one. I feel that we cannot truthfully say that we can come to an understanding with all these people. And then again, if we have true non-violence in us we should have the strength to say these things and to act accordingly.

Hence I ask you, is our non-violence the non-violence of the coward, the weak, the helpless, the timid? In that case, it is of no value. A weakling is a born saint. A weak person is obliged to become a saint. But we are soldiers of non-violence, who, if the occasion demands, will lay down their lives for it. Our non-violence is not a mere policy of the coward. But I doubt this. I am afraid that the non-violence we boast of might really be only a policy. It is true that, to some extent, non-violence works even in the hands of the weak.

And, in this manner, this weapon has been useful to us. But, if one makes use of non-violence in order to disguise one's weakness or through helplessness, it makes a coward of one. Such a person is defeated on both the fronts. Such a one cannot live like a man and the Devil he surely cannot become. It is a thousand times better that we die trying to acquire the strength of the arm. Using physical force with courage is far superior to cowardice. At least we would have attempted to act like men. That was the way of our forefathers. That is because some people hold the view that the ancestors of the human race were animals. I do not wish to enter into the controversy whether Darwin's theory is tenable or not. However, from one standpoint we must all have originally been animals. And I am ready to believe that we are evolved from the animal into the human state. That is why physical strength is called brute force. We are born with such strength, hence if we used it we could be, to say the least, courageous. But we are born as human beings in order that we may realize God who dwells within our hearts. This is the basic distinction between us and the beasts. It is not that the serpent crawls on its belly, whereas we walk on our legs. The bullock has four legs, I have two. We have attained the human form. We are evolved gradually from such species as the serpent, etc., to the human state. Along with the human form, we also have human power—that is the power of non-violence. We can have an insight into the mystery of soul-force. In that consists our humanity. Man is by nature non-violent. But he does not owe his origin to non-violence. We fulfil our human life when we see the *atman*, and when we do so we pass the test. Now is the time for our test. God-realization means seeing Him in all beings. Or, in other words, we should learn to become one with every creature. This is man's privilege and that distinguishes him from the beasts. This can happen only when we voluntarily give up the use of physical force and when we develop the non-violence which lies dormant in our hearts. It can be awakened only through real strength. Do we really have this non-violence of the strong? If not, we are in the sorry plight of Trishanku¹. The better thing would be to admit that ahimsadharmā is an impracticable ideal and then to give it up and adopt violence. But now we are unable to advance even a step farther than the non-violence of the weak. Now we have no alternative but to choose between the two. If you do not decide this issue, who will? If you regard

¹ Who remained suspended in-mid-space between heaven and earth

non-violence as a principle and not a policy and if you live for it, it becomes your responsibility, although your number may be small, to give proof of true non-violence in your own lives. If your non-violence is genuine and not assumed just to disguise your weakness, the faults pointed out by Kishorelal will not arise at all. I have been saying this since 1920.

You will ask me—what then should we do? You should understand well what I tell you. There are several things you can do. I wish to take up one of these. That is the misunderstanding or hostility between Hindus and Muslims. Our mutual ill will is on the increase. What happened in Allahabad, what took place in the U. P. today, may happen tomorrow in Bombay and Calcutta. In Calcutta, it may even be worse than in Allahabad. This is not something new in our country. If this is solved, other issues will soon be resolved. In this lies our test. You, can ask me what you should have done in Allahabad had you been true followers of non-violence. I would say that Govind Ballabh Pant was not needed there. That issue should have been tackled by the Allahabad Congress Committee. It could have mustered ten thousand volunteers. I had presented a draft of their pledge in 1921¹ I had prepared it myself. The Congress approved of it and I had also put it before the Khilafat Committee. Hakim Saheb was in the chair. Hasrat Mohani opposed the motion. He said that I wanted to make slaves of the Muslims. They may well remain non-violent in word and deed but Islam does not ordain them to remain non-violent in thought. He accused me of wanting to dominate Muslim minds as well. The *ulemas*² who were present there understood what I wanted to convey. Maulana Azad is a very intelligent person. He had understood me right at the beginning I told them that I did not wish to make myself or any other person the master. But I wished to give this status to non-violence. Finally, they adopted the draft pledge. This pledge is seventeen years old. Despite this, even today we have not formed such a band of volunteers. The pledge has not been annulled by the Congress. Our resolution is in the records of the Congress office. It must be lying with Kripalani. But it lies buried in files. In my opinion, not a word from it needs to be eliminated. If we had such bands of volunteers at Allahabad or the other places, Hindu-Muslim riots would not take place. If we had a batch of a thousand volunteers, they could

¹ Vide “Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad”, 28-12-1921

² Muslim divines

go over to a thousand such localities. They would carry the sword of truth and the shield of non-violence. If there are a thousand goondas and if we are alone or only ten, we would go there and die, get killed. We are pledged to non-violence, Hitler's soldiers go to kill, we go to get killed, as Gupta¹ did. I would have preferred him to have died alone. Why did he go to find out a Muslim comrade? This is not to criticize him. This is just a point I am putting before you. This is because I claim to be an artist working with non-violence. I say that Gupta had no need to take along a Muslim with him. But then there was only one Gupta. The picture that I am painting before you is something far grander. Imagine that Sarup moves up in the Allahabad riots and I come to hear that she gets killed while trying to restore peace and that she gets killed without a trace of anger against the people—I would then dance with joy. I would say people have lost their sanity, Sarup has fulfilled her life. She got killed. If we had ten or twenty thousand such persons, would they not do anything? And what if we do not have ten or twenty thousand? Even if there is a single person, he should get killed. Even if there is only one person who has the faith, he should allow himself to be killed, but should not bow down to the fanatics, the goondas. Take the example of Sparta. Though they were an armed people and also few, they laid down their lives but would not leave their places. We should have much more courage than they had. If we think that we cannot accomplish this task without a thousand men, our non-violence is not worth the name. If we do not have such courage, let us not talk of non-violence; let us not defile it. Non-violence is a weapon against which neither the sword nor any other power can avail. Even if there are a crore of people on one side and a single votary of non-violence on the other, even then the latter would not say that he would surrender to the might of arms. He will demonstrate the fact that poisonous gases and other weapons are futile against non-violence. He will not bend as did Austria against Hitler. It is for this reason that I wish to place before you this [principle]. It is of primary importance. You should understand it and also discuss it here. If we put this non-violence into practice, Kishorelal's task would be lightened. First we shall examine our conduct towards one another and see whether we are indeed followers of such non-violence. And, on the strength of this non-violence, we shall also win over the Muslims.

¹ Pashupatinath Gupta; vide "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

This is one point I have mentioned to you. I have many more in my mind. This programme has been with us for the past seventeen years, and we have been sleeping over it with total indifference. I have reminded you of it. If I am as strong as I am today, I shall appear before you and you can ask questions about it. For me this is a very grave matter; my heart is full of it. I have direct experience of this kind of non-violence. If we have been unable to fulfil it during these seventeen long years, the fault lies with me. It is my belief that even in politics non-violence can work. In 1920 I had stated that through non-violence we could win swaraj within a year. I repeat that had it been an experiment with unadulterated truth and non-violence, I am sure a year would have been more than enough. If the country and the Congress feel that swaraj cannot be won through non-violence, they may well give me up. This does not imply that they are ready for violence right now. They will make use of truth or untruth, violence or non-violence, whatever is possible under the circumstances. That, however, will not be my programme. If there is truthfulness in you, and if we come to the conclusion that non-violence is a weapon of the weak, we ought to throw it away. If you are of the opinion that putting down riots by a non-violent army is an empty dream, you must also come to the conclusion that swaraj cannot be won through non-violence.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)Ka Vivaran, pp. 5-12

41. DISCUSSION AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH

DELANG,
March 26, 1938

BAPU: I have not come to tell you anything. If anyone of you wants to raise any questions about the point that was made yesterday or about anything else, he may do so. Hence I shall not begin a discussion.

PRESIDENT: Kripalaniji wants to say something about what was discussed yesterday. I call upon him to start.

KRIPALANI: I would like to say something about the riots in Allahabad where two groups were engaged in a clash. Together with the police, the Congressmen also rushed to the scene. How could the Congressmen or the satyagrahis go where one man was blindly stabbing another? How would they know in advance who was going to pull out a knife and at which moment? In former days the Hindus at any rate used to listen to the Congress workers. As for the Muslims, their hatred of Congressmen exceeds their hatred of Hindus. Now when the Congressmen, impelled by sentiments, are risking their lives and getting killed, even the Hindus have started abusing them. What I want to know is: have we weighed our policy at all? We want to give our lives for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. But, if the Muslims slay our great leaders, will the Hindus have more hatred for them or less? If a great man sacrifices his life, will the consequences not be exactly the opposite? Supposing Bapu sacrifices his life tomorrow, I am sure the Hindus will never forgive the Muslims for the ghastly murder. And there will be no Hindu-Muslim unity for the next two thousand years. What happened to the Jews? Even today Christians all over the world despise them for crucifying Christ and persecute them. I urge Bapu to consider whether or not one should have a sense of proportion in sacrificing one's life. We shall never fulfil our purpose if we act without any thought of the Congressmen.

BAPU: Kripalani has raised very good points and they deserve your best consideration. If we do not or cannot have satisfactory answers to his questions, we must give up non-violence as I said yesterday. There certainly are solutions to Kripalani's problems even if he or you may not be satisfied with them. There is nothing new about the methods adopted in these riots. The same thing has been going on for years. What is new is that people are stabbed in the streets or under cover of darkness. I do not know how the riots started in Allahabad. But if they began with two groups of fifty men facing each other, we can certainly do something. We can go and stand

between them and allow ourselves to be killed. But when the riots give rise to widespread fear in the city, people confine themselves to their own localities. This is as good as an invitation to those so inclined to indulge in secret assaults. What can we do in the face of such secret killings? This is Kripalani's problem. When this method of secret killing is adopted, shops are closed and people do not stir out. They avoid going into each other's localities. Will the poor creatures go there to be killed? It is a different thing if one goes out for some very urgent work or inadvertently, or if a Muslim disguises himself to go into a Hindu locality. In this case they may get killed. But no one goes out in order to get killed. No one wants to die. My conscience tells me that every Congressman should be trained to go into localities where people run away after stabbing. In countries like France and Germany, everyone is required to join the army. In these countries the law ordains that people should be prepared to die. If we too have such a band [of volunteers] who would be ready to sacrifice their lives during such riots, something could be done about these stabbings, although secret.

KRIPALANI: Bapuji, it may be so. The Congress workers should go into both the localities, and they do go. They have done it in Allahabad also. But they are not as safe as a Christian can be. The question is whether the Congress has developed such strength. We have got the courage to die. We are not cowards. But we are few in number. Did not the people who went to the Muslim localities in Allahabad die? The goondas did not spare them out of any consideration for the Congress. My question is whether the Hindus' hatred of Muslims will increase or decrease if Congress workers are killed in this manner.

BAPU: I merely wanted to show that we have a solution to the problem. If a few of our men or many of them are killed that way, it will ultimately serve the purpose. My opinion is not baseless. I am well aware of the difficulties involved. But we must know whether or not we have any solution. What do the British, German, French, Italian peoples do? They prepare for war in the same manner. They keep themselves well equipped to face any new power that may emerge. Should we be less alert than these countries? Should we not prepare ourselves fully for our non-violent struggle? Should we sit back and say that we are not strong enough? This is not a matter about which we can remain silent. It is a new experiment. Non-violence has not been tried in politics so far. Non-violence was practised in the olden days too. But it always remained a matter of individual pursuit. Such

people, later on, either fled into the mountains or lived in solitude in the villages. They took no interest in the public weal. I have started a new trend. Non-violence, if confined to an individual, cannot be the supreme dharma. I at any rate shall not worship a man who practises non-violence in a cave. Such non-violence has no use for me. I believe in that non-violence which can be practised in the world of practical realities. I am not interested in the liberation a man may get by practising non-violence after renouncing the world. I do not care for individual liberation which would leave others out. One can find liberation by serving others. That is why I have to come here and explain things to you. Now let us have a full understanding of our policy. Let us put ourselves to a test. We may describe our policy by any other name, but let us at least know what it is. If we have come to the conclusion that non-violence was useful to us at one time but that it is no longer so, we must make a public declaration of it. Let us at any rate not exhibit our inertia and ignorance. If we do not decide our policy in all seriousness we would be only betraying ignorance and fear. For, in such a situation we would not increase our strength even if we had an army of millions. And here, too, what really troubles me is that we would be doing harm to our millions. When the real time comes, the people will flee to their villages instead of fighting the danger. What worse can happen to our millions?

Those others who have no faith in non-violence will accuse me. They accuse me even today. They are blaming non-violence; they are blaming you. They exaggerate so much and say such things as I could not have thought of even in my dreams. They say that I have formed a sect. They think that the training I am giving in non-violence has proved very harmful for India. And some of them even go to the extent of saying that our real strength does not lie in non-violence. They say that this passive policy of non-violence has ruined us. In their view, the man who has done so much harm is as good as a thorn. And it would not at all be inconsistent with their policy to remove this thorn. I may be exaggerating, but is this not the gist of what they say? It is not that I am paying them a compliment. My thoughts are the same in public and in private. In their place, I would be probably more fiery than they are. But I never for a moment think that I am going along the wrong path. On the contrary, my faith is confirmed day by day. This is no small matter. We have a solution for this [problem]. We have not tried it in full measure. The solution is no doubt correct. But we have tried it on a very small scale.

We are not practising non-violence with conscious understanding. Right now, it is our duty to give it a fair trial once again. But we at any rate must be confident of our success. The test of our success is that no trouble should start from our camp. If it does we must admit that we cannot attain swaraj through non-violence. For us, the freedom struggle consists in the confrontation between the non-violent and the violent camps. This does not mean that the people on the other side are taking up arms right now. They too are brave and are willing to adopt non-violent means, as the Communists are. They are no less ready to get beaten up by the police. But our paths are not the same. They might say that they can remain peaceful while fighting with the Government but not in mutual quarrels. There are others who may say that they can adopt peaceful methods in the field of politics but not in Hindu-Muslim clashes. But we cannot talk in such terms. For us this problem is as important as the problem of achieving swaraj. If non-violence can serve no purpose during such riots, we must put it completely out of our minds. But I am certain that it can definitely work. We are unable to solve the problem because of the third power in the country. Hence, [it is said], let us first defeat the third power. Let us come to terms till then. After that the Hindus and the Muslims will confront each other and decide the issue. I have been hearing this since the year 1920. From that time on I have been thinking over the problem. I will never accept such a situation. It is true that the presence of the third power is one reason for the Hindu-Muslim differences. But I do not believe that these differences would be resolved merely by eliminating the third power. If we have not been able to extinguish [that fire] so far, it is time we searched some new way of doing it. I have only one way of attaining independence as well as Hindu-Muslim unity, and that is satyagraha. We adopted the path of satyagraha against the Government for the attainment of swaraj. And we did succeed to some extent. We offered the Salt Satyagraha¹ and refused to pay taxes to the Government. But we have done almost nothing with regard to this (Hindu-Muslim question). Whatever we have done is not particularly non-violent. We have had the Unity Conference. We had parleys with Mr. Jinnah. We had talks with the Ali Brothers. We arrived at a couple of agreements. But all these do not go to make the path of non-violence. All these are political methods. And then, they did not even make much headway.

¹ In 1930

For they were not backed by any real strength. We had the Lucknow Pact of 1916. But there has been no agreement of any consequence after that. I wrote to Jinnah that I would even go and meet him.¹ But what should I do even if I did so? Both the Hindus and the Muslims have in their hearts scant respect for the Congress. Under the circumstances, how can the agreement be successful? If in the event of a riot the goondas on both the sides declare that they would not attack those with white caps, if we ourselves have confidence that the Congress workers would not be attacked, then we may say that we have achieved something. This task would be accomplished if we can have a band of one or two thousand workers wedded to non-violence. And what if we cannot? Our success is not solely dependent on numbers.

Let us now come to the practical side. I never do anything without practical considerations, for I am a practical visionary. True, there is something in laying down one's life out of sheer devotion to duty. But that can be done even by a soldier pledged to violence. The reason why I think in practical terms is different. It is quite likely that if I go there, or Kishorelal and Kripalani go, or if I am killed, the goondas might get converted. I may not even go where this is not likely to happen. But those who lay store by faith will say that I am thinking in practical terms, and that I lack faith. But one practical consideration is always before us. For instance, Vallabhbhai is doing so much work that I would certainly not allow him to go and get killed. If I send Manilal, the poor chap will be killed. But I will not send Vallabhbhai as long as I can help it. I would send others. Let us thus carry on work while bearing in mind the practical aspect of it. I have some such practical consideration before me. If some two thousand outstanding Congress workers have to sacrifice their lives, I shall not think that we were not practical. History will not say that we had indulged in madness. I would only feel that we had fulfilled our vow. I am sure history will testify that non-violence is a weapon of the strong, and that we laid down our lives for our cherished principles. Such is my undying faith. We have been somewhat slack and off our guard. That is why we did not recognize the power of non-violence. For we have not had enough faith in it.

MATHURA BABU: What will you say in reply to the remark about Jesus Christ?

¹ Vide "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 8-3-1938

BAPU: Kripalani has put it upside-down.

SWAMI: What measures can we take to put a stop to secret assaults?

BAPU: I agree this is a very complex problem. Since we cannot save others from such assaults, we should get ourselves killed in such cases. These assaults do not stop when some people are killed because those people do not deliberately go there to get killed. And it is mostly the poor people who are killed. How is it that rich and respectable people do not go and get killed? It is a different matter if some of them are killed that way without their knowledge. We must visit the Muslim localities in the event of such secret assaults and killings. We must make it a point particularly to visit the houses of the suspects. We may go to Shaukat Ali. If he puts the blame on the goondas, we should ask him to accompany us and take out posters against the goondas. In the same way I had approached Chhotani¹. The leaders of these goondas are supposed to be powerful, are they not? From this point of view, mass contact with the Muslim community acquires a new meaning altogether. The real way of making mass contact with the Muslims is that we should seek opportunities to know them and serve them. Serving the Muslim masses without any expectations is the only honourable and effective way of winning their hearts. I would like to give it priority even if I have to suspend political work. But it is not necessary to stop political work. We find easy opportunities of serving and knowing the Muslims. For instance, Mahadev and I often travel by trains. Often there are Muslim passengers in the compartment. But our people do not talk to them spontaneously. We do not offer them our food and other things. This is just one instance. There are so many other things. After hearing this some even amongst you might say that I am talking utter nonsense. Those who talk in this manner consider the Muslims as people of a different community. But I want to accept them as our own people. This is a question of a change of heart on our part. How can we express the love and respect that fill our hearts? I know there are quite a few Muslims who regard the Hindus as infidels and do not wish to associate with them. But all Muslims do not harbour such hatred in their hearts. There are enough Muslims who consider the Hindus as their compatriots and believe that it is only by living in amity that both these communities can look after their interests and make progress.

¹ Mian Mohammad Haji Jan Mohammad Chhotani

But we should not be frightened even by those Muslims whose hands hold knives and whose hearts are filled with hatred. We must win their hearts too, so that even they find it impossible to kill us. After all, is it that we alone are human beings and they are not? Even they are bound to appreciate human qualities some time. They are sure to understand our way some day or the other. This is a question of union of hearts. Communal trouble may be halted temporarily by means of some political compromise, but that will not bring about unity of hearts. I would like to tell each one of you that if there is any such trouble in the villages where you have settled down, you must sacrifice your lives there. There is this great difference between me and the socialists. They believe in first converting the whole world to their view and then taking up these things. Individual action is not part of their programme. This is not the way of non-violence. It can begin with individual action. I do not say that my work can start only when I have an army of a thousand workers. I live in Segaoon. Should any such incident happen there, I must plunge into it. Wardha is at a distance of five miles from Segaoon and quite a large number of Muslims live there. If something happens there and suppose Jamnalalji is unmoved, I must go there and jump into it. Now, if Kripalani asks me if I have given any practical thought to the matter, I would say that this was my practical consideration. Under these circumstances it would be my duty to die even if I were all alone. Similarly, this would be the duty of each individual. He has to be prepared to die. We should not ask whether we shall achieve swaraj by thus allowing ourselves to be killed in communal clashes. For us, there is no other way of achieving freedom except through non-violence. And it is my hope that we are developing that power, unless whatever has been done during these twenty years has been in vain.

KRIPALANI: To you, non-violence may be a matter of individual action and may bring liberation to your own self. But you are not content merely with that. You consider non-violence a means of social service as well. Not only this, you consider it also a social force. Under such circumstances, you have no right to miscalculate. You must understand that you may not do anything from which society cannot benefit. You say you should go and allow yourself to be killed. But you must remember that if the Muslims so completely lose their heads that they kill you, the Hindus will not forget this thing for the next two thousand years. They will regard the Muslims as the enemies of all mankind. They may forget this thing after two thousand years and unite, but as far as you are concerned, it cannot be gainsaid that from the point of view of society, you will have done a wrong calculation in this

throwing away your life. Thus, in all matters we shall have to think out what is going to be our gain or loss.

KAKASAHEB: When there was trouble in Bombay during the visit of the Prince of Wales¹, you did take a practical view. You did not go to persuade the Parsis because you thought that your action would not produce any good results.

BAPU: I agree that I took a practical view. And, like that, I do make such calculations. But my calculations too can sometimes go wrong. Do I not have a right to commit blunders?

KRIPALANI: It is not only your right, it is your nature. You want to go against nature. You have no patience. I know that many people will hide their cowardice behind my argument. But, for that reason, why should we be foolish enough to sacrifice needlessly so many gallant lives? We must think about it from the national point of view.

KAKASAHEB: But who will decide this matter—you, society or Bapu?

JAMNALAL: Neither we nor Bapu. The nation, that is, the Working Committee will do it.

KRIPALANI: What I wish to say is that you have written to Jinnah that you do not find the atmosphere [favourable]. Under such circumstances, if you find yourself alone in the midst of a riot and if it becomes your duty to plunge into it, my only request is that you should not sacrifice your life.

BAPU: This consideration is irrelevant. Please forget me and Jawaharlal. You think of your own self and of the country. We claim to represent the entire country. Millions of Congressmen are ready to die for the country. What is their duty? The leaders will look after themselves. But I am talking to you about the duty of Congressmen in general. The instance of Jesus Christ will not be applicable in this case. The death of Jesus had no untoward effect on the world. Yet another difference is that Jesus did not go to die on his own. He was crucified. Yet, by his death, his teaching spread far and wide. Leave aside all these things. Think of it from the individual point of view. Social force is something that follows it. I have given my example only from that point of view. I have not done so with the idea that I am a leader or a general. When the occasion arose, I demonstrated my quality of leadership too. What I then did was but calculations. People were shouting why I was not coming out. They were probably calling me a coward too. I listened to everything in silence. The leader does not think of what other people may be saying. I was shouldering at that time the responsibility of leading a movement. But now we have to

¹ In November 1921

experiment in sacrificing our lives on a larger scale. I have not tried such an experiment so far. Whatever happens, cowardice must be discarded. Non-violence is not for the helpless and the timid. That was the reason why I wrote to an Andhra friend that if he could not remain non-violent and would die a gallant death, he should fight with physical force. Running away is cowardice. Even today I feel that I had suggested the correct way to him. I have still not tried and seen the result of sacrificing lives on a large scale. I wanted to tell him that it was quite plain that battles in the past were fought with the sword. What I mean is that I have not tried and tested remedy to prevent this. My understanding and my experiences in other fields suggest a remedy which I think will be successful. I am not ashamed to acknowledge my imperfections. But I am not so shameless that I would stop with mere acknowledgement. I make constant efforts to do away with my imperfections. What I am placing before you today is the result of this very effort. If your conscience does not accept what I am saying, just forget it. You need not hesitate out of respect for me. In the matter of the Hindu-Muslim problem, our love will not be proved by argument or physical force. If our love proceeds from the heart, ours cannot be the way of the sword. We cannot answer abuse with abuse and fists with fists. The real test of love lies in sacrificing ourselves and thus answering the lack of love in others. The time has now come to try this experiment. I have given¹ you a call through *Harijan* and now personally. Consider this from the individual point of view. You can discuss it with me if you want and then present it in your own words. It is not as if I had tried this experiment and was now presenting it as an infallible remedy.

JAMNALAL: We must have more discussion on this point. The thing is not as simple as Bapuji thinks it to be. It must be considered from various points of view. Every man cannot be used everywhere. We have to have a certain sense of proportion here also. Take me, for instance. I was present at Banaras when communal violence raged there. I had to go into a troubled area for some personal work. But my friends prevented me and held me back. I was convinced by their arguments. And I did not go. Now you and I will have to decide whether what I did was right or wrong.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)Ka Vivaran pp. 18-26

¹ Vide "our Failure", 22-3-1938

42. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,

March 27, 1938

You have just heard the resolution¹. I suppose no one will have any objection to it. My task is to caution you on this issue and to explain its implications. Am I audible to all of you? If you ask me to interpret the resolution, I shall do so.

This resolution is not for the whole of India. It is also not meant for the Working Committee. It is meant only for those who have come here. And to them I wish to say that wherever they happen to be when a riot breaks out, whether they happen to be alone or in a group, whether they find a co-worker or not, they should be prepared to lay down their lives in order to put down the riots wherever they might have started. This does not mean that they should simply go and get killed. No doubt they should lay down their lives. But they must also think whether they are doing so in anger or out of love. If they do not have love in their hearts, their laying down their lives is pointless. You should try to understand this well. I would like to admit before you in all humility that what I say to you is meant also to myself. This is because I also keep thinking about what I say to others, what I have done, what its possible implications are, what my duty in the matter is. Even while having my meals, while discussing other matters, this issue weighs on my mind. Only yesterday, such matters came up before me, which I cannot mention now; and this is not the occasion for it. I shall speak of them on some other occasion. Today, I cannot even say what we should do in any given situation. We should of course be prepared to lay down our lives. But our task is not complete with that. Our desires and our actions should be based on understanding. What is it that inspires us to act? What will be its outcome? Is this the best

¹ The resolution on the methods to counteract communal riots is not available. It was decided not to pass such a resolution. The members, however, were urged . . . to take note of the following statement. "After considering puja Bapuji's views and the members' discussions during the last four days on the subject of communal discord, a consensus was reached that the experience with regard to such strifes was not such as could enable the conference to formulate in the form of a resolution any opinion or scheme. However, in the interest of the country, it was imperative to remove communal differences and encourage friendship among the different communities. Members of the Sangh should make efforts in this direction following the guidance given by puja Gandhiji."

possible path? Or can there be an even better path? That should be our line of thinking. It is thus that we can find the right path. We should engage ourselves in our work intelligently. As I was thinking along these lines, I found that there were many hurdles in our way. If you ask me how we can overcome all of these, I can give neither you nor myself a satisfactory answer. I would only say that if you believed in these principles you too should experiment with me. In that case, we shall certainly find the way. This resolution is before you. You should give much thought to it and then be prepared to discuss it. Because, if we do not wish to give up our tenet of non-violence, we should think over what we should do in such a situation and start preparing for it now. You do not have merely to pass this resolution, you have also to implement it. You have also to create a favourable climate for it. You should find a Muslim locality within your field of service and there create such an atmosphere. If anything untoward happens in this locality, you should accept the responsibility. Every individual cannot make the entire country his field of work. After all we have to know our limitations. In a city like Bombay you cannot take the responsibility even for the whole city. You should find out how many Muslims live in the locality where you happen to reside, get yourself acquainted with them, serve them, and do whatever you can. There should not be a single Muslim child whom you do not know. We should take each individual Muslim in our locality and build in his mind trust for us. If we resolved this issue fully, we shall develop the strength to solve other problems as well, for this is the biggest hurdle in our way. A satyagrahi alone can render such service. He should specially keep himself in the forefront of such service. You may ask what special service he can render. If you render sincere service there will be no such incidents in your locality. And if such a situation does arise in another locality and if you prepare to go there alone to resolve the dispute, the Muslim's in your locality will co-operate with you. At least they will take care of their own locality. You will be able to go to the other localities, and that too with greater courage and confidence. Today, I myself do not know how I am going to do all this work. I have explained the resolution all right but whom shall I invite to implement it? Those whose help is to be sought in this work will have to be trained in self-confidence. And that by itself will, again, not be sufficient. We shall also have to prepare them for the time when they will be tested.

It is for this reason that I explained to you how we could put this

resolution into practice. The second part of my speech deals with a question of the greatest magnitude. Let me caution you. Think well before you answer. I shall put the question to you in brief.

The question is whether your non-violence is that of the brave or of the coward? Is it the result of your weakness? If it is the result of your lack of strength, I insist you discard it. It will cripple and weaken us. That certainly is not the aim of non-violence. This does not mean that I am asking you to take up the sword right now. There is a place for non-violence in the war strategy of the weak also. But such unarmed opposition is not my non-violence. You may adopt even that. But before doing so you will have to renounce the non-violence in which I believe. Today, you and I bear the burden of this non-violence [of the strong]. If we openly renounce it, we shall relieve ourselves of that burden.

It is not because we are unarmed that we have adopted this non-violence. Ours is the non-violence of the brave. Although I have been experimenting with it for fifty years, I have no cut-and-dry answers to all the questions. When I start thinking what I would have done if I had been in Spain now or in China or Austria, and if Hitler had attacked these countries and I found men and money being drained away, my head starts reeling. You may well argue how much the non-violence that has made only this much progress even after fifty years' experience can help us in our struggle. If you think like this, you may give it up. For me, there is no question of giving it up. My faith in it is unwavering. I shall however ever regret that the Lord has not favoured me with such clarity of expression that I could explain my ideas to others.

I mean ours should not be the non-violence of the cowards who are afraid of war, of bloodshed, whose hearts 'tremble at the shouts of killers. Our non-violence should be the non-violence of the Pathans. I have lived with them. They are not afraid of killing or getting killed. I have cited this example so that I may compare myself to a Pathan boy. A Pathan boy is fearless. If there is bloodshed he does not hide himself in his house. He finds pleasure in fighting. He does not stop to think that he might be injured or even killed. He is never afraid of being hurt. I have seen one standing unmoved in the midst of blood gushing from his many wounds. I do not mean to say that all Pathans are like this. But I have seen such Pathans with my own eyes. What I wish to say is that experimenting with non-violence is the work of

such brave persons. I myself have not yet reached this stage. There is lot of cowardice in me. I talk of satyagraha, no doubt. But in the face of killings I cannot have the fearlessness of the Pathans. If I have to go and face such a situation, my heart's one wish would be to escape alive. If per force I do go, my heartbeats would quicken. And, in my heart of hearts I would be afraid lest a bullet or a stone should hit me. I reached Bombay (in 1921) when the riots were raging. Stones were being hurled. I wanted to save myself from the melee, but what could I do? I was the leader of the non-co-operation movement. I went in most unwillingly. At heart, I wished someone asked me to stay at home; that would have indeed been welcome. When I reached there the people were in a frenzy. Anasuyabehn was with me. She is a brave woman. Who was I to protect her? People had lost their heads. I saw mounted policemen advancing towards us. At the most, there must have been forty of them, but they were advancing with such unconcern as though there was not a man on the road. They were followed by officers in their cars. My heart trembled. We wanted to go to the Fort area. We reached Abdul Rehman Street *via* Pydhonie. There was heavy fighting in the area. My heart was thumping. I do not know how high the blood-pressure rose. As soon as the mounted police and army officers arrived the people who were till now in a riotous mood ran helter-skelter. I do not wish to take up your time narrating the whole incident. My idea is to tell you that you should give some thought to this. I have spoken of my own cowardice. But those who were brandishing knives and sticks turned out to be no braver. I have compared my own courage with a Pathan's. Non-violence is the weapon of such fearless persons full of courage.

This will show clearly how I should experiment. If there is real love in my heart and a feeling of oneness, why should I feel nervous to go there? Why did my heart thump so? This clearly implies that even in me the feeling of non-violence has not grown to the extent that would make me fearless and free of doubts. Fearlessness born of love is the general characteristic of non-violence. If it is not yet born in our hearts, this experiment is for that very purpose. While carrying on this experiment, we shall acquire the strength to face death smilingly. But we have fallen into complacency. When there is peace on all fronts we do not prepare ourselves for such eventualities. And when the occasion arises we do not know what to do. If we do not wish to try this experiment whole-heartedly and in all seriousness, I humbly request you to give it up. I also wish to point out to you that mere

debating will not resolve the issue. Open discussions do clear up our reasoning to some extent. It is true that on the question of non-violence also we shall have to exercise our reasoning till the last. But I must tell you that non-violence is not a matter solely of the intellect. It is a matter of faith and devotion. If you have no faith in the *atman* or in God and prayer, non-violence is not going to prove useful to you. If it is in fact the supreme dharma, as we believe it is, then it must work on every occasion and at every place. It has so much potentiality. If we cannot recognize it the fault lies with us. Realizing the whole range of the power of non-violence or having a vision of its whole power depends on our spiritual effort. If you are convinced of it and, after striving for 17 years, if you have developed this faith that whether or not we win swaraj, that irrespective of what happens to the world, we have achieved this one thing, you should try it intelligently. Your knowledge will grow with your *sadhana*. But you will not become omniscient. God alone is omniscient. He is not so stupid as to let all become omniscient and omnipotent. Thanks to our imperfections we can still aspire to it. God has assured us that when we realize our weakness and take refuge in Him, He is with us. The *bhajan* "Rama is the strength of the weak", is not a versification of some music teacher; it is a factual statement by someone who had experienced it.

If you have any doubts or hesitation you should not pass this resolution. Take at least one night to think over it. Pray to God to enlighten your intellect. This is not a resolution to be passed by a majority. Even if a single member amongst you stands up and says that he does not have this faith, he still has the right to tread the path of non-violence. You should certainly not pass it by a majority.

Now let us come to Jamnalalji's question. If we, who are members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, accept ministerships, can we order firing? Today, in Allahabad Govind Ballabh Pant is a Minister. He is not a member of our Sangh. But is he for that reason less non-violent than we? I know him very well. But what could the poor man do? I want to tell you that had I been in his place I would have acted similarly. When I accept ministership, I take the responsibility for peace and honest administration. Of course, I could think this matter over before accepting the ministership. But I cannot ask any member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh not to accept ministership solely on this account. I am aware that this would mean lowering of my standard.

But after all my non-violence cannot deviate from what is practical. I wish to work through non-violence while yet solving the problems of everyday life. If while I am a Minister Hindus and Muslims start fighting amongst themselves, and if I realize that I can stop this violence and bloodshed by calling in the army and having a handful of men shot, I would have to resort to this course for the sake of restoring order. I will have to give orders to stop the massacre with the least violence.

I am opening my heart to you in order to explain all this to you. If outsiders hear what I am saying, I cannot say what interpretations they will put on it. There must be journalists present here, but they do not know their profession. They should not be cross with me, I too have been a journalist, and I too have experience of reporting. But these people do not wait to discriminate between fact and fiction since they must fill up a page and create a sensation. Hence I wish to state rather plainly that not a word from what I say shall go out.

Well, this was a digression. Now visualize Pant's position. The Hindus and Muslims of his city have lost their heads. They are butchering each other. Life and property are not safe. What then shall he say? Should he say to himself that although he is a votary of non-violence he sees no non-violent way of facing this situation? He examines the doctrine of non-violence, but finds it silent over the point—but he does have in his hands brute force; hence he should take recourse to it. He does not lack manliness, so he will not remain passive. He would again seek the help of non-violence and not use brute force. But if such an occasion arises again and he does not find a non-violent way, he should again act in the same manner. Pant should publicly declare that non-violence did not avail; the people did not help him and all the same they have made him a Minister. He should therefore do whatever suggests itself to him. You must have understood my point. It is now needless to discuss the issue any further. If you wish to ask any other questions please do so.¹

Seven minutes are left. Let me answer Rajendra Babu's question in the mean time.

His point, as far as I can understand, is this: I now know all of you. Knowing you as you are, I should put something before you

¹ Rajendra Prasad then asked how the problem could be solved in the prevailing atmosphere of violence, while even members of the Sangh were no strong enough to try non-violence even though they might be convinced of its efficacy.

which you can do. Even if you thought for the whole night or, for that matter, for ten nights, you cannot know yourselves better than I know you. Hence I should put before you the minimum that I want. This is his question.

I have already shown the remedy. Rajendra Babu has said that even if we thought for ten nights we shall make no progress. Yet I would again ask you to think all night. Tell me tomorrow if you can. For this I may start my silence earlier today and break it earlier tomorrow, so that after thinking it over all night you can discuss it tomorrow. My point about cautioning you is to be found in the second part of my speech. In the first part I mentioned the minimum that you can do. I have said that we should increase our contacts with the Muslims in our village or locality in a spirit of service. We should widen our circle of Muslim friends. We should serve them with sincerity and not by flattering them. If they ask us to get this or that for them we should refuse to do so. We should apply our reasoning, cast off our fears and without flattering them go on doing what we regard as our duty. For instance, we should gather Muslim boys and give them milk; even if their parents have suspicions, I should like to prove through my conduct that I was not doing this in order to convert them to Hinduism. Gradually their suspicion will be removed. At least we shall come to know the boys. Now suppose a riot breaks out in the mean time. In that case after this experience we can go into that locality without fear. I have in this matter less experience but more faith. And now I have also lost my strength. Had it not been for this reason I would not be sitting like a fool doing nothing. Take up one locality and try the experiment. Nevertheless I must say one thing. If you carry out this experiment your self-confidence will grow a hundred fold. You will know your strength. We have only one weapon and that is non-violence. It will be applied extensively and in many ways you will think of putting this remedy to many other uses. As you tread the path of non-violence, new weapons will come into your hands of which I am not aware.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 36-42

43. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters. Of course you shall, have all the guidance about the Mirza correspondence. Anasuya's¹ letter is typical of her. She seemed at one time to be satisfied with what had happened. Shariff² has certainly put up a good defence.

It is very hot here. Melting.

Ba and some of the party have gone to Puri. They return tonight.

You would have liked the Exhibition here. It is very well arranged. Over 12,000 people visited it yesterday.

Lilavati is here. So is Kanti.

You will have to be strict with Vijayasingh. It won't do to pamper him. I am hoping that your judgment about him would prove true. Your previous letter disturbed me a bit. You will neither be hasty nor dejected over the result of your efforts in the villages. It is an uphill task especially when it has to be done through paid agency.

Nothing yet from Sikander Hayat³. I have to see Jinnah in April in Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3850. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7006

¹ Anasuya Kale

² Minister of Law and Justice in the Central Provinces

³ Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Premier of the Punjab

44. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have a moment to spare. We are all melting. I suppose it is good for me for the b. p. is 160-96. Ba and some of the party have gone to Puri.

I am glad you are able to help Vijaya and Munnalal. It is good that M. himself wanted you to help him.

We return to Calcutta on 1st but may even on 31st. I shall know then when we may expect to leave for Segaon.

It is as well that Amtussalaam has gone to Bombay. Her brother's company will be some compensation and the humidity of Bombay may suit her. Let us hope.

They are giving me as much rest as they can here.

Tulsi Maher is here and so is Kanti. He has very long vacation. Frydman¹ and Uma Devi² too are here.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6398. Courtesy. Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9993

45. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 28, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You have no reason to be unhappy. Who can be as happy as you? We have to do certain things as a matter of duty. Why feel unhappy over this? I certainly didn't like that you had to rush off all of a sudden. But in life we have to do a good many things like that. Let me know what special work you have to do there now. I shall be in Calcutta for three days if not more. I shall know after some decision is taken about the detenus. Write to me there. The address is: 1 Woodburn Park, Calcutta. Couldn't you have come with Jaya-prakash?

¹ Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, and his wife who had adopted this Indian name

² *Ibid*

I am keeping good health. The blood-pressure rises sometimes, but comes down again.

Kanti must have given you the rest of the news.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3510

46. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

March 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA

You might think I had completely forgotten you. But it is only today that I have some time to write a few brief notes. You seem to be progressing well. Get completely all right by the time I return. Don't give up hip-baths and friction-baths. Go over to a diet of fruit juice as soon as you feel the slightest trouble.

I am keeping well enough. It is very hot here. But it does not trouble me. I hope you have not decided not to write to me if I do not write to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7078. Also C.W. 4570. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

47. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

March 28, 1938

CHI. BHANSALI,

I hope you are doing well. You will be glad to learn that these days while I do my sacrificial spinning the yarn rarely snaps. Of course, it does surprise me. You also should try to spin even, strong and unbroken yarn, though the quantity may be less, instead of spinning much and for many hours. It is good that you are taking the injections. Let us hope that will put you right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8354

48. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

March 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have already sent the answers to your questions. Try to discover why you keep good health in Bombay without any effort while you barely manage to do so in Segaon. Is the cause psychological or external? If it is external, is it the food and water or the climate, or both? If it is food, you can eat the same food in Segaon as you do in Bombay. If the reason is psychological, [the cure] is in your own hands. If it is the climate and water, we are helpless. But I don't think that they count so much.

The date of my return will be decided in Calcutta.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10745

49. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

DELANG,

March 28, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Today is my Silence Day. And I also have some time. It is pretty hot here. We are a goodly company. Ba, Lilavati, Manilal and his wife Sushila are with me. Kanti has come from Bangalore. Your letter should have arrived here. It has not yet arrived. It may come tomorrow. We shall reach Calcutta on the 1st or maybe on the 31st. My health has been good so far. I have cut down my intake of food. Now the blood-pressure has come to 160-96.

Prabhavati has gone to Patna, Amtul Salaam to Bombay.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9992. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

50. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,

March 28, 1938

Having heard the discussion we have had now and Kishorelal's brief report of the discussion in the afternoon—having heard it all I have come to the conclusion that this proposal should not be put before you. You should not conclude that this is a result of the argument advanced by a few friends. The discussion I heard here has also left the same impression on me. This does not mean that those who have faith in this may not act upon it. It only means that in this matter I do not wish to force anyone. But I certainly insist upon the principle underlying this proposal. It is not something unnatural. If you have understood my point it will gain weight when you act upon it and carry it out according to your capacity. [Passing] a resolution will not by itself suffice. Take [for instance] Jamnalalji's suggestion. He says that so long as Muslims do not become members of our Gandhi Seva Sangh, it will be futile to make efforts in this direction. What he says is true but we shall find the correct remedy after we have served them and our action has borne fruit in the form of a closer contact with the Muslims. Of what good will it be if one or two persons become members reluctantly? We shall achieve something only when our relationship with the Muslims becomes that of the servant and those whom he serves. So far the Congress has been doing what Jamnalalji suggests. What it did was good, no doubt. They got many Muslims enrolled as members. But they had to be coaxed into becoming members. This is a kind of flattery, or you may call it a politically motivated policy. What I have said today is not for political reasons, although it may well have a welcome political outcome. Today I place it before you solely from the standpoint of non-violence. If we are really experimenting with the non-violence of the strong, we ought to make an effort to bring about friendship between Hindus and Muslims. So far there has been no friendship. It was only an attempt to win them over through flattery. There was a policy behind all that. We maintained friendly relations merely from a practical point of view; it was like a businessman's practical policy. So far we have not put our non-violence to the test in regard to this issue. If today we can take this test in non-violence and pass it, we shall move a thousand steps forward on the path of winning freedom

through non-violent means. If you really believe that swaraj cannot be won without non-violence, you will also have to admit that our non-violent means will not be effective without Hindu-Muslim unity. As I delve deeper into this question many things come up before me. After all I am being guided by my intellect, am I not? Nowadays, I am relying solely on my intellect. But mere intellect makes one insane or unmanly. That is its function. In such a situation Rama is the strength of the weak. My innermost urge is for pure non-violence. My weakness is that I do not know how to make it work. I use my intellect to overcome that weakness. If this intellectual cleverness loses the support of truth, it will blur my vision of non-violence, for is not non-violence the same as truth? Mere practical sense is but a covering for truth. "The face of truth is hidden by a golden lid."¹ The reasoning faculty will raise a thousand issues. Only one thing will save us from these and that is faith. Hence Gangadharrao said that he did not feel weak. For him, the argument of weakness is hollow. But others have doubts whether non-violence can accomplish this. Kripalani had raised the doubt about what policy we could adopt where there are secret attacks on individuals. This is a kind of guerilla warfare as Prabhudas called it. There was in Banaras nothing but peace. In Sarnath however four Hindus were done to death. Now how can our non-violence help in such a situation? I say, think a little deeper. This is but a part of our war strategy. You despair that no friendship will help there. I tell you it certainly will. It is not that a handful of persons have lost their sanity. Its root lies in the fact that the atmosphere is vitiated. But then I cannot say right now how far it can be purified through our service. You must not reduce your service to a bargain. Non-violence cannot work in this way. In the case of non-violence we on our part start acting without any doubts. Take the instance of April 6, 1919² Where were the Congress Committees then? We announced a proposal. Millions responded to our call. Tell me how this could have happened. Everyone felt as if a miracle had occurred. People thought that at the bottom of all this there must have been a mighty scheme, but there had been no such thing. However, it was certainly supported by a lot of prayer. The same thing happened in the case of the Dandi March. Who had organized and planned it? I myself was not aware of

¹ Ishopanishad, 15

² "Directions to Demonstrations", 5-4-1919

anything. There was faith and nothing else. I too did not know what God would do. I had only the faith that it would all turn out as it did. You have evidence that I had no clear idea of it. I do not know how it all really happened. This is how non-violence works. Today, we think of our weakness. Actually, it is not our weakness. The fact is that we have no faith in non-violence. This lack of faith makes us doubt whether non-violence can solve the problem. Millions have this faith in the matter of swaraj. But with regard to Hindu-Muslim unity we find not even a thousand such persons. What we need is that we should have faith in non-violence not merely as a means to swaraj, but independently as well. Whether we win swaraj through non-violence or not, we must achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. For us, it is not a means to swaraj. I have not been able even to create the climate for it. Not even a thousand persons share my views on this question. Just as I say that I do not want swaraj if it is to be won through untruth and violence, today I would also say that I do not want swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. I say this because I want that in independent India Hindus should not suppress Muslims, nor Muslims Hindus. I want to see that all are equal. You may perhaps find this aspect of the problem rather new. If this is something new for you, so is it for me. I can see no straight way in front of me. There is total darkness ahead. Despite this, I have the confidence that if I go forward with faith, I shall certainly reach my destination. If you realize this, you should start working on this even without a resolution. In a way this problem is even more difficult than that of swaraj. Millions of people today aspire for swaraj. Not even a handful of people care for Hindu-Muslim unity. We will have to solve this problem independently. There are many difficulties because we seek the welfare of the Muslims while serving them. We do not want to encourage their selfishness by pampering them. Take for instance the incident cited by Prabhudas. I totally disapprove of what he did. If a Muslim zamindar insists that the Hindus should not celebrate Holi, should I ask the Hindus to agree to it simply because these poor people listen to me? I will certainly not do it. You may say that to celebrate Holi would be suicidal. I would tell the Hindus that they should not give up their religious practice on this account. I would myself ask the zamindar to come forward and kill me, for I would light the Holi fire right in front of him. I would ask the Hindus not to break the heads of Muslims, but rather to sacrifice their own. We shall give up nothing through fear. I shall certainly do what I have a right to do and what I

may. If I have to fight for this, I shall do so in a non-violent manner. I went to make friends with Jinnah Saheb. But if for this reason I allow myself to be suppressed and do not fulfil my duty, it is no friendship. This is not a new approach. The important thing is that service should be the basis of friendship, and no other motive or self-interest as was the case with my childhood friendship. The friendship which I had then formed with the Muslim boy¹ was for the sake of meat-eating and ended with it. But today, I am asking you—you who make friends with the idea of service and who with your mature intellect believe in *atman* and *Paramatman*—to serve them. Such friendship will result in unity.

Now the question of girls. What should they do? Should they be scared at the sight of Muslims? That ought not to be. But it does not follow that they should enter the fray at the time of riots or become the victims of secret attacks as a matter of dharma. Of course, if there is a girl like Mridula it is another matter. She is not afraid of anyone. She does not care even if the Muslims kill her. Girls who are self-confident should go in. But those who are afraid, who lack this self-confidence, who do not have a strong heart should not go there. “But the man of doubt is lost.”² If I am overcome by doubt I will hardly touch a serpent. Women who have doubts must never come out before Muslims. I know of many such instances. I tried to tell you about this in a way you would understand. You should not feel that the whole discussion has been futile. My mind too has become clear. You have drawn my attention to several difficulties. In spite of them, after this discussion, I am even more strongly convinced that this is what we should do and shall have to do. Let us not form any committee and so on. Each one is a committee by himself. Each is his own leader and his own soldier. The servant is himself the master. Where the climate does not exist, what is the use of forming committees? When the time comes we will lose our heads. The real thing is to keep our heads—our reasoning—clear. There is no question of any confrontation. Dastane asks me to appoint someone for the task. This is not a matter to be dealt with in this way. In the same matter what may be dharma for one person may be its opposite for another. Let us not betray our souls. Let us not corrupt our

¹ Sheikh Mehtab; vide “London Diary”, 12-11-1888, and “An Autobiography” sub-title “A Tragedy”

² Bhagavad Gita, IV. 40

intellect. If we wish to strive for non-violence we should follow the *yamas* and *niyamas*¹. This advice of our forefathers is absolutely correct. I am not placing anything new before you. I shall show what strength underlies our forefathers' advice. I have derived this from their own books. We cannot observe ahimsa without fulfilling the vows. This does not mean that whoever is morally depraved and given to drinking commits violence. But then it is certain that he does not sincerely observe non-violence. We must examine everything from this standpoint, viz., whether it helps or hinders non-violence. I too can drink alcohol but as medicine, provided a vaidya prescribes it for me. If this movement of ours is conducive to non-violence, let us at least demonstrate unity amongst all Hindus.

Why did I stretch this point? Because the other point that I wish to make follows from this. You must never forget one more fact regarding Hindu-Muslim unity. It is a test for every religion. Even if there be nothing special about Hinduism it must have something distinct about it. Otherwise how could it come to have the name Hindu? [Now] does this distinctiveness consist in playing Holi? Does the distinctiveness of Islam consist in hit-and-run tactics? Does Hinduism teach animality? And did the Prophet's religion teach lawlessness? My point is that you should first become a true Hindu and then go to the Muslims. Till then no unity is possible. I know there are many Muslims who believe that so long as Hindus do not recite the *kalmah* they will not be saved. But if we prove through purity in our life and perfection of conduct that one can be saved even without reciting the *kalmah*, the Muslims too will be impelled to have respect for the Hindus. Such true unity will not be achieved through any political agreement. Such business pacts are futile. What is needed is an understanding based on dharma, where there is no question of a bargain. For this, friendship between brave people and the non-violence of the strong are required. Even if a frightening *smashan*² interposes—such non-violence will fearlessly make its way through it. I do not claim that I have attained such non-violence. I am afraid of every [little] thing. Perhaps I am the weakest and the most cowardly of all. But I am all the same a devotee of true non-violence. I tell you that so long as we do not attain the non-violence of the strong and our conduct is not truly religious, the Muslims will have no respect for our

¹ The rules and regulations prescribed for the attainment of spiritual progress

² Literally, cremation ground; here death and desolation

religion and love for us.

GANGADHARRAO: If the resolution is withdrawn the consequence will not be good.

BAPU: I don't agree.

JAMNALAL: I had a special reason when I said that we should have Muslim members. Only a Muslim can persuade another Muslim if the latter misbehaves, and the same applies to Hindus. But I find that even the most respectable Muslim seldom raises his voice against the misdeeds of his community. On the other hand one can keep them in good humour only by justifying their every action, good or bad. I cannot tolerate this state of affairs. I cannot uphold what Prabhudas did. Must we stop our music for fear of losing the Muslims' friendship? Friendship does not imply that we give up resistance to injustice. But this, more or less, has till now been the policy of the Congress as well as the Gandhi Seva Sangh. In my opinion appeasement cannot bring about unity or love.

BAPU: If we have formed the notion that we should suffer the atrocities of the Muslims in mute submissiveness it is absolutely wrong. If until today I have not said that we must also resist injustice inflicted by them, here I say it now. We should now tell the Muslims also that they have been unjust and, if they beat us up for saying it, we should get beaten up. As for the resolution, we should have it after making some efforts and gaining experience in the matter. It is likely that experimenting on these lines someone may get some new inspiration. In that case we can call a special session of the Sangh before the end of the year.

DASTANE: If not this resolution, let us have another commensurate with our faith and strength.

BAPU: Yes, we can do it if you like. But in my opinion, it would be proper to do so only after making an experiment and gaining experience.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 50-5

51. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *March 28, 1938*]¹

I can say you are now doing my work. It was a great relief to me that you were looking after Amtul Salaam and that you saw her off.

You won't worry about me. I shall try to be there as early as I can.

Be patient with Lilavati.

Love.

From the original: C.W. 6423. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10018

52. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. WORKERS' MEETING

BIRBOI,

March 29, 1938

Gandhiji proposed that efforts should be made to give eight annas as minimum wages to spinners working for eight hours a day, thus allowing at least fifteen rupees per month. Mahatmaji also said that the price of khadi should be so fixed as to bring more money from the rich and less from the poor. Gandhiji asked members seriously to ponder over his proposals.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-3-1938

53. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,

March 30, 1938

This is the last day of the present session. I myself was not aware that I was going to speak today. Kishorelal told me that I was expected to speak. Later I also felt like it. Before I say what I wish to, I shall answer a question.

It has been asked whether every member of the Working Committee is not expected to put in 1500 hours of work in the Gandhi Seva Sangh every year. The question has been posed by Jethalal. Although the idea is very good it cannot be put into practice. Today, we must give up our insistence on this. Everyone should put in as much physical labour—not mental or intellectual—as possible.

¹ *Vide* letter to the addressee, "Letter to Mirabehn", 28-3-1938

However, we cannot go so far as to expect daily four or five hours' work from the members. This is not an association of labourers. If it can become one, well and good. But today it is an association of educated people. If we wish to take five hours work daily from the Working Committee, we should ourselves do it first. How can those people find the time for all this at present? In this country the trouble is that those who are supposed to be big men get very little time. Where can Vallabhbhai find so much time? In that case we should ask him to quit. But then we cannot do without him. We ought to realize our limitations.

Yesterday I had decided to remain silent on what I am now going to say. But I changed my mind this morning. I am glad that Mahadev has told you something about what has happened, and now that he has said something I feel like speaking out all that is in me. The various items of constructive activity that you are doing are only outward expressions of truth and ahimsa. They only reveal how far they can carry you on the road of ahimsa and truth, and ultimately to freedom. The removal of untouchability is one of the highest expressions of ahimsa. It is my daily prayer, as it should be the prayer of you all, that if untouchability does not perish it were far better that Hinduism perished. This prayer found its most poignant expression during my Harijan tour of which the principal objective was the opening of the temples to Harijans. They tell me that the untouchables do not wish to enter the temples. Even if this is true, the reason behind this is that we have made such monsters of them that they no longer have any need for temples. Even if they do not care to go into the temples it should be our concern to permit their entry. And I have declared day in and day out that whoever believed in the removal of untouchability should shun temples which were not open to Harijans. Now, how could I bear the thought of my wife or my daughters having gone to such temples? I would plead with them, would go on bended knees to dissuade them from going to these temples, and might have to deny myself personal ties with them if my entreaties failed. I have tried to live up to this principle all these years, and I felt humbled and humiliated when I knew that my wife and two ashram inmates¹ whom I regard as my daughters had gone into the Puri temple. The agony was enough to precipitate a collapse. The machine recorded an alarmingly high blood-pressure, but I knew better than

¹ Durga and Velanbehn; vide "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 31-3-1938

the machine. I was in a worse condition than the machine could show. The *Gita* teaches us the lesson of detachment, but that detachment does not mean indifference to shocks of this kind—failure in duty on the part of one’s dearest ones. The three who went were the least to blame. They went in ignorance. But I was to blame, and Mahadev was more to blame in that he did not tell them what their dharma was and how any breach would shake me. He ought to have thought also of its social repercussions. We should understand our individual as well as our social dharma. How did it affect me? I turned pale. My grandson says that the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reports that Kasutrbai did not go in but waited outside. If that was so I would have leapt high. But how could she at all go there after having lived with me for fifty years? And why did the two other women go? Are they not my daughters? That too is my fault. This act of theirs has depleted our soul force. We ought to be more vigilant. By looking upon women as [mere] women we overlook such matters. That is not the way of non-violence. This is a matter of awakening. It was Mahadev’s task to have reasoned with them. And, if they were not convinced, he should have brought them to me. I would have told them that I was their spiritual father and not opposed to their religion. I could be their spiritual father only if they and I belonged to one faith. If their faith could be identified with mine I could reason also with the people: “What is the use of [going to] such temples?” They were ignorant, I know, but we are responsible for their ignorance, and it is the reverse of ahimsa not to dispel their ignorance. I sent them to Puri not to go into the temple, but to stand just where the Harijans were allowed to go and refuse in protest to go beyond that limit. That would have been the right kind of propaganda, and they would that way have done Harijan service. To do scavenging work or to eat with Harijans or to feed them is not enough, if we do not deny ourselves the going to temples and the like so long as our kith and kin, the Harijans, are denied their use.

If we do not go even to the temples which have been regarded as sacred for hundreds and thousands of years, where such great men as Chaitanya¹ have gone in to offer worship, where we long to go, simply because our Harijan brothers are not allowed, it would be a great act of dharma and, if God really is in the temples, as we believe, it will

¹ Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, also known as Gauranga Mahaprabhu, founder of the Vaishnava sect in Bengal

certainly have its effect. The *pandas*¹ had come there and said that the Harijans could go along with us. Quite correct. For a *panda* the silver coin is God. I therefore prevented Rajendra Babu's sister from going in. Some may say that I exercised undue pressure. I would say I saved her from *adharma*. If I intruded it was in the name of religion. Like these three women many others must have gone and must be intending to go. I have expressed my feelings for the sake of these people. What can I say to those who cannot restrain themselves even after this?

There is another aspect of the case. The sanatanists believe that untouchability is part of Hinduism, and so do the Mussalmans and the Christians who think that Hinduism is nothing if not don't touchism. But the virus of untouchability has infected them too. They shun the Bhangis. You cannot finally solve the Hindu-Muslim problem until you have removed the stain of untouchability by non-violent means. The Muslims will then cease to regard us as unbelievers.

They will then say that we might be idolators but God is in the idols too. Hence, I have asked the idol-worshippers to befriend the Muslims. That is the path of courageous non-violence. Perhaps Maulana Saheb also believes that Gandhi is what he says he is, but the other Hindus are steeped in untouchability. It is our responsibility to change his opinion of us.

Then there are the Harijans themselves. How are we to carry to them the conviction that we are with them through thick and thin, that we are completely identifying ourselves with them, unless we can carry our families—our wives, our children, brothers, sisters, relatives—with us in our programme of the removal of untouchability?

Is it possible that a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh might claim that his dharma is different from his wife's and sister's? This is neither religious tolerance nor is it non-violence. People will think we are hypocrites. Intense faith is what is called dharma. The essence of dharma is non-violence; it is another name for it. Its power is such that the sword would drop from the Englishman's hand. The Muslim's lawlessness would be held back. Patanjali has said that violence becomes ineffective when confronted by non-violence. If this has not happened till this day it is because our non-violence has been that of the weak and timid.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sangh ke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 65-7

¹ Priests

54. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[Before *March 31, 1938*]¹

I did not mean to say that you should not stay with me or accompany me. I cannot take every member of my family to other people's houses.

My health will not permit me to do much work in Calcutta. Even if Birlaji consults me I shall not give him much time;² it all depends on my health. Do only what Shankerlal asks you to do. I shall regain my health, if at all, only on my return to Segaon

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2470

55. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELANG,

[On or before *March 31, 1938*]³

Gandhiji was asked in Delang what the Ministers' attitude should be over the appointment of Acting Governors in the Provinces. . . . He said that acting appointments should not be made from among the services in the Provinces.

Ministers will not relish the idea of a subordinate official suddenly becoming Governor to whom they have often to refer for guidance and who may even preside over their deliberations. Such a Governor cannot act with detachment nor can he command the respect and confidence of the Ministers. I should think that the Viceroy or the Secretary of State would think twice before making such appointments. Ministers would be right, indeed it might be their duty, to protest against such an appointment. I do not know that such an appointment might not be, *casus belli*. In the Colonies generally I have known the practice of Chief Justices of Supreme Courts acting as Governors in the absence of permanent ones.

Harijan, 2-4-1938

¹ From the addressee's letter to Gandhiji, as also from the contents of this letter, it appears that this was written from Delang which Gandhiji left on March 31, 1938.

² The addressee wanted to discuss with Gandhiji the Birla Mills labour problem.

³ Gandhiji was in Delang till March 31.

56. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What a gift so early in the morning! But if even one mistake is not corrected immediately, it will lead to a succession of others. All the same I will tolerate thousands of mistakes, but I can never part with you. Even death at the hands of a *bhakta* is preferable to salvation at the hands of those who have no love for one. There is, therefore, no question of your leaving.

Now I will list your mistakes.

I don't blame Durga or Velanbehn at all. Ba has already made atonement; not by fasting but by confessing her lapse to me with utter simplicity. She thus made holier yesterday our holy relationship of over fifty-five years.

But what did you do? Either your negligence or your blind love for Durga let her do a wrong thing. And afterwards when you came to know of my pain, you started a fast without thinking. Fasting is no remedy for thoughtlessness or wrong-thinking. The remedy lies in right-thinking. When I came to know about your fast, I tried to dissuade you, but to no avail. I advised you to think carefully instead of fasting. You did not do that. You did not even try to understand my point of view. Yesterday I asked you very tenderly whether you had understood what I said. The reply you gave then was not proper. Your behaviour was still worse. Instead of attending Maulana's speech, which it was your duty to do, you went away to cry. And as a result you threw a silly poem at me. Last night also you should have given some time to Maulana, which you did not do. You did not, thus, fully avail yourself of the opportunity of serving a Mussalman. Had my words yesterday had their intended effect, you would have gone today to Puri with a band of workers and would have shaken up Puri. But perhaps I myself was not sufficiently serious, otherwise I should have thought of this right in the beginning. If your duty is as clear to you as daylight, I would even grant a day's leave and also let you take along with you anybody who might be ready to go. This may be done even today if it is possible.

You say that you 'interpret' me, but may I ask to whom? Is it not to Velanbehn?

Your poetic imagination sometimes blinds you to reality. There is nothing but cowardice in your letter. If you decide to leave me, will Pyarelal stay on? And if Pyarelal leaves, will Sushila stay? Of what use to me is her extraordinary intelligence? She has such intelligence that it sometimes pains me to think that it will rust if she stays with me. Why does it not occur to you that I could let all of them go if I let you go? They will all run away. Lilavati will simply go mad. I will suffer even that, if such be my lot. But I will never send away you or anybody else. And yet how can I prevent anybody from running away? Let this incident inspire poetry in your heart. Correct your error if you see that you have made one. If you cannot see it, ask me to explain it to you. If you think that I have committed any error, correct me. This is no time for crying or fasting. You should read less, but think more. Study carefully all that has been done here. You yourself should utilize Sushila's and Pyarelal's talents and thus lighten the burden on you. Take work from Lilavati too. This incident shows me that being crushed under the weight of external activities, you think less. Thereby you will be able to do much less by way of 'interpreting' me.

How much more shall I go on writing?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not revising. I have finished the letter just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11594

57. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 31, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I am sorry that I will not be able to speak today. But it is as well that it is so. I have already written to Ba and made my suggestion regarding Kanam. If she permits you to take charge of him, do so. If you do, you should give up the kitchen work. You may give some help if necessary. Mix well with Nanavati. Talk less. Don't speak thoughtlessly. Never shout at anybody. Our servants are not mere servants. Treat them as your own little brothers and sisters. Cultivate

cordial relations with Mirabehn. She is doing very good work at present.

Continue to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9370. Also C.W. 6645. Courtesy: Lila-vati Asar

58. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 31, 1938

CHI. AMTUSALAAM,

How are you? Would you not regard Sushila's letter as coming from me? You yourself wrote that I should not write [myself], that a letter from Sushila or anyone else would suffice. If you steadied your mind you must soon get well. I am all right. The rest from Sushila's letter. You did well to have your tonsils removed.

Keep on writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 398

59. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 31, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I got your letter. You will not receive any salary but I shall let you have time to read books on spirituality and so on. You will be posted nowhere but in Segaoon. I see no inconvenience in your visiting your home once a year. I might send you to Wardha if any work comes up there. If you find these conditions acceptable, you may come over on the 15th April or even earlier depending on my reaching there. Remember, moreover, that my stay in Segaoon is rather uncertain, although I shall certainly spend there the four months of the rainy season. Anyway, in Segaoon you shall have ample *satsang*¹.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4290

¹ Literally, company of good men

60. LETTER TO SARASWATI

March 31, 1938

CHI. SARASWATI,

Ba and I were very sorry that you could not come, but what could be done? We have to live as God disposes, shouldn't we? I hope to send for you soon enough. Can you stand the heat? Will you keep up your studies? Reply promptly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N 6166. Also C.W. 3439. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

61. INTERVIEW TO RAJA OF PARLAKIMEDI

BIRBOI,

March 31, 1938

The Raja Saheb¹ requested Gandhiji to enlighten him on the policy of the Congress with regard to the zamindari system.

Gandhiji who is observing silence owing to ill-health wrote the following on a slip of paper:

I am glad you have come. I wish I were speaking and well enough for a fairly long discussion. You are quite right in saying that I do not wish the extinction of old zamindaris. All Congressmen do not think so. The remedy lies in the hands of zamindar friends. How it is so, I have shown through the articles I have written. Nevertheless, if you so desire, I will gladly set apart some time to meet your friends. That cannot be in Calcutta. I am hardly in a fit state to cope with the work I have there. I can, therefore, only see you at Segaoon when I reach there unless there is a breakdown in my health.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-4-1938

¹ Ex-Premier of Orissa

62. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 1, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
WIRE HEALTH TEMPERATURE

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3851. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7007

63. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[April 1, 1938]¹

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

You must not be in a hurry to leave the hospital. Leave only when the doctor permits. Restrain your eagerness to come to me. I am quite well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 715

64. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

CALCUTTA,
April 1, 1938

AMTUSSALAAM
EASTERVILLA
SANTACRUZ

GLAD YOUR DISCHARGE. HEALTH ALL RIGHT.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 408

¹ *Vide*, "Letter to Amtussalaam", 31-3-1938 in which Gandhiji enquires after her health following an operation for tonsillitis.

65. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 2, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

HEALTH ALL RIGHT. WRITING. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3852. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7008

66. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 2, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I sent you a wire¹ yesterday and no reply as yet !!! I hope it is well with you. I do not like these frequent attacks. I know that earth and water are the two cures. Of course light and air are there; you have a fair dose of them. But not of the other two. You must take the hip, friction and sitz-baths and have abdominal and local earth band-ages.

There is no set-back in my health. But Ba foolishly entered the Puri temple and it upset me terribly.² I must not give you the whole history. I have not yet got over the shock. The pressure therefore has just now steadied round 175-80 and 108-104. The mental fatigue I had lost has returned. I have lost perhaps 5 lb. in weight. As soon as I am free from the Calcutta business I shall make up for the losses. I impose long silences on myself and hope to continue them for the time being. This is being written during silence.

Prabhavati is with me. Jayaprakash was with me at Delang. He brought Prabhavati with [him].³ He has gone to Dacca and will pick her up on his return. Probably there will be a note from her with this.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to amtussalaam", 1-4-1938

² This temple had not been thrown open to the Harijans.

³ The source has: "He brought P. with me." In *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, however, this has been changed to: "I brought P. with me."

I often thought of you in Delang and wished you were there. There was much to see and learn.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Wire just received.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3853. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7009

67. *LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA*

April 3, 1938

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I do not understand why you abandoned your work among the stone-breakers and the tongawalas. I stopped you from coming to Segaon for a short visit but it is different if you want to come for good for the sake of service. I am a little afraid that you will get tired quite soon; what will you do in Segaon? Take it that coming over merely to serve me is nothing but false attachment. I am weary of the overwhelming service I receive. I fear it may make a cripple of me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall accommodate Deka somewhere if he comes only to serve.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2469

68. *STATEMENT TO THE PRESS*¹

April 3, 1938

My attention has been drawn to the press report purporting to give the gist of the conversations that took place between Sir Nazimuddin² and me on April 2. The conversations were strictly confidential and, therefore, the report can only come from a fertile journalistic brain. Ever since I have entered upon this self-imposed mission on behalf of political prisoners and detenus, I have made

¹ Published under the title "No Assurances Given"

² Khwaja Nazimuddin, Muslim League Home Minister of Bengal

known the terms upon which I have intervened. But the giving of assurances by prisoners or detenus as a price of freedom has never crossed my mind. As a civil resister, I would not be guilty of inducing any political prisoner to give such assurances. And I can also add that during my talks with the prisoners at Alipore and Howrah jails and the Regulation III prisoners at Hijli, they made it absolutely clear to me that they would give no assurance to anyone for the purpose of purchasing their freedom. I wish for the sake of the cause that the news papers will not anticipate events. Every unauthentic report adds to my difficulties which are already formidable.

Harijan, 9-4-1938

69. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 4, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This is not a final draft¹. I want you to read it sympathetically. I feel that unless we do some such thing, the tension must continue. Anyway at one o' clock I won't take all of you by surprise. I have discussed the subject with the Maulana at some length.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

70. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,

April 4, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is a strictly business letter. You want a p.c. when I am ill, I send you a letter to say I am really well. The breakdown was mental, not physical, due also to mental causes as you will learn from *Harijan*.² It is Mahadev's version of as he saw me and felt me. If he

¹ Presumably of the resolution on the C. P. crisis, which the Working Committee passed later at Calcutta

² Mahadev Desai's article "A Tragedy", published in *Harijan*, 9-4-1938, described Gandhiji's anguish at Kasturba's and Durga Desai's visit to the Puri Temple which was not open to the Harijans. For the text of Mahadev Desai's article, *vide* Appendix I.

missed my love in all I did, it was missing. Love to be love must be felt by the loved one at some stage or another.

I am taking the strain really well. I have done a lot of writing and I am none the worse for it. I may have to go to Delhi in a few days' time. You will hear if I have to.

Did I say anything about your offer to do some of my work in the Punjab? I fancy not. But how can I ask you to face the Lahore heat? How can I bear your separation from Shummy¹ whilst he is in Simla? And to what end? It may prove an utterly fruitless and thankless errand. I have not the courage to exploit you for the Punjab muddle. And where is the time? Your hands are already more than full.

My work here is not prospering. Only I do not lose hope.

If I go to Delhi it will be only for a few hours.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3625. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6434

71. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,
April 4, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I am distressed that my return is being unduly prolonged. The suspense must be terrible for you. But if you have found your bottom, you won't be upset. In spite of what you may see from the papers or other sources, believe me I am quite well. Deep down in me there is the feeling that I shall stand the strain I have still to go through. The people spare me generously. The weather is not trying. I shall feel happy if I know that you are not worrying over the delay in returning or over my health. After [all] we are in God's hands for everything.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6399. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9994

¹ Col. Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother

72. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
April 4, 1938

DEAR LORD LINLITHGOW,

I have to thank for your letter¹. I have delayed writing for a day. I did not know what to say, nor do I know now. My movement is so uncertain. I am in the hands of the Bengal Government. I should come as early as I can before the 18th instant. May I simply send by wire to P. S. V. the day of my arrival in Delhi without giving therein the sender's name? I may be able to leave even in a day or two.

Now about secrecy, I am bound to tell some of my friends what I am doing. I am anticipating such permission. I shall of course see to it that nothing goes to the Press. The fewest possible persons will be told.

I assume too that you refer to secrecy before we meet. Isn't secrecy impossible after we have met ?

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

73. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[Before April 5, 1938]²

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Yes, you may stay on while I am in Calcutta. What do you gain by placing so much faith in me? I am not perfect, nor am I free from passion. Only last night I had a dirty dream. This is not a good thing. What can you hope to gain by living with such a person? Know me as

I am. A Bapu who exists only in your imagination will not be of

¹ Dated March 31, in which the addressee had expressed a desire to meet Gandhiji once again and have a general talk with him, preferably before April 18, when the addressee was to leave Delhi on tour.

² The letter is entered in Mahadev Desai's Diary under the date April 5, 1938; *vide* however the following item which appears to refer to this.

any use to you. Whatever I have in me is known to the world. You can draw from it a good deal wherever you may be. You know my definition of freedom from passion, don't you? Such a man, even though virile, does not become sexually roused in thought word or deed, whether waking or asleep. I am striving to become such in this very life. If I succeed you will benefit by being with me. Let us see what God wills.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You can show this to anyone. Do show it to Mahadev and others.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2467

74. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

April 5, 1938

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I described myself as I saw myself.

Yes, you may go to Segaon whenever you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2468

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 6, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

Today is the fasting day¹ and I think of you all. I have decided provisionally that even though I may not finish my work, I shall leave here not later than 12th. May leave earlier. I shall hope to reach you not later than 16th. This is all unconscionably long but I have become perfectly helpless. A day out of Segaon is a day lost. But there it is and here I am. God will have His way.

¹ Since 1919, April 6 had been observed as Satyagraha Day—a day of fasting and prayer—to protest against the Rowlatt Act; *vide*” Telegram to Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay and “An Autobiography”, sub-title “That Wonderful Spectacle”

I am well. Details from Sushila in so far as she gives them.

I hope Balkrishna is keeping well. If he feels the heat, he should have the tattis¹ to keep him cool. He must sit in water hip-bath. In the afternoon he may take abdominal bandage.

I hope you are not feeling the heat overmuch.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 6400. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9995.

76. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 7, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You won't be disturbed over the news that S.² may give you today. Blood-pressure may help doctors. It is no help to patients. When they feel bad, they are bad. Such was my case last night. The same kind of pain in the back of the head. But gentle massage by S. brought me round in a few minutes and there is no return. B. P. was 154/98 at 12 noon. It rose again later to 170/98 or something like that. So you are not to worry. When the real alarm comes, you will hear after the event and then there must be no idle sorrow but greater dedication to service.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Did you observe 6th April ?

From the original: C. W. 3626. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6435

¹ Screens made of *khas*.

² Sushila Nayyar

77. *LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR*

[After April 7, 1938]¹

CHI. SUSHILA,

What shall I write? You will have received my letter of yesterday. After I wrote it, I saw Pyarelal's letter. May God grant you courage and peace. If you cannot find peace there, you have always got my bosom such as it is.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

78. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

April 8, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You must excuse the pencil hand. You should tell Paul that you are not interested in the tours he suggests, your time being solely occupied with your own affairs. You should send Rs. 100 telling him that you had not expected your donation to be treated as a yearly call. The present one should therefore be treated as final. Future calls will be treated on their own merits and your then commitments.

I like George. I have not yet read his pamphlet.

Sir Mirza's² herewith with correction.

Poor Prabha ! She had to go to Patna.

I am well in spite of the work. I may leave even tomorrow or on Monday.

Papers herewith.

Love. In haste.

TYRANT

[PS.]

George's pamphlet is all right. He may go on with the movement.

From the original: C. W. 3854. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7010

¹ This letter is written below a letter from Mirabehn to Gandhiji, dated April 7, 1938.

² Mirza Ismail, Dewan of Mysore.

79. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

CALCUTTA,
April 8, 1938

With a smiling face Mahatma Gandhi came out of the Presidency Jail at 5 p. m. after having been closeted with 14 state and four women political prisoners for about three hours. While leaving the jail gate, Mahatmaji was approached by the Associated Press. He said he had a long talk with the prisoners, but that was all he could say at this stage. Asked if he was going to see the prisoners again, Mahatmaji said:

I may, but not this time.

Further questioned, he said he might have one or two more meetings with Sir Nazimuddin, the Home Minister, to complete his negotiations, but there is no possibility of his meeting the Governor again now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-4-1938

80. THE CHOICE

My remarks arising out of the recent riots in U.P.¹ have attracted much attention. Friends have sent me cuttings from the Press. This is some of the criticism printed or spoken :

- (1) My writing betrayed hysteria.
- (2) I wrote without sufficient data.
- (3) I had recanted my views on non-co-operation and civil resistance.
- (4) I had been driven to the policy of the Liberals.
- (5) Congressmen had never adopted non-violence as between themselves.
- (6) I was expecting the impossible from human nature.
- (7) If my position was accepted swaraj would never be obtained, for all India could never become non-violent.

There is much more I could cull from the criticism. I have only taken the relevant parts.

1. If my article betrayed hysteria, the symptoms still persist, for in spite of the criticism which I have studied with the care it demanded, I see nothing to change the position I have taken up. The

¹ *Vide* "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

critics should remember that my proposition was specific and narrow. Swaraj could not be obtained through non-violent means unless our non-violence was of the brave and such as to be able to deal effectively with violence. I have not maintained that it could not be obtained by other means. But if it could be so obtained we were not ready to deliver the goods, for we were not ready for matching our force against the British.

2. All the data required were that there were riots, no matter on how small a scale, that Congressmen were not able to deal with them non-violently, and that the aid of the police and the military had to be summoned. There was no dispute about these three broad facts. They were enough to enable me to draw the conclusion I did. In this there was no reflection on the Ministers. I have admitted that they could not have acted otherwise. The fact, however, remains that the Congress non-violence was not able to cope with the emergency.

3. There is nothing in my article to warrant the inference that I had lost my faith in non-co-operation and civil resistance. All I need say is that it is brighter than ever. The two are quite enough to bring swaraj, provided that non-violence practised is of the bravest.

4. I wish I could be drawn towards the policy of the Liberals. I have many personal friends among them. But they have no sanction. I claim that I have an infallible sanction. My article was written to show that during the riots it was not the sanction that had failed, the failure was of the organization which had accepted the sanction, namely, active, constructive non-violence.

5. I can only refer the critics to the many resolutions of the Congress which do not confine the use of non-violence only towards Englishmen. Indeed I remember having many discussions at the Working Committee meetings at which the necessity of non-violence among ourselves was emphasized.

6. Well, human nature has hitherto responded nobly to the call of non-violence. But I am concerned with the Congress nature. Congressmen have to sign a pledge which commits them to non-violence.¹ My question was and is—have they non-violence in them? If they have, is it of the brave? My thesis is that if it is of the brave, it should be enough for dealing with the riots and for delivering the goods.

¹ The practice was started in 1919 at the time of the satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act; *vide* "Instructions to Volunteers", 26-2-1919

7. This is answered in the foregoing.

But I have the fear that our non-violence is not of the kind required. Congressmen may not treat my warning lightly. After all I am supposed to be the Congress expert, however inefficient, on non-violence. I have confidence in my readings and my remedies. I cite Ahmedabad and Viramgam violences¹, Bombay violence during the Prince's visit,² and Chauri Chaura³ on the eve of Bardoli. The results have amply justified the remedies applied at my instance, though on these occasions critics were not wanting who had expressed their strong disapproval of the suspensions. I have no doubt about my present diagnosis [or] about the remedies. The remedies are not beyond our ability if we have a living conviction about non-violence and its nature. Here are some of the remedies :

1. We must discover a solution for the Hindu-Muslim tension. I use that expression deliberately instead of 'communal'—for if we find this, the other will follow as a matter of course.

2. There must be a purging of the Congress registers so as to make them proof against bogus voters. From all accounts I receive, our registers contain too many bogus names to be called at all accurate.

3. Congressmen must not be afraid to find themselves in a minority.

4. Without delay every Provincial Congress Committee should raise a proper corps of volunteers pledged to non-violence in thought, word and deed. And there should be a manual of instructions as to training, etc., prepared for universal use.

There is nothing heroic or impracticable in these suggestions. But they are impracticable if those who lead have no living faith in non-violence. If they have not, the sooner non-violence is removed from the Congress vocabulary the better it is for the Congress and the nation. The alternative is certainly not unadulterated violence. The Congress is the only political organization in the world which has, at my instance, adopted unadulterated non-violence for the attainment of swaraj. It is its only sanction. I dare say that if its quality is not what it

¹ In April 1919 during demonstrations against Rowlatt Act ; *vide* "Press Statement on Suspension of Civil Disobedience", 18-4-1919

² On November 17, 1921; *vide* "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921

³ In February 1922; *vide* "The Crime of chauri Chaura"

should be, it will do great harm to the nation. In the last heat we may be found to be cowards instead of brave men and women. And there is no disgrace greater than cowardice for fighters for freedom. Surely there is nothing to be ashamed of in retracing our steps. If we feel that we shall not be able to displace the British power without a violent struggle, the Congress must say so to the nation and prepare accordingly. We must do what is being done all the world over—‘forbear when we can, hit when we must’. If that is to be our creed or policy, we have lost precious seventeen years. But it is never too late to learn and mend. Seventeen years in the life of a nation is nothing. It will go hard with Congressmen if having received the warning they do not make the choice.

Harijan, 9-4-1938

81. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

April 9, 1938

I AM LIKELY TO BE IN DELHI ABOUT 19TH.
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE I SHOULD LIKE TO MEET
YOU THERE INSTEAD OF IN BOMBAY IN ORDER
TO SAVE TIME AND ENERGY. IF AGREEABLE
MAULANA WILL ACCOMPANY ME.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-7-1938

82. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

April 9, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

If you can, stay on till I return. If you think it is your duty to leave, do so. If this is still not clear, ask Amritlal and do as he advises.

I hope to return in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujrati: G. N. 7079. Also C. W. 4571. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

83. *SPEECH AT KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR*

April 10, 1938

Gandhiji said that he would like to spend at least a day in the Ashram, but he was unable to do so this time owing to his preoccupations in Calcutta. He found it difficult to express in words his love for the Ashram and the Ashramites, and urged them to carry on their mission of spreading the use of khadi amongst the masses.

Through Sodepur, he added, they were serving the entire Hindustan. Mahatma Gandhi hoped that their services would be more and more appreciated all over the country.¹

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-4-1938

84. *INTERVIEW TO P. R. THAKUR*²

CALCUTTA,
April 10, 1938

Mahatmaji intimated his good wishes to Mr. Thakur and desired that he should follow in the footsteps of his noble grandfather, Sree Guru Chand Thakur, who devoted his life to the cause of the Scheduled Castes. He further added that the Congress would try its level best to stamp out the sin of untouchability from the soil of Bengal. He asked Mr. Thakur to visit the different Congress Provinces and study for himself the Congress work and activities for the uplift of the Scheduled Castes and make a propaganda in Bengal so that the Bengal Scheduled Castes might respond to the clarion call of the Congress for achieving India's political end.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-4-1938

85. *MESSAGE TO PEOPLE OF MIDNAPUR*

[Before *April 11, 1938*]³

I hope that Midnapore will show that it stands for unadulterated non-violence. In my opinion that is our greatest need.

The Hindu, 12-4-1938

¹ Gandhiji's Hindi speech was translated into Bengali by Hemprabha Devi Das Gupta.

² P. R. Thakur, M. L. A., had told Gandhiji that the Scheduled Castes in Bengal would willingly co-operate with the Congress if Harijan uplift programmes undertaken by the Congress Ministries were followed in Bengal as early as possible.

³ The message was sent through Subhas Chandra Bose who visited Midnapur on April 11.

86. *LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD*

CALCUTTA,
April 11, 1938

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Please forgive the pencil hand.

I wish I could be with you to witness the enthusiastic response of the young men to your call. But that cannot be. I hope the enthusiasm will last and that soon illiteracy will be banished from Bihar.

Tell Begum Mahmud with my love that she has no right to invite me till she has given up the *purdah*. Has not the Prophet said that the real *purdah* lies in the woman's chasity?

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MR. SYED MAHMUD
MINISTER OF EDUCATION
PATNA, BIHAR

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5083

87. *TALK WITH PRISONERS*¹

[On or before *April 12, 1938*]²

I am at the end of my resources and although I am ready to return to Bengal if the Government of Bengal wants me, very much, I am afraid, will depend on my health.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

² According to *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 13-4-1938, Gandhiji paid his last visit to the political prisoners on April 12.

88. MESSAGE TO GURUKUL KANGRI

CALCUTTA

April 12, 1938

A serious problem faces the teachers and students of the Gurukul: How can the country and dharma be protected—by truth and non-violence or by untruth and violence? How nice it would be if the Gurukul could provide the answer to this question with its head as well as its heart.

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

89. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

April 12, 1938

Approached by waiting Pressmen as he came out,¹ Gandhiji said that he would be issuing a statement on the subject of their discussion either that evening or on the following day.² Pressed further as to whether any settlement was arrived at, Mahatmaji pointed out to Sir Nazimuddin and told the journalists to approach him.

Sir Nazimuddin, however, expressed his inability to state whether any agreement had been reached or not.

As he came out with Gandhiji, Sir Nazimuddin introduced Maulana Abdul Rashid Tarkabagish of Bogra as a leader of the Proja Party. At that Gandhiji humorously remarked that in that case he had got to please the Maulana.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-4-1938

90. TALK WITH CONGRESSMEN³

CALCUTTA,

[On or before *April 13, 1938*]⁴

I have found my task here Herculean and I am sure any other person would have slunk away from it. I have the patience of a Job, but even that was on the point of being exhausted. But now I have a

¹ After the interview with Khwaja Nazimuddin.

² *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 13-4-1938

³ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Notes"

⁴ Gandhiji left Calcutta on April 13.

ray of hope bright enough to light my path to Wardha. I now want your hearty approval, not mechanical consent to my suggestion to stop all demonstrations and receptions and addresses, in order that the ray of hope may be multiplied a hundredfold.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

91. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 13, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

MANORVILLE

SIMLA

REACHING DELHI TOMORROW NIGHT. LEAVING DAY
AFTER. QUITE WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3856. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7012

92. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 13, 1938

CHI. PRABHA

I had your letter. You must have received mine. I do not like your worrying all the time. You must regain perfect health.

I hope Jayaprakash is well. Write to me fully. Don't postpone writing till I write to you. I am going to Delhi for a day. I will leave there on the 15th and reach Wardha on the 16th. I am fairly well. The blood-pressure at present is 154/100. I observed a fast today¹, but didn't feel it.

The work here has remained unfinished. Perhaps I shall have to come back. I do hope that everything will be all right. But why need we concern ourselves with the result? Write to me regularly. Write to Ba also. And don't forget A. S.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3511

¹ It being Jallianwala Bagh Day

93. LETTER TO ANANDI BUCH

April 13, 1938

CHI. ANANDI¹,

Haven't you still got over the fatigue of nursing me? How is your home life? Have you set up house on your own? The amount of service which you two together render should be not twice but four times as much. There should be multiplication and not addition in such matters.

I had Puratan's² and Lalitji's letters. I am not writing to them separately. Won't this letter suffice ?

Both of you should daily read Chapter XII³ [of the *Gita*] and ponder over it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9163

94. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS⁴

CALCUTTA,

April 13, 1938

I regret to inform the public that the negotiations that I have been conducting with the Government of Bengal through Sir Nazimuddin have not yet been concluded. I must confess that my arrival in Calcutta was ill-timed, as the Ministers were all busy with the assembly work and as it was known that I should come back before the end of March, I felt it was unnecessary to ascertain Sir Nazimuddin's wishes about the time of my arrival. Had I taken the precaution of writing to him, I would not have found myself in Calcutta at an inauspicious moment. I have now to write a letter⁵ to Sir Nazimuddin, summarizing my suggestions which, I am assured, will be considered by the Government as speedily as possible and definite decisions taken—a process which, it is expected, will be completed within one month. It is

¹ Daughter of Lakshmidas P. Asar

² Puratan Buch, addressee's husband

³ Which describes the characteristics of a *bhakta*

⁴ This was published in the *Harijan* under the title "Negotiations Not Concluded".

⁵ *Vide* the following item.

hoped, however, that the decisions may be taken much earlier, and if it becomes necessary for me to return to Calcutta, I shall do so without hesitation, provided, of course, that my health permits it.

Meanwhile I must repeat that all agitation for the release of detenus and prisoners should be suspended while negotiations continue. I must also state that it is not conducive to the success of the negotiations if public demonstrations are held in honour of those who may be discharged. In my opinion, it is more dignified for Congressmen to exercise restraint. I have seen extracts of speeches and addresses as reported in the papers which do not betray any spirit of non-violence.

I may add that whilst I have been seeing the convicted prisoners and discussing with them their attitude to non-violence for my own guidance, the Government have made it plain to me that whatever the prisoners might state to me will not be allowed to determine their policy. They think that it will be improper for them to base their action on such assurances as I may issue. I fully appreciate the Government view. My talks with political prisoners therefore are purely for my own personal satisfaction.

In so far as the 14 Regulation prisoners are concerned, they gave me at the interview I had with them the following letter :

During your last visit you expressed your desire to be acquainted with our definite views on certain things. After giving full consideration to the matter we can only reaffirm what we said then. As long as we are in detention we are unable to discuss our past and future and our political opinion. Particularly when the talk of release is in the air it affects our sense of self-respect to say anything that may have some bearing on the question of our own release. We hope you will appreciate our standpoint and readily concede that we mean no personal disrespect.

It was signed by nine. Four other prisoners had not signed the letter but they associated themselves with the sentiments expressed therein, and the fifth gave a letter very similar to the foregoing.

Harijan, 16-4-1938

95. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

[April 13, 1938]¹

DEAR SIR NAZIMUDDIN,

In accordance with the understanding of yesterday, I submit herewith my suggestions :

(1) I understand that the detenus, including the Regulation III prisoners, will be discharged and all restrictions upon their liberty will be removed inside of one month from this date.

I can only hope that I shall not have to return to Calcutta in that connection. Should my presence, however, be required, I shall gladly come whenever wanted.

(2) With regard to the convicted political prisoners I suggest that—

(A) the ailing prisoners should be discharged forthwith irrespective of their terms of imprisonment;

(B) those who have less than 6 months to serve should be discharged forthwith;

(C) those who have 18 months or less, but over 6 months to serve, should be discharged within 3 months;

(D) those who have longer terms than 18 months to serve should be discharged within one year at the most.

(3) Those releases should be contingent upon a public understanding between the Government and the Opposition, that is, the Congress Party, to the effect that—

(A) there shall be no public demonstrations or processions in honour of those detenus or prisoners who may be discharged;

(B) there should be no agitation, directly or indirectly, initiated or countenanced by the Congress Party to depart from or improve upon the settlement that may be arrived at. In other words, so far as Bengal at any rate is concerned, the question of the release of detenus and political prisoners shall cease to be a Party question or a

¹ Although the addressee in his letter of April 17 to Gandhiji acknowledges this as of the 12th, this was obviously written after the “Statement to the Press”, 13-4-1938; *vide* the preceding item.

matter of public controversy.

I have purposely refrained from entering into any argument in favour of the suggestions made herein. I have discussed them threadbare with you and you have very patiently listened to me.

Whatever the fate of the negotiations and suggestions, it is agreed between us that a final decision will be taken by the Bengal Government within a few days, certainly within one month from today.

You have told me that any assurances the prisoners or detenus may give me about non-violence could not or would not be allowed by the Government to influence their decision. But, as you know, I have interested myself in their cases on the strength of their disavowal of violence for the attainment of India's freedom. Therefore, for my own satisfaction, I discussed the question with them and whilst they did not want to make any statement for the sake of furthering their release, they assured me that they had no faith in violence for securing India's freedom. I believe in their assurance and it would be a pity if such men could not be discharged.

I forgot to mention one thing during our conversations of yesterday. The prisoners at Dum Dum asked me whether I had received the many messages they had sent me through the usual channels. I cannot recall having received any, except the messages from the Midnapur girl prisoners. Whatever may have happened in the past, I trust that in future you will kindly issue instructions so as to ensure the delivery of their messages to me, assuming, of course, that they are not objectionable.¹

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C. W. 9919

¹ In his reply dated April 17, the addressee wrote: "In view of the wording of the paragraph (1) of your letter which refers to detenus, I think it desirable, in order that there may be no misunderstanding, to repeat what I stated at the commencement of our interviews that proposals made by me personally as a basis of settlement in the course of negotiations were, and are, subject to, and, basis of settlement in the course of negotiations were, and are, subject to, and, conditional upon, the approval of the Government of Bengal as a whole.

"Secondly, what I endeavoured to convey at our last interview was simply this—that, subject to an agreed solution of the problem of convicted prisoners being arrived at, I felt sure you would not be dissatisfied with the action that the Government would in that event take regarding State prisoners and detenus."

96. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
April 13, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

A wire has gone to you telling you I am well and going to Delhi and thence at once to Wardha. Of Delhi you will know from the papers and later from me or Mahadev after the work is finished.¹

I am really well and have stood the strain in a wonderful manner.

The negotiations² have been difficult but I have hope of their being successful. Everything will depend upon the result of my appeal³ for restraint. I might have to come again.

One of these days Mahadev or I must tell you all about the interview with the girls⁴ but not before we meet.

It will be good if you can go to Ooty and pass a day with me on your way.

Mind I am likely to have to go to Bombay on 25th to see Jinnah.

So, Mrs. Subbaroyan is in the Assembly. I suppose you meet her often.

Of course there is no chance whatsoever of my arbitrating over the Shahidganj issue. It almost defies a reasonable solution.

This U. P. dacoity⁵ is a disturbing affair. Heaven knows what is in store for this country.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C. W. 3627. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6436

¹ Gandhiji was going to meet the Viceroy on April 15.

² With the Government of Bengal

³ Vide "Statement to the Press", 13-4-1938

⁴ Presumably Bina Das and Ujjala Majumdar who were sentenced to nine and ten years' imprisonment respectively and whom Gandhiji met at Presidency Jail, Calcutta, on April 12.

⁵ Staged by terrorists on April 11 at Pipribih, on the North Eastern Railway between Allahabad and Kanpur.

97. DISCUSSION WITH BENGAL CONGRESSMEN¹

CALCUTTA,
[April 13, 1938]²

The difference between your view and mine is based on the question whether the Zemindari system is to be mended or ended. I say it should be mended, and if it cannot be mended, it would end itself. You say that it is incapable of being mended.

In these words Gandhiji summed up the difference between the Socialist school and what may be called the Satyagrahi school, before an informal meeting of Calcutta Congressmen.

Q. The zemindars and *mahajans* are the instruments of the bureaucracy. They have always sided with it and are an obstacle to our progress and freedom. Why should not the obstacle be removed ?

A. They are indeed part and parcel of the bureaucracy. But they are its helpless tools. Must they for ever remain so? We may do nothing to put them away from us. If they change their mentality, their services can be utilized for the nation. If they will not change, they will die a natural death. If we have non-violence in us, we will not frighten them. We have to be doubly careful when the Congress has power.

Q. But can't we say the system of zemindari is an anachronism and should go, by non-violent means of course?

A. Of course we can. The question is: 'must we ?' Why can we not say to the zemindars, 'These are the evils which we ask you to remove yourselves'? I admit that this presumes trust in human nature.

Q. Would you say that the Permanent Settlement³ should remain ?

A. No, it has to go. The way to make the *kisans* happy and prosperous is to educate them to know the reason of their present condition and how to mend it. We may show them the non-violent way or the violent. The latter may look tempting, but it is the way to perdition in the long run.

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "Kisans and Zemindars". Among others who attended this informal meeting were Subhas Chandra Bose and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

² From *The Hindu*, 14-4-1938.

³ Introduced by Lord Cornwallis in 1793.

Q. But don't you agree that the land belongs to him who tills it ?

A. I do. But that need not mean that the zemindar should be wiped out. The man who supplies brains and metal is as much a tiller as the one who labours with his hands. What we aim at, or should, is to remove the present terrible inequality between them.

Q. But the mending process may be very long.

A. Seemingly the longest process is often the shortest.

Q. But why not parcel out the land among the tillers ?

A. That is a hasty thought. The land is today in their hands. But they know neither their rights nor how to exercise them. Supposing they were told neither to move out of the land nor to pay the dues to the zemindars, do you think their misery would be over? Surely much will still remain to be done. I suggest that that should be undertaken now and the rest will follow as day follows night.

That led up to the question of the Kisan Sabhas, their relations with the Congress, their scope and their function.

My opinion is clear-cut, having worked among the *kisans* and labour all my life. There is nothing constitutionally wrong in the Congress allowing the Kisan Sabhas to work independently nor in allowing the office-bearers of the Kisan Sabhas to be office-bearers of the Congress, for they will come in the usual way. But my study of separate *kisan* organizations has led me definitely to the conclusion that they are not working for the interests of the *kisans* but are organized only with a view to capturing the Congress organization. They can do even this by leading the *kisans* along the right channels, but I am afraid they are misleading them. If the *kisans* and their leaders will capture the Congress by doing nothing but authorized Congress work, there is no harm. But if they do so by making false registers, storming meetings and so on, it would be something like Fascism.

But the main question is whether you want the Kisan Sabhas to strengthen the Congress or to weaken it, to use the *kisan* organization to capture the Congress or to serve the *kisans*, whether the Sabha is to be a rival organization working apparently in the name of the Congress or one carrying out the Congress programme and policy. If it is really a rival organization and Congress organization only in name, its strength and energy will be utilized in resisting the Congress and those of the Congress will be utilized in resisting the Kisan Sabha,

with the result that the poor *kisans* will be ground between the two mill-stones.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

98. FOREWORD TO “THE PERSIAN MYSTICS”

April 14, 1938

Sir Jogendra Singh is to be congratulated on having given us his rendering into English of the “Sayings of the Mystic” by Abdullah Ansari¹. Islam has given the world mystics no less than Hinduism or Christianity. In these days when irreligion masquerades as religion, it is well to remind ourselves of what the best minds of all the religions of the world have thought and said. We must not, like the frog in the well who imagines that the universe ends with the wall surrounding his well, think that our religion alone represents the whole Truth and all the others are false. A reverent study of the other religions of the world would show that they are equally true as our own, though all are necessarily imperfect.

M. K. GANDHI

The Persian Mystics

99. LETTER TO RATILAL MEHTA

April 14, 1938

BHAI RATUBHAI²,

Maganlal³ writes that Chhaganlal's⁴ condition is pitiable. He has incurred debts and has suffered losses. Do you know about his real condition? Does he listen to you? I have written to him, but I don't expect a reply. I hope you are keeping well.

I write this in a moving train.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7176. Also C. W. 4672. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

¹ Sheikh Abdullah Ansari of Herat, 1005 A. D.-1090 A. D.

² Father-in-law of Chhaganlal Mehta

³ Sons of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta

⁴ *Ibid*

100. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 14, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Give the enclosed¹ to Ratubhai.

Kanaiyo is quite happy. I do feel unhappy that I am not able to pay the attention that I ought to pay him. If I could but manage it, I could take much work from him. I am fairly well. I am writing this in a moving train.

I hope everything is well with you. Are you quite satisfied with Kamala? I return to Wardha the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III. Also C.W. 8543. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

101. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
April 14, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

You have done something really excellent.² Act in the same manner in future also. And now the answers to your questions³.

1. It has not been my experience that in daily life it is untruth and dishonesty that always triumph. We of course come across instances of these sometimes winning, but if we look deep into the matter we shall see that the real triumph goes to truth.

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² The addressee had helped an old Mussalman fellow-passenger on the train who had lost his ticket (*Harijan*, 14-5-1938).

³ These, briefly, were:

(i) Would it not have been proper for the ticketless passenger to evade the ticket-examiner? Didn't dishonesty often pay ?

(ii) How far was it proper for the addressee to advise him to be honest ?

(iii) What right had the ticket-examiner to let the passenger off ?

(iv) Not himself having any money to pay, how could the addressee have appealed to other passengers to pay the ticketless passenger's fare ?

(v) If the passenger could complete his journey to Madras, would it have been right for the addressee to see him out of the platform on a platform ticket ?

If, however, the victory of truth was always self-evident, what would be its value, and what would be the merit of adhering to it? Is not this the reason why the *Ishopanishad*, which is regarded as authoritative as the Vedas has this *mantra*, that the face of truth is covered with a golden lid? We are dazzled by the splendour of that lid.

2. Now the second question. It may not be our lot always to suffer, but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't advise other people to follow the seemingly strait and narrow path of truth. Even if the old man had been able to hide himself and reach Madras, what would it have availed? Where was the guarantee that he would not have got caught somewhere? And why should we assume that he had to suffer because finally he had to get down? We don't always know what is for our good. We should, therefore, proceed blindly on the assumption that the path of truth cannot but lead to our good.

3. It was certainly within the right of the ticket-examiner to let that man go. If, however, he did not think he had such a right, he could not have neglected his duty out of false pity. But even in that case he could have issued the man a ticket and paid for it from his own pocket or could have collected the money from other passengers.

4. Supposing the examiner did not let the man travel, nor issued him a ticket with his own money, and the old man had therefore to miss the train or go to jail, why should he have minded that? If he was a lover of truth, he should have faced that cheerfully. And we are thinking here about the duty of a lover of truth. Even though you are not maintaining yourself with money earned by yourself, on an occasion like this, which arises only once in a while, you could have paid something yourself and collected the balance from the other passengers. If the latter had paid anything, so far so good; but even if they hadn't, you would have done your duty. But I didn't feel, either, that even the little you did was not enough.

5. Had the examiner let the man travel to Madras, he could have informed the ticket collector there that he had used his discretion in letting him go. But supposing he had refused to do that, it would not have been right for the old man to get out of the station with the help of a platform ticket. However, the way out of that situation would have been easy. You yourself could have explained his condition to the ticket collector and if the latter had not been convinced he could have kept the man in custody. These days, however,

they don't follow that practice since it puts the railway company to a loss; the ticket collector merely shouts angrily at such persons and lets them go.

If you have any doubts even after reading these answers to your questions, ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7334. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

102. LETTER TO BAL KALELKAR

April 14, 1938

CHI. BAL,

I am writing this on a train to Delhi. I will leave Delhi tomorrow and reach Wardha the day after. You will have read about the visit before you get this.

I am writing this just to tell you that I have not forgotten you. I always wish that you should progress spiritually and in health even as you are cultivating the intellect. Progress in all the three spheres necessarily includes progress in each.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7969

*103. INTERVIEW TO "PRATAP"*¹

KANPUR,

*[April 14, 1938]*²

Q. Do you approve of the decision of the Congress Working Committee regarding the C. P. Ministerial crisis ?

A. I cannot say anything in this matter. I cannot describe the working Committee's decision as wrong.

Q. Do you think you have succeeded in your mission regarding the release of the Bengal political prisoners ?

A. Let us hope so.

Q. Have you been invited by the Viceroy to Delhi ?

¹ A Hindi daily of Kanpur

² Gandhiji passed through Kanpur on April 14 *en route* to Delhi.

A. It appears that the public knows more about it than I do.

Q. Are you expected to discuss the question of political prisoners at Delhi ?

A. I do not know what I shall do at Delhi.

Q. What is your purpose in going to Delhi ?

A. I am afraid I cannot say anything about it.

Q. Do you think that the Congress will accept the Federation, if certain changes were introduced in it ?

A. How can I say what the congress will do in this matter ?¹

Q. What will you recommend to the Congress in case modifications are made ?

A. Let us see what these are.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-4-1938, and *The Statesman*, 15-4-1938

104. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

April 14, 1938

MY DEAR ANGAD²,

My heart goes out to you. What does it matter that on some things we do not see eye to eye? I must however ask one question. Did you think it lawful to sexually love the married lady or do you say that although it was wrong you could not help yourselves, and having fallen, the only honourable course for you was to marry ?³ I need to know this, if I may, to see how far we have drifted from each other and what philosophy guides us. The fact that you are a seeker of Truth is enough to sustain the bond between us.

I hope you are completely cured.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

¹ What follows is from the correspondent of *The Statesman*.

² The monkey-prince sent as a messenger by Rama to Ravana. Gandhiji gave the addressee this name as he had carried his letter of March 2, 1930, to the then Viceroy, Lord Irwin; *vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930

³ The addressee had married Ethel Mannin, a divorcee.

105. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

DELHI,
April 15, 1938

IF ON RETURN BOMBAY YOU CAN BREAK JOURNEY AT WARDHA FOR ONE DAY YOU WILL SPARE ME THE STRAIN OF UNDERTAKING THE JOURNEY TO BOMBAY. I NEED SOME UNINTERRUPTED PHYSICAL REST IF POSSIBLE. IN ANY EVENT COULD MAULANA AZAD ACCOMPANY ME AT THE INTERVIEW? PLEASE WIRE WARDHA WHICH REACHING TOMORROW.¹

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

106. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We are moving towards Wardha. I am in a fit condition. I have started the day with 160-4/98—an unusual thing nowadays. And mark you, up to Gwalior the crowds won't let me rest. They would shout in my ears, as it were.

Mahadev I have sent to the Frontier to see things for himself. He should be there three or four days.

It was a nice chat with the Viceroy. Quite inconclusive. It was not meant to be conclusive. It was an exchange of ideas. More when we meet.

You must make yourself fit in Simla. You must take the hip-baths and exercise. It is criminal to tie yourself to the desk. Play tennis daily, if it suits you.

Sushila has remained in Delhi. She must have written to you.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3628. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6437

¹ In his reply the addressee telegraphed: "Extremely sorry unable change programme now. Will receive you at Bombay on 25th or thereafter as arranged. Would prefer to see you alone."

107. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

ON THE TRAIN,
April 16, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Lately you have been figuring in my dreams. Shall I call it attachment or love? Be that as it may, you have become a big question-mark for me. "You have already taken one; you want to take the other one too?" These words of Mother still echo in my ears. Her concern was justified. My duty is clear. At least today your place is not with me. If Pyarelal finds his moorings, it will be well. But if that does not happen I shall consider myself worthless. And what can a girl like you do by living with a worthless person? There is no strong reason for you to leave your mother's lap. I failed in my duty when I let you ignore the letter from Delhi. You should have accepted one of the jobs offered. Even now if the posts have not been filled, you may still write, 'It so happens that I can now entertain one of the pro-positions, if the posts or any of them be still open.'¹ Your duty is to be near Mother and earn. And even while you earn, increase your know-ledge as much as you wish. This is my considered view. Mahadev will say the same. I shall convey this to Pyarelal. If he has anything else to say, I shall write again.

Stop worrying about me. The night passed well. In the morning the blood-pressure was 164/102. Even otherwise I am feeling fine.

How can I forget the service I had from you? How can I reward it? How and why should a father reward a daughter? God will reward you. It will be reward enough if Pyarelal's mind becomes quiet. If that does not happen, what good will be a reward? You did your duty. Why should you be concerned with the fruits of it?

You must go on writing to me. God will show you the right path.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ In English in the source

108. LETTER TO PYARELAL

April 16, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Now you may know the reason why I feel light at heart. If I want to act on your letter, who is there to stop me? But you should know my decision. Sushila's pure love has showed me the way. For your sake she is starving herself. I was overawed when I learnt about it. There is no pretence, no outward show. I was terribly perturbed. If Sushila has to starve herself as she is doing, is my love so only in name or does it serve any purpose? Mother's tears made me resolve that if Pyarelal's life could be put on the rails then I would be qualified to keep Sushila. If that does not happen, I would stand disqualified in my own eyes. If my non-violence is not capable of melting your heart, how would it help in winning swaraj? You have become part of me. If I cannot keep you, I am worthless. Mother's words were not the words of an ignorant woman. Her candid words emanated from her great anguish. They went direct to my heart, and she was fully entitled to tell me all she did. When others hear such words of truth, it will only benefit them. Hence, at that time I lightened my heart by taking the decision that if Pyarelal cannot convince me of the justice of the step he wishes to take, he should give up his fast, whether complete or partial. If in his innermost heart he cannot be persuaded, he can by all means abide by his decision and then I will eat when he eats and starve when he starves. When he fasts I will fast too. If he should leave, my fast will commence from that very moment. This thought occurred to me after I heard about Sushila. I made my resolve after seeing Mother's anguish. She will tell you everything on reaching home. God has willed otherwise. If you go from here, you will be breaking your vow. I cannot quietly sit at Segaon till the visit to the Frontier Province materializes. And (at Segaon), you should start nothing until I am settled there (Segaon).

But this is making a mountain out of a mole-hill. A new phase has begun for me. My love for you will be as much as for swaraj. If the spark that Sushila has kindled is enough, God will grant me the strength to quietly adhere to my resolve.

If you have become part of me, then your duty is clear. You must do as I say. By doing so, you will benefit yourself, me, Sushila and Mother, who is like a cow. Then all of us will strive together for

swaraj. The happiness and peace of many others like Mahadev, for instance depend on your peace of mind. If you can believe it, do this much in good faith. Nothing should be given up for fear that I may resort to fasting. Duty should never be forgotten. If you think that it is clearly your duty to go, who am I to stand in the way? If there is any room for the slightest doubt, give the benefit of it to me whom you have accepted as father.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

109. LETTER TO PYARELAL

Second letter

[On or after *April 16, 1938*]¹

CHI. PYARELAL,

I had finished writing the enclosed² when Sushila gave me your letter. You did not quite understand. What I had decided is mentioned in the enclosed letter. Even if deep down Sushila has any misgivings as to what may be good for her, she must submit to Mother's love. But if she feels that it is to her good to be here she must remain firm and put up with Mother's lamentations. I wanted to take back the letter today. In my opinion, from all points of view, Sushila's good lies in being here. But even you may not agree on that point. I am not enamoured of medical degrees nor for that matter [education] in England. Those who learn do so after getting their degrees. But this is my position. I have written this to show how my views about someone's good can appear distorted and short-sighted. Hence if there is any need for thinking, it has to be done only by Sushila.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It is true that Mahadev should have informed me. But now that is over. Here we have a situation where Ba worships Sushila. What does anything else matter?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ From the contents it would appear that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated April 16, 1938; *vide* the preceding item.

² Presumably the foregoing letter

110. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[AFTER APRIL 17, 1938]¹

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What you say is correct from the economic point of view; but I look at it, and I ought to look at it, as a purely political issue.² We cannot enter into any agreement with Lancashire which will bind us to buy their cloth. The argument that Lancashire cloth is bound to come here anyway is irrelevant. There has been no change in the Congress position, as it has always been explained to the people, as regards Lancashire cloth. I think, therefore, that we cannot enter into the sort of agreement you suggest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

111. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

WARDHA,

April 18, 1938

THANKS. 25TH HAPPENS TO BE MONDAY. WILL REACH
BOMBAY 28TH IF NOT INCONVENIENT.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

¹ The addressee in his letter dated April 17 had written: "I thought I might clear the point again as regards the Indo-British Trade Pact. The period of protection expires next March and in any case the amount of protection will be revised. I believe that Lancashire would in any case get a 5% reduction in the tariff. The question therefore is: should we give Lancashire a grant of 5% under the recommendations of the Tariff Board without asking for any *quid pro quo* or should we insist on a pact based on 5% reduction and a definite guarantee by Lancashire to purchase a large amount of Indian cotton? ...Purely from the economic point of view, we would not think of giving a free gift of 5%. But from the political point of view there may be reasons for taking up such an attitude. I should like you therefore to send me, at your leisure, your arguments in favour of such a position which, you will agree, would appear to be anomalous from the economic point of view. Because under this position Lancashire will get what she wants without having to pay anything for it."

² *Ibid*

112. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

April 18, 1938

MY DEAR KU,

3 p.m. on 21st if that will suit the members. I know it is a hot time but I am helpless. Will you prefer 6.30 to 7.30 a. m., or have I to go to Wardha on 21st morning ?

You will talk to me about finances when we meet.

Yes, there must be a joint committee for the Museum.

Rajkumari comes on 22nd by the Calcutta Mail at 7 a.m. (is it?). Look up the time-table. Will you receive her and pack her off here? I may not be able to send anyone from here.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10134

113. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,

April 18, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Pyarelal wrote to you yesterday. If you can come, we shall discuss a few things. But if you cannot it doesn't matter. I have had a talk about the land in Gujarat. I think it impossible to do anything more about Nagpur now. Let things take their own course. The entire policy requires careful consideration. In any case, I have to be there on the 28th to meet Jinnah. I intend to return the same day. Did you call on Jalbhai? Do you write to him. ?

I request you not to take me to the sea coast. And on May 6-7 your committee is meeting at Wardha. I am really keeping

fine health. Mahadev is expected back on the 20th or the 21st.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 219

114. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,

Silence day, April 18, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Pyarelal told me that you had cried and my heart wept. A wicked person sees everyone as wicked. Do I also belong to the same category? How very perverted I must be to imagine even for a moment perversity in a pure-hearted girl like you? Why should you serve me? Where do I have the right to take service from you? Your duty is clear. Stay with Mother and do whatever work of service you can from there. It is too true that I have ruined the life of a saintly man like Pyarelal. Is that not enough? Am I a godfather to you or the opposite of one?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

115. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 18, 1938

CHI. SUMI,

You write to me only rarely. Are you trying to pay me back in the same coin? Write to me a long letter in Hindi. Kanam is fine. He thinks of you sometimes.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

116. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

WARDHA,
April 20, 1938

IF NOT INCONVENIENT WOULD LIKE TO REACH YOUR
HOUSE AT 11-30 A. M.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

117. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

SEGAON,
April 20, 1938

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You are by . . . ¹ doing credit to your birthday . . . ² The policy of neglecting your health . . . ³ and carrying on somehow or other is immoral. Have no doubt about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Some words are illegible here.

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

118. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
April 21, 1938

DEAR SIR NAZIMUDDIN,

I thank you for your letter.¹ Of course, I understand that everything has to go to the Cabinet before the final decision is taken. My suggestions were, therefore, intended to be independent and for examination on their merits. Only, I had felt that the policy so far as the detenus are concerned was a reiteration of that adopted by the Cabinet. I am anxiously awaiting your final decision. But before it is taken, if my presence is considered necessary you are only to send me a line—even a wire if necessary.²

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C.W. 9921

119. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAY

SEGAON,
April 21, 1938

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Bapuji has received both of your letters. He says he had a talk with Jammalalji about sending Ba. He will certainly send her if she can be sent. There is no objection from Bapuji's side.

About the prisoners he says that we have to await the decision regarding the Bengal prisoners. Only after that shall we know what can be done about the prisoners of the other provinces. About the prisoners there we shall discuss when there is an occasion for you to write about them.

Yours,
PYARELAL

From the Hindi original: Haribhau Upadhyay Papers, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ *Vide* footnote 1, "Letter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 13-4-1938

² The addressee on May 6 replied: "The Muslim League Conferences made it impossible for the Assembly to meet in Darjeeling until April 20. The Cabinet at once took the matter into consideration and definite conclusions have been reached. I am afraid that, in any circumstances, a short delay may be inevitable before we are in a position to communicate with you further. This delay will not, I anticipate, be much, and you can rest assured that I and my colleagues have taken and are taking every possible step to expedite the matter."

120. SPEECH AT VIDYAMANDIR TRAINING SCHOOL,
WARDHA¹

April 21, 1938

Today the students of the Vidyamandir have taken a solemn pledge. It is a momentous pledge. Its fulfilment would seem well-nigh impossible. This pledge binds one to serve without a break for twenty-five years on a monthly salary of Rs. 15. The fact that more than five thousand applications² were received is proof that unemployment in our country has reached the extreme limit. Some persons, while working for high ideals cannot get even dal and rice; many persons cannot obtain work to fill their bellies.³ It is also proof of the glamour that surrounds Government employment. I know that people apply for constabships or teacherships in the hope of adding to their legal pay in illegal ways. I hope that no one of you entertains any such hope. I do not know that with all my patriotism I could bind myself to serve as a teacher for Rs. 15 per month. You must dismiss from your minds the thought that there may be profits left over in your schools to be divided amongst you. If, therefore, there is anyone among you who repents of the contract, you will ask the Minister to relieve you. I promise to plead for you. Having said this, I tender my congratulations to those who hold to their contract. I hope that God will give you strength to abide by your pledge.

Yours is a self-sacrificing pledge. If you prove true to your pledge you will set a noble example before the world. If you do not succeed, both Ravishankar Shukla and I will be condemned by the world. So the weaklings had better withdraw now.

This scheme is wholly Indian. Its ideal was born in Segaoon. Real India is enshrined in the seven lakhs of villages, whose plight is even worse than Segaoon's. I want you to drive away illiteracy from these villages, find out means whereby villagers can obtain food and clothing, and take the message of winning swaraj through truth and non-violence to the villages. This responsibility rests on you. It is your

¹ The school, a combination of the Wardha Scheme and Ravishankar Shukla's Vidya Mandir Scheme, was to be conducted under the supervision of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh.

² Out of these 166 candidates were selected.

³ The remaining part of the paragraph is from *Harijan*.

dharma to work with this ideal in view. I have presented my scheme after mature deliberation. If it fails, the teachers would be to blame. It is through handicrafts that instruction in geometry, history, geography and arithmetic will be given and an attempt will be made to meet the expenses of the school through the students' manual labour.¹

You know that the scheme of this education has been drawn up in pursuance of the Congress programme. Now the Congress is pledged to win swaraj by non-violent and truthful means. Therefore the cultivation of these cardinal virtues is the foundation of the scheme. And if you do not show these in your daily contact with your pupils and a character in keeping with them, you will fail and so will your school. You know what Hitler is doing in Germany. His creed is violence, of which he makes no secret. The other day we were told that the sword was their soul. The boys and girls there are taught the science of violence from the beginning. They are taught to hate the enemy even in their arithmetic, and you will find that the examples have been chosen with a view to inculcate the military spirit. If we endorse their creed, we must recognize the necessity of inculcating the spirit of violence from infancy. The same thing is happening in Italy. We must be honest even as they are honest. I have no doubt that if the scheme is worked with all its implications and becomes popular throughout India, a silent revolution will have taken place and swaraj will be a certainty.

Herr Hitler is achieving his goal through the sword, I through soul. Cast off the cloak of foreign thoughts and ideals, identify yourselves with the villagers. The Western world is giving us destructive knowledge; we want to impart constructive education through non-violence. May God give you the strength to reach your cherished goal and to fulfil the pledge which you have taken today.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 30-4-1938, and *Harijan*, 30-4-1938

¹ The following paragraph is from *Harijan*.

121. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

April 22, 1938

I observe that the forthcoming interview between Shri Jinnah and myself is not only attracting very wide attention, but is also inducing high hopes in some. Then there are friends who gravely warn me against this visit and against building any hope on the interview. It is better, therefore, for me to take the public into my confidence and tell them why and how I am waiting upon Shri Jinnah on April 28.

He has himself published my first letter¹ to him, showing my attitude on the question of communal unity, which is as dear to me as life itself. In that letter I clearly stated that all before me was darkness and that I was praying for light. If anything, the darkness has deepened and the prayer become more intense. Add to this the fact that for causes some of which I know and some of which I do not, for the first time in my public and private life I seem to have lost self-confidence. I seem to have detected a flaw in me which is unworthy of a votary of truth and ahimsa. I am going through a process of self-introspection, the results of which I cannot foresee. I find myself for the first time during the past 50 years in a Slough of Despond. I do not consider myself fit for negotiations or any such thing for the moment.

There is no need for any speculation as to the cause of my despondency. It is purely internal. It comes from within. It must be now clear that, if I regarded the forthcoming interview as between two politicians, I should not entertain it in my present depression. But I approach it in no political spirit. I approach it in a prayerful and religious spirit, using the adjective in its broadest sense.

My Hinduism is not sectarian. It includes all that I know to be best in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism. I approach politics as everything else in a religious spirit. Truth is my religion and ahimsa is the only way of its realization. I have rejected once and for all the doctrine of the sword. The secret stabbings of innocent persons and the speeches I read in the papers are hardly the thing leading to peace or an honourable settlement.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 22-5-1937

Again, I am not approaching the forthcoming interview in any representative capacity. I have purposely divested myself of any such. If there are to be any formal negotiations, they will be between the President of the Congress and the President of the Muslim League. I go as a lifelong worker in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. It has been my passion from early youth. I count some of the noblest of Muslims as my friends. I have a devout daughter of Islam as more than a daughter to me. She lives for that unity and would cheerfully die for it. I had the son¹ of the late Muazzin of the Juma Masjid of Bombay as a staunch inmate of the Ashram. I have not met a nobler man. His morning *azan*² in the Ashram rings in my ears as I write these lines during midnight. It is for such reasons that I wait on Shri Jinnah.

I may not leave a single stone unturned to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. God fulfils himself in strange ways. He may, in a manner least known to us, both fulfil himself through the interview and open a way to an honourable understanding between the two communities. It is in that hope that I am looking forward to the forthcoming talk. We are friends, not strangers. It does not matter to me that we see things from different angles of vision. I ask the public not to attach any exaggerated importance to the interview. But I ask all lovers of communal peace to pray that the God of truth and love may give us both the right spirit and the right word and use us for the good of the dumb millions of India.

Harijan, 30-4-1938

122. MESSAGE TO JAIPUR RAJYA PRAJA MANDAL³

[Before April 23, 1938]⁴

Everyone who cares to study what is happening at the present moment in our country can see that what we want can be attained if we will but achieve the *mantra* of peace, the creed of non-violence. You cannot breed peace out of no-peace. The attempt is like gathering

¹ Abdul Kadir Bawazeer

² Call to prayer

³ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly letter". The message was sent through Jamnalal Bajaj who presided over the Conference.

⁴ Although the message was read out at the Conference by Jamnalal Bajaj on April 30, this was obviously drafted before April 23; *vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 23-4-1938

grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. The more I go into the question, the more forcibly the conclusion is borne in upon me that our first duty is to grasp this fundamental fact. There was a day when I used to flatter myself with the belief that I had mastered the key to learning that lesson. Today I am filled with doubt. I do not know that I have in me purification enough to realize true peace or non-violence. In that frame of mind I cannot think of any other thing, talk of any other thing. But whatever may be my condition, I have no doubt in my mind that there is no swaraj without non-violence, nothing that goes by the name of constructive work. Constructive work is a mild aspect of non-violence, but the true test of non-violence lies in acquiring the capacity to meet an innocent and unflinching death in the service of our cause. How to achieve it is the question. I want you to apply your minds to it.

Harijan, 4-6-1938

123. *MARTIAL* v. *MORAL*

It is often forgotten that the Congress has only moral authority to back it. The ruling power has the martial, though it often dilutes the martial with the moral. This vital difference has come to the fore since the assumption of office by the Congress in seven provinces. This office-holding is either a step towards greater prestige or its total loss. If it is not to be a total loss, the ministers and the legislators have to be watchful of their own personal and public conduct. They have to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion in everything. They may not make private gains either for themselves or for their relatives or friends. If the relatives or friends get any appointment, it must be only because they are the best among the candidates, and their market value is always greater than what they get under the Government. The ministers and the legislators of the Congress ticket have to be fearless in the performance of their duty. They must always be ready to risk the loss of their seats or offices. Offices and seats in the legislatures have no merit outside their ability to raise the prestige and power of the Congress. And since both depend wholly upon the possession of morals, both public and private, any moral lapse means a blow to the Congress. This is the necessary implication of non-violence. If the Congress non-violence is merely confined to abstention from causing physical hurt to the British officials and their dependants, such non-violence can never bring us independence. It is bound to be worsted

in the final heat. Indeed we shall find it to be worthless, if not positively harmful, long before the final heat is reached.

There is considerable force in the argument of those who have conceived Congress non-violence in that narrow light when they say that it is a broken reed.

If on the other hand non-violence, with all the implications, is the Congress policy, let every Congressman examine himself and reconstruct himself accordingly. Let him not wait for instructions from the Working Committee. After all the Working Committee can act only in so far as it interprets the public mind. And non-violence is not a quality to be evolved or expressed to order. It is an inward growth depending for sustenance upon intense individual effort.

I have received several letters offering the writers' names for enrolment as volunteers ready to immolate themselves at times of rioting and the like. To these writers I would suggest that they enlist co-workers themselves, form local corps, and begin training in accordance with the suggestion I have made. Let them not confine themselves merely to preparedness for emergencies, but for the daily walk of life in all its departments, personal, domestic, social, economic, political, religious. Only thus will they find themselves more than ready for dealing with emergencies in their own localities or beats. They may not aim, except indirectly, at influencing events happening hundreds of miles away from their scene of activity. That ability will come, if the right beginning is made in the first instance.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

124. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

CHI, JAMNALAL,

I have written to Lilavati Munshi and said " No". Wait for me on the 28th morning. You must have seen the wire I have sent to Khan Saheb. A letter¹ for Vallabhbai is enclosed. Read it and pass it on to him. If he is not there, post it to him wherever he is. Calm yourself.

¹ *Vide* the following item.

You may make any changes you like in the draft of the speech¹ I have sent to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 2990

125. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,

April 23, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter. Mahadev should be back here this evening. I hope to be there on the morning of the 28th. I may also meet the Governor informally on the same day. I can see him at 9 or 9.30.

I had a long talk with the Viceroy about Orissa, the land in Kheda, the detenus, etc. Orissa's case deserves consideration.² It will be possible to arrange a few days' stay in Gujarat at any time. Maybe I shall have to go to the frontier Province in May. I have sent a wire to Khan Saheb today. I shall know more when Mahadev arrives.

My health is good enough just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Read my statement³ regarding Jinnah. If I don't meet him, it is bound to be misunderstood.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 220

¹ Which Gandhiji had drafted for the addressee who was to preside over the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal; *vide* "Message to Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal

² In Orissa, Dain, a civilian, was appointed to act as Governor during the period of leave of Sir John Habback. *Vide* "Statement to the press", 29-4-1938

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-4-1938

126. LETTER TO MANUBEHN S. MASHRUWALA

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

CHI, MANUDI¹,

I get no time at all to write to you. But I do get news of you from time to time. I hope you will not stop writing to me because I do not write to you. Kanti and Saraswati have arrived today. They will stay for a month.

On the 28th I am leaving for Bombay for a day's stay. I shall probably return on the same evening. Come and see me. Bring Surendra² with you. I am keeping fairly well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1569. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

127. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

CHI, SHARDA,

It seems you are being sensible. I had really thought that after my letter you had abandoned the idea of going to Ahmedabad, in which case you should have told me. You had my permission, but I would want to know. Now stay with Shakaribehn³ to your heart's content. Also tell her from me that there is a lot of difference between what she told me and what she had in mind. She must talk to me without reserve. She must let me know through you what she wants. I do not intend doing anything against her wish. Stay there as long as necessary on condition that you maintain your health. Give me regular account of how you spend your time. You should not be too sure of a letter from me.

I shall write to Saraswatibehn when I have the time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9993. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

¹ Daughter of Harilal Gandhi

² Addressee's husband

³ Addressee's mother

128. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

SEGAON,
April 23, 1938

I have your letter. Riots appear to be our fate.¹ At such a time there is special need for us to meet.² What is important is the urge that impels us to meet. I have today sent to the press a statement³ which might have been drafted precisely to answer your questions. Read it and think over it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 167

129. *LETTER TO PRESIDENT, MYSORE STATE CONGRESS*

April [24,]⁴ 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

B. Chandrasekhara, D. Chandrasekharayya, B. Ramachandran have seen me with reference to the recent unfortunate arrests that have taken place in Mysore. I am sorry that Siddhalingaiya and seven other friends are in jail over what has been called the flag satyagraha. I had hoped that after the full talks I had with friends including Siddhalingaiya at Delang there would be no friction between the state and the Congress. With the concurrence of these friends and their hearty approval I had given Sir Mirza a fairly full summary of the conversation they had with me. Sir Mirza had been writing to me about developments, but I was loath to intervene unless I had heard from the State Congress.

I must also admit that my preoccupation in Bengal would have most probably prevented my doing anything even if you or any member had written to me. Today I had a full discussion with the friends above named. I feel that there has been some misunderstand-

¹ The reference is to Hindu-Muslim riots in Allahabad.

² Gandhiji is here referring to his proposed meeting with Jinnah.

³ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 22-4-1938

⁴ The source has "14". But on April 14, Gandhiji was on way to Delhi from Calcutta. Presumably it is a slip for "24". The representatives from Mysore met Gandhiji at Wardha and they were in Bombay on the 26th on their way back to Mysore.

ing or some haste on the part of overzealous workers. Thus I had clearly advised at Delang that the confining of membership of the Mysore State Congress only to primary members of the Indian National Congress was wholly wrong and that in effect it made the State Congress an Indian National Congress organization even though it might be unaffiliated. In my opinion that is contrary to the spirit of the Haripura resolution¹ on the subject and, what is more, calculated to defeat the end you have in view. And as Sir Mirza was in possession of my opinion, the action of the State Congress in spite of my advice was evidently the first cause of misunderstanding and the hoisting of the flag was evidently interpreted as a challenge to the State and the State Flag. I am quite clear in my mind that such was not the intention of the authors of the demonstration but we may not expect the State authorities to go behind our action and interpret it in terms of our intention expressed or implied. On the contrary they would infer intention from action. I, therefore, suggest that necessary change is immediately made in the State Congress constitution and an unequivocal declaration is made to the effect that the hoisting of the National Congress flag is in no way intended as a hostile demonstration or insult to the State flag. If Mysore is an integral part of India, as it is, it should be equally proud of the All-India national flag as it must be of its own.

It will also be necessary for you to make it clear that you will not hoist the national flag on ceremonial occasions where persons other than registered Congress members are admitted, unless you also at the same time hoist the Mysore flag. Remember, you are not in a state of rebellion against the Maharaja. So far as I understand you do not aim at the destruction of the Principality of Mysore. You aim at

¹. The relevant part of the resolution read:

“In view of the different conditions prevailing in the States and the rest of India, the general policy of the Congress is often unsuited to the States and may result in preventing or hampering the natural growth of a freedom movement in a State. Such movements are likely to develop more rapidly and to have a broader basis, if they draw their strength from the people of the State, produce self-reliance in them, and are in tune with the conditions prevailing there, and do not rely on extraneous help and assistance or on the prestige of the Congress name. The Congress welcomes such movements, but, in the nature of things and under present conditions, the burden of carrying on the struggle for freedom must fall on the people of the States. The Congress will always extend its goodwill and support to such struggles carried on in a peaceful and legitimate manner, but that organizational help will inevitably be, under existing conditions, moral support and sympathy.”

radical reforms. If such is the case, you may not ignore the Mysore flag on ceremonial occasions, if you have also the all-India flag.

If, therefore, you could see your way to adopt my advice I should think that the State authorities will release the prisoners as they should. When the operating cause ceases there is no meaning in keeping political prisoners in jail. Please remember that satyagraha has to be full in thought, word and deed. If I have understood the situation correctly, I must confess that albeit entirely unconscious, from both truth and non-violence. Truth demanded the carrying out of what I had understood would be done and I had conveyed to Sir Mirza. I know it was open to the State Congress to reject my advice.

But in that case I should have been told so that I would have informed Sir Mirza accordingly. There was a flavour of violence because any hasty or thoughtless action is a breach of non-violence. I am well aware that such meticulous observance of non-violence and truth is not to be expected from the rank and file. But then satyagraha cannot be launched by the rank and file. It has to be launched by responsible persons who are versed in the law of satyagraha.

I understand there is to be a black-flag demonstration. It savours of violence. I hope if there has been any such idea, it will be abandoned.

I need hardly say that my letter carries no authority save what it may possess on account of my supposed expert knowledge of satyagraha. You are at perfect liberty to reject the whole of my advice if it does not commend itself to you and other members of the State Congress.

If you can get permission, you should see Siddhalingaiya and other prisoners and if it is at all possible arrive at a unanimous decision.¹

The Hindu, 7-5-1938

¹ According to the source the letter was cancelled on receipt of news of the Mysore firing.

130. SPEECH AT HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH¹

WARDHA,
April 24, 1938²

We have to make of this training school a school for winning freedom and for the solution of all our ills, of which the chief one is our communal troubles. For this purpose we shall have to concentrate on non-violence. Hitler's and Mussolini's schools accept as their fundamental principle violence. Ours is non-violence according to the Congress. All our problems have therefore to be solved non-violently. Our arithmetic, our science, our history will have a non-violent approach, and the problems in these subjects will be coloured by non-violence. When Madame Halide Edib Hanum delivered her address to the Jamia Millia Islamia on Turkey I remarked that whereas generally history is a chronicle of kings and their wars, the future history will be the history of man.³ That can be or is only non-violent. Then we shall have to concentrate not on city industries but on rural industries, that is to say, if we want to keep all the 700,000 of villages alive, and not only a fraction of them, we have to revive our village handicrafts. And you may be sure that if we can impart scholastic training through those crafts we can bring about a revolution. Our text-books will have also to be prepared with the same end.

I want you to give your close consideration to what I am saying and reject what does not appeal to you. If what I say does not appeal to our Mussalman brethren, they may reject it summarily. The non-violence I want is not non-violence limited to the fight with the British but is to be applied to all our internal affairs and problems—true active non-violence from which will issue live Hindu-Muslim unity and not a unity based on mutual fear like the pact, for instance, between Hitler and Mussolini.

When the New Education Scheme was launched I was full of self-confidence in which I now feel I am lacking. My words had power of which they seem to be bereft today. This lack of confidence is due not to things without but to things within. It is not that my senses are paralysed. My intellect gives me good work for my age.

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

² From *The Hindu*, 25-4-1938

³ Vide "Prisoners Condition", 10-10-1908

Nor is it that I have lost faith in non-violence. That faith is burning brighter than ever. But I have for the moment lost self-confidence. I would therefore ask you not to accept anything from me implicitly. Accept only what carries conviction to you. But I am sure that if we could conduct even two schools on the right lines I should dance with joy.

Harijan, 7-5-1938

131. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
April 25, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is a copy of Mahadev's notes on his Frontier Province visit. As I could not go and as we had disturbing news¹, I felt that he should be sent. I am not circulating the notes among all the members. I am sending copies to the Maulana and Subhas. The notes have made me disconsolate. Mahadev has more to say. I am sending a copy, of course, to the Brothers². I hope you will feel impelled to use your great influence over the Brothers. I am of course in telegraphic communication. I may even visit the Province for a few days, if Khan Saheb wants me to go, in spite of the shock I have received. We seem to be weakening from within. It hurts me that, at this very critical juncture in our history, we do not seem to see eye to eye in important matters. I can't tell you how positively lonely I feel to know that nowadays I can't carry you with me. I know that you would do much for affection. But in matters of state, there can be no surrender to affection, when the intellect rebels. My regard for you is deeper for your revolt. But that only intensifies the grief of loneliness. But I must stop.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Presumably this is a reference to the tragedy at Mayar; *vide* "Speech at Mardan", 7-5-1938.

² Khan Brothers

132. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON,
April 25, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

You have become lazy in writing letters. Nowadays I eagerly await your letter. I couldn't bear the news that you had a fainting fit. Moreover, is it not my unworthiness that you couldn't remain calm this time although you were with me? I am not joking. These days I often feel my unworthiness. That hinders my work, too. You have to rely on your own efforts to attain peace of mind. Why do you want me to tear up your letters? Is there anything confidential in them? Since you wish, however, I do tear them up. But you should shake off this shyness. Write to me freely and let me know all your thoughts. I hope Father is keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3512

133. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

April 25, 1938

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I understand your point.¹ It is also correct. Do give your approval, looking at it purely from the economic point of view. My point was that in case you wanted Congress approval later on, you would not get it. After all, economic and political interests should not be at variance. There is no difference between them. The rulers have taught us the difference.

I shall be needing Rs. 50,000 for rural education and maybe an equal amount for the A.I.V.I.A. The burden of the Harijan Sevak Sangh is already there. This needs to be discussed further. I hope Brijmohan is well and so is Krishna.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7992. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ With reference to Gandhiji's letter (p. 31), the addressee had *inter alia* written: "I fear it will be very difficult for the Congress to justify its position if it took up the attitude suggested by you. I can understand refusing to conclude an agreement on economic grounds. But your grounds being purely political, it would look rather odd if after having kept silent for eighteen months, the Congress now comes out to denounce the resolutions which were taken up at their request."

134 . LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

April 25, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Do whatever you want after due deliberation. I shall certainly like it. May God give you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4300

135. MESSAGE FOR MYSORE

[April 27, 1938]¹

Do everything possible to keep the movement absolutely non-violent.² The death of a large number of pilgrims, if true, is too high a price to pay. If necessary, I am prepared personally to lead the movement in Mysore, wherever I happen to be in India.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-4-1938

136. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,

April 27, 1938

I approach the Frontier visit³ in fear and trembling. I dread the crowds that gather at stations. I have only limited physical energy. I would, therefore, urge all Congress Committees *en route* to prevent crowds from coming to platforms, making noisy demonstrations and even insisting on my getting up at all hours of night.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-4-1938

¹ Mahadev Desai's telegram to the Press dated April 27 stated that Bhupal Chandrasekharayya, representative of the State people was leaving that evening for Mysore with Gandhiji's message.

² On April 26 at Viduraswatham village in Kolar District, when the people defied the order banning the hoisting of the national flag and prohibiting meetings, the police opened fire and as a result 32 persons were killed and 48 seriously injured.

³ Gandhiji left for the Frontier province on April 29.

137. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[Before April 28, 1938]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

On receipt of your letter I sent you a wire advising postponement of publication.¹ See what Nawab M. I. Khan says. He feels hurt that you want publication. In the circumstances, it is best not to insist on publication till after my meeting with Jinnah. His reference to me also has the same meaning. It is no use publishing the correspondence if it increases bad blood. Don't you think it is wise to wait?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

138. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[Before April 28, 1938]²

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am getting restive about the talks with J. Are you hastening the matter? I am holding up some of my actions for that purpose.

I hope good news continue to come about Indu³.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Presumably of the correspondence between Jawaharlal Nehru and Nawab Muhamed Ismail Khan from November 10, 1937 to February 5, 1938 and between Jawaharlal Nehru and Jinnah from January 18, 1937 to April 16, 1938; *vide Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. 8, p. 245.

² From the reference to talks with Jinnah, presumably on the Hindu-Muslim question which took place in Bombay on April 28, 1938; *vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 28-4-1938

³ Indira Gandhi

139. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
April 28, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

C/O YWCA

ANANDAGIRI

OOTACAMUND

TALKS¹ NOT UNHOPEFUL. AM² WELL.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3857. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7013

140. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS³

April 28, 1938

We had three hours' friendly conversation over the Hindu-Muslim question and the matter will be pursued further. The public will be informed in due course of its developments.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-4-1938

141. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

JUHU,
April 29, 1938

BHAI PAKVASA,

I only knew from a newspaper yesterday, as we were nearing Kalyan Junction, of the wrath that has descended on you. However, God's wrath is in fact an expression of His kindness. He takes back what He had given. I don't wish, therefore, to offer you any condolences. On the contrary, I want a promise from you that you will not lose fortitude. May this loss increase your devotion to service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4679. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

¹ With M. A. Jinnah.

² The source has "and".

³ This was issued jointly by Gandhiji and M. A. Jinnah.

142. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

April 29, 1938

The appointment of Mr. Dain, a subordinate of the Orissa Government, to be the acting Governor threatens to precipitate a crisis of the first magnitude. The matter looked small on the surface. The fact that he is to retire after the termination of the acting appointment has been regarded as sufficient atonement for an admitted mistake. In my opinion it is no atonement. If he is reverted to his original permanent post, not only would there not be anything wrong but if the Ministers wanted to be churlish, they might take a secret delight in their quondam acting Governor becoming their subordinate. The whole of the sting lies in a subordinate official becoming an acting Governor of his Province with whom the Ministers are expected to work and almost daily submit documents for his signature and have him to preside at their meetings.

It is incongruous and unbecoming and reduces autonomy to a farce. If this autonomy is real, and is to blossom forth into full freedom, nothing should be done by superior powers after the previous style. Every one of their acts must conform to a rule or convention. It must not depend upon the caprice of the Governor-General or even the Secretary of state for India. Wherever the prestige of autocracy depended upon its exacting obedience, willing or unwilling, from the ruled, the prestige of the superior authority that has voluntarily divested itself of autocracy and conferred autonomy should consist in always carrying the majority party with it. There is no other way that I can think of for the healthy growth of autonomy and the avoidance of friction.

The Viceroy and the Governors have bestowed unstinted praise upon all the Ministers of India. They have given no cause for the exercise of the more than ample powers reserved under the Government of India Act. The prestige of the majority party depends upon never sleeping over the rights of the people, never allowing a single error on the part of the superior authority to escape their vigilant eyes. Looked at in this light, the Congress, it seems to me, cannot allow the appointment to pass unchallenged.

I hear that the Orissa Ministry has threatened to resign as soon

¹ This was published under the title "Acting Governorship of Orissa".

as Mr. Dain occupies the gubernatorial chair. I understand too that an interim Ministry will be appointed to carry on the Government. I suppose that as soon as the acting appointment is over and the Governor returns from leave, by some arrangement the present Ministry will be reinstated. That won't be fair play. The Congress will stultify itself to submit to any such arrangement. The governance of a province is not like a play of children. The Congress is discovering what a thankless task it is, how serious it is. The real Ministers, who represent the real majority of the Orissa legislators, cannot look unconcerned on the administration of their province passing into the hands of new irresponsible persons appointed at the will of the Governor or acting Governor as the case may be. I do hope, therefore, that the mistake will be undone before it is too late. There are many ways of doing it gracefully. But there must be a will before a graceful way is found. I hope it will be.¹

Harijan, 7-5-1938

143. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS²

April 29, 1938

I enjoy the privilege of friendship with Sir Mirza Ismail. I know that he is anxious to liberalize the administration of Mysore. I have found him to be willing to listen to the advice and suggestions of friends. And I know that the tragedy³ which has been enacted in Mysore has filled him with distress.

I have read the communique issued by the Mysore Government. It does not read convincing to me. But for the advice that I am about to tender, I do not need an accurate knowledge of all the facts surrounding the tragedy. Seeing that I receive pressing letters, deputations and wires from representative people of Mysore for guidance, and seeing that I know so many workers of Mysore who look to me

¹ In response to this the Secretary to the Governor of Orissa issued the following communique on May 4, 1938: "In view of the instability of the political situation which he would be bound to leave to his successor, His Excellency the Governor of Orissa does not feel justified in proceeding with his original plan, and considers that he has in the interests of the province no option but to ask for the cancellation of the leave granted to him. The secretary of State has acceded to his request with the concurrence of the Governor-general."

² This was published under the title "Price for Gaining Liberty".

³ *Vide* footnote 2, "Message for Mysore", 27-4-1938

for a solution of their difficulties, it would be wrong on my part at this critical juncture to content myself merely with sending letters or even telegrams of advice.

One or two facts stand out prominently. There has been firing upon an unarmed crowd, resulting in several deaths and many more being injured. I will assume, though the information received by me on behalf of the public is to the contrary, that there was some provocation. We can never know with absolute certainty whether the firing was justified. There is no code which can give an exact definition of justification. It must always be a matter of opinion, and opinions always have a knack of varying.

What I, therefore, venture to suggest to the Mysore Government is that they should not be satisfied with making an inquiry, however impartial it may be. The demonstration that is going on in Mysore about the national flag is a symptom of the time.

I must confess that I was not aware of a popular awakening in Mysore on a wide scale, as there undoubtedly is. It gladdens me, as I hope it gladdens the Mysore authorities. I suggest, therefore, that the best and only remedy for the Maharaja and his Adviser, Sir Mirza Ismail, is to divest the Government of its autocracy and to make popular representatives responsible for the administration of Mysore. The responsibility must be on the broadest scale possible if it is to ensure peace in Mysore. It has been suggested that the state being backward, responsibility can only be a plant of slow growth. I have never subscribed to that doctrine. It is not a compliment to the States. One would expect them, with all the natural advantages in their favour, to show much greater progress than in unwieldy British India.

To the leaders of the people of Mysore I will say: These tragic deaths and injuries inflicted upon innocent persons would be a small price paid for the liberty of the people. They may make an enquiry and the injured and the heirs to the deceased may receive compensation. But if I were a Mysorean, I would not lay stress on personal gains; I would use these sacrifices for gaining the liberty for which they had been made voluntarily or involuntarily. They should also remember that one condition of success is the retention of a truly non-violent spirit and atmosphere under every conceivable circumstance. I have been told that the people have been behaving with exemplary non-violence and that the crowd bravely suffered the

firing. If that is proved to be the case, I for one will rejoice over the loss of life. It is the necessary price paid for gaining liberty.

Harijan, 7-5-1938

144. DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL¹

April 29, 1938

Sardar Vallabhbhai raised the question of the Lancashire Delegation coming out and asked Mahatmaji as to the lines on which the Congress is likely to approve of an agreement with U.K. Mahatmaji said that he could not see under what circumstances the Congress could be a party to agreeing to take cloth from Lancashire in return for cotton from India. He said that would be definitely against the whole creed of the Congress.

Sardar Vallabhbhai pointed out that the Advisory Committee was appointed on a recommendation of the Assembly and the report of the Advisory Committee and the recommendation of the Government of India thereon were, without division, demanded by the Assembly to be put before them. He, therefore, inferred that the Congress party in the Assembly were committed to negotiations with Lancashire, and he said that it would not be right for the Congress to go back on it. Mahatmaji said that he was not a party to these requests and demands, but he said that as far as the Advisory Committee were concerned, he would say to them as under :

1. The Advisory Committee may examine the trade pact from a purely economic point of view.
2. That if, on that examination, they could honestly recommend an agreement with U.K., including an arrangement with Lancashire, he saw no objection to their making such recommendation.
3. *Per contra*, if, on such examination, the Advisory Committee felt that they could not recommend such an agreement, he would not be sorry.
4. That any such recommendation made by the Advisory Committee, as constituted, would command his best attention, but he would advise the Advisory Committee to put in a paragraph at the end of their recommendation saying that they had examined the whole question only from an economic point of view and no other. Other points of view, viz., political, etc., were for the Government of India to consider and the Assembly to express an opinion on.
5. Mahatmaji, however, made it clear in unambiguous language that if the Advisory Committee felt that they could not put in any such observation out of what he calls self-respect, they may not do so. He said that, in that case, the Congress was quite capable of raising its own points. As I was leaving, he said:

¹ As reported by Purushottamdas Thakurdas

Do your best according to your lights and leave us to do our best according to the political light.¹

He added that both these expressions of opinion from different points of view would be equally valuable and consistent.

From Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers. Courtesy:Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

145. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN TO PESHAWAR,
April 30, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here, is a copy of the brief notes I have jotted down of the 3½ hours' talks with Jinnah. It may be that you and the other members may not like the basis. Personally I see no escape from it. My handicap today is that I do not move about the country, as you do, and a still more serious handicap is the inner despondency that has overtaken me. I am carrying on, but it is galling to me to think that I have lost the self-confidence that I possessed only a month ago. I hope that this is but a temporary phase in my life. I have mentioned this to help you to examine the proposals on their merits. I do not suppose the first will present any difficulty. The second is novel, with all its implications. You will not hesitate summarily to reject it if it does not commend itself to you. In this matter you will have to give the lead.

I expect to return on the 11th. Subhas in reply to my telegram suggesting that he should open formal negotiations with Jinnah telegraphs that he will be in Bombay on the 10th. I wish that you could also go there early. I am writing to Maulana Saheb in the same strain sending him a copy of this letter.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy:Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to G. D. Birla", 25-4-1938

146. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

[April, 1938]¹

I had a fairly long talk with Pyarelal last evening. He has agreed to shoulder the responsibility for dealing with all the letters that you may entrust to him. What I said was that Pyarelal and Kanu should open the letters, arrange them, pass on to you those that are for you alone to deal with and advise you as to the disposal of the rest. He should not take upon himself the responsibility of tearing up the letters; he should just write on them ‘may be torn up’, ‘may be kept’, etc. Only when something like this is done can your burden be made lighter, enabling you to work the way I want you to work. I do not know to what extent you have been able to assimilate the idea of non-violence. I am anxious to know this because it is necessary. That will be only when you have a variety of problems to tackle. More and more occasions present themselves each day. What can be done about the case of fanatical Muslims? How can we cope with it? I do not have a ready answer. But it is a thing to which you should give thought. In regard to N. W. F. P. your responsibility is of course great.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

147. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[April, 1938]²

Now, what is to be done. Mataji says you cannot go. Yes, it is indeed a matter of health. Everbody must agree to that. Nobody will let you die here. Of course, I have been a little careless. Lost in my own worries, I have neglected your eating and drinking. To an extent, I also trusted you. Mirabehn’s reason is altogether different. I have written her a letter saying that she spreads poison by talking to others about you and me. And so, she should not talk about you and me to

¹ From the contents, it appears that the letter belongs to April, 1938, when Mahadev Desai visited the Frontier Province.

² Inferred from the contents; *vide* Suppl. “Letter to Stretcher-Bearers”, 24-4-1900

anyone. She has found this a hard condition. That is why she is silent. No doubt that is a good thing to happen.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

148. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

May 2, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR

CARE YWCA

ANANDAGIRI

OOTACAMUND

HEALTH GOOD. WEATHER PERFECT. LEAVING FOR BOMBAY
TENTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original:C. W. 7858. Courtesy:Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7014

149. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

PESHAWAR,

[*May 2, 1938*]¹

AMTUSSALAAM

CARE ABDUL WAHEED KHAN

MANSA

HEALTH GOOD. WEATHER PERFECT. LEAVING TENTH MORNING. LOVE.

From a photostat: G. N. 372

150. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 2, 1938

Tell Khan Saheb that my health will not permit such a heavy tour programme. This time we should undertake only what can be done by staying at Peshawar. We may certainly go to Utmanzai for a day. We may leave out Khyber if necessary. Those who want to meet me should be given appointments in Peshawar. A women's meeting must be arranged. The programme for September or October can be

¹ A similar telegram was sent to Amrit Kaur on this date; *vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 2-5-1938

arranged right now. It may be a one-month programme if they want it. Impatience may damage my health and may prevent our finishing all the work that we propose to do. Even after considering this, if you wish to go ahead with the programme as shown to me, it may be done. The will of God shall prevail. The programme for Peshawar may be arranged for tomorrow, if possible.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy:Narayan Desai

151. LETTER TO AMRITAL T. NANAVATI

May 2, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

May you always remain a youth of eighteen or twenty-two. How could that be my condition? You don't know passion, but I was a slave of passion for thirty years and tried to satisfy it. Moreover, I recently discovered that I have not been able to subdue it at all. I don't remember having had an emission while awake at any time during the last fifty years. I am not referring here to the emission in dreams or those brought on by desire. But I was in such a wretched and pitiable condition that in spite of my utmost efforts I could not stop the discharge though I was fully awake.¹ I feel now that the despondency that I had been feeling deep down in me only foreshadowed this occurrence. After the event, restlessness has become acute beyond words. Where am I, where is my place, and how can a person subject to passion represent non-violence and truth? This turmoil goes on in my heart. I keep asking myself: am I worthy of you all who follow me, am I fit to lead you all? God will answer the question when He pleases. Is it not said that Rama is the strength of the weak?

There must be some place where you can settle down. We will think over the matter when I return. Think over what you would like to suggest.

A wire was sent to Vijaya. Now let us await her reply.

Mahadev will write about Surat.

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-5-1938

If you have in mind an indigenous machine, you needn't ask anybody.

What you write about the weaving shed seems all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G. N. 10747

152. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

PESHAWAR,

May 2, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. Stay there in peace. I shall reach Segaoon by the beginning of June. May be a couple of days earlier. Do not let your health suffer. The Jains who visit the common temples follow Hinduism. Jain philosophy is not distinct from Hindu philosophy. A temple-goer should certainly keep away from any temple which the untouchables cannot enter, shouldn't he?

Are you studying anything there? I expect to leave the Frontier province on the 9th. I shall have to go to Bombay again. Your reply to this letter may be sent to Bombay. I shall be staying at Juhu. Let me know whatever talk you have with Shakaribehn. I am of course keeping well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original:C. W. 9994. Courtesy:Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

153. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

PESHAWAR,

May 3, 1938

SETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ

JAIPUR

FORGOT TELL YOU VALLABHBHAI CANNOT GO JAIPUR.¹
HE HAS TO GO MYSORE. HEALTH WELL CLIMATE
EXCELLENT BUT TOUR PROGRAMME CANCELLED AS
TOO HEAVY.

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 195

¹ For the Jaipur Rajya Praja Mandal Conference.

154. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

PESHAWAR,
May 3, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
OOTACAMUND

YOU CAN GO.¹ TAKE CAREFUL NOTES. FRAME CON-
CLUSION WITH ME. KEEPING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3859. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7015.

155. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 3, 1938

I like your letter for its transparent love. It tells me nothing new, but it comes at a moment when I am most receptive. The problem however is not so simple as you have put it. If complete *brahmacharya* under the conditions I am trying is like an attempt to climb the craters in the moon. What is the value of the species that requires the nine fortifications?² You are quite right in describing my experiment as new. So is my experiment in ahimsa. The two hang together. Remember that my experiment has natural limitations. I may neither tempt God nor the Devil. I have not the time to prolong the argument.

In your next letter you must tell me in concrete terms what definite changes I should make so as to fit in with your idea. Should I deny myself the service rendered by Sushila? Should I refuse to have *malish*³ by Lilavati or Amtul Salaam for instance? Or do you want to say that I should never lean on girls' shoulders? Needless to say you won't pain me at all by telling me frankly whatever you think I should do to get out of the terrible despondency. Just now I am most in need of support from those who surround me with service and affection, undeserved as it seems to me, for the time being. In guiding me remember that what I am doing I have done all my life you may say. And my *brahmacharya* has become firmer and more

¹ To Mysore; *vide* letter to the addressee dated May 16, 1938.

² The reference is to the nine rules of behaviour known as "the nine-fold hedge or wall" for the protection of *brahmacharya*.

³ Massage.

enlightened. Of course I have been far away from perfection. But I felt I was progressing. That degrading, dirty, torturing experience of 14th April shook me to bits and made me feel as if I was hurled by God from an imaginary paradise where I had no right to be in my uncleanness.

Well, I shall feel pride in my being parent to so many children, if any of them will give a lifting hand and pull me out of the well of despair. My faith in myself and my experiment will revive and will burn all the brighter.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy:Narayan Desai

156. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

[AS AT] SEGAON,

May 4, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I am replying today; but this should not become a practice. Whenever there is an opportunity you should ask orally as it is easier for me to give oral answers. It saves time.

Your interpreting it as 'natural' is correct. All *vikaras*¹ need not be rejected. Even pitying a man is a *vikara*. Our distaste for something bad is also a *vikara* but not to be rejected. If it is desirable to carry on the business of the world, then the *vikara* needed for this is not only in order but is necessary. Of course vital fluid is discharged also when man and wife come together to procreate; but then it does not go waste. It may be a fall. The fall leads to new creation as a rise often does. It cannot be said that procreation is always harmful. Saying this would amount to finding fault with God. Those couples who come together only for the sake of a felt need for offspring and otherwise remain like brother and sister—can remain so without any *vikara*—deserve a million salutations; they are perfect *brahmacharis*.

What you have written about expenses is all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi:G. N. 4291

¹ Mutations of the mind.

157. *SPEECH AT ISLAMIA COLLEGE, PESHAWAR*¹

May 4, 1938

I have become a member of the Khyber Union without reading its constitution. It is the Pathan's trick. Our people tremble at the mention of the Pathan's name.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had been unable to participate in active discussion for the last two or three years.

I cannot speak standing. Even when I talk at length sitting, I get dizzy in the head. It is the Khan Brothers' love of me that has brought me here.²

It is well that you referred to the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, and I would ask you to consider what you can do in furtherance of that great cause. There is no doubt that the work belongs essentially to you of the younger generation. We are now getting old and will soon be gathered to our fathers. You have therefore to shoulder the burden. How you can help in achieving the great object, you have yourselves shown in your address by your appreciative preference to non-violence and to Khan Saheb's work. I do not know if your reference was deliberate and if you knew the full implication of what you were saying. I do hope you knew what you were saying and that you fully weighed your words. If you have, then I should like to take you a step further.

After explaining the circumstances which had delayed his visiting the Frontier, Mahatma Gandhi said that when it was first known that he was to visit the Frontier people said that this man (Mahatma Gandhi) was going to make the people cowards. If non-violence means that, you should despise it.³

An Urdu newspaper has said that my mission in the Frontier Province is the emasculation of the Pathans, Whereas Khan Saheb has invited me here in order that the Pathans might hear the message of non-violence from my own lips and in order that I might see the Khudai Khidmatgars at close quarters and find out to what extent

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III". However, this has been collated with the report published in *The Hindustan Times*.

² This and the preceding paragraphs are from *The Hindustan Times*.

³ This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

non-violence has permeated them.¹ That means that the Khan Saheb at any rate has no such fear as has been expressed by that Urdu paper. For he knows that true non-violence is mightier than the mightiest violence. If therefore you really know the essential nature of non-violence and appreciate Khan Saheb's work, you will have to pledge yourselves to non-violence, and that in spite of the fact that violence is so much in the air and we are talking day in and day out of military manoeuvres and aerial action, armaments and naval strength. You have to realize that the power of unarmed non-violence is any day far superior to that of armed force. With me acceptance of non-violence was instinctive, it was part of my training and home influence in childhood. I have been preaching the creed of non-violence for 50 years.² Its superior strength I came to realize in South Africa where I had to pit it against organized violence and racial prejudice. I practised it in South Africa, where everybody, like the Pathans, is armed and the Government has introduced conscription.³ The people said how a handful of Indians could fight the African Government with that weapon. I returned from South Africa with a clear conviction of the superiority of the method of non-violence to that of violence. In India also, we have used it for gaining our rights and we have achieved some measure of success.⁴

If the method of violence takes plenty of training, the method of non-violence takes even more training, and that training is much more difficult than the training for violence. The first essential of that training is a living faith in God. He who has a living faith in God will not do evil deeds with the name of God on his lips. He will not rely on the sword but will rely solely on God. Lakhs of Muslims commit sins in the name of God and lakhs of Hindus who say "Rama" do likewise.⁵ A genuine believer in God need not have a stick in his hand. One who repeats God's name and recites the *kalmah* may not be Allah's devotee. He alone is a man of God who sees God in every soul. Such a man would not be prepared to kill another. But you may say that a coward may also pass off as a believer in God saying he

¹ *The Hindustan Times* adds here: "There is no other reason. There are other small things, but they could not have brought me here. If you really understand non-violence, you will have to be non-violent throughout."

² This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

³ This and the following sentence are from *The Hindustan Times*.

⁴ This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

⁵ This and the following four sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*.

does not use the sword. Cowardice is no sign of belief in God. The true man of God has the strength to use the sword, but will not use it knowing that every man is the image of God.

Islam, it is said, believes in the brotherhood of man. But you will permit me to point out that it is not the brotherhood of Mussalmans only but it is universal brotherhood, and that brings me to the second essential of the training for non-violence. We must not believe in non-violence as a policy, but as an article of faith.¹ The Allah of Islam is the same as the God of Christians and the Ishwara of Hindus. Even as there are numerous names of God in Hinduism there are as many names of God in Islam. The names do not indicate individuality but attributes, and little man has tried in his humble way to describe the mighty God by giving Him attributes, though He is above all attributes, Indescribable, inconceivable, Immeasurable. Living faith in this God means acceptance of the brotherhood of mankind. It also means equal respect for all religions. If Islam is dear to you, Hinduisim is dear to me and Christianity is dear to the Christians. It would be the height of intolerance—and intolerance is a species of violence—to believe that your religion is superior to other religions and that you would be justified in wanting others to change over to your faith.

The third essential is the acceptance of truth and purity, for one claiming to have an active faith in God cannot but be pure and truthful.

Now let me tell you that your appreciation of Khan Saheb's services and of non-violence carries all these implications if the appreciation is genuine.

If you want to preach non-violence in India and the world at large, you must accept my advice in the matter based on long experience. If you forsake non-violence, you will have to forsake Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He cannot go a step without your assistance. God also helps through people by moving their hearts. I have travelled throughout the world and seen that people do not realize and appreciate the full implications of the non-violence creed. We have to defend India's wealth with non-violence. Millions of our people will have to fully realize the implications of this creed. Non-violence is meant for all irrespective of faith.²

¹ This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

² This and the following paragraph are from *The Hindustan Times*.

As votaries of non-violence we will forget violence. If Islam is dear to you and Hinduisim is dear to me, sheer logic will force you to the conclusion that we must have equal respect for each other's religion.

Those who claim to lead have to live up to all the implications and express them in their daily life. Now, you will not be the rank and file, but you will be leaders of your people. As generals of non-violence you need special training than ordinary people, who can at best be soldiers.¹ Your non-violence will not be of the lunatic or the coward. It will be stronger than of one with the sword. If you can live up to the ideal, you may be sure that no one will have any excuse for saying that non-violence is going to emasculate you. Yours will be the non-violence of the bravest.

Harijan, 14-5-1938, and *The Hindustan Times*, 5-5-1938

158. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS SOCIALISTS²

PESHAWAR,
May 4, 1938

Mahatma Gandhi replied that the Socialists believing in the Congress creed could not be excluded from the Congress on account of their socialistic ideas. Gandhiji is reported to have pointed out that Pandit Nehru and Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose were Socialists. So long as the Socialists accepted the Congress creed and carried out the Congress programme he could not see there was any objection to their being admitted into the Congress organization. This, however, was his interpretation of the existing Congress practice. Whether different courses were warranted under particular local conditions in the Frontier Province, he was unable to say.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-5-1938

¹ This and the following two sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*.

² A deputation of the local Congress Socialists, consisting of 11 persons, drew Gandhiji's attention to a Press report that the Frontier Congress leaders intended to exclude Congress Socialists from the Congress in view of the special circumstances obtaining in the Frontier.

*159. SPEECH AT EDWARD'S MISSION COLLEGE,
PESHAWAR'*

May 5, 1938

Replying to the address in Hindustani, Mahama Gandhi said that his heart rebelled against speaking in English for the sake of a few Englishmen in the audience. He took strong exception to addresses being presented in English when he could well read Urdu and, if he felt any difficulty anywhere, he could consult Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Continuing, Gandhiji said:²

Your address is one paean of praise of me. Well, I have never found it easy to appropriate such praise, but let me tell you that there was no time in my life when I was less able to appropriate such praise than I am today. For a curious sense of despondency has possessed me and I cannot yet get over it. Well, I came here not to make a speech, and I was told that I need not give more than five minutes. But a sentence in your address³ compels me to devote a few minutes more than I had anticipated. The sentence about non-violent passive resistance at once took my memory back to Germiston in South Africa in 1907⁴. A meeting of European friends was convened to hear me speak on passive resistance, as the movement was then known. The Chairman of the meeting there expressed practically the same statement as you have made in the address, viz., that passive resistance was a weapon of the weak. The reference jarred on me and I immediately corrected the speaker. It is curious, if not also surprising, that you should have made the same mistake after all these years of satyagraha in India. We may be weak and oppressed, but non-violence is not a weapon of the weak.⁵ It is a weapon of strongest and the bravest. Non-violence has greater power than Hitler's or Mussolini's force.⁶ Violence may well be the weapon of

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III". This version has been collated with the report published in *The Hindustan Times*.

² This paragraph is from *The Hindustan Times*.

³ Which read: "Born in a land where ahimsa was preached thousands of years ago it was left to you, Sir, to enunciate in your own remarkable way the doctrine of non-violent passive resistance as the most irresistible weapon in the hands of the weak and the oppressed."

⁴ This should be '1909'; "Sprrvh sy Germiston", 7-6-1909

⁵ The Hindustan Times reports here: "Non-violence is not a weapon of the weak because, when a weak man uses it, love does not come into the picture."

⁶ This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

the weak and the oppressed. Being strangers to non-violence nothing else is open to them. It is, however, true that passive resistance has been regarded as a weapon of the weak. That was why the name 'satyagraha' was coined in South Africa to distinguish the movement there from passive resistance.

Passive resistance is a negative thing, and has nothing to do with the active principle of Love. Satyagraha proceeds on the active principle of Love which says, 'Love those that despitefully use you. It is easy for you to love your friends. But I say unto you, love your enemies.'¹ If satyagraha was a weapon of the weak, I should be deceiving Khan Saheb, for no Pathan has yet confessed his weakness. It was Khan Saheb who told me that he never felt so strong and brave as when he, out of a free will, renounced the lathi and the rifle. If it was not the Supreme weapon of the brave, I should certainly have hesitated to place it before a brave community like the Pathans. It is with that weapon that Khan Saheb can bid fair to befriend and convert the brave Afridis and the other tribesmen. You know the Afridi does not fear death.² I have to make him braver, not a weakling. Otherwise Khan Saheb will despise me.

I am glad to have had this opportunity of correcting you. For the moment you realize it, you will enlist yourself as workers in the cause for which Khan Saheb and I are working. That it is difficult to carry conviction I agree. I find it difficult in spite of my conscious practice of it for the last 50 years. But it presupposes purity of the highest type. Infinite patience is required—even the patience of emptying the ocean with a blade of grass. If we want complete independence for India, it can be through non-violence alone.³

Harijan, 14-5-1938, and *The Hindustan Times*, 6-5-1938

160. SPEECH AT CHARSAJDA⁴

May 6, 1938⁵

I really wanted to make the acquaintance of those of whom I had heard so much. I wanted to see with my own eyes how the Khudai

¹ St. Luke, 6. 28

² This and the following two sentences are from *The Hindustan Times*.

³ This sentence is from *The Hindustan Times*.

⁴ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV". The meeting was held at 10 O'clock at night and was attended by over ten thousand people.

⁵ From *The Hindu*

Khidmatgars live, move and work. The Khan Saheb was also keen that I must see all these and testify to what extent they had assimilated non-violence. That examination I am afraid cannot be carried on during this brief tour. But let me tell you that my desire to live in your midst has increased. To-night I am thankful that I have been able even to come to Utmanzai and Charsadda and to see you all. Khan Saheb and Dr. Khan Saheb I had seen much of even in Wardha, but I wanted to see *you* and make *your* acquaintance. A great responsibility rests on your and Khan Saheb's shoulders. You have deliberately chosen a name that carries mighty implications. You might have called yourselves Servants of the people, or of the Pathans, or of Islam; but you chose instead the name Khudai Khidmatgars—Servants of God, i.e., Servants of humanity which includes, Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians [of the] Punjab, Gujarat and other parts of India, and also other parts of the world. This very ambitious title implies the acceptance of non-violence. How can a man in the name of God serve humanity by means of the sword? It can be only done by means of a force that God has given us and which is superior to any other force that we can think of. If you do not understand this, you may be sure that the world will laugh at the Khan Saheb and me as vain hypocrites. Whilst therefore I am delighted at the sight of the Khudai Khidmatgars, I am also seized with a kind of fright. Many people have warned me against you, but that warning does not matter if you are true to your creed. Remember that you outnumber volunteers in the whole of India, and that you are more disciplined than volunteers in other parts of India. But unless the discipline is rooted in non-violence the discipline might prove a source of infinite mischief. I have rarely in my tours seen more orderly and quieter meetings. I congratulate you and express my gratefulness for all the affection you have showered on me. I shall conclude with the prayer that the Frontier Pathans may make not only India free, but teach the world, through an India made non-violently free, the priceless lesson of non-violence.¹

Harijan, 21-5-1938, and *The Hindu*, 7-5-1938

¹ Gandhiji's speech was translated into Pushto by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

161. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

MARDAN,
May 7, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Sushila has been keeping you informed about me. I have not therefore worried to write to you. It has been an anxious time here.

Your analysis is good. Of course the experience was due to my “weakness, lack of faith”.¹

Let us all hope that I shall come out of the well of despair stronger and purer. There is as yet no sign of the end of the crisis. Darkness is still there. There is still an unaccountable dissatisfaction with myself. Moodiness is wholly unnatural to me. it creeps over me now and again. I suppress it by constant work. But the body does not respond to it as readily as I want it to. But I have not lost faith. There are signs that I shall get out of the slough. I may be deceived. I have patience. I do not fret over the delay. If it is to be a new birth, a regeneration all round, it must be preceded by adequate travail.

You are not to worry over my present condition. The sexual sense is the hardest to over come in my case. It has been an incessant struggle. It is for me a miracle how I have survived it. The one I am engaged in may be, ought to be, the final struggle.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3860. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7016

162 LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 7, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

What is it in the new orientation of the Gandhi Seva Sangh that has disturbed you? I must own that I am responsible for it. I should like you to tell me unhesitatingly what has disturbed you. If I have erred, you know that I shall retrace my steps as soon as I discover the error.

¹ Vide also “Letter to Mirabehn”, 3-5-1938

As to the general deterioration, I agree with you, though we may differ as to the weak spots.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

163. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

MARDAN,

May 7, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You must have got my reply. I think it would be best to use Gokuldas's¹ money for purchasing books.

I hope Chakraiyya will not lose the weight which he has gained.

It is sad that Vijaya is not improving. If she has not come there, write to her to come and see me in Bombay. I am also writing to her. Please inquire about the letter which got lost.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10746

164. SPEECH AT MARDAN²

May 7, 1938³

If what you have told me is a solemn promise, and if you can keep it, you may be sure that we will win not only the freedom of India but something more. When we can be ready to sacrifice any number of men in the cause of non-violence, we can easily bid fair to be spared the ghastly spectre of war that is now threatening Europe. We talk of doing everything in the name of God. We call ourselves Khudai Khidmatgars, we profess to have given up the sword, and yet if we have not put the sword and the dagger out of our hearts, we are sure to be disgraced and the name 'Khudai Khidmatgar' will be a term of reproach.

¹ Gokuldas Khimji of Mandvi, Kutch

² Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV"

³ From *The Hindu*, 9-5-1938

I have not yet recovered from the shock of the story¹ I heard this afternoon. The Sikhs from Mayar told me of the tragedy that happened there in broad daylight. So far as I know the victims had done nothing to provoke the ire of the assassins. The assassins did the deed in broad daylight and bolted away without anyone trying to apprehend them. It is worth pondering over how such a thing could happen when we are all talking of non-violence. There were in the village Khudai Khidmatgars and others believing in the creed of non-violence. It was their duty to catch the culprits. It is their duty to prevent the recurrence of the deed. It is also your duty to befriend the bereaved and to assure the fear-stricken of your sympathy and succour. So long as things of this kind continue to happen in our midst, our non-violence must be in doubt.

Harijan, 21-51938

165. SPEECH AT KALUKHAN²

May 7, 1938³

Your address is made up of two parts—one devoted to my praise and the other to non-violence. The first part may be ignored for I am sure that that is going to do good to nobody. In fact I am quite sure that if someone offered to sing my praises for twenty-four hours, he would get tired and I should fall fast asleep. What God may have enabled me to do is but a repayment of debt, and he who repays a debt deserves no praise. In fact if he fails to do so, he may be liable to prosecution.

What interests me more is what you have said about non-violence. Let me tell you that I should not have been able to sum up better the characteristics of a non-violent man. But let me tell you what you have not said in your address, and that is the implications of non-violence. You must have heard of the riots³ in Allahabad and

¹ At Mayar, a village about three kilometres from Mardan, three Sikhs—a boy of 11, an old man of 80 and a young man of 25—were murdered by three Pathans.

² Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV"

³ During March 1938

Lucknow. These would be impossible if there was really non-violence amongst us. There are thousands of members on the Congress register. If they were really non-violent, these riots would not have occurred. But we not only failed to prevent them, but even sought the aid of the military and the police to quell them. Some of our Congressmen argued with me that our non-violence was limited to our dealings with the Englishmen. Then I say that non-violence was not the weapon of the strong, but of the weak. Active non-violence of the brave puts to flight thieves, dacoits, murderers, and prepares an army of volunteers ready to sacrifice themselves in quelling riots, in extinguishing fires and feuds, and so on. you have said that non-violence automatically solves unemployment. You are right, for it rules out exploitation. The non-violent man automatically becomes a servant of God. He should be ready to render account to God of every minute of his time. May you all be true servants of God and true practisers of non-violence.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

166. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PESHAWAR,
May 8, 1938

I hope you got my letter¹ in reply to yours on my bitter experience. My search still continues. It gives me joy. I rejoice in the pain that sometimes accompanies the labour. God who has never forsaken me is not going to do so now. I am therefore indifferent what comes out of the search. But you must continue to warn me so long as you think that I go astray in action.

Your brother-in-law's letter is very fine. Evidently your sister was a very superior woman—a rare type. I can understand your grief over such a loss. But such losses are a test of our faith. Nothing but a fixed faith that death for the good is a translation to a better state, and for the evil a beneficent escape, can reconcile us to the mystery of death.

Love.

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

¹ Dated May 3, 1938; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 3-5-1938

167. *SPEECH AT POLITICAL CONFERENCE, PESHAWAR*¹

May 8, 1938

In all your three addresses² you have told me that you made a triumphant and unique demonstration of non-violence during the C. D. campaign, but I have to find out whether you have assimilated non-violence with all its implications. The principal purpose of my visit was to find out whether all that I had heard from the Khan Saheb about the Khudai Khidmatgars was true, and I am very sorry that I could not give all the time that was needed in order to find out the truth. One conviction I am carrying back with me, viz., the wonderful and affectionate allegiance of the people to the Khan Saheb as their general. Not only the Khudai Khidmatgars but I noticed wherever I went that every man, woman and child knew him and loved him. They greeted him most familiarly. His touch seemed to soothe them. And Khan Saheb was most gentle to whoever approached him. The obedience of the Khudai Khidmatgars was unquestioned. All this has filled me with boundless joy.

A general merits such obedience. Khan Saheb has it by right of love unlike the ordinary general who exacts obedience through fear. The question now is what use will Khan Saheb make of the tremendous power of which he finds himself in possession? I cannot answer the question now. Nor can the Khan Saheb. Hence it is that, if God wills it, I should like to revisit this wonderful Province about October, make a prolonged stay and study in detail the working of non-violence.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

168. *INTERVIEW TO A PROFESSOR*³

PESHAWAR,

[Before May 9, 1938]⁴

A professor of Islamia College came with a question that was troubling him and is troubling many of the present generation—belief in God. What was the basis

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-IV".

² Presented by Municipal and District Boards of Peshawar

³ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III"

⁴ Gandhiji left Peshawar in the morning on May 9.

of his belief if Gandhiji had it, as he knew he had it? What was his experience?

[GANDHIJI:] It can never be a matter for argument. If you would have me convince others by argument I am floored. But I can tell you this that I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. Then I can also testify that I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill me. You may chop off my nose, but that will not kill me. But blast my belief in God and I am dead. You may call this a superstition, but I confess it is a superstition that I hug, even as I used to hug the name of Rama in my childhood when there was any cause of danger or alarm. That was what an old nurse had taught me.¹

But you think that superstition was necessary for you?

Yes, necessary to sustain me.

That is all right. May I now ask if you had anything like a prophetic vision?

I do not know what you call a vision and what you will call prophetic. But let me give you an experience in my life. When I announced² my fast of 21 days in jail I had not reasoned about it. On retiring to bed the previous night I had no notion that I was going to announce the next morning a fast of 21 days. But in the middle of the night a Voice woke me up and said: 'Go through a fast.' 'How many?' I asked. '21 days,' was the answer. Now let me tell you that my mind was unprepared for it, disinclined for it. But the thing came to me as clearly as anything could be. Let me tell you one thing more and I have done. Whatever striking things I have done in life I have not done prompted by reason but prompted by the instinct, I would say God. Take the Dandi Salt March of 1930. I had not the ghost of a suspicion how the breach of Salt Law would work itself out. Pandit Motilalji and other friends were fretting and did not know what I would do; and I could tell them nothing, as I myself knew nothing about it. But like a flash it came, and as you know it was enough to shake the country from one end to the other. One last thing. Until the last day I knew nothing about announcing the 6th of April 1919 as a day of fasting and prayer. But I dreamt about it—there was no Voice or Vision as in 1930—and I felt it was just the thing to do. In the morning I shared it with C.R. and announced it to the country, you know with what a wonderfully spontaneous response.³

Harijan, 14-5-1938

¹ *Vide* "An autobiography" sub-title "Glimpses of Religion"

² On April 30, 1933; *vide* "Statement on Fast", 30-4-1933

³ *Vide* "Speech at Chowpatty, Bombay", 6-4-1919

169. INTERVIEW TO A PROFESSOR¹

PESHAWAR,

[Before *May 9, 1938*]²

[PROFESSOR:] How is it that many of the English Pacifists are talking of defence and elaborate plans of defence? . . . May it not be possible to carry pacifism too far? Supposing Abyssinia had simply non-resisted and said to Italy, 'Do your worst', would the Italians have been ashamed and desisted from their design? Lansbury said they would.

[GANDHI:] I shall take up the Abyssinian question first. I can answer it only in terms of active resistant non-violence. Now non-violence is the activist force on earth, and it is my conviction that it never fails. But if the Abyssinians had adopted the attitude of non-violence of the strong, i.e, the non-violence which breaks to pieces but never bends, Mussolini would have had no interest in Abyssinia. Thus if they had simply said: 'You are welcome to reduce us to dust or ashes but you will not find one Abyssinian ready to co-operate with you', what would Mussolini have done? He did not want a desert. Mussolini wanted submission and not defiance, and if he had met with the quiet, dignified and non-violent defiance that I have described, he would certainly have been obliged to retire. Of course it is open to anyone to say that human nature has not been known to rise to such heights. But if we have made unexpected progress in physical sciences, why may we do less in the science of the soul?

Now about the English Pacifists. I know there are some great and sincere men amongst them, but they are thinking in terms of pacifism as distinguished from unadulterated non-violence. I am essentially a non-violent man, and I believe in war bereft of every trace of violence. An essentially non-violent man does not calculate the consequences. The English Pacifists you are talking of calculate, and when they speak of pacifism they do so with the mental reservation that when pacifism fails, arms might be used. With them not non-violence but arms are the ultimate sanction, as was the case with Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points³. No, someone has to arise in

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Frontier Notes-III". The Professor has not been identified in the source.

² Gandhiji left Peshawar on the morning of May 9.

³ Outlined by him in a speech before the U. S. Congress on January 8, 1918, they became the basis of the armistice between Germany and the Allies and the subsequent peace treaty signed at Versailles.

England with the living faith to say that England, whatever happens, shall not use arms. They are a nation fully armed, and if they having the power deliberately refuse to use arms, theirs will be the first example of Christianity in active practice on a mass scale. That will be a real miracle.

Harijan, 14-5-1938

170. A TELEGRAM ¹

[On or before *May 9, 1938*]²

TELL BOTH FAST HAS NO MORAL BASIS. IF PEOPLE FASTED AGAINST WRONGS, FANCIED OR REAL, AND THERE WAS ANY YIELDING ON ACCOUNT OF THE FAST, SOCIETY WOULD BE DISRUPTED.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

171. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

PESHAWAR,
May 9, 1938

NANAVATI
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

YOU CAN START WEAVING SHED. AM WELL. LEAVING TODAY. ARRIVING BOMBAY ELEVENTH.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10748

172. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 10, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Mahadev's letter seems to explain everything. Resolve things there properly and come early. I do not insist on your bringing

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". This was in reply to a telegram from Salem that A. Manikkam, an "orthodox Congressman", was on a fast unto death and his pregnant wife had started a sympathetic fast.

² According to Mahadev Desai the telegram from Salem was received during the Frontier tour. Gandhiji left the Frontier Province on May 9.

Sushila. Do only what you think would be for her good and what she herself would like. Do not unnecessarily take a responsibility on yourself. Remember what I have said today, that is, what is at the root of all that is happening at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

173. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

BOMBAY,

May 10, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had been awaiting your letter. I had it yesterday. I found nothing in it that would do any harm if Mahadev read it. Mahadev read all the letters. What was there in it to add fuel to the fire?

Stupid girl! You are indeed stupid. For that reason I love you all the more. Your obstinacy does not hurt me. I will not let you remain stupid forever. You are not a goddess, nor is Mahadev a god. The future is bright if this illusion has been dispelled. I consider both of you simple-hearted. The only difference is that you have not experienced lust. Mahadev has done so in full measure. He is a married man after all. But the god of love is subtle. You were both unaware of his attack. You needlessly blame yourself. Desire had certainly taken possession of you. But you were not aware of it at all. For that matter even Mahadev was not aware of it. Mahadev was not careful. But he was not aware even of that.

Neither you nor Mahadev has given me any unhappiness. So long as your reason does not accept something, you must never accept it, however much it may hurt me or anybody else.

My advice is that you should now forget the past, and remaining cheerful by doing your present duty, free my mind from anxiety. Let me know your programme.

Dr. Gilder was here. The blood-pressure was 180/108. The climate is lovely. We expect to go to Wardha from here on the 17th.

I return your letter to Mahadev. I shall tear up the remaining letters. There is a churning going on in my heart. I am happy. God

alone knows what the outcome will be. Massages, etc., have been stopped. I bathe alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Are you laughing? I have not revised this letter. I have torn up all the letters.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

174. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW DELHI,

May 10, 1938

The Associated Press sought the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi regarding the terms of the settlement arrived at between the Mysore Government and the Mysore Congress over the flag trouble,¹ announced by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, when he arrived here this morning by the Frontier Mail on his way to Bombay.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he fully concurred with the terms of the settlement as he thought that it was the proper decision in the circumstances. When he was told that some Socialists objected to Sardar Patel's decision to allow the State flag to be hoisted by the side of the Congress flag, Mahatma Gandhi said that their objection was nevertheless not without reason; because they wanted to abolish the States, which was only possible by armed revolution to which creed he did not subscribe.

When questioned as to what should be the attitude of the general public towards the Congress flag and the Red (Socialist) flag in the case of the Congress sponsoring the labour cause in a strike, Gandhiji thought that with him the only flag that counted was the Congress flag. A labour union which had faith in the Congress should, in all circumstances, work under the Congress flag. If there were many flags, he feared that a clash was bound to occur.

¹ The terms of the settlement were: (1) Recognition of Mysore Congress; (2) declaration by the Mysore Government that it is open to the Reforms Committee to discuss and recommend responsible Government for Mysore State; (3) four Congressmen who resigned from the Reforms Committee to be renominated with three additional Congressmen to be selected by the State Congress; (4) the satyagraha to be called off by the State Congress; (5) general amnesty to political prisoners and withdrawal of all repressive orders; and (6) the flag dispute to be settled on the lines suggested by Mahatma Gandhi, namely, that the Congress flag should be flown along with the State flag on all ceremonial occasions. But at purely party functions of the Congress only the National flag is to be flown.

Regarding the release of the Delhi political prisoners, Mahatma Gandhi said that the question of their release was before him. He would do his utmost to secure it, but at the moment he could not say as to when he would take up the matter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-5-1938

175. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 11, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I very much wanted to write to you, but how could I get the time? I have your letter telling me about your entering your 31st year. Little by little you are sure to achieve steadiness. You have certainly made progress. But you have still a long way to go. You will acquire steadiness by observing rules in all matters. I have left Pyarelal and Sushila in Delhi. They will return in a few days. A. S. joined us at Delhi. Kanti and Saraswati joined us at Agra. Ba will remain in Delhi for the present.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9371. Also C.W. 6646. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

176. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 11, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Sushila is causing me considerable worry. I am afraid she may break down. It will be terrible if that happens. I would not in any way feel sorry if she were to find happiness by going away from me and this atmosphere. Then I would feel that I had no right to keep her. But, then, who am I? Do I know her? Or, if I know her, why am I not in a position to explain what I see? Your profound love can save her. Her bitter experiences here will be like medicine to her. Do not be hasty in anything. For the sake of Sushila, stay there as long as you must. It is possible that she has now understood a lot on her own and is calm and cheerful. In that case you can perhaps return early.

Mahadev has left a heap of letters with you. Deal with them there. Keep a list of the names of people to whom you write.

I am writing this letter on the train. Do write to me every day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

177. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 11, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

How are things with you? When will you calm down? The 9th of May was auspicious for us as the 14th [of April].¹ The 9th had a special tranquillity. On the 14th I was very much upset. On the 9th I was miserable but calm. How nice it would be if you too could understand this in your heart.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

178. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BOMBAY,

May 12, 1938

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SIKAR

HOPE YOUR APPEAL TO SIKAR PEOPLE WILL BE LISTENED.
YOU SHOULD STAY THERE TILL REQUIRED.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 196

¹ For allusions to the incident on this day: *vide* Vol. LXVII pp. 58, 60-1, 80 and 166.

179. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 12, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
GUEST HOUSE
BANGALORE

ARRIVED SAFE. FRONTIER VISIT NECESSARY USEFUL. HOPE
YOU KEEPING WELL. AM BOMBAY TILL SEVENTEENTH AT
LEAST. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3861. courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7017

180. LETTER TO MERABEHN

May 12, 1938

Your letter is most helpful. I would have called it perfect if there had not been the usual exaltation. But I have no time to dissect your letter. Your own experience settles me. I must change my manners. There will be considerable response to your suggestions. I have been daily taxing myself about my course of action. I am not yet certain what shape the change will take.

About Lilavati I can't recall anything of what you say. But once I felt that I had put my arm around her neck. I asked her in the morning. She said she had no knowledge of any touch. Nevertheless from that day I asked her to sleep at a proper distance. Give me more details about the incident you relate.

You will continue to make whatever suggestions may occur to you. I must not interrupt the experiment, but there is room for revision. My problem is: "Had the awful experience of the 14th April anything to do with the contacts or has it any other meaning?"

Love (in great haste).

BAPU

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

181. NOTE TO D. B. KALELKAR¹

[Before *May 14, 1938*]²

My silence should not in any case stand between us. I have nothing to say about Nanavati. I only wanted to know all that might be said about him. I have organized myself in such a way that his or anyone else's going will not inconvenience me. It is not necessary for Nanavati to stay here whenever I am here. When he serves you I consider it as service to me. Nanavati is staying here to know what village life is and to find out what part he can play in it. He is mainly useful as a musician and when everyone leaves Segaon he would stay on and die here. It is quite difficult to explain the usefulness of such a man. But it is enough if, even while staying with you, he remembers that he has to pass his life in Segaon. In this way he can retain his self-respect and keep his word too. So I think it is his dharma to go from here so long as you need him. But if deep down in his heart he has lost interest in Segaon, he should unhesitatingly take his mind off Segaon. His aim in life would then be to follow in your footsteps and take up Hindi. This is the proper age for him to fix his aim. I have very little use for him when I am in Segaon because for the most part Kanu takes up the responsibility for music. At present his main job in Segaon is to propagate weaving and to think of and experiment on village sanitation. These two tasks are very important. The result may not be visible today but eventually it will grow into a big tree. This aspect may however be ignored for the present. It is good I am observing silence, so that you can ponder over this note. Yet if you want to discuss something I am prepared to talk. Today's silence leaves room for such violations.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10786

182. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 14, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You shall certainly know about my agony. You may ask Mirabehn.

¹ The note was subsequently sent to Nanavati.

² The postmark bears the date May 14, 1938.

This is how you and Kanchan should live. You should not meet alone, nor touch each other. If either of you is aroused in the presence of the other, and if you are keen on observing *brahmacharya* at present, you should stay away from each other. Don't suppress passion forcibly. If you desire from the depths of your heart to observe *brahmacharya*, you will certainly be able to overcome your passion. If you are inspired to observe *brahmacharya* merely because it is good, it will not be enough. You may be certain that it can be observed only if you are convinced that without it you cannot shape your life aright.

The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8576

183. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

JUHU,
May 14, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I had hoped to see you in Bombay. Now that is over. You must build up your health. You should live on butter milk, milk, rice if you can digest it, and juicy fruits like *mosambis*. You need no medicine.

Mirabehn will write about my health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7080. Also C.W. 4572. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

184. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

JUHU, BOMBAY,
May 14, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Do come to Bombay. I am at Juhu. If you let me know, somebody will go to the station to receive you. I shall most probably leave here on the 17th or the 18th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9995. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

185. LETTER TO PYARELAL

JUHU
May 14, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have received your letters. I have had Mahadev read them all. You will learn more from Sushila's letter. It is a good thing for me that Sushila seems to be coming out of her stupor. A great burden will be off my mind if she returns to her original self and devotes herself to whatever she considers her duty.

After I had written the above, I got another letter from you. I can bear this distance because you are with Sushila. I would not have been able to stand it had she been alone in Delhi. I have compared her to a tender plant and the comparison is very apt. It was not in the least difficult for me to understand the purpose of Sushila's letter. I have never believed that she would deliberately resort to a lie in speech or action. Sushila acted as if in a stupor. With the exception of going to the toilet, every action of hers was in my view a lie. Once we accept the state of stupor, it is unnecessary to impute to her any other fault. The incident of that night only supports this contention. It has no other relevance.

Sushila is unnecessarily being angry with herself. There will be no time to write separately to her about it. Plead with her on my behalf and console her. Is she cheerful? Does she laugh? If she does

not laugh, how can she be stupid? If she accepts the adjective I have used for her, she must forget her unhappiness and prove her stupidity. Do not the foolish and the wise have some common characteristics?

If your understanding of [the incidents of] the 14th in daytime and of the 9th night is different, what is there in it to make you shudder or render you unhappy? Am I omniscient? My understanding has not always been correct. And on this occasion, I see myself distressed and senile; so what wonder if I act like a jaundiced man who sees everything yellow? Hence, have no fear about my being firm. Right now, I am beginning to give more importance to the view of the other party rather than to my own. Please therefore let me know your interpretation in clear terms and without any fear. If I find it acceptable, it will not take me long to change my view.

When would you prepare *rotis* for me? Sushila is confused. Only you can show her the straight path. Take whatever time is necessary to do that.

Blessings form

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to leave here for Wardha on the 17th.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

186. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

BOMBAY,
May 15, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter¹ of the 11th instant received yesterday. I showed it today to Subhas Babu. I must confess that it does not satisfy my expectations. At the same time, I fully recognize the labours given to the question by the Government. I can also appreciate their extreme caution. I am not, therefore, going to come to any hasty decision. But before I can examine the implications of the policy adumbrated in your letter, I should like to know the number of prisoners that will still remain to be dealt with after the operation of the first three clauses. And before I can come to any conclusion, it will be absolutely necessary for me to know how the prisoners will respond to the propositions laid down by the Government.

I can well understand from your standpoint that such a procedure may not be countenanced. But I am bound by a moral promise given to the prisoners and in pursuance thereof, if the whole programme is to work smoothly, it is necessary for me to know their mind. It would be a breach of promise on my part if I submitted without demur to anything less than almost immediate and unconditional discharge.

I am sure you will not ask me for this purpose to travel to Calcutta. I would, therefore, ask you kindly to grant permission either to Subhas Babu or to Sarat Babu to see the prisoners as my deputies.

Of course, your request for secrecy will be strictly respected.

Subhas Babu has not seen this letter. He is engaged in the Working Committee meeting away from where I am staying, but if he was here, I am sure he would share the views expressed herein.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C. W. 9922

¹ *Vide* "Letter from Khwaja Nazimuddin"

187. LETTER TO VIJAYA GANDHI

May 15, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your beautiful birthday letter. I pardon you for not writing any letter till now. Last year you learnt the *Gita* by heart. What will you do this year? Does Purushottam pass your pronunciation? Finally, of course, it will have to be passed by me. He might even show partiality towards you. After all, isn't he your teacher? But when do you ever cross my way so that I may test you?

All of us are just near the sea and so have a very pleasant breeze.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

188. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

May 15, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

If you wish, I would take you and the children, and Manu also, to Delhi. You may stay there as long as you like.

BAPU

[PS.]

God has given enough to Surendra. And you have an independent hoard of your own. Moreover, boarding will be free.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1570. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

189. LETTER TO PYARELAL

VISHRAM VATIKA,
JUHU,
May 15, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You will have received my letter of yesterday. Mahadev has been terribly hurt by your letter. He has been crying. He had already been anguished and given to crying. Your letter has added to his agony. However, it is just as well that you have expressed through this letter whatever was weighting on your mind. That is the only way to regain mental composure and to be cleansed of the kind of suspicions and prejudices lurking there. Mahadev has not written the letter "under pressure from me" as a last resort. Yes, the letter was the result of his discussion with me. But it was not written under pressure. His pen moved because he felt that his writing the letter would be justified. All arguments were his own.

Mahadev wrote to you on his own and the letter was full of anguish. That is why I did not allow it to go. It would have only intensified the misery and there would have been more misunderstanding. Now he has decided to stop writing to both of you for the time being. I have approved of this decision. You and Sushila may write if you feel like doing so. You can even write if the absence of Mahadev's letters irks you. Mahadev had told Sushila that he would write [to her] about my health. But for the time being even that has been stopped. In any case, I would be writing almost every day. Hence, you would continue to get the news. This should not lead to the conclusion that I have suggested to Mahadev not to write to you, since the idea was Mahadev's. I have given it my approval for the time being. The past, except when it is essential for the present, needs to be forgotten. I wish to discuss the past only to be certain that I have not done any injustice either to Mahadev or to Sushila. No one has deliberately committed mistakes. That is sufficient consolation for me. It should be so for Mahadev and Sushila as well. Where there was no wrong at all, I saw wrong and insisted that all of you should also see it. I wish I had not committed such a grave sin. You can be of great help in my quest to find out. Do not conceal the truth from me by showing me undeserved pity. Of course I know that you will not stay on there a

moment longer than necessary and I am not therefore impatient. My blood-pressure is not checked every day. What daily news then can I give about my health? My own diagnosis says that my health is fine. I sleep well. I take my walks regularly. I eat well. Perhaps mangoes are a little difficult to digest. I do a fairly good amount of work. It does not show any adverse effect. I lie down in the bath-tub. I get sleep. My legs are massaged. My head and feet are massaged with ghee. A[mtus] S[alaam] gives me nourishment. She prepares *rotis* with her own hands. She is quite successful.

Kanti and Saraswati are here. Manilal and Sushila have arrived today.

There is a letter from Nazimuddin. I cannot say it is wholly satisfactory. I shall see what I have to do.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

190. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

VISHRAM VATIKA,

JUHU,

May 15, 1938

STUPID GIRL,

Should I dispense with the quotation marks? I shall do that if you can send me a telegram saying that you have calmed down and are abiding by your promise. Can you understand that there can be stupidity tempered with knowledge? May you always have that type of stupidity. Do suggest whatever you want with regard to my health. I shall need to have letters from you. Write to Rajkumari, Prabha, Mira, Kanu, A. S., etc. Now you must quickly make your life normal. More in the letter to Pyarelal. How is Mother? Is she in good cheer?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

191. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
May 16, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have all your letters from Bangalore. Of course, there is the other side. But there is no rest for Mirza except through responsible government. I shall go through the papers carefully.

I am keeping good health. Pyarelal and Sushila are in New Delhi—19 Raja Bazar Square. Write to them. I am sending them today three letters from Mira with instructions to forward them to you after perusal. You will destroy them. Robbed of Mira's hysteria, they are sound. I am contemplating some changes. I have not yet decided upon anything. You will make what suggestions you may like. The despondency is there but the inner peace is coming.

Talks with J.¹ are still going on. S.² is very patient. He is a good listener. He may succeed where others might have failed. I would like him to succeed.

No hasty resolution will be taken about Mysore.

Your visit to Mysore was after all a good thing. You have gained a rich experience.

Ba is in Delhi. Amtul Salam is with me. And she is looking after me.

Love.

ROBBER

[PS.]

Expect to leave for Wardha on 17th or 18th. So write to Wardha.

From the original: C.W. 3862. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7018

¹ M. A. Jinnah

² Subhas Chandra Bose

192. *LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*

VISHRAM VATIKA,
JUHU (P.O. SANTACRUZ),
BOMBAY,
May 16, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have gone through the salty note. It you mean that I should take notice of the flagrant breach, I shall do so. If you mean anything more, please be clear. Are we breaking up by the sheer weight of our own folly or worse? You must give yourself a moment's leisure and think out where we are drifting to. Don't say you have no time. I want to go away tomorrow or as early as I can consistently with the business here.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2069

193. *A LETTER*¹

*Monday [May 16, 1938]*²

The violence that I see running through speeches and writings, the corruption and selfishness among Congressmen, and the petty bickerings fill one with dismay. In the midst of this, we who know must be unyielding and apply the golden rule of non co-operation.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee has not been identified in the source.

² Monday prior to May 21 fell on May 16,

194. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

JUHU,
May 16, 1938

BA,

How could I expect any letter from you? There was no need for you to write when you were with Jamnalalji. I am all right. Kanti and Saraswati are here. Most probably they will go to Matunga. We shall be leaving for Wardha on 17th or 18th. It would be better if you went straight to Wardha. Devdas may perhaps go to Madras and take Lakshmi with him. He may have some relief from heat, too. If he should go to Dehra Dun, I feel that it would not be proper for him to stay there for more than a day or two. Pyarelal and Sushila are there in Delhi. Both of them or Pyarelal alone may perhaps accompany you. However, consult Devdas and do what you like. Manilal and Sushila also are here, and so is Rajagopalachari. He will go back to Madras in two or three days. Kanam must be fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Bane Patro, p. 28

195. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

VISHRAM VATIKA,
JUHU,
May 16, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

Forget your own unhappiness now and understand and share mine. In truth you have no reason at all to feel unhappy. I am sending Mirabehn's three letters by this same post.¹ Ignore the exaggerations, etc., in the letters and see the love, the truth they contain. Go through the letters patiently. Tell me what it is proper for me to do. Write to Mirabehn if you want. I need women's help in this matter. You can show the letter to anyone you wish.

¹Vide "Letter to amrit Kaur", 16-5-1938

I am quite well of course. There is nothing new to write. We shall go to Wardha in a couple of days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

196. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 16, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

I received Pyarelal's letter after I had already written to you. He writes that [you think] you have lost for ever the place you had in my heart and that consequently you have lost your lustre. This has disturbed me. Your place with me remains as it was. I cannot understand why you should think otherwise. You should cast the doubt out of your mind. The truth is that perhaps I am not the same to you now as I was. But I have no fear. If I am true, your doubt will be dispelled. I do have a fear that I may have unwittingly been unfair to you. But I am not writing this to tell you of my woes. You should at least believe this much, that you have not lost your place with me. I should have your reply by wire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

197. LETTER TO PYARELAL

VISHRAM VATIKA,

JUHU,

May 16, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There was no letter from you yesterday. It would be good if you did not keep me without letters these days. I am now putting out of my mind the distress of Mahadev and Sushila. It should now be considered entirely a matter of the past. I am sending today by book-post three letters from Mirabehn. Both you brother and sister

may peruse the letters and let me know your reaction. Is not Mirabehn's description similar to that of Ravana's palace by Tulsidas? Ravana is lying unconscious and his numerous queens are reclining around him in various states of undress. I laughed and cried when I read it. How could I have been affected in that way? Disregarding Mirabehn's exaggeration, I was affected by what remained in the letter and I wrote that I would change my practice. What if the suffering witnessed on the 14th was the result of those physical contacts? So far I have not found any clear evidence to conclude that it could not have been so. Then have all these women become impure by my touch? If that is so, have I been like that from the beginning. In that case, is the peace that some women and young men are supposed to have found by being close to me a delusion? If that is the case, do I have a place in the world? Who am I to find fault with Mahadev and Sushila? Who can say that I may not be thrusting my own faults on them? What have you all gained from me? Is it only disappointment? Would it be proper for me to guide you? Such thoughts pass through my mind. I am maintaining my calm in the midst of this turmoil. My attention is centred on you. If you remain composed then I may regain my self-confidence. Your action will help me only if it is natural. Or, if I find that whatever steps you take express your sense of duty, then too I shall feel at ease. This means that I have found the guru that I have' been looking for. I shall consider myself fortunate if that happens. It is my belief that such should be the result of my training. I shall attain glory only if those who are my heirs have reached higher than I. Right now I see you, Mahadev, Sushila, etc., as occupying a loftier place. This does not mean that now I cannot guide you in any matter at all. But it does mean that if the experience of the 14th is indicative of my generally diseased mind, the situation in which all of you sustained yourselves would have reduced me to bits!

I shall not elaborate further.

If possible, decide about the time of your coming. After you receive this letter, write to me at the Wardha address.

Today's post has not yet arrived. I expect to hear that Sushila has regained her calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending “Thought for the Day” copied from the *Times of India* of today. The person who copied it is also a Sushila¹. She is the headmistress of a high school at Rajkot.

Post Mirabehn’s letters to Rajkumari. I have received your letter. Is Sushila so mad ? It is unbearable that she should lose her place with me. I am awaiting your detailed letter.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

198. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

After May 16, 1938]²

If you take it with a smile the pain will be lessened. Of course if you wish to make me cry you may wear the long face. I cannot put up with your looking sullen. Is not one Pyarelal enough?

If you have read Mahadev’s letter to me you will know that I have told Leela nothing. I have told nothing to anyone. I told only Mirabehn that I had conveyed her complaint to both of you. What is your fault after all? I am at fault in having accused a young man like Mahadev and a pure girl like you. Is this not all that I can tell anyone? Why should you make me more unhappy by being unhappy about it? If you can bear with me, keep a cheerful face and absorb yourself in service. If there is even a little purity and love in me, Pyarelal will be saved and with him both of us will be saved too. Otherwise, both of us will be ruined.

Keep this letter with you. I am afraid of somebody reading it if it is left with me. Ultimately it has to be destroyed.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ Sushila Pai

² *Vide* the preceding three items.

199. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 17, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

How is it there is no letter from you today? Not a day should pass without a letter from you. At present, I am working sometimes for ten hours a day. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL NAYYAR
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

200. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 17, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

After reading Mahadev's letter, you must neither get angry nor abandon me. I have spared nothing in making you unhappy. I do not regret it. Whatever I did was for your good. If you remain unhappy there, it will be breach of promise. If you are not tired of me, both of you should come back at once. Pyarelal's parting from me is like Shravana's being snatched from his parents. I do not have so much right over you. If I remain alive, you will be convinced one day. For the present I shall be awaiting your letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

201. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
May 18, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA W

HEALTH PASSABLE. CAN'T LEAVE BEFORE TWENTIETH.
DEJECTION DIMINISHING.

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3863. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7019

202. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 18, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your letter to Mahadev is shocking. It would seem of all the people you are the most distressed. If anyone has to be distressed, it should rightly be I. I shall put up with your absence so long as you remain cheerful there. Otherwise it would be unbearable.

I for one feel that it will be good for you to come away. My state of health is described in the letter to Sushila. Even from that point of view it may be necessary for you to come. Maybe it would be inadvisable for me to be unrestrained.

I must definitely have your reaction. How would that distress me? You may be sure I am calm.

Mahadev's greatest sorrow is that he has lost his place with you. Unwittingly, he has caused you untold misery. I am persuading him. Wipe his tears if you can.

Do not deprive me of your letter even for a day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

203. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

May 18, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER,

You have been proving your stupidity in every letter. Yes, I did say that if you were tired of Segaon then I had not been entitled to receive service from you. This could not in any way imply that you should not come to me. It did imply that you should hasten your return. If your mind cannot grasp such a simple thing, ask me again. In this context let me describe to you my condition. These two days have not passed well. Yesterday I worked for 12 hours. I was mentally exhausted. I had a terrible backache. I slept well. I was alert again. But the mental condition is not good. In such a situation I do feel your absence. But how can I send for you, how can I ask you to come so long as you do not feel drawn to this place? Would I have been able to work so much if you had been near me? Now do you understand what I want? But this certainly does not mean that you should come here at once under any circumstances.

Now your second question. I accept your version of what happened on the 9th night. There is no question of your account being incorrect. Those who see silver in a sea-shell are right at all times. But he who knows a sea-shell will see it only as a sea-shell, will he not? Oh, the things that sexual impulse makes us do! This does not even mean that I am in the right and what you thought was merely imagination. Believe me, I admit I may have been a prey to illusion; so you can stick to your own position. Indeed it is your duty to do so. Ponder that verse in the *Bhajanavali*. Only that is dharma which is followed by the learned and practised by the saintly and by people free from attachment and hatred, and which your heart accepts as dharma. What the learned, the saintly and people free from attachment, etc., believe can never be acceptable to us if our heart does not accept it. I am neither a learned man, nor a saint; nor am I free from attachment, etc. I have only appointed myself your godfather. The words of such a man must be rejected unless your heart and mind accept them. Whatever you do, your position with me will always remain the same. In no way have you fallen in my estimation.

Yes, a man's words should be taken at their face value. But even

so, one must consider their context. That is to say, while it is necessary to exercise discretion, we must take it that if the reasons which dictate avoidance of physical contact are applicable to any other behaviour or gestures, such gestures, too must be avoided. So much for the literal interpretation. But even this much is not sufficient. To know the meaning of words it is also necessary to know their deeper significance. When you recite the *Gita* every day, you know the literal meaning of the words. But so long as you do not understand their deeper significance, going by the literal meaning of the words would be futile and burdensome. Does this fully answer your letter?

We shall probably leave here on the 20th. I have torn up your letter. Mahadev does not read your letters these days. He sees what I write. He continues to be miserable. That is in his nature. Time will do its work. Is not *Kaala*¹ one of the names for God?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

204. RESOLUTION ON MYSORE SETTLEMENT²

[May 18, 1938]³

The Working Committee has read the popular and official versions of the recent firing that took place near Vidhuraswatham in Mysore on an unarmed crowd. The Committee deplores the fact that the State authorities felt called upon to resort to firing. On seeing that the Mysore government has appointed a tribunal to inquire into the causes that led to the firing, the Working Committee refrains from expressing any opinion on the tragedy. But the Working Committee thinks that H.H. the Maharaja should establish responsible government in his State so that the responsibility for law and order including firing, whenever it is deemed necessary, will be shouldered by a government answerable to the people. The Working Committee sends its condolences to the members of the bereaved families and expresses its sympathy with those who suffered injuries.

¹ Time

² According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-5-1938 the resolution drafted by Gandhiji was discussed by the Working Committee on May 18 and passed the following day.

³ *Ibid*

The Committee approves of the settlement effected by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Acharya Kripalani as between the Mysore State and the Mysore State Congress. The Working Committee notes with satisfaction that in furtherance of the settlement the Mysore Government have issued a communique,¹ and congratulates H. H. the Maharaja and his advisers on the prompt manner in which they are carrying out the settlement. The Working Committee hopes that the settlement will be strictly carried out also by the Mysore State Congress.

On the question of hoisting the national flag the Working Committee hopes that care will be taken not to do anything that may imply any disrespect to the State flag by the State Congress or the national flag by the State authorities.² The final status of the national flag will depend not upon the ability to exercise compulsion but upon the correct conduct of Congressmen and the progressive record of service that the Congress establishes in the country. It should further be borne in mind that the national flag is the symbol of non-violence and national unity to be brought about by means strictly truthful and non-violent. It should further be borne in mind that though there is a growing party among Congressmen who seeks the total abolition of States as a relic of the Middle Ages, the policy of the Congress as a whole has hitherto been and remains one of friendliness to the States in the hope that they will recognize the signs of the times and establish

¹ The communique of the Mysore Government dated May 17, stated that:

(i) The Government would recognize the Mysore State Congress provided it co-operated with the Government in the task of constitutional reforms and carried on its activities in a peaceful and constitutional manner.

(ii) The Government would add three new members selected by the Mysore State Congress on the committee on constitutional reforms.

(iii) On all ceremonial occasions the Mysore flag and the flag of Indian National Congress would be hoisted.

(iv) The Mysore State Congress would withdraw the civil disobedience and no-tax campaigns.

(v) All the political prisoners would be released and the prohibitory orders withdrawn.

² *The Hindu*, 20-5-1938, carried the following report: "Mahatma Gandhi has instructed the Mysore State Congressmen to hoist first the Mysore State flag, that is, give precedence to the Mysore flag on all ceremonial occasions when they hoist the national flag, as a mark of their loyalty to the Ruler and in order to avoid any conflict."

responsible government within their borders and otherwise extend and guard the liberty of the people under their jurisdiction.

Harijan, 21-5-1938

205. TELEGRAM TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

WARDHA,
May 19, 1938

SUSHILA
21 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

THOUGH STILL FEEL UNWORTHY YOU ARE TO COME. SOONER
THE BETTER. PYARELAL AGREES BRING SHARDA. GOD BLESS
YOU. SOUNDARAM HERE. HOWEVER YOU CAN WAIT IF YOU
WOULD RATHER SEE SOUNDARAM THERE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy
: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

206. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 19, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There are no letters from you today. maybe they have gone to Wardha. I hope to get away from here tomorrow. Today the blood-pressure was 168/105. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL NAYYAR
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

207. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS¹

BOMBAY,
May 20, 1938

Sardar Prithvi Singh, who has been just taken in custody by the collector of Bombay Suburban District, is a life-sentence prisoner in connection with what is known as the first Lahore Conspiracy Case of 1915. He served part of the sentence in the Andamans, and when as a result of public agitation that criminal settlement was closed, Sardar Prithvi Singh was transferred to Madras and then to Rajahmundry. There, having grown tired of jail life, he made two attempts to abscond. He succeeded in the second attempt in 1922, and has ever since succeeded in eluding the police. He is a self-made man. He is a leading revolutionary and for some time has been revising his views on armed revolution, and ultimately decided in consultation with his friends to surrender himself to me and be guided by me. After having had a full conversation with him, I decided to take charge of him, and told him that according to my view of life there could be no secrecy and voluntary surrender to authorities was in itself a service to the country. He recognized the force of my opinion. He came to me on the morning of the 18th, and I wrote to the District Magistrate on the 19th, informing him that Sardar Prithvi Singh had surrendered himself to me, and that I was about to put myself in communication with the Government of India with a view to securing his discharge, and that if the District Magistrate could not legally allow Sardar Prithvi Singh to remain with me, he was at liberty to take him into custody. The District Magistrate wrote to me to say that he had no authority to leave him free. He himself accompanied by the Superintendent of Police arrested him today at 1 p.m. at our residence at Juhu.²

I have been given to understand that he will be treated as an A-class prisoner. I had asked Sardar Prithvi Singh to write an account of his career. It is a thrilling romance. So far as I can see, he has not been

¹ This was published under the title "A Fellow-pilgrim".

² Mahadev Desai in his "Weekly Letter", published in *Harijan*, 28-5-1938, commented: "Gandhiji was visibly moved as the Magistrate and the Police Superintendent bore him away, and after dictating the statement for the press, said: 'It is people like these who can be true satyagrahis.'"

guilty of anything of which he need be ashamed. He developed revolutionary ideas in Canada where he had migrated in his youth. He was witness to the illegal and shameful turning away of the *Coma Gata Maru* from the Canadian shore, and he and a band of Indian settlers in Canada decided to return to India and lead a revolution. After absconding he has evidently made himself useful to the nation in various ways. He is very powerfully built Rajput. Five months of hunger-strike in the Andamans and injuries received, whether in scuffles with the police or in escaping from custody, have left no visible trace of weakness on his body. He became a first-class gymnastics teacher and studied the science of physical culture and the art of massage, and gave training in physical culture in many schools.

To seek the relief of the political prisoners has come to me in the later years of my life as a God-sent mission. To strive for the early discharge of Sardar Prithvi Singh is the latest addition to this mission. He tells me that he is endeavouring to examine the method of non-violence for the deliverance of the country. He says that many of his past revolutionary companions are thinking along these lines. He has no other aim in life but the freedom of India. I was so much taken up by the sincerity with which he talked to me that I had no difficulty in taking his word at its face value, and I should love to have men like him as fellow-pilgrims in the pilgrimage to the temple of freedom,

Harijan, 28-5-1938

208. INTERVIEW TO JAMES A. MILLS ¹

JUHU,

[May 20, 1938]²

I hope to live to see India united and independent. When that day comes I hope to carry out the long-cherished wish of visiting America.

The Hindu, 23-5-1938

¹ Special correspondent of the Associated Press of America, interviewed Gandhiji in Juhu just before his departure for Wardha on May 20.

² *Ibid*

209. *LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*

SEGAON (WARDHA),

May 21, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

I had two hours and a half with friend Jinnah yesterday. The talk was cordial but not hopeful, yet not without hope. I must not enter into the details of the conversation, but he complained bitterly of Hindi having been imposed in particular areas of Madras in primary schools. What is exactly the position? Are Mussalman boys affected? Please send me as early a reply as possible and one that I could publicly use.

I had a long chat with Jawaharlal about the Communist party. I think we understand each other better than before on this particular question. He says [in] the Communist Party's programme, there is no violence, there is no secrecy. Why should it [be] banned therefore as such? If any communist or party resorts to violence openly or secretly or incites to violence they must be dealt with not because of allegiance to a particular party, but because of violence. Thus the author of the writing that you showed me can clearly be dealt with under law, not because there is a ban on the Communist [Party] but because the writing itself has a criminal taint. Have you anything against this argument? If the ban is lifted, what will happen?

I hope you have received the official reply from Subhas. It enables you to deal with your correspondent.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat; G.N. 2070

210. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,

May 21, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Sardar Prithvi Singh is an old revolutionary who, belonging to a party that believed in armed revolution, was one of the odd hundred Indians, who being enraged over the treatment meted out to the passengers of the *Kamagata Maru* who vainly sought legal landing on the Canadian shore, took their passage to India with the avowed purpose, I believe, of causing trouble. Sardar Prithvi Singh was tried and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. He was then tried in what is known as the first Lahore Conspiracy case of 1915 and was sentenced to transportation for life, and was sent to the Andamans. When the penal settlement was broken up, he, with many other prisoners was transferred to Madras and thence to Rajahmundry. On the way he absconded — this was in 1922—and successfully evaded capture. All these years of hiding he passed in studying the science of physical culture, and was responsible for training hundreds of youths. But this life gave him no satisfaction. He fell in the company of those who believe in the non-violent method. He seems to have developed faith in non-violence. On the 18th instant, he surrendered himself to me, and put himself under my guidance. I told him that I would love to keep him with me, watch him, and engage him in constructive national activity if the Government left him free. But I told him also that I could not keep him without informing the Government of what I was doing. On the 19th instant, therefore, I wrote to the Collector of the Suburban District in Bombay (for I was living in Juhu) telling him that if he had no authority to let Sardar Prithvi Singh remain with me, the Sardar was ready to be arrested. Yesterday the District Magistrate came to Juhu and arrested Sardar Prithvi Singh and lodged him in Thana Jail as an "A" class prisoner.¹

I have given only the bare outline of Sardar Prithvi Singh's activities. I feel that persons like Sardar Prithvi Singh should be given an opportunity of leading a useful life, instead of being kept in custody, especially when some person like me, known to the Government, is willing to keep them, and hold himself responsible for their

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 20-5-1938

peaceful conduct. I wonder if my presentation makes any appeal to you. If it does I would urge you to make my way smooth, and restore Sardar Prithvi Singh to me. I may tell you that my having interested myself in the discharge of political prisoners has brought me in touch with many revolutionaries. I entertained high hopes of their conversion, especially if I received hearty co-operation from the authorities concerned.

I do not know exactly whom or which department, or which provincial government I should properly approach. But I felt that as we have come to know each other, and there is a friendly contact between us, I would approach you, the fountainhead.¹

May I expect an early reply? I know how busy you are, but perhaps you realize the importance of the matter and will therefore forgive me for the trouble I am giving you.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

211. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

SEGAON *via* WARDHA,
May 21, 1938

DEAR DR. KHARE²,

Though you are in trouble³ I know you will not neglect the accompanying important newspaper article. As it professes to be authoritative it demands a reply. Will you kindly inquire and send a detailed reply in respect of each count in the indictment? How I wish Government will guide the forthcoming deliberations.⁴ It requires

¹ In his letter of June 18, the Viceroy had said he was touched by the terms in which Gandhiji had pleaded Prithvi Singh's case, but that records revealed that Prithvi Singh had been guilty of crimes of exceptional violence, aggravated by deceit, and he could not properly ask the Governor to press his Ministers to release him.

² Then premier of the Central Provinces

³ In the Central Provinces serious differences had arisen among the Ministers and three Ministers had resigned.

⁴ The reference is to the meeting of the C. P. Congress Assembly Party scheduled to be held at Pachmarhi on May 24, called by the Parliamentary Committee "to compose the differences that had arisen among the Ministers and investigate certain charges that had been brought to the notice of the Working Committee".

bravery of a high type to insist upon cleaning one's own house and putting it in order.

May I expect an early reply to the indictments? At the time of sending it, please return the newspaper.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Newspaper separately posted.

Gandhi-Khare Papers, file No. 107, P. I. Courtesy : National Archives of India.

212. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 21, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Yesterday I did not dictate any letter. I am writing this on the train. My health can be said to be good. I am under mental tension. What does Prakash intend doing? What does Ba propose doing? Will Devdas be going to Rajaji or not? Tell Devdas that it was unnecessary to send the long telegram. How is Sushila?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

213. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 21, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have sent off a postcard today after paying late fee. I got your note after I reached here.

I am feeling quite well. I had my weight taken. It was 106 lbs. It is not bad.

It is quite hot here, though it is not unbearable. Do not be slack in writing letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

214. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,

May 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

A letter addressed to me at Calcutta in which you wrote about a young graduate, went from place to place and was received only yesterday. Your letter written on the train was duly received and was easily readable. And now has come yours of 19th.

I feel better and rested after reaching Segaoon. I want mental rest. The mind has been overworked. I can take that rest only here, so I find from experience.

The heat is no doubt trying. But I feel the joy of being a co-sharer with the other inmates. I propose presently to take daily silence for a few hours.

My weight was found to be 106 yesterday—not much of a loss for retaining the health I was able to keep.

Yes, the Mysore communique¹ was distinctly good. You must have liked the W. C. resolution². It was good you went to Mysore.

¹ *Vide* “Resolution on Mysore Settlement”, 18-5-1938

² *Ibid*

I shall gladly revise what you may send.

What do you say to my exploit about Prithvi Singh?

I must send you a copy of what happened between Jinnah and me. He is a very tough customer. If the other members of the League are of the same type a settlement is an impossibility. But there is a way out for a unilateral undertaking. Settlements cannot be unilateral. I do not know that a unilateral undertaking will not be in the prevailing atmosphere a better mode of handling the situation. But every attempt must be made to arrive at a mutual understanding.

I have not yet written to the Mirza. I shall do so in a day or two. As for myself you are right. You and others can help me only through prayer. I feel that the cloud is lifting. What is happening to make me feel easy, I do not know. And why should I worry? God's ways are mysterious.

I had an hour's good chat with Jawaharlal on 19th. Your diagnosis is correct. The European visit will do him good. Of course he is at heart religious, though he denounces religion. He reads the *Gita*. He sports a Buddha head in his bedroom. Whatever he does and wherever he is, it is well with him.

Did I ever tell you that I did not deliver your letter to Jinnah? I did not like it. It should have made no mention of me but should have confined itself to the question itself. But it does not matter.

How are you doing? What about the eczema? And the throat?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3629. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6438

215. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 22, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Have you and Sushila decided not to write to me? I have written to you that your letters are a necessity for me. You must at least do this much.

I may say I am getting along well. Pass on the enclosed letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

216. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*¹

SEGAON,
May 23, 1938

I have your wire. I await letter. Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3864. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7020

217. *LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

May 23, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

There is a wire from Gosibehn. She has lost her mother. I have sent a wire. You may send a wire or write a letter.

I hope Rajendra Babu is cheerful. Please let me know the temperature if anybody is coming this way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2991

218. *LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 23, 1938

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I could reach your letter only today. May you live long and grow in your devotion to duty day by day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4727. Courtesy : Shantikumar N. Morarjee

¹ This is in the form of a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

219. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 23, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I do not find in it any contempt for me. What you have done is scientific analysis. I agree with many of the points. I shall enclose with this the article I had written. You can tear it up after having Devdas read it. Nothing has been published. If I write anything afresh, I shall circulate it among friends. I am still not convinced that there is anything wrong about discussing such matters. To my knowledge, such discussions have been beneficial so far. I am not aware of the harm done. There will be a great deal of dirty discussions. How can filth be removed unless it is brought out through discussions? All this is unnecessary today. I submitted to Mahadev, Raja, etc., because I am a little scared of them myself. We shall see about it when I have acquired confidence in myself.

Does it not follow from your letter that it is not right that I should forbid others from taking the liberties I permit myself? I am not perturbed. I have almost regained my original calm. I am thinking impartially about everything, including the bitter experience of the 14th.

Can you indicate the date of your return

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

220. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON,

May 23, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have received two of your envelopes together. Mahadev appears calm. But if his calm is genuine, he will not be distressed by your letters. I send him all your letters.

You certainly are stupid, but certainly not unfortunate and

undeserving. And why unfortunate? Have you lost my love? Have you lost Mahadev's love? Why undeserving? What have you done to make you undeserving? You certainly are stupid because you could not understand some simple things about the world. But it is I who make you stupid, What if I should be seeing my stupidity in you?

Now about the 9th night. Why are you suffering so much? Can it not be that my affliction is the result of my latent lust? Maybe it is not. Can it not be that it is the result of my delusions? I have not claimed divinity. If you can be in the wrong, why can I not be in the wrong too? Both are a matter of imagination, are they not? You have not experienced anything and I cannot know your heart. God alone is the ruler of the hearts of both of us. He alone knows our hearts. That is why as your godfather I command you to regard your conduct as having been absolutely innocent and to forget your anguish. My misconceptions are the cause of your anguish. Forget it; that you forgive me I can hardly ask.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

221. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[1.30 p. m. Monday, May 23, 1938]¹

You have not to say anything. There is no need to take Jajuji. You have to go and sit there². You should join in when you can contribute something. Otherwise remain silent. I have no doubt that it is your duty to go there. If the corruption cannot be removed you will have to leave the Provincial Committee³.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 2992

¹ Supplied by the addressee in *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, "How Non-Violence Works"

² At the meeting of the C. P. Congress Assembly Party which was to be held at Pachmarhi on May 24; *vide* footnote 3, "Letter to Dr. N. B. Khare", 21-5-1938

³ Nagpur Provincial Congress Committee, of which the addressee was President.

222. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
May 24, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

So, learn a lesson now, that wherever we are we must not eat food that does not agree with us. When will you build up your health and be your old self again? If you prefer Amritlal to look after you, then keep him and send A. S. back. Anyhow, get well quickly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7084. Also C. W. 4576. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

223. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 24, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I wrote to you at considerable length yesterday. You have asked in your letter to Kanu as to what is being decided about you. He will no doubt write. I can only say that all that we are thinking of is your return. When will you be coming?

And what is there to, think about? You had said three weeks at least. I had thought it would be three weeks at the most. Deep within me I had felt that you yourself would not be able to stay away for three weeks. If you do not fix another date, I shall await your arrival on the 30th. Counting from the 9th, would not three weeks be over on the 30th?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

224. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 24, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

You will have received my letter of yesterday. Ba is enquiring when you will be coming back. Others are also enquiring, so am I. Whatever work you are doing there you can do here as well. You will be serving me besides. Vijaya is quite ill. So is Vasumati. Bhansali had seven glands taken out. You can certainly help in all these cases. Now you have been away sufficiently long. Think over it and write to me. Do you or do you not wish to come?

Whatever the case, you must cease your lamentations.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

C. S. had come today. The blood-pressure was 155/95 at 10 o'clock.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

225. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
May 25, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. I understand from Mahadev's letter that you have not passed on some of my letters to Sushila. Now I know why some letters have remained unanswered. But I think you were right in withholding the letters. Only you can imagine Sushila's state of mind. It seems she is still suffering unnecessarily. Will she ever get over her suffering? What can I do from here to relieve her distress? Is it possible that she may recover if you bring her here even for a few days?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

226. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 25, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER,

When will your sorrow end? In expressing your sorrow, you use words which pierce me like arrows. Have I ever worked for 12 hours in your presence?

Are you receiving Mahadev's letters now? Did I write to you that Mahadev had resolved to stop writing to you?

In today's letter you have reached the limit of your stupidity. Where is it laid down that if you see silver in a sea-shell once you will do so every time. And only yesterday I wrote that if something was possible in your case, it would be possible, in my case too. Could it not be that I saw silver in a sea-shell?

You will have to withdraw the adjective "undeserving". Would you be undeserving when I considered you so or would you believe it of yourself on your own? Do you wish to abandon me altogether by saying that? Now I am unable to bear your sadness because there is no cause for it at all. Can even Pyarelal not tell you such a simple thing? Forget your sorrow, if only for my sake. What can I do to comfort you? Granted that you have made me unhappy. But have I made you any less unhappy? Who should blame whom? Why should we not leave it to God to decide?

When shall I have a comforting letter from you? Rajkumari's letter is enclosed. Let Devdas also read it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

227. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 26, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL

How very business-like and prompt you are ! I am so glad you were able to go into the Gurgaon D. C. C.'s affairs. I hope your advice will be accepted by both parties, as it should be.

Today I have your letter about my notes of my talks with Jinnah.¹ I think my second talk with him was inevitable. I hope it won't do any harm. If you have time I would like you to give me a line about Jal after you have seen him. How I wish you will give yourself rest during your European tour and not rush as you have been doing here all the time.

Love.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 279

228. *LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL*

May 26, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I learnt about your fever. Don't be disheartened. Every thing will be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7081. Also C. W. 4573. Courtesy : Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 30-4-1938

229. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 26, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is no letter from you today.

I was perturbed by Sushila's letter of yesterday. How can she be consoled? She seems to be hurt all the more by my letters. It seems that my letters, instead of healing her wounds, are keeping them raw. Why can you not console her? I am sure you understand my state of mind. As for the night of the 9th I have explained that I fully agree with what Sushila says. I have indeed said that her impression might not have been correct. By the same token, I also believe that my impression might not have been correct either. I am even going a step further. Sushila is witness to her purity of mind. I cannot even claim purity of mind. I am willing to admit that I might have had a dirty mind. Can it not be that my diseased mind might have aroused me and I might have seen the reflection of my own morbidity in that innocent girl and in her action? Why should Sushila feel unhappy when all this is possible? Why should she feel miserable on account of my morbidity, my delusion and my imperfection? Why should Sushila go on feeling unhappy in spite of my acceptance of all these possibilities? I am not accusing her of anything. If you are convinced by my argument, try to pacify Sushila in your own words and in your own way. I do not wish that she should be calm for my sake. I can be calm only if her mind accepts that there is no reason at all to feel perturbed. I have somehow started feeling that in all these incidents I alone have played the role of Satan and by imputing guilt to an innocent act have caused untold misery to Sushila, to Mahadev and even to you. Thus, while on the one hand I am beginning to feel calm under the intoxication of work, on the other hand, whenever there is free time, I keep analysing the incidents of the day of the 14th of April and the night of the 9th. I have found no clue so far. I do not know if I shall find it at all. As Rajkumari says my faith in God is being tested. If Sushila cannot be pacified at all, I can see that it will be a terrible thing for me. But if she cannot be pacified what will you

do? What will poor Sushila do? As for me, I shall reap what I have sown.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You may use this if you really think it is proper. If I cannot reduce Sushila's misery, let me at least not add to it?

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

230. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 26, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER,¹

I am well. Sharda is looking after me well. Now you have to keep Vijaya there. Her temperature should come down.

I expect you have made proper arrangements for your food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 399

231. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
[After *May 26, 1938*]²

CHI. SARASWATI,

I am glad I got your letter at least. Keep on writing thus.

You have not been tested. You had once said 'no', but there is no harm if you wish to marry now. Your earlier decision was immature. I cannot understand the resentment of your uncle and Mother.

What a cunning girl you are! Kanti was sent there for a month and now you ask for two. Don't do so. Don't keep Kanti for more than a month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6153

¹ This is in Urdu.

² From the contents it appears that this letter was written during the period of about a month that the addressee and Kantilal Gandhi had spent at Trivandrum. They had left Wardha for Trivandrum on May 26, 1938; *vide* also "Letter to Prabhavati", 27-5-1938 and "Letter to Prabhavati", 20-6-1938

232. *LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN*

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
May 27, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I thank you for your exhaustive reply of the 24th instant.¹ Evidently my position has been misunderstood. I do not wish to suggest that my judgment or that of the Congress is to be made subservient to the opinion of the convicts, but before I could come to a final judgment, it would be necessary for me in the interest of the common cause itself to sound the prisoners' mind. If I had not, subject to confirmation after an examination of details, come to the preliminary conclusion that the solution suggested by the Bengal Government might be worthy of acceptance, I could not have thought of any interview with the prisoners. My idea is, after deeper examination of the solution, to convince the prisoners of the desirability of its acceptance. Before, therefore, I can finally accept the solution suggested, I hold it to be necessary to take the prisoners into confidence. I hope that you will agree with this opinion, for the sake, as I have already said, of the common purpose, viz., to ensure peace so far as this ticklish question of prisoners' release is concerned.

I take it that the question of detenus has been satisfactorily settled. I would appreciate a line as to how the matter stands.

yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938; also C. W. 9925

¹ The addressee in his letter had said that Gandhiji's suggestion that the proposals for release of political prisoners and detenus should first be discussed with the convicts would promote misunderstanding both among the prisoners and the public.

233. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
May 27, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

Kanti, Kanu and I wrote to you around the 15th. How are we to blame if you didn't get the letters?

Please continue to write to me. I am all right. A meeting is going on here just now. Kanti and Saraswati left for Trivandrum yesterday. Ba arrived from Delhi yesterday. The rest, after I hear from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3514

234. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
May 27, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

What reply did you give Vinoba? Where did you catch the illness? But what has happened has happened. Now get well soon and return here. We shall forget the past.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7082. Also C. W. 4574. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

235. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
May 27, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There has been no post from you yesterday and today. There are only three days before the 30th. I gather from Ba's broken sentences that you are planning to run away somewhere. I cannot believe it. But if you want to throw pepper into a raw wound you will

do that too. Think of it if you can. Is not my prestige in your hands?

You will have received my letter of yesterday. My mind at present is inclined in that direction. I am back in the same state of mind as I was in on the 14th. If that conclusion is correct, have I not been like the guilty person arraigning the policemen? Can you be of some help in this as well? I shall feel greatly relieved if Sushila's agitation subsides.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

236. *LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE*

[About *May 27, 1938*]¹

DEAR SUBHAS BABU,

This is Shri Dayal Singh. He says he is in search of national service. I have told him I have . . . ²

From a copy: C. W. 4575. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

237. *FOREWORD TO "BASIC NATIONAL EDUCATION"*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

May 28, 1938

The fact that the first one thousand copies of this pamphlet have been sold out shows that what Dr. Zakir Husain and his committee have called Basic National Education is exciting fair interest in India and outside. A more correct though much less attractive description would be Rural National Education through village handicrafts. 'Rural' excludes the so-called higher or English education. 'National' at present connotes truth and non-violence. And 'through village handicrafts' means that the framers of the scheme expect the teachers to educate village children in their villages so as to draw out all their faculties through some selected village handicrafts in an atmosphere free from superimposed restrictions and interference. Thus considered, the scheme is a revolution in the education of village children. It is in no sense an importation from the West. If the reader bears this

¹ This is written on the reverse of the preceding item.

² The letter is incomplete.

fact in mind he will be better able to follow the scheme to the preparation of which some of the best educationists have given their undivided attention.

M. K. GANDHI

Basic National Education

238. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

May 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

Today I am sending A.S. You must carefully follow all the instructions of the doctor. It is your duty to get back your health quickly. I have written today to Naranbhai and Manubhai.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7085. Also C. W. 4577. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

239. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 28, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

No letters from you for three days! I do not like it. You must be receiving my letters every day. The absence of your letters may also mean that both of you, brother and sister, will be arriving here on the 30th. In that case I shall forget the absence of your letters. You have sent all the luggage with Ba. That is an additional cause of worry. Have both of you deserted me? If the implication is as terrible as that, I have explained in my two previous letters what that would mean to me. Maybe I deserve only that! Hence, I am not in a position to write anything more this time. If you are still in Delhi when this letter reaches there and if you have not written any letters in the meantime, send me a telegram immediately. I shall await it on Monday.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

240. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 28, 1938

CHI. A. S.,

I am comfortable. Vijaya has to stay there as long as the doctor does not allow her to move. If this is more than six days, I shall call you back.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There is no reply from Jinnah.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 659

241. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[After May 28, 1938]¹

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. You had better not damage your health. Bring Vijaya only when the doctor permits. You may come over if someone can stay there for a few hours. Vijaya should be given butter-milk only if she feels hungry. Bhansalibhai can travel by car. So when Ba comes here, you may put him in the car or bring him in the car.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 631

242. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

May 29, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I hope you are better today. I intend to replace A. S. tomorrow. I am thinking of sending Lilavati. If you have any suggestion to make, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7086. Also C.W. 4578. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

243. LETTER TO ANNAPURNA

SEGAON,
May 29, 1938

CHI. ANNAPURNA,

I have your letter. You don't mention how many years you have completed. How can I say, therefore, how old you have grown? I got your gift. Today I am wearing the *kuchchha*¹ made from your khadi. There is still room for improvement in your handwriting, though, of course, you have tried to write with greater care.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9424.

244. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 29, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Give the enclosed letter to Sushila if you think it proper. It will give you an idea of my present state. It seems by entering into Sushila's life I have embittered it at least for the time being. How should I punish myself for it?

I have not shown your letter to Mahadev. I have understood your point. So far, I should say, I have not made any changes yet. The conflict is still going on. I like Mirabehn's conclusion better than that of all of you. That is exactly what Sushila's great anguish suggests. I attributed guilt where there was none. Does this not point to my own morbid state of mind? Mirabehn is not even aware of that incident. Yet she has warned me as gently as she could. The direct implication of Sushila's anguish is this: "What sort of a father are you that you saw guilt in an innocent girl?" Even by deserting me she gives me the same warning. She is of course taking the whole responsibility on herself. But if I let her do it, would it not be the limit of my wickedness? If this conclusion is correct, would I not be doing penance by not taking service from any woman? This question is before me in spite of myself. I am perplexed. I cannot see my way. I cannot make up my mind. Who can help me in this matter? Hence I am praying to

¹ An article of underwear.

God that He may either guide me or take me away.

I have taken note of your programme. Even for the sakes of Prakash, Satya and Sushila, stay there as long as necessary. Do not desert me altogether. Ba's remarks have scared me.

I have given vent to the fire that burns me. However, do not think that I am in the least disturbed. I continue working as much as I can. All the things have been safely received. What tyranny? Why did you join in it?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

245. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 29, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your two letters together. For three days I talked to you only through Pyarelal. I do not know whether you have seen those letters or not. Be that as it may. I am picking up the courage to write to you today.

You have written: "When I have the faith that you understand me and I too understand myself, the period of my separation will also end." When will you have the faith that I understand you? When will you understand yourself? When you understand yourself you will have attained to the farthest reaches of knowledge. Then, instead of your coming to me, the whole world will come to you. In short, I have lost you. You are not an undeserving daughter. What trouble have you given me? I have not had such a thought even in my dreams. I have already been proved an undeserving father. Have I not troubled you enough? Am I not the one who saw guilt in your innocent act? I had lost you at that very moment. I had even told you so that day. I am reaping as I sowed. You have returned everything. Some of those things were meant solely for you. The microscope, etc., were not bought for me. They were bought only for you. Permit me to return those things to you if you can accept them.

What else should I write? I do not deserve even a letter from you. I shall of course feel happy if you write.

I could not do you any good, but God will.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

246 LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 29, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER,¹

The question of sending Lilavati arises only if Vijaya has to stay there long. If she is released tomorrow, nothing need be done.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 400.

247. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

May 30, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You will have received the letter I wrote you yesterday. It seems I forgot to mention that I had not shown your letter to Mahadev.

I would wish this to be my last letter concerning the Sushila-Mahadev episode. So far as I am concerned, the conclusion I have come to from the facts that have come to me is final.

Sushila's firmness has opened my eyes. I thrust my suspicion on Mahadev. Only what Mahadev said to me on the 14th was correct. Whatever he wrote and said since then has been done merely under my influence. Hence, I must treat it as cancelled. In the process, the innocence of both of them comes out clear before me. My love was full of suspicion. That is why I saw pure gold as brass. I attributed my morbid tendencies to both of them. It is my cussedness which is the cause of Sushila's tortured state of mind. I have now got to look into the source of this cussedness. The fact that Sushila has abandoned me because she feels that she is undeserving is due to her determination

¹ This is in Urdu.

not to see any cussedness in me. The result is of course good. I do not consider myself worthy even to touch Sushila. But would I thereby forget the anguish I have caused her? How can I expiate for maligning Mahadev? Did I not do the same with you in relation to Yoga? Your firm stand conquered me. I shall handle Mahadev. He cannot abandon me at all. When you could not abandon me, how can Mahadev do so?

You have been looking after Sushila. Bring her back into line.

Once your affairs are settled there you have got to come here. If you can give me a firm assurance about your coming, I can patiently wait.

Now about me. If I have caused anguish to Sushila even unknowingly, where do I have the right to serve women or be served by them? I cannot expiate for it by fasting. I cannot do it by suffering in any other way. My expiation can only be in one form and that to avoid the touch of women altogether and serve them from a distance in whatever way I can. In no sense have I been a *brahmachari* of my definition. I must make this known to my colleagues and do the necessary *sadhana* to approximate to my definition.

I do not know if my cussedness has gone that far. I am trying to carry on an impartial search in that direction. If it results in something, I shall inform you.

Neither you nor Sushila need be disturbed on reading this. I am certainly not perturbed. I am trying to understand myself in the light of the *Gita*. I am not troubled by my cussedness. I have not deliberately cultivated it. I was not aware of the stench I was carrying. But when Sushila's fragrance entered my nostrils I thought it was a stench. Such a feeling cannot develop in a day. The root must be lying deep somewhere. Who can unravel this tangle except God? He alone can pull us out of trouble. He will show me the way.

If Sushila can benefit by reading this letter, let her read it. Otherwise there is no need at all to show it to her.

I have already written to Mahadev something to this effect in the morning. I have said the same thing to him in a clear manner.

I do wish you would not feel upset. Nothing is to be gained by feeling upset at this time of trouble.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

248. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 30, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I shall make no change in your time-table now. Talk less.

I shall release you from Sharda's tuition. I shall protect you. You have given me good warning.

Your food charges may well be met here. What you spend on books is too much. It would be good if you received books from home. Are you not satisfied with whatever books we have? Mahadev also has many books. You can look at them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4292.

249. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON¹

WARDHA,

[May 31, 1938]²

AGATHA HARRISON
2400 BATTERSEA
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE RD., S. W. 1

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1501.

250. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

May 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I read your letter. Despatch my letter. I understand what you say. I have not failed to understand. Let me follow my own way for the present. I made my attitude clear only when I made up my mind. "One who has had the good fortune to see Rama has won all the three worlds." I see in this the boundless compassion of the Lord.

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's cable which read: "Is rumour you contemplate visit here shortly correct? Cable."

² On the addressee's cable Amrit Kaur has noted: "Sent Tuesday, May 31, 1938, 7.30."

“One who has had the good fortune to see Rama has won all the three worlds.” I see in this the boundless compassion of the Lord.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11596.

251. LETTER TO PYARELAL

May 31, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have your letter. After writing to you yesterday, I think I can see my way clear.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PYARELAL NAYYAR
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

252. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,

June 1, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I received your two letters together. Now everything is changed, is it not? My letters of yesterday and the day before will have made this clear. Now I have more or less decided that with the exception of Ba I will not accept from any other woman any service involving physical contact. After that, there is no question at all of an affectionate touch. I have made another discovery. In saying that I alone might touch women and that no one else might do so, I was guilty of a terrible error—and for how many years I persisted in the error! I should have known that I could claim no scientific sanction for the experiment. I was impelled solely by my terrible arrogance. Among all my colleagues I considered only myself entitled to break the restrictions of *brahmacharya*. As long as I am not willing to accept my colleagues touching women I have not the slightest right to touch a woman. I hope to settle everything in a day or two. I have

only your firmness to thank for making me see my error. In my view the restrictions I had laid down for you and Mahadev are no longer justified. What qualifies me to lay down such restrictions? When I admit that my accusing you was merely the reflection of my own failing, not yours or Mahadev's, where is the place for the restrictions set by me? To the extent I am involved in this affair, I am the guilty person, not you, nor Mahadev. I am writing all this dispassionately.

And what reward I gave you for your services! Now for Pyarelal. Mother's words were like nectar to me: "You have already taken away Pyare. Now you want to take away Sushila too?" She was right. I did not do you any good. What good have I done to Pyarelal? Pyarelal's future would be the test whether my acts were good or evil. As for you, I still consider you stupid. You have worked for me like a benign spirit. But for your resolute stand, my eyes would not have been opened. I would have still been in the slumber of my illusions. Mira-behn has rightly said that I would have died repenting. God has alerted me only through you. Even though you came to me as a daughter, you have acted like a mother. Not my merit but maybe yours will save your brother.

It is good that you are helping Brijkrishna. My advice is that you should take the place for the hospital. You must be fully recovered. But who am I to guide you? You have got a brother like Pyarelal. He is with you. Do only what he says. After all, how can God give you up? Who will be left for Him if He gives you up? You will always prosper. Do not worry about me. I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

253. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 1, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There is not enough time to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

254. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 1, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your questions are very pertinent. Our duty, as I understand it, is not to spend public funds and not to refuse the money which our relatives are willing to give us. However, if they give unwillingly and because they cannot help it, that money should be refused. You can judge for yourself in the present situation. If you consider it your duty not to take anything from there, then your expenses on food, dress, some little postage, etc., should be met from here. Now about books. If it is a matter of a rupee or two, I do not find any harm in taking that money from here. It would be desirable to consult me on such occasions.

I hope everything is clear now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4293; also S. G. 63.

255. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
June 2, 1938

PYARELAL,
19 RAJA SQUARE
NEW DELHI

YOURS WAS WHOLLY UNPREPARED FOR REBELLION.
SUSHILA'S RIGHT OF SERVING HAD BEEN SPECIALLY
RESERVED. YOU MUST RELY ON YOUR ABILITY CON-
VINCE ME. IMPLORE YOU BOTH START. YOU WILL
LEAVE WHEN YOU LIKE. IF YOU STILL WONT COME
YOU WILL MAKE MY POSITION PRECARIOUS.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

256. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 2, 1938

DEAR SYED MAHMUD,

You are a long time coming. If you come now, I won't be able to provide for you even the comforts you would need for your health. You must now let the rainy season pass.

Hope your drive against illiteracy is making rapid progress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5111.

257. LETTER TO E. RAGHAVENDRA RAO

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 2, 1938

DEAR RAGHAVENDRA RAO,

I must thank you for your frank letter.¹ As you must have seen, such² of your objections as have force have been anticipated by the Working Committee. But it seems to me that you are judging a big institution by the shortcomings of individual members. The Congress has to be judged by its capacity of resistance to the foreign exploitation of the country. In that test I hope that even the present ministry won't be found wanting. I invite you to return to the Congress fold and fight impurity wherever you see it with all your might.³

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji*, pp. 131-2.

¹ *Vide* "A criticism"

² The source has "so much".

³ *Vide* also "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao". 10-6-1938

258. NOTE TO ASHRAM INMATES

Not Revised

June 2, 1938

I have been distressed since the 7th of April. I had a dirty dream that night. I did wake up before the crisis but I felt ashamed. After the experience I hardly slept that night. I was restless. I walked about on the terrace and calmed myself a little. I felt that I was not fit to accept service from Sushila and Prabhavati who slept close to my bed. After the prayer, I first recounted to them what I had been through and then told them that I would not be taking service from them. But both took this decision very badly. Within twelve hours I reviewed my decision and continued to take service from them. But my distress did not cease. On the 14th I had another type of experience which increased my shame and added to my anguish. I had not made any change in my outward behaviour. But consciously or unconsciously, my mind was preparing itself. While I was caught in that whirlpool, I had to meet Mr. Jinnah. I thought it was my duty to write something for the occasion. I wrote something and indicated my sense of shame in it.¹

I had lost my self-confidence. I had shamed my *brahmacharya*. After a great deal of thought I have come to this decision. For the time being, and so long as I am able to bear such physical contact with other people, I should not take any service from women which involves physical contact, unless it is absolutely unavoidable. It is obvious that I must not touch them in jest or in affection. This change is very important to me. My whole life has been shaped in the belief that there is nothing wrong about innocent physical touch of women. Before I took the vow of *brahmacharya* and after, I touched numerous woman in a light-hearted way or in affection, I have not experienced any adverse effect thereby and have not known any woman who may have been sensually aroused.

But a doubt arose after my experience of the 7th April. Why have I not become free from passion in spite of my constant effort towards *brahmacharya*? Why have my thoughts and my mind not become purer and purer? I can say that I have not felt myself free from carnal desire in India as much as I did in South Africa. Could the contact with women have obstructed my path in some subtle way? Who can answer that question? The only solution is that unless God Himself answers it, I should try to shun all physical touch and

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao" 10-6-1938

understand my own mind and conquer it.

Yesterday it became clear to me as day that it was very wrong of me to prevent my colleagues from taking the liberties which I myself have taken. I still cannot understand how I allowed it to happen for so many years. It seems to me that behind that restriction was my pride. It was a failing. I should not have undertaken the experiment if it was so terrible. If it was worth undertaking, I should have encouraged all my colleagues to pursue it on my condition. My experiment was a transgression of the limits prescribed by *brahmacharya*. Only a sage like Shukadevji who was always pure in thought, speech and action would be entitled to exercise such freedom. Such thinking led me to the above decision yesterday.

I feel that the bitter experiences of Dahyabhai and others at Sabarmati had my experiment at their root. Who can say in how many cases my behaviour has led to wrong actions?

Only he who can observe complete *brahmacharya* can give complete training in non-violence. I am the self-appointed leader of the path of non-violence! What wonder if my non-violence is weak to the extent that I cannot pass the above test? Even then, I shall continue my experiment in non-violence so long as I feel convinced that even my imperfect *brahmacharya* has lent considerable support to non-violence. Otherwise too my behaviour would remain the same at least for the present. Who can say where the future will lead me? My strongest desire is to submit lovingly to God and let myself be driven whither He wills.

It was my clear duty to convey this much to my co-workers. I assume that any co-worker who wishes will let me know his reactions and point out any error he may find in my thinking.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

259. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 2, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your letter was received late. You had written 'Shegaon', which is not this Segaon. The letter went to some other Shegaon. If you write 'Wardha', I shall receive the letters regularly and intact. The postal service is bad here.

You must have read my letter to Sushila which I wrote yesterday. You will see that I have gone further ahead. Now what have I got to draw out of Sushila? The whole misunderstanding arose because of my misguided imagination and poor Sushila had to pass through an ordeal. I am not now feeling sorry about it. Whatever I did had been prompted by my love. But according to my definition I proved to be a father with sensual tendencies. How can such a father do justice even to his own children? He would see his morbidities in others. Where do you figure in this? According to my analysis, this entire tragic episode is the result of my mistaken thinking. Now my eyes have been opened and so things must calm down. Does my diagnosis now sound complete? The credit for everything goes to Sushila's firmness.

I have now understood about Sushila. Now why should I worry? Did my worry have behind it the fear that Sushila might be harbouring a scorpion? Sushila having shown her crystal purity, why should I worry about her? She will shine wherever she settles.

I am enclosing a copy of the I note¹ have addressed to co-workers. I hope it will make everything clear. Give this to Devdas to read.

What should I say about you? My conclusion is clear. If I have to lose you, the blame will be entirely on me. I realize that in some matters I am slow-witted. I shall not go into a fresh analysis of myself. If I lose you, I shall know myself as I really am. If I can have you back with me in the natural course, I shall feel reassured that I was not an absolutely undeserving co-worker and father. I have written to Sushila that if my meritorious acts do not save me, hers will certainly save her. During this period of turmoil I have without a doubt obtained a jewel in the person of Sushila. By saying this, I am not undeservedly praising her. I am describing her as I see her at present. Your letter of today confirms that thought.

Sushila writes that I should get my blood-pressure taken twice a day and get my urine also examined twice a day. That will be possible when you come here and attend to it. I am myself not too keen about it. All that Sushila wants you can carry out. But definitely not right now. Only after you have settled everything there and settled Sushila well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 15-7-1938

260. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[On or after *June 2, 1938*]¹

STUPID DAUGHTER SUSHILA,

There is no letter from you. Then why should I write? But on second thoughts I decided to write.

My decision should not hurt you in the least. Though stupid, you are intelligent enough to see that my decision is absolutely independent and inescapable. How can I do what others could not do? How was it I did not understand such a self-evident thing, till today? Why was I so silly? And yet, I do not hesitate to call you stupid!

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

261. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After *June 2, 1938*]²

STUPID GIRL,

Are you trying to prove your stupidity? What did I know of your purity before Mahadev told me? Since then I have been taking service from you. If you too have experienced desire, it is as well. For then we are both in the same plight and we both ought to be on our guard. For me it is sufficient that I am on my guard. The day I have to save myself from you, you will only see my dead body, you will not see me alive. After my 69 years, the *vikara*³ in you cannot affect me. I burn with my own *vikara*. Because of my *vikara* I regard myself unfit to take service from any woman. For that reason, you are free to abandon me, but you are always telling me that you do not want to leave me under any circumstances, so I must accept your services in

¹ From the contents it appears that the letter belongs to this period.

² This letter is written on the reverse side of the addressee's letter to Gandhiji dated June 2, 1938.

³ Meaning here lustfulness

all humility.

Have you read the letters of others? No one has any complaint to make. Mirabehn had only imagined things. Even then there was no complaint against you. Only I have a complaint. But that is a different story altogether. You should forget these people.

You have to consider two questions. I must not take you away from your duty to Mother. Deep in your heart you desire to study. It is a good desire too. Should I make you give up that desire and continue taking service from you? These two questions are very pertinent.

About my experiment later. I can write now, but you must show pity for my hand.

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

262. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 3, 1938

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You will understand everything by and by. Have patience for the present.

Don't run away from there in haste. Stay on till Durga has completely recovered. Here Kanchan is looking after everything quite well. The bread she makes is also quite good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9372. Also C. W. 6647. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

263. *LETTER TO VIPIN D. PATEL*¹

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 3, 1938

CHI. BABA,

I got your letter only today. How old will you be on your next birthday? Why did you forget to write that? And shouldn't one who asks for blessings give something in return? What will you give? What new thing will you do in the new year?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 162.

264. *LETTER TO PYARELAL*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 3, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

It was not difficult for me to read even those portions in your letter which were scored out. You have harassed Sushila for no reason. But she has already passed through the ordeal. It was just as well that she was thus tested. You too should stop lamenting. My decision is based on entirely different grounds. It has nothing to do with Mira's argument. It is not possible that my argument would have occurred to Mira. If I see something wrong in a practice I have continued for forty years, shall I not say that there is the hand of God in it? That was why I did not wait for your and Sushila's letters. Now you can both see that even if it could be proved that Sushila was perhaps on the verge of succumbing to impure thoughts, my conclusion would remain unaltered. So long as I am not prepared to allow others to do what I do myself, why should I do it? This seems to me self-evident. I am now beginning to see this fault has a historical background. After my decision all of us must feel at ease. According to me everything has become clear.

I understand about the machines. Only you can put them to use. Right now I am not even in a position to tempt Sushila. When she comes on her own I shall of course embrace her in spite of my having

¹ Grandson of Vallabhbhai Patel.

stopped taking service from women. But right now her well-being does not lie with me. It lies in her settling somewhere. But it is not for me to decide. Only you two should jointly decide. I see from what you have scored out in your letter that you are shouldering a heavy responsibility there. I do wish you would leave as soon as the problems are solved. And if Sushila wishes to come, her place will be higher than it was. Where would you escape to by running away from me! Such words should not have come from your pen. I am returning your letter.

My health I should say is good.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Reply at Wardha address.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

265. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 3, 1938

STUPID DAUGHTER,

You are like a benevolent spirit but you unfailingly show your stupidity. What letters you write! Who can stop you if you are eager to rush back to an unjust father? I see that you were not in any way at fault. My own blunder is very clear to me. Even then you are trying to convince yourself that the fault was yours. Is it not stupidity? Now be calm. Take up some work there. When Pyarelal is ready to come, you may also come if you wish. Do not torment me by saying that you have lost your place with me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

266. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHAGANJ,
June 4, 1938.

PYARELAL
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

NO CASE CAN SUSHILA COME ALONE. MOST WELCOME
IF BOTH COME. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy
: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

267. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 4, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. Why so much lamentation now? Having taken the decision I am now absolutely at peace. Even Mahadev is calm as far as I can understand him. I am not worried about Sushila either. You are there. That particular incident has nothing to do with my decision. Although it provided the immediate pretext I have justified it independently of that incident. Even if Mahadev and Sushila had been proved guilty instead of innocent, I would still consider my decision right. Since they have been proved innocent my decision is of course correct. My decision is not at all by way of expiation. Whatever blame I am taking upon myself appears to me justified. It may well not be so. But even if the cause of the incidents of the 9th and the 14th is proved to be purely imaginary the legitimacy of my decision holds. Very often, a decision becomes necessary to open our eyes. Hence, let us stop lamenting. Let us forget the past and look after the present.

Sushila therefore does not have to come to pacify me or to find her peace of mind. I would certainly like to have Sushila by my side. I would take service from her in so many ways. But I would be afraid to let her come alone. She is a chain that binds. I. would not willingly

permit you to keep out. I wish your presence even without her. I would be very happy if she too accompanied you. That is why I have sent a telegram¹ today to let you know my state of mind. Now decide what seems right after taking into consideration what needs to be done there. I am in fine fettle.

What Sushila's instrument says or what the urine test indicates only Sushila or you will know. But I am sleeping well and eating well. My diet includes 10 to 12 oz. of milk, *roti*, vegetables, garlic, onions and fruit. This is sufficient. I am not taking jaggery for the present. In the afternoon I take juice of raw mango or lime with soda. I have a tub-bath in the morning. I rub ghee on the soles of my feet twice a day. I massage my head with oil at night. As usual, I apply mud-pack to my abdomen morning and evening. This is for two to two-and-a-half hours altogether. I take light walks. I invariably sleep in the afternoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

268. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEGAON,

June 4, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

That my ideal is Shukadevji does not mean that I should like to have a face like his, to sleep, sit and eat like him and go to the Himalayas as he did. It only means that I should like to cultivate *brahmacharya* like his. And if you say that this can't be the ideal of one who wishes to live and serve in this world or that it cannot be attained by such a one, then *brahmacharya* like Shukadevji's is of little value. A perfect *brahmachari* should remain unaffected by passion in any circumstances. If you say that nobody has ever been, and nobody will ever be, able to cultivate such freedom from passion, then it means that we should abandon the struggle to cultivate *brahmacharya*. If this is correct, then it follows that one can never cultivate perfect ahimsa.

I am alarmed, or was, by my experience² because I was at a loss

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", 2-5-1938

to know what to do. Now that I know, the reason for alarm has disappeared. Saying that I know does not mean, either, that physical contact with women was one of the causes or the only cause of my painful experience. But this has become clear to me as day that I should not have done what I was not prepared to tolerate in others. Now that I have given up the practice I shall discover whether it was physical contact with women that was obstructing my progress or whether there was some other cause. Hence, for fully assessing the result of the experiment of refraining from physical contact with women, I must avoid such contact completely, for the present at any rate. There is no question here of more or less contact.

I hope you will understand everything from this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8574. Also C. W. 7028. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah.

269. TELEGRAM TO PYARELAL

WARDHA,
June 5, 1938

PYARELAL
19 RAJA BAZAR SQUARE
NEW DELHI

READ LETTERS. BOTH START TODAY UNFAILINGLY.
REPLY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

270. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 5, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I hope that before you get this letter, both of you will have arrived here. I had sent one telegram yesterday. Today I am sending another. I am sure you will not delay it. Both of you have understood me wrong. Nothing can be explained through letters. Poor Durga knows nothing. I do not think she has even the slightest suspicion. And now what is there to discuss? I have explained this in my letter of yesterday. But I shall not write anything more. I think I have not blundered. But if you can prove that I have, do you think I shall take long to make amends? You are unnecessarily putting the whole blame on Sushila. I have not exonerated Mahadev independently. What I am saying is that the scale by which I was measuring Mahadev was itself faulty. He is innocent from that point of view. Right now, Mahadev has lost all capacity to decide whether or not he has committed a wrong. My wretched suggestions are responsible for that. What can poor Mahadev do? Hence it is useless if he considers himself innocent and a thousand times more so if he considers himself guilty. Sushila's case is different. But today's letter puts her in Mahadev's position. Both you and I are responsible for that. And even there do I not take the lead? Sushila's agony started with my intimation [of the happening] of the 14th. But I have not taken my decision on that basis at all. It does not involve any expiation. It involves awareness on your part. In your view it is utter ignorance. If you prove that to me I shall swallow my pride. I shall do what I did about Bardoli. Hence, if both of you have not already started, do so after seeing this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

271. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 5, 1938

STUPID SUSHILA,

How stupid you are! Sitting there, you cry and make me cry!!! You are unnecessarily taking the blame upon your self. I have not given up taking service from Ba. Other women feel a little unhappy, but they are cheerful. They have also understood the point. A. S. does feel miserable. But I am also making her laugh quite a bit. She is more stupid than you. She too will calm down in a few days. I hope that abiding by my order, both of you will have arrived here. It is impossible to start today. I am writing this letter so that the day does not pass without communication in case you are unable to leave. Stop crying now. I am eager to see you laugh. You have committed no sin.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

272. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Unrevised

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 5, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

You will be leaving on Wednesday. You came but I feel as if you had not come at all. We had long enough conversations but I can't say that we talked at leisure. But, then where do I have such a thing as leisure? Whatever decision you take, do it calmly. If you can keep [*Indian*] *Opinion* going, do so. But remember the meaning of keeping it going, which I explained to you. I would not consider it being kept going if it is done through advertisements. This does not mean that you should now stop accepting advertisements. But it would be pitiable for the journal to be kept going on advertisements. Advertisements should be used for increasing the profits or for reducing the subscription rate. In the case of pice-newspapers a pice would not help to meet even the cost of the newsprint. But because they get advertisements they are able to reach lakhs of readers by charging a nominal price. If we accept the policy of taking in

advertisements we can justify it only in this way. The royal road for you, therefore, is that you should divide the total expenditure by the number of prospective subscribers and fix that figure as the subscription rate from the very beginning. If you don't get subscribers at that rate, then you should conclude that *I. O.* should be closed down. The rest you know. If you want to earn, settle down there. I won't consider that objectionable. If you wish to return to India, you should be content with whatever you get and decide to devote yourself to public service. Please treat all this as no more than my advice and do what you yourself wish.

Have an amicable talk with Kallenbach.

Don't carry with you any worries about Sushila and the children. Vijayalakshmi and Nanabhai are there to look after them. They will stay in Akola as long as they wish and then come here. You should also know that what the children will acquire in India in the ordinary course from the surrounding atmosphere they cannot acquire in a foreign country, despite all our efforts. You need not, therefore, worry about the children's education either. Sushila should come to Segaon early, because most probably I shall be in the Frontier Province in October. And I can't say how long I shall be there. My health is all right. Pyarelal and Sushila are still in Delhi. Maybe they will come after a few days. Don't be lazy in writing letters.

If my message¹ has not been sent already, it will be enclosed with this. Please give it to Ramdas. The enclosed letter² is for Ramdas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4871.

¹ *Vide* "Message to Indians in South Africa", 6-6-1938

² This is not traceable.

273. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 5, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

How silly you are ! What a long letter you write when you should have just said: 'I want five rupees every month; please send the amount.'¹ Now say how you want me to make the remittance? Shall I send it by money order or in any other way I like? Shall I send the sum every month or every three or four months together?

I have no time to write more. I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10394. Also C. W. 6833. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak.

274. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[June 6, 1938]²

CHI. MANILAL,

I forgot yesterday to enclose a letter for Kanam. Here it is. I am sending the message³ also. I had almost forgotten about it.

Don't worry about me. You are bound to feel the pain of separation, but you should bear it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4874.

275. LETTER TO PYARELAL

June 6, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Notwithstanding all my explaining what anger, what misunderstanding and what lamentation! You even refuse to understand what in my belief is cent-per-cent truth. But I shall not write more. It is my hope that this letter will be proved superfluous, and honouring

¹ The addressee wanted this amount to meet her personal expenses.

² *Vide* following item.

³ *Ibid*

my command, both you brother and sister will be on your way here. You have not fully understood my step. I hope to explain to you fully when you come. All of us cannot be mad at the same time. Either I shall be proved right or you two on your part will have to give up your obstinacy. Then why fear? We shall understand at once when we meet. If you have not left already, you must leave at once after seeing this letter. I do not know what will happen if you really do not come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

276. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

June 6, 1938

STUPID GIRL,

Is there any limit to your stupidity? How could I abandon you forever? Why are you raising me so high? The place you assign to me is not my place, though I certainly wish it was. My experience on the night of the 7th could not in any way have been influenced by the prurience of any of you. As for the incident of the 14th, I find only my own sensuality reflected in it. I shall explain it further when we meet. Why do you presume the existence of something in your heart which was not there? Your saying such a thing is a matter of shame for me. I constantly see that I am sensual. In that case why should we ignore what is evident and look for what is not evident? But you both will have left before this letter reaches Delhi.

Blessing from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Dr. Sushila Nayyar

277. MESSAGE TO INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

SEGAON,

June 6, 1938

I can give only one message to the Indians in South Africa. We shall never be able to preserve our self-respect in South Africa without self-sacrifice. There can be no such distinctions as Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Madrasis, Gujaratis or Punjabis.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4872.

278. TO SEGAON WORKERS

June 6, 1938

The manager should copy out whatever I write herein and read it out to the others. This note-book should always be kept in front of me.

* * *

I have been asked if there are any rules here about anything. There are. For when winding up Sabarmati Ashram I had said that we would from then on be a mobile Ashram and carry with us wherever we went Ashram life and Ashram rules. Prayers, etc., thus stay as before as also the hour of rising. We may certainly introduce changes, excepting in principles, according as circumstances may warrant, as has been done here. We deliberately employ Harijan servants, because we want to serve the Harijans. But though we employ them as servants we have to treat them as our brothers.

* * * *

Therefore we must do even menial work that we can do ourselves. If we cannot do some particular work ourselves we may have it done by others. Only work that even others cannot do may we ask Harijans to do.

From Hindi: C. W. 4674; also G. N. 6866.

279. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 8, 1938

MY DEAR ATULANAND,

I have not been able to overtake your letter of 20th May earlier. Yours of 22nd April I saw only today. The reason for this delay you know.

About the year-book, you have to do what Subhas Babu suggests. I may not, and must not take the lead. I can't issue invitations. The thing has got to be taken up by the Congress. What I said was that an accurate year-book would supply a felt want. It is not the work of any single individual, but you can make yourself responsible for it as editor if the Congress would entrust the work to you.

I am glad that you have dropped the idea of the monthly journal.

I hope your daughter is fully restored.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 1479. Courtesy: A. K. Sen.

280. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 9, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I am grateful for your letter of the 1st inst. If you will please refer again to my letter of 27th ultimo, you will find that the sentence referring to deeper conviction has been wholly misunderstood. You will see that it does not bear the meaning you have put upon it. It is clear from the context that if, after deeper examination of the solution suggested by the Government,¹ I should find it acceptable, I would like to convince the prisoners of the desirability of their acceptance. For deeper examination I must have more material, which is lacking and which I am seeking from you and other sources. If, before I or Sarat Babu or Subhas Babu went to the prisoners, we all three came to the conclusion that the Government's was a sound offer, I for one should stand by it, even if I failed to get the prisoners' acquiescence, unless they could convince me of the error of my judgment. I must however inform you that my deeper study is shaking my belief in the workability of the solution offered by the Government. Naturally I must weigh every solution in the scales I have set up for my guidance, and on the basis of which I submitted my propositions to you before leaving Calcutta. I do not mind through what formula or through what machinery the object of securing the release of every prisoner inside of one year or thereabouts is attained.

With reference to the detenus and the State prisoners I remember the paragraph you refer to in your letter of 17th April. I did not raise any objection to it, although I felt it to be a new introduction, because I had hoped that an early solution of the prisoners' question would be reached. I venture to remind you that in the very

¹ For the scheme proposed by the Government for the release of political prisoners, *vide* "Letter From Khwaja Nazimuddin", 11-5-1938

beginning of the conversations it was agreed that the detenus and the prisoners who were incarcerated without trial were to be separately considered from the convicted prisoners. In my opinion it would be a grave injustice if the discharge of the detenus and State prisoners is to be made contingent upon an agreed solution of the question affecting convicted prisoners.

May I also remind you that the policy about detenus has been already made public by you? It would be a thousand pities, therefore, if the release of detenus and State prisoners were delayed or indefinitely postponed because of the possible breakdown of the negotiations for the release of convicted prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C. W. 9927.

281. LETTER TO E. RAGHAVENDRA RAO

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 10, 1938

DEAR RAGHAVENDRA RAO,

I have your letter of 6th inst. Mahadev has already asked you to send a copy of your first letter.¹ I want to work at it without in any way disclosing your name.² All I wish to say at this stage is that you should send facts and figures to support your conclusions.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI,

From a facsimile: Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhiji, p. 130.

282. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 10, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Women may well be there, but I must nevertheless have a man by me. Whether I want support or not is not the question. I am trying to do without it but how can I say when I may have to have it?

I shall see about the massage. Sushilabehn knows every nerve and tissue of the body. That is why even she does not dare to give it

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao", 2-6-1938

² *Vide* "A Criticism"

up too soon. You should learn how to massage by practising it on Kanu.

Blessings from
BAPU,

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4294; also S.G. 64.

283. TALKS ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION¹

[Before June 11, 1938]

I had long been impressed with the necessity for a new departure as I knew the failure modern education had been through the numerous students who came to see me on my return from South Africa. So I started with the introduction of training in handicrafts in the Ashram school. In fact an extra emphasis was placed on manual training, with the result that the children soon got tired of the manual training and thought that they had been deprived of literary training. There they were wrong, for even the little that they gained was more than children ordinarily get in the orthodox schools. But that set me thinking, and I came to the conclusion that not vocation *cum* literary training, but literary training through vocational training was the thing. Then vocational training would cease to be a drudgery and literary training would have a new content and new usefulness. The acceptance of office by the Congress prompted me to place the thought before the nation, and I am glad that it was welcomed in many quarters.

English we decided to taboo, because we knew that most of the time of the children was taken up with memorizing English words and phrases, and even then they could not put in their own language what they had learnt, and could not properly follow what the teacher taught them. On the other hand they forgot their own language by sheer neglect. Education through vocational training seemed to be the only way to avoid both these evils.

I should make a start on the first day with finding out the calibre of the boys—whether they know any reading and writing, any geography, and then start with trying to add to their equipment through the introduction of the *takli*.

Now you might well ask me why I picked up the *takli* out of the many other existing handicrafts. Because *takli* was one of the first crafts that we found out and which has subsisted through the ages. In the earliest ages all our cloth used to be made of *takli* yarn. The

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Education through Vocation—A synthesis", Desai does not say when or where the talks were delivered

spinning-wheel came later, and [as] the finest counts could not be produced on the spinning-wheel, one had to go back to the *takli*. In devising the *takli* man's inventive genius reached a height that had not been reached before. The cunning of the fingers was put to the best possible use. But as the *takli* was confined to the artisans who were never educated, it fell into disuse. If we want to revive it today in all its glory, if we are to revive and reconstruct the village life, we must begin the education of children with the *takli*. My next lesson would therefore be to teach the boys the place the *takli* used to occupy in our daily life. Next I would take them into a little history and teach them how it declined. Then would follow a brief course in Indian history, starting from the East Indian Company, or even earlier from the Muslim period, giving them a detailed account of the exploitation that was the stock in trade of the East India company, how by a systematic process our main handicraft was strangled and ultimately killed. Next would follow a brief course in mechanics—construction of the *takli*. It must have originally consisted of a small ball of clay or even wet flour dried on to a bamboo splinter running through its centre. This has still survived in some parts of Bihar and Bengal. Then a brick disc took the place of the clay ball and then in our times iron or steel and brass have taken the place of the brick disc and a steel wire the place of the splinter. Even here one might expatiate with profit on the size of the disc and the wire, why it is of a particular size and why not more or less. Next would follow a few lectures on cotton, its habitat, its varieties, the countries and the provinces of India where it is at present grown and so on. Again some knowledge about its cultivation, the soil best suited for it, and so on. That would make us launch into a little agriculture.

You will see that this takes a fund of assimilated knowledge on the part of the teacher before he can impart it to his pupils. The whole of elementary arithmetic can be taught through the counting of yards of spinning, finding out the count of yarn, making up of hanks, getting it ready for the weaver, the number of cross-threads in the warp to be put in for particular textures of cloth and so on. Every process from the growing of cotton to the manufacture of the finished product—cotton picking, ginning, carding, spinning, sizing, weaving—all would have their mechanics and history and mathematics correlated to them.

The principle idea is to impart the whole education of the body and the mind and the soul through the handicraft that is taught to the children. You have to draw out all that is in the child through teaching all the processes of the handicraft, and all your lessons in history, geography, arithmetic will be related to the craft.

If such education is given, the direct result will be that it will be self-supporting. But the test of success is not its self-supporting character, but that the whole man has been drawn out through the teaching of the handicraft in a scientific manner. In fact I would reject a teacher who would promise to make it self-supporting under any circumstances. The self-supporting part will be the logical corollary of the fact that the pupil has learnt the use of every one of his faculties. If a boy who works at a handicraft for three hours a day will surely earn his keep, how much more a boy who adds to the work a development of his mind and soul !

Harijan, 11-6-1938

284. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 11, 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I saw your letter¹ addressed to Mahadev. I can understand your pain. I hope the step I have taken will help to lighten your pain to some extent. I have drafted a statement² in English for newspapers, but I have not as yet published it. Your suggestion is certainly worth thinking over. My temperament inclined me to another course. I experience greater peace when I make such things public. The fear mentioned in your letter is based on practical considerations. I don't feel that I have lost the strength to stick to a step which I may have decided to take deliberately and as a matter of dharma. However, I won't publish the statement in a hurry. Even though I am putting it off, for non-Gujarati readers there must be a statement in English similar to the one in Gujarati.

I got the news yesterday through Gordhandas about Savitri³ having given birth to a son. I am writing a few lines on a postcard to Lakshmanprasad⁴.

Blessings from,
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2993.

¹ Not traceable. It had referred to the adverse comments by some of the Ashram inmates on Gandhiji's practice of resting his hands on shoulders of girls during his walks and his decision to give up the practice.

² Gandhiji had written an article on his decision for *Harijan* but it was never published as some of the Ashram inmates did not approve of making Gandhiji's decision a public affair.

³ Addressee's daughter-in-law.

⁴ Savitri's father. The letter is not traceable.

285. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON,
June 11, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your letter is extremely good. It is pure. Your doubts are pertinent, even your fear is relevant and your caution is quite welcome.

The vow¹ of 1935 was worded in English, I had not seen the Gujarati or the Hindi translation. The purport of the original English is that I renounce the practice of placing my hands on the shoulders of women. I did not feel then that there was anything wrong about it, nor do I now. I gave up the practice only for the sake of public good. My heart never took it to mean that I would never place my hand on the shoulder of any girl whatsoever. I have no recollection of the particular girl with whom the practice was resumed in Segaoon. But I do recollect that I fully remembered my vow of 1935 when I placed my hand on her shoulder. Possibly I could not resist her request, or may be I needed her support. I cannot of course say that the support became necessary because of my weak state for had that been the case I could have had the support of some man so as to keep the vow inviolate. But my vow never had such a wide meaning, at least for me. From the very beginning I have regarded Sushilabehn in the same way as Ba, as an exception. My tender feelings are to account for that too. I would like to give up physical contact even with these two if it were possible, but I have no desire to do so at the cost of the deep hurt which I would be causing them while my heart feels no sin in the contact of these two. I took the decision only after much discussion with the girls here, after some laughter and some cajoling. I have caused Ba much pain. I still occasionally do, but I have no courage nor any desire to inflict any further pain on her. Sushila has observed *brahmacharya* since childhood but her observance does not include the exclusion of innocent contact with men. Pyarelal too is a *brahmachari* and one of the reasons for his joining me is that I do not advocate total avoidance of innocent contact between the two sexes and I have had a certain measure of success in this. Once I intended to give up all personal services from Sushila but within twelve hours my soft-heartedness had put an end to the intention. I could not bear the tears of Sushila and the fainting away of Prabhavati. I did not even want to. It is these brothers and sisters that my decision has affected most and that is why I summoned them by wire. I want their sincere

¹ *Vide*, "A Renunciation"

co-operation in my present task. Sushila has been present in the bathroom while I have bathed in the nude and in her absence Ba or Prabhavati or Lilavati have attended on me. But I see nothing wrong in it. It was necessary for someone to be there. I could call a male co-worker, too. Pyarelal has been in attendance occasionally but I have never felt any embarrassment in being seen naked by a woman. Still it would have to be a woman whose relations with me cannot come under any kind of suspicion.

Now for its implementation. As soon as I put my decision into practice the discussions arose. During the first round of discussions I started acting upon the decision the very next day though the step was to be taken only after 3-4 days. The discussions are inevitable as long as my mastery over the passions is incomplete, perhaps they are even necessary. Complete realization can be expressed best only through silence. Speech can never fully express thought. Ignorance denotes disorganization of thought which is why it needs the vehicle of speech. Thus you may take it for certain that the very necessity of any explanations and persuasions on my part proves my imperfection or proneness to passions. My claim is and has ever been very small. I am striving incessantly to have full control over my thoughts, i.e., to remain unaffected in every circumstance. I am quite vigilant but the outcome lies with God which fact relieves me of worry. Do write to me if some points has still not been covered or a new doubt arises.

I return your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1904.

286. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR ¹

[About June 11, 1938]¹

Your argument is welcome. I haven't the time for long argument with you.

S.² is out of the picture. She must be an exception being a doctor. But your objection is sound in that even one woman vitiated the experiment. I am struggling to exclude Ba, too. S. has put herself

¹ She had written to Gandhiji regarding his decision to give up touching women.

¹ There is a reference in the text to the article not having gone to the press. There is a similar reference in the "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 11-6-1938, where Gandhiji says: "I won't publish the statement in a hurry." This letter therefore could have been written about June 11.

² Dr. Sushila Nayyar .

out. She wouldn't have what others can't. Therefore she is training a male nurse.

You are again right in saying that even a woman's proximity, speech, look, letter, etc., may work the evil as her touch might. But I had to think of myself. If I scented danger then I must put out my eyes, rather than have the animal in me be aroused.

You miss the crucial point. It is not the woman who is to blame. I am the culprit. I must attain the required purity. This experiment is but a way to be tried.

The article has not gone to the press. It may never go though the prohibition is in force. You will put yourself wholly in the wrong if you avoid me because of my decision. If you were here I would convince you of the necessity of the decision, in spite of your finding flaws.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai.

287. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON,
June 12, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. It is a great crime to feel unhappy over a step which one may have taken as a matter of dharma. Therefore, forget the pain of separation. It is your duty to stay in Akola and mine to keep you there as long as your presence there is necessary for service. But if there is no such need, then stay in Akola long enough to satisfy Father and Mother and then come away here. Take care of your health, as also of the children's. If you have no special reason for being in Bombay, you may spend so much the more time in Akola.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SUSHILABEHN GANDHI
C/O MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA BUILDING

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4875.

288. FOR SEGAON WORKERS

June 12, 1938

I hope, if I keep well, to join in the *takli-yajna* daily.

This *yajna* is not obligatory for anyone but I think it essential for all inmates of the institution. *Takli-yajna* is a social and public *yajna* and the charkha has no place in it. *Takli* teaches us silent service. The millions can perform the *yajna* only through *takli*. The noise of the spinning-wheel is a distraction in the *takli-yajna*. So those who understand its worth may ply the *takli*-exclusively.

The room we sit in is not arranged properly. Quite a few things there are superfluous. They should be removed after due examination. The case lying near my seat is quite out of place. Every-thing can be accommodated on the box. Our possessions should be the very minimum. We should remember that non-possession is one of the eleven vows.

BAPU

From the Hindi: C.W. 4674.

289. LETTER TO PRITHVISINGH

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA, C. P.,
June 13, 1938

DEAR PRITHVISINGH,

I was delighted to have your letter and am happy to learn that you are quite comfortable there.

You have rightly asked me how a prisoner wishing to observe truth and non-violence should behave in prison. Your present behaviour is quite commendable, but let me put down here a few principles:

- (1) A votary of truth and non-violence may have nothing secret.
- (2) He will observe all the jail regulations cheerfully.
- (3) He may invite the attention of the authorities to such rules as may appear to him to be improper or hard.
- (4) He has a right, and it may be even his duty, to disobey such rules as may offend his self-respect. But it is his duty first to make a representation to the authorities in respect of these rules, and he may

disobey them holding himself ready to suffer the consequences only after he has failed to obtain redress.

(5) Such a prisoner will never regard himself in any way superior to the rest, and will never agitate to secure facilities which are denied to others.

(6) Such a prisoner will regard the prison as a temple of freedom, and will therefore work for the development of his mind and his soul by serious study and thinking. He will not waste a single minute.

(7) Such a prisoner will regard all jail labour as his own work and will perform it with the same devotion. He will seize every opportunity to learn a new calling.

(8) Such a prisoner will always think of God, will never give himself up to despair, and will cheerfully put up with all hardships and sufferings.

What more can I say? I know you will fill in the details.

I am in correspondence with the authorities regarding your release. The result is in God's hands.

Do write whenever you can. I do get news about you from Shantilal and Jamnadas. Your father has been informed. I shall let you know when I have his reply.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

290. TELEGRAM TO M. A. JINNAH

June 15, 1938

SURE PUBLICATION IS UNAUTHORIZED. BUT YOU MAY PUBLISH OUR CORRESPONDENCE..

GANDHI

Hindustan Times, 16-6-1938.

291. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 16, 1938

BHAI JETHALAL,

Parnerkar explained to me all about your dairy activities. But what he told me about ghee, etc., was not at all encouraging. But his

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of June 14 saying: "Publication correspondence Jawaharlal and myself is breach of confidence. Seems leakage is from Congress circles. I must release fully now your correspondence along with the rest. Hope you agree."

information was nine months old. What is the present position? He also told me that the dairy would need a capital of seven thousand rupees for running it efficiently. From where are we to get that? And even if it were found, one cannot be sure about any very big result being produced. You must, therefore, learn the art of being self-supporting with whatever is available. What are the activities at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 9865. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat.

292. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have never liked the idea of our women seeking foreign aid in their fight for freedom. Hence I do not want the League¹ to inquire into the position or condition of India's women. This kind of propaganda turns their attention from themselves. Their fight is not even against India's men. It is and must [be] among and against themselves. I have never relished the fight put up for women at the Round Table Conference. Such being my radical views you can understand my indifference to what the League does or does not do. But if I have to examine their viewpoint, I refuse to read colour prejudice where there are other cogent reasons to justify a particular course of action. I wonder if this is plain to you. You may not agree just yet, though you will in the end. For I am quite sure of my ground. The women in S. A. rose at a bound by their own action. And have [not] they, the village women, done likewise even here?

I had a long chat with Asha Lata about Parkinson's note. I think she has grasped my point.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3865. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7021

¹ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

293. DISCUSSION WITH KALIDAS NAG¹

[Before *June 18, 1938*]

KALIDAS NAG: Wherever I have been . . . non-violence is the question of questions. But it is just a question or a matter of doubt . . . But . . . has not Buddhism been responsible for widespread emasculation? And whatever may be the potency of non-violence, is it not impossible as a weapon of defence?

GANDHI: Do you want me to answer these questions or did you reply to them?

K.N. I have been replying to them after my own historical fashion, but I want you to answer them, for yours will be authentic answers. . . .

G. Well, the answer is being given in India in actual practice. It is no use citing the example of China and Japan. India is the only place where if an answer must come can come. Experience here is quite encouraging. Intellectually of course even many people in the West have come to recognize the futility of violence and begun to ask if non-violence may not after all be worth a trial. Dr. Stanley Jones has sent me a copy of his recent article, "Gandhian Solution of the Chinese Trouble"—and he has seriously discussed various forms of non-co-operation that may be successfully adopted. There was time when Dr. Jones had not much belief in non-co-operation, but he now seriously suggests it as a non-violent solution, and has pressed me to go to Europe to preach peace. But so long as my mission in India remains unfulfilled, my visit to the West on a peace mission must be a vain effort. Whilst it is true that non-violence has made much headway in India, it is not of much value to an outsider and a critic at that.

K.N. What you say, Mahatmaji, is quite correct, viz., that the answer is being given, and if it is really given on such a scale as the size of our country it will be most effective. For their acceptance—even intellectual—of non-violence and non-co-operation is in a spirit of condescension.

G. It is impossible that a thing essentially of the soul can ever be imparted through the intellect. It is just like trying to impart faith in God through the intellect. It cannot be as it is essentially a matter of the heart. Faith can be turned into knowledge by experience, and it can come only through the heart and not the intellect. The intellect, if anything, acts as a barrier in matters of faith.

Harijan, 18-6-1938

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Kalidas Nag had visited many foreign countries on cultural missions. This time he was going to Australia. On his way to Calcutta to board a ship, he stopped at Wardha to meet Gandhiji.

294. A CRITICISM

A C. P. correspondent sends me a bitter letter criticizing the C. P. Ministry.¹ I condense it below toning down the bitterest part:

I have been wanting to write to you for some time but did not do so advisedly. I do so now as one interested in the good government of my province which, I take it, is also your adopted home for the rest of your life. We were led to believe that government by the representatives of the Congress would be so good as to escape calumny and be able to rule for all time merely by reason and by moral influence. But the main purpose of the Congress Ministry appears to us to be.

(a) to worship your idol in public and break it in secret;

(b) to worship the symbols of Imperialism in secret and denounce them in public;

(c) to play the malefactor towards their opponents whom they cannot conquer by truthful and legitimate methods;

(d) to carry on a brisk traffic in legislation and public offices.

The government of a people cannot be run, as the Congress Ministers in the C. P. seem to imagine, by the common argument of promised boons and by corrupting the electorate with hope. During the past ten months your Ministers have left no stone unturned to shake the moral foundation of good government of this province. The Ministry and its component parts are honey-combed with intrigues and corruption. To sum up my conclusion, which I wish to convey to you, is that the Congress Party might have been deemed capable of governing had they never assumed power and responsibility. Next to assumption of power is the responsibility of relinquishing it. It is strange that your soul should not revolt against such a predatory Ministry for the creation of which the moral responsibility is entirely yours.

The Working Committee referred all the complaints against the Ministry to the Parliamentary Board which carried on an enquiry on the spot. Its report² is public property. The Congress is a wholly

¹ *Vide* "Letter to E. Raghavendra Rao", 2-6-1938

² The Parliamentary Board which held a joint meeting with the C. P. Congress Legislature Party and the three Provincial Congress Committee presidents from the C. P. examined the various charges against the C. P. Ministry, including some of corruption. In a statement Vallabhbhai Patel and Abul Kalam Azad declared that while the Committee found no evidence to substantiate the charges of corruption it found certain complaints "not without justification". For instance, raising from Rs. 15,000 to 1 lakh the limit of the Debt Conciliation Act and appointing underserving persons to professorships in the University. They were glad to note among those concerned "a readiness to admit mistakes and make amends" and hoped that "under promise of prompt rectification all public criticism will cease."

democratic organization with the widest possible franchise. The Working Committee is its mouthpiece and has to work within the limits prescribed for it by the Congress Constitution. It was open to the C. P. Congress representatives to demand resignation from the Ministers, but they did not. On the contrary they wanted the present Ministers to compose their difference and carry on the Government. The Parliamentary Board could not disregard the wishes of the representatives. It had no power to do so. But it did all it could to rid the Ministry of whatever short-comings they had discovered. The Ministers, it must be admitted, offered no opposition to whatever the Board wanted to do. It now remains to be seen how the new arrangement works.

The point, however, that I wish to make is that the Working Committee does not hush up any evil that is found in the Congress organization. It is not afraid to impose discipline which is readily obeyed in most cases.

I wholly endorse the correspondent's proposition that the Congress can only rule "by reason and moral influence". He and critics like him may rest assured that the Congress will die a natural and deserved death if and when it substitutes reason and moral influence by goondaism.

One more point. The Congress is composed of ordinary mortals. They share the virtues and vices of the nation which they seek to represent. But after all is said and done, it will not be denied that it is the oldest political organization in the country, it is the most representative, it has drawn to itself the best talent in the country, it has the highest amount of sacrifice to its credit. Above all it is the one organization that has offered the greatest resistance to foreign rule and exploitation. Whilst all honest criticism is to be welcomed, I would like to remind the correspondent and other critics that it is open to them to join the Congress and criticize it from within and to try to rid it of all the removable limitations they may discover in it.

Harijan, 18-6-1938

295. *QUALIFICATIONS OF A PEACE BRIGADE*

Some time ago I suggested¹ the formation of a Peace Brigade whose members would risk their lives in dealing with riots, especially communal. The idea was that this Brigade should substitute the police

¹ *Vide*, "Our Failure"

and even the military. This reads ambitious. The achievement may prove impossible. Yet, if the Congress is to succeed in its non-violent struggle, it must develop the power to deal peacefully with such situations. Communal riots are engineered by politically minded men. Many of those who take part in them are under the influence of the latter. Surely it should not be beyond the wit of Congressmen to devise a method or methods of avoiding ugly communal situations by peaceful means. I say this irrespective of whether there is or there is not a communal pact. It cannot be that any party seeks to force a pact by violent means. Even if such a pact were a possibility, it would not be worth the paper on which it might be written. For behind such a pact there will be no common understanding. What is more, even after a pact is arrived at, it would be too much to expect that there would never be any communal riots.

Let us therefore see what qualifications a member of the contemplated Peace Brigade should possess.

(1) He or she must have a living faith in non-violence. This is impossible without a living faith in God. A non-violent man can do nothing save by the power and grace of God. Without it he won't have the courage to die without anger, without fear and without retaliation. Such courage comes from the belief that God sits in the hearts of all and that there should be no fear in the presence of God. The knowledge of the omnipresence of God also means respect for the lives of even those who may be called opponents or goondas. This contemplated intervention is a process of stilling the fury of man when the brute in him gets the mastery over him.

(2) This messenger of peace must have equal regard for all the principal religions of the earth. Thus, if he is a Hindu, he will respect the other faiths current in India. He must therefore possess a knowledge of the general principles of the different faiths professed in the country.

(3) Generally speaking this work of peace can only be done by local men in their own localities.

(4) The work can be done singly or in groups. Therefore no one need wait for companions. Nevertheless one would naturally seek companions in one's own locality and form a local brigade.

(5) This messenger of peace will cultivate through personal service contacts with the people in his locality or chosen circle, so that when he appears to deal with ugly situations, he does not descend upon the members of a riotous assembly as an utter stranger liable to be looked upon as a suspect or an unwelcome visitor.

(6) Needless to say, a peace bringer must have a character beyond reproach and must be known for his strict impartiality.

(7) Generally there are previous warnings of coming storms. If these are known, the Peace Brigade will not wait till the conflagration breaks out but will try to handle the situation in anticipation.

(8) Whilst, if the movement spreads, it might be well if there are some whole-time workers, it is not absolutely necessary that there should be. The idea is to have as many good and true men and women as possible. These can be had only if volunteers are drawn from those who are engaged in various walks of life but have leisure enough to cultivate friendly relations with the people living in their circle and otherwise possess the qualifications required of a member of the Peace Brigade.

(9) There should be a distinctive dress worn by the members of the contemplated Brigade so that in course of time they will be recognized without the slightest difficulty.

These are but general suggestions. Each centre can work out its own constitution on the basis here suggested.

Lest false hopes may be raised, I must warn workers against entertaining the hope that I can play any active part in the formation of Peace Brigades. I have not the health, energy or time for it. I find it hard enough to cope with the tasks I dare not shirk. I can only guide and make suggestions through correspondence or these columns. Therefore let those who appreciate the idea and feel they have the ability, take the initiative themselves. I know that the proposed Brigade has great possibilities and that the idea behind it is quite capable of being worked out in practice.

Harijan, 18-6-1938

296. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 18, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending my two articles today. The one in Hindi should not be published. Publishing it may possibly harm Raja. What I have written below the Government note is enough for the present. Make a suggestion to Raja privately.

I am glad that you are training Babla. He should be fully satisfied. Please see that while he becomes proficient in English he does not forget Gujarati, Hindi or Sanskrit. Moreover, he should not

feel that all that is worth knowing is in English and that everything else is trash.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11597.

297. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before June 20, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you will be able to calm yourself now. Send a wire to Kanti as per enclosed draft. His ship is in mid-sea. "A thought for today" in today's *Times* deserves to be engraved in our hearts by us all. I have been reading the *Dhammapada*. It also is a book which can be of great help. The letters and articles are enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Details about blood-pressure will be given by Sushila. For Kanti: "Do come. Love. Bapu." I got your mail just now. I will now look into it. No note from you ! Well, let it be so, I forgot about the blood-pressure. Today 164/102. Yesterday also it was the same. In between it had risen to 176/106.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11600.

298. LETTER TO KOTWAL

SEGAON,
June 20, 1938

BHAI KOTWAL,

I don't seem to have got your precious letter. You should not remain unconcerned where Harijans are excluded. I feel that you can throw open the temple for Harijans if others co-operate with you. Somebody who knows the local law would be able to express a definite opinion.

You may come after the rains are over.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3602.

¹ This was obviously written before "Letter to Prabhavati", 20-6-1938, in which Gandhiji says "Kanti is expected to come with Saraswati in a day or two."

299. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have not been able to write to you myself lately. But what is the use of writing? Do you ever stay at one place for any length of time? You do not seem to have got the letters that I wrote to you at Sewan. And then you complain that I don't write to you. Now tell me what I should do? At what address should I write so that you may get the letters without delay?

You worry too much. But the *Gita* says that one should never worry. One should endure everything. One may try to remedy things wherever possible but one may not worry if one's efforts fail. I can guide you further if you write frankly.

Sushila is here. She has been giving me her services. I have dictated to her one letter. Amtul Salaam also is here and of course Pyarelal too.

I am all right. My diet is practically the same as it was. I take walks as usual and also work well enough.

Harijanbandhu is sent to you regularly.

Do you get the food you need?

When may I expect you here? Kanti is expected to come with Saraswati in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3515.

300. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

SEGAON,
June 20, 1938

BHAI FULCHAND,

I got the letters of both of you. I have written to that gentleman. I will send the name if he permits. If he does not, why should we make

any inquiry? There can be no inquiry about anything which is not supported by definite evidence. I hope you are completely restored.

Blessings from

BAPU

FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
KELAVANI MANDAL
WADHWAN CITY, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9200. Also C.W. 2853. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

301. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *June 20, 1938*]¹

CHI. PRABHA,

You are unnecessarily suffering. My statement will not be published as drafted. And why should you be unhappy even if anything is published? You need not go anywhere for solitude. Your solitude is with me. Come as soon as you can. I don't like your worrying. Continue to write to me regularly. Don't be remiss about it. Come out with all your suffering and lighten your heart. Kanti has left Saraswati here. She cannot stay without Kanti now. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3310.

¹ From the reference to Saraswati's arrival. Gandhiji wrote to the addressee on June 20: "Kanti is expected to come with Saraswati in a day or two."

302. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After June 20, 1938]¹

CHI. PRABHA,

What an angry letter ! Your anger is the result of your suffering. That you are not educated means that I didn't educate you. Isn't that so? I don't repent of that. It is possible that you may not be useful there. I have not trained you for the work there. I have trained you for public service. I have trained you for work with me. There is no work here for which you are not fit. You can live in the midst of all types of people. I wouldn't hesitate to send you anywhere. I have no fear that you might do something wrong. You have got the strength now even to mount the gallows with a smile on your face. What more would you like to be? If you wish to learn English, you may do that whenever you like. I can certainly teach you. Do come in September if you can. I cannot bear to see you unhappy. You have no cause for unhappiness at all. It is your duty to stay there for the present and serve Jayaprakash in whatever way you can. When you have no work with Father and when Jayaprakash can let you come, you will certainly come away, your place finally is here. Work is waiting for you here. What more do you wish? Why do you unnecessarily make yourself unhappy?

I am well. The blood-pressure is under control. Just now I am experimenting with a diet of milk, dates and lemons. I take mangoes when available. I seem to feel better with this. It is only the third day today.

Saraswati is here. Kanti is in Bangalore. Sushila and Pyarelal are still here. Kallenbach's sister-in-law has come. The place is crowded. There is hardly room even to stand. A *takli-yajna* is going on daily and I join in it. I feel very happy doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3311.

¹ From the reference to Saraswati's presence in Segaoon, this letter seems to have been written about the same time as the preceding one.

303. DISCUSSION WITH DELEGATES FROM CONGRESS PROVINCES¹

WARDHA,
June 21, 1938

To questions from the Frontier delegate regarding the non-violence with special reference to foreign aggression, Mahatma Gandhi said that violence means a vicious circle of conquest and defeat. True freedom is only possible through non-violence and religion lives by non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi further said that agriculture is not a craft dependent on social and political condition. Craft training is essential for Indian villages. A compact and a small area without previous schools and with national work as the background, is necessary for introducing the Wardha scheme which is primarily rural, and for urban areas the same principle with the necessary modifications.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-6-1938

304. LETTER TO LORD LINLITHGOW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 22, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I am deeply grateful to you for your letter.² It has caused me no disappointment. On the contrary, where mutual confidence is established, one is enabled to correct one's impressions based upon one-sided evidence.

I know you are on the eve of your departure for England. But if it is no undue tax on your time, and if my request is legitimate, I would like to have the evidence against Sardar Prithvi Singh, so that I may correct myself and know the step I should take.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: Linlithgow Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ They had come for a fortnight's training as Educational Officers, under the Wardha Scheme of Education.

² In his letter of June 18, the Viceroy had said he was touched by the terms in which Gandhiji had pleaded Prithvi Singh's case, but that records revealed that Prithvi Singh had been guilty of crimes of exceptional violence, aggravated by deceit, and he could not properly ask the Governor to press his Ministers to release him.

305. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

June 22, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Replies tend to get delayed.

The reasons which you have mentioned also may be responsible for the scene on the 14th.¹ But a great experiment can be carried out only by enlisting the support of those who are most likely to respond, and only thus can one discover truth. I can now clearly see that it was a fundamental error on my part to have deliberately excluded other co-workers from my experiment. I should have tried to get a class of workers who would be able to carry on the experiment in accordance with conditions laid down by me. My taking it upon myself, instead of finding such a class of workers, was the result of abysmal ignorance and certainly of conceit, too. In consequence, while I would not tolerate even the most trivial departure from the conditions by my co-workers. I myself committed the most serious blunders. This was the limit of intolerance. The small-mindedness implied in this attitude fills me with disgust for myself; but on the other hand the generosity displayed by all of you co-workers delights me with its sweet fragrance. This, in brief, is the truth.

The new experiment² started on the 2nd. But it is only the beginning as yet. The ship has set sail and is slowly leaving port. It is not easy for one who has been used to sailing in one kind of weather continuously for 40 years to try to sail in weather of another kind. Hence the slowness of speed.

I am not in a position to advise you much in regard to Gijubhai. But I should certainly like you to consider one point. Gijubhai is a devoted follower of the Montessori system. I know its basic principle. We do not even make an attempt to follow it here. Narandas and you have understood the principles of the Wardha scheme and are convinced of the soundness of the scheme. Probably Gijubhai will not be able to co-operate with you. For, as far as I know him, he will not

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Amritlal T. Nanavati", 2-5-1938

² Of not having any contact with grown-up girls. Gandhiji had decided not to take the support of girls during his walks.

be able to co-operate unreservedly in implementing the Wardha scheme.

Show this letter to Narandas. You may write to me or come here whenever you wish.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5544. Also *Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 267-8.

306. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 23, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

My idea of boycott is that it can be a perfectly non-violent measure. When it is that, it becomes a duty. Hence boycott of Japanese goods does become a duty for those who consider Japan to be wholly in the wrong. And when it becomes a duty, it takes no account of consequences. And duty has to be performed whether one has company or not. Have you seen Stanley Jones's thesis on the subject?

No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3630. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6439.

307. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS²

[Before June 25, 1938]

Gandhiji explained to them how almost since the beginning of his public life in South Africa he had been closely associated with labour. When he settled down to practise at the bar in South Africa he decided to give the whole of his spare time to work for the Indian settlers there, and the first man who came to him for assistance was an indentured labourer. This case at once put him in touch with labour. The labourers brought to him their troubles with their employers and also their personal and domestic worries, and that gave him a glimpse into their lives as nothing else could have done. Non-violence was the first thing he placed before them, and non-

¹ These two sentences are from the printed source.

² Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". A group of university graduates after undergoing training in the organization of labour had come to see Gandhiji.

violence was the only thing that they had been pledged to observe when, at a critical stage in the satyagraha campaign, nearly 60,000 labourers downed their tools and faced imprisonment. They went through untold hardships, suffering, starvation, and some even died, but they adhered to non-violence until the end. Their condition was particularly difficult and in a sense worse than the workers' here. They were not free, but indentured, and they had to fight not only for justice from their employers but for the abolition of the opprobrious £3 tax which threatened them with extinction. But non-violence helped them to pull through. His work in Champaran and Ahmedabad was recent history. Regarding Champaran he said that the condition of the peasants there was almost the same as the indentured labourers', and that they had failed in their agitation for nearly half a century for there was no cohesive power of non-violence to hold them together. There had been several riots and their condition had grown worse every year. But the first taste of non-violence breathed new life into them, and at the end of a remarkably brief struggle they were emancipated.

Without that necessary discipline in non-violence, they would have internecine strife and would never be ready to develop the strength that is needed to enable them to realize the power that they possess. Organization, technical skill and everything else would follow the acceptance of the fundamental principle of non-violence. Class collaboration would also follow as a matter of course. They are strong in numbers and yet they feel so dependent, so very much at the mercy of their employers. That is because they do not know their own inherent strength. Otherwise what is there to prevent them from pooling their own resources and dictating terms as employers do now. The thing that they have to realize is that labour is as much capital as metal. That realization can come only through acceptance of non-violence.

But after that realization has come and they have come to their own, non-violence does not become superfluous. If they were to bid good-bye to it, they would be as bad as capitalists and turn exploiters themselves. The realization of their strength combined with adherence to non-violence would enable them to co-operate with capital and turn it to proper use. Then they will not regard it as a conflicting interest, they will not regard the mill and the machinery as belonging to the exploiting agents and grinding them down, but as their own instruments of production, and will therefore protect them as well as they would their own property. They will not steal time and turn out less work, but will put in the most they can. In fact, capital and labour will be mutual trustees and both will be trustees of consumers. The trusteeship theory is not unilateral and does not in the least imply

superiority of the turstee. It is, as I have shown, a perfectly mutual affair, and each believes that his own interest is best safeguarded by safeguarding the interest of the other. 'May you propitiate the gods and may the gods propitiate you, and may you reach the highest good by this mutual propitiation,' says the *Bhagavad Gita*. There is no separate species called gods in the universe, but all who have the power of production and will work for the community using that power are gods—labourers no less than the capitalists.

Harijan, 25-6-1938.

308. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[Before June 25, 1938]¹

CHI. KAKA,

I want that book about marriage rites. Send two or three copies. I hope to marry Vijaya to Manubhai shortly. Nanabhai will most probably attend and he himself will perform the rites. But he says he would like to perform the rites according to your booklet. I therefore think it necessary to send a copy to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7686.

309. TELEGRAM TO KANTILAL GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
June 25, 1938

KANTI GANDHI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
BANGALORE

SARASWATI DISCONSOLATE. WANTS YOUR PRESENCE. SAYS CAN'T
LIVE WITHOUT YOU. SUGGEST YOUR SENDING WIRE ASKING
HER CARRY OUT PROMISE BUT DO WHAT YOU THINK BEST.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 7336. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 25-6-1938

310. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

SEGAON,
June 25, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am not regular nowadays about your letters. For I have not asked Mira to give a regular letter or p.c. But you shall have it if you want it.

There is no neglect on the part of the postal department about the letters. The thing is that I am writing this at night. It will be posted tomorrow but will bear the date the day after. I hate post-dating letters.

I have been forgetting always to tell you that the exception in favour of S. was dropped, she had to nurse me because of her skill. This is no favour but necessity which is protected in my note yet unpublished.

I have not yet been able to come to a final decision about the publication. My own inclination is to publish it. I have not yet given it final shape. I am in no hurry.

Yes, I read Sastri's address. I want to deal with it if I get the time.

Subhas is in Wardha. He is looking a picture of health. All he needed was work of the type he loves. He has got it and he is happy.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3866. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7022.

311. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 25, 1938

DEAR KHWAJA SAHEB,

I thank you for your letter of 18th June,¹ as also for the letters from prisoners, dated 21st and 26th May respectively. I wish the prisoners' letters could have been sent to me earlier. I am enclosing replies² to them, which I hope will be sent to them without delay.

With regard to the prisoners, I had the benefit of a fairly long chat with Subhas Babu. On his return he hopes to be able to see you, and then, if necessary, ask for permission to see the prisoners. As, very properly, his acceptance and that of Sarat Babu is regarded necessary, it is as well that further negotiations are conducted by one of them. Moreover this arrangement saves me another journey to Bengal. I am sorry to inform you that my health has again become very uncertain owing to the heavy strain of work I have been recently undertaking.

Before the proposed scheme can be accepted by us three it is necessary that even following out the method of the Government scheme, the result should approximate to what I have submitted in my letter of 13th April last. If I accepted anything less I would be guilty of a breach of faith with the prisoners to whom I gave an absolute assurance, often repeated, that, subject to their subscribing to non-violence, I should strain every nerve to secure early discharge for every one of them. I could, therefore, not be party to any scheme which does not imply such discharge of all prisoners. The method adopted for achieving the end would then cause no difficulty.

I hope that when Subhas Babu meets you, it will be possible to reach a satisfactory solution. If, at any time, you desire my presence, and if it is likely to facilitate matters, you will please not hesitate to drop me a line and, health permitting, I would gladly visit Bengal.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE HON'BLE KHWAJA SIR NAZIMUDDIN
7 HUNGERFORD STREET
CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 9929

¹ In this the addressee had said that the Bengal Government were not standing still in the matter of the detenus and that they would gladly grant facilities for convincing the prisoners of the desirability of accepting the decision come to regarding their cases.

² These are not traceable.

312. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

June 25, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please see Kanti's letter. Send the accompanying wire¹ to Ramachandran. Hope the wire² to Kanti was despatched yesterday.

Last night I took serpina. At 3.30 a.m. the blood-pressure was 190/112. Just now it must be less. Nothing need be done because of this. I shall have to reduce the work. Send the accompanying wire to Hanna³.

Blessings from
BAPU

[P.S.]

Did you give Kaka the letter regarding marriage rites? Now at 6.30 a.m. it is 180/102.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11599.

313. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After June 25, 1938]⁴

CHI. KANTI,

I have been regretting having called Saraswati. She has been miserable ever since you left. She told Vasumati so the day before yesterday, and Vasumati told me. I had a long talk with Saraswati. She said: "I cannot live without Kanti. Send me to Bangalore." I got into a fluster. I said: "I certainly could not do that. It would interfere with Kanti's studies. It would also spoil your life and your parents would not approve of it. But I shall write to him. You too may write." But she was not satisfied with that. She told me this morning: "Call Kanti. Send him a telegram." I did not agree at first. Then I felt that I should at least inform you and so sent you a telegram. You must have received it. She goes on repeating: "If K. does not come, send me to

¹ This is not traceable.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Kantilal Gandhi", 25-6-1938

³ Niece of Kallenbach. The telegram to her is not traceable.

⁴ From the contents; *vide* "Telegram to Kantilal Gandhi", 25-6-1938

Bangalore.” I did not like your not having stayed on. I am now in a fix. I cannot trust her word. I do not even know what is in your mind. It is my firm opinion that you should make it clear to her that you two cannot live together till you are married. You certainly cannot abandon your studies and come away. It is a different matter if you marry immediately and live together. But none of her elders would be agreeable to that. Your firmness is absolutely essential in the interest of Saraswati’s progress. Without that she would be completely ruined. And you too will not be happy. But this is only my opinion.

From a copy of the Gujarati : C. W. 7389. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

314. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After June 26, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

If sleep overcomes you let it. This time we need not worry about the editorial. Hanna will finish it in a little while. I do understand why you feel sleepy. Your mind is a little lighter. You certainly did well in not coming. There is no need for you at all to force yourself. I am returning the cheque.

Should I look for some assistant? It will be enough if you manage Lilavati. Here she is absolutely idling away her time and feels unhappy all the time—for having had to leave the kitchen. She will be somewhat happy if she goes there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11638.

¹ From the reference to Hanna who arrived on June 26.

315. TELEGRAM TO KANTILAL GANDHI

WARDHAGANJ,
June 27, 1938

KANTI GANDHI
HARIJANSEWAK SANGH
BANGALORE

YOUR LETTER. SARASWATI WANTS YOU TAKE LEAVE. BE FIRM.
TELL HER SHE MUST FULFIL PROMISE STAY SEGAON. YOU CANNOT
LEAVE BANGALORE. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 7335. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

316. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 27, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Again pencil hand. I am on my back with the earth bandage on the abdomen.

If you do not see the *Reformer*¹, look up the current number. You will find Hansa's article. Do you know anything of that movement?

We have a newcomer in Kallenbach's niece. She is an extraordinarily good woman. But our climate may floor her. She came in only yesterday.

The weather just now is cool.

My b. p. shoots up and goes down. Does not interfere with work.

Love

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3867. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur, Also G.N. 7023

¹*The Indian Social Reformer.*

317. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

June 27, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I read your letter, as also the article. If the article pertains to the work of *Talimi Sangh*, the sentence about Hindi should be omitted. But if it pertains to the work for the spread of Hindi, it cannot be omitted. The distinction is clear enough. More when we meet.

Who is Madan Mohan? He has given his address care of you. The reply¹ to him is enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7687.

318. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,

June 29, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

It is not your fault, either. Nor is it Amtul Salaam's. I had no other intention except that of changing Amtul Salaam if it was necessary for you to remain there for more than six days. You ought not to indulge in conjectures about my intentions. You may come only if the doctor gives full permission. Lilavati can be sent without any inconvenience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 4579. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi.

¹ This is not traceable.

319. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

Silence Day [After June 29, 1938]¹

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must be all right. Manilalbhai will bring you here in the evening, if the doctor permits, that is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7109, Also C.W. 4601. Courtesy: Vijayabhahn M. Pancholi

320. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,

June 30, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

You won't mind the missing of a day now and again.

My statement is still hanging fire. It is still to be mended. I am having extraordinary opinions on it.

Did I tell you Kallenbach's niece had come here? She is very weak in body. She is most anxious to help. I wish you would see her. If she does not remain well, I shall have to pack her off.

Shanta has gone back.

Balkrishna is not bad.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3868. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur, Also G.N. 7024.

321. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

June 30, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I have done all that you wished and more. I have arranged for her coaching in Hindi, music, etc. I ask her to sit with me. I permit her to eat everything. I have permitted her to cook

¹*Vide* the preceding item.

her food with chillies, even offered to get it cooked for her. I have asked Vasumati and Sharda to keep her company. I give her a good deal of my time too. But she wants you. How can I give that?

You are safe because you can see your errors sooner or later. Being at my wit's end I have already sent a wire to Ramachandran. I have asked him or Govindan to come over. There has been no reply so far. It was your duty to let me know what happened there.

Now my advice. If you wish to save yourself and Saraswati you will have to be hard-hearted. You should plainly tell Saraswati that you will neither leave Bangalore nor permit her to come over there; that she will have to stay either at Segaon or at Trivandrum. She will submit to you. But she knows your weakness. She is, of course, a child but you, too, have proved to be a child. I had thought that you were mature and had ability to guide Saraswati. But my judgment has proved to be wrong. You seem to have become completely infatuated. If you find it impossible to overcome the infatuation, then there is no other way for you except to get married. But I would consider it an outrage for you to marry at present. I would not give my consent to it. But you do not need my consent. I would regard it as your duty to do that without which you cannot live. If I cannot give my consent to it because I don't like it, you should not feel unhappy.

Give up the idea of going to Nagpur. Complete the course there.

Permit Amtul Salaam to talk. It would be easy for me if you did so. You should trust me. I will not let Amtul Salaam violate propriety.

I will tell you an interesting thing that happened yesterday. In the morning Saraswati came and asked me to send you a wire stating: "I will be brave," etc. I asked her to write down the telegram. She, therefore, brought the enclosed. I told her that it being Sunday I would send it today. She was pleased. Before two hours had passed she brought another telegram, also enclosed. It was of course not sent. This is the position. Everything depends on you. I wish to give you all possible help. But all that should be within the limits of dharma. Be mature and steady of mind. At present you should live purely a student's life. Your life will be ruined if you yield to attachment.

May God show you the right. path. I will not be in a hurry to send Saraswati to Trivandrum.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7337. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

322. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 30, 1938

CHI. LAKSHMI,

When I do not write to you how can I expect you to write?
Please write to Saraswati.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2027.

323. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

Segaon, Wardha,
June 30, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

I also have had a letter from Manilal. By all means stay there as long as you wish. Please remember that the law of life is that we should be governed by dharma rather than by our own desires. Most often desire and duty, *preyas* and *shreyas*, are opposed to each other. On such occasions we should follow *shreyas*. This, of course, need not be applied to your wish to stay there. It is all the same to me where you stay. I should like you to stay wherever you would be more cheerful and keep good health. From the point of view of service, perhaps it may even be your duty to stay there for some more time.

Sita also may stay there. What arrangement have you made for her education? Does Arun harass you much? Is there any improvement in your health? Why don't you write to Vasumati? If you do not write even though you get time to write, how can you hope to be excused?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4876.

324. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN AND SISTERS

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 1, 1938

I thought I had never been one of the domestic circle and had never even tried to be one. There has been an invisible spiritual bond between us derived from the common loyalty to Dadabhai. I have regarded you as more than his descendants by blood. You have believed in him and his mission. His life was an inspiration to me when I was yet a boy. I came under his influence before I had known any other Indian leader. That influence has persisted. Soon after I returned to India Perin entered my life and it was more than a joy to me to find Dadabhai's granddaughter sharing my ideals. This contact grew. And it has become such that I instinctively feel and share the sorrows that overtake you when I come to know of them. I never came near enough to Jalbhai to know him so well as you four sisters. But I knew his great worth from many sources. I knew above all his quiet services. I realize therefore what a shock his death must be to you all. This is to supplement my wire. May the knowledge that I am a silent sharer in your grief lighten it somewhat.

With love to you all,

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal.

325. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,

July 1, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I did not like your wire. How can we stand between Saraswati and her parents? How can we insist that she should never visit them at all? But now your wire has no meaning. The latest position is this. I had a talk with her about a great many things. I joked with her and I even assumed a stern tone, but Saraswati did not give up her obstinacy. Firmly she told me: "Get me married." I said: "I will never agree to that. I cannot attend such a marriage nor can I give my blessings. I do not approve of a girl of your age marrying. I am a reformer and therefore cannot give my consent to a thing which I

don't approve of. Moreover, I have every fear that Kanti's studies will suffer as a result of the marriage, and that is another reason why I cannot give my consent. But if your parents agree and Kanti also is willing, then I will not stand in your way and in that case you will not need my blessings." Saraswati was pleased and said at once: "Then I am ready to go to Trivandrum. You can arrange for that." I then asked: "Shouldn't we first ascertain your parents' and Kanti's views?" So she asked me to write immediately. This conversation took place yesterday during my walk. There was no question of writing a letter then. In the morning I got your wire. I showed it to her and asked her how she could go to Trivandrum now and also how the marriage could take place. But she said: "Kantibhai is definitely ready for marriage. My parents also will not object. You should write a letter and after getting his consent send me to Trivandrum." When during our talk yesterday I agreed not to oppose the marriage to the extent of preventing it, she agreed even to study during the time she had to stay here. She has started learning English from Mr. Kallenbach's niece. Today she must have started even the Hindi lessons. This is the position.

The idea of Nagpur is absolutely useless. Mahadev has already written to you about that. I also have already given you my opinion. I had given my consent only with the hope that your relationship would be an ideal one. At the moment, I do not see any sign of that hope being realized. I said to Saraswati: "Kanti wants that you should be treated as Kanam." She vehemently protested: "I am not Kanam. I know my interests. I will not stay here without Kantibhai. Please call him for fifteen days." I cannot make Saraswati obey my orders as you think. I ought not to do that either. The key is solely in your hands. My advice is that you should let Saraswati go to Trivandrum, should flatly refuse to marry just now and should not go to Trivandrum yourself. You should sacrifice everything else for the sake of your studies. You should write all this to Saraswati very frankly. You ought not to leave your studies and come here. But this is, of course, my opinion. If it does not appeal to you and if you are ready to marry, you may by all means do so. You need not bother if I do not think that it will be for your good. Who can foresee the future? My fear may be unjustified and my reasoning may be wrong. You know best what is good for you. You should, therefore, decide as you think best without taking into consideration my opinion and inform me accordingly. In the mean time, I will do whatever may be

necessary to humour Saraswati. Yesterday I spared four hours for that girl. Vasumati is devoting a good deal of her time to her, but she frankly confesses: "The task is beyond me. How would a girl who does not listen to you listen to me?" Over and above this Kanu also gives some time to her. Lilavati, Sharda, etc., try their level best to make friends with her. But she is not easy to make friends with. It seems she feels somewhat at home with Vasumati, though. I still think that Amtul Salaam might be able to influence her.

Now do as God prompts you and write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7338. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

326. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,

July 1, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter. I have already read through twice the letter to Maulana Saheb. I do not reject it but may have to redraft it completely. Hence the delay. I will redraft it as early as I can.

I understood Ramdevji's letter. If you come some day, you can persuade Mirabehn yourself. My persuading her will mean ordering her, which will not be right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7685.

327. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 1, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Your letter was excellent, because it was so frank. There was no reason at all for you to apologize for it. I fully remember the discussion at the Sabarmati Ashram. But my impression is the opposite of yours. I think also that the subject was discussed on two separate occasions. I have a faint impression that at the end of the discussion

on the first occasion some decision was arrived at regarding my practice of walking with my hand on a girl's shoulder. Kaka was not present at that discussion. When he came to know about it, he raised the subject again, for he approved of the principle behind my practice. At the end of the second discussion, my memory is that I had decided to maintain the *status quo*. Be that as it may, the main point is that I do not think I have failed to do what I had promised to do.

As regards the Wardha decision, you will see if you read *Harijan*¹ that the girls, while going in procession from Maganwadi to Mahilashram and from Mahilashram to Maganwadi, used to call at my hut and take me out with them. I walked with my hands on their shoulders by turns. This was observed by some people and became the subject of comment. I myself raised the matter for discussion and published the decision at which I finally arrived. It was not in my mind at all that I would never place my hands even on the shoulders of girls who live with me, for after writing that article I continued to use Manu and other girls as my walking-sticks. But that procession stopped, and the practice has not been revived and will not be revived. The reason for stopping it had nothing to do with my vow of *brahmacharya*. The only consideration was the good of society. In this instance, too, there is no question of my having failed to do what I had declared I would do. If I had made such a declaration and then failed to abide by it, knowing full well that I was doing so, I would be pained and feel humiliated in my own eyes. It would give me no pleasure to know that I had weakened in my determination to keep a vow. Yes, there may be self-deception sometimes; as, for instance, when I decided to drink goat's milk because my vow forbade me to use cow's or buffalo's milk, or when I compromised by counting several vegetables as one item in observing the vow of not consuming more than five items at any one meal. This is a painful memory for me. Even so, I have convinced myself that I have not violated the letter of my pledges and exercise the utmost strictness in observing a vow. I have no comment to make about Thakkar Bapa having been pained. You had no reply to give to the criticism of that *muni* of Kutch, for you had before you two instances of what you regard to be violation of pledges; you should, therefore, bear that criticism without resentment. Your only reply can be: 'Even we, who live with him, are puzzled by some of his actions. But we think we have lost nothing by

¹ *Vide* "A Renunciation"

our association with him, and so we cling to him. I will ask him about the comparison which you have made.' If you gave this reply, it was correct. If you kept quiet, that also was right. In any case, you can always give this reply: 'He has always touched girls with a pure feeling and never with a gross purpose. But a doubt having occurred whether, unknown to him, there might not be an impure feeling in his heart, he has temporarily given up the practice to end that doubt.'

Personally, I cannot compare the *muni's* conduct with mine. According to me, there is a serious error in it. If, however, his own conscience feels nothing wrong in his practice, he should continue it no matter what I do. This is so deep a matter that blind imitation of one another is likely to land one into serious error. Everybody, therefore, should cultivate a vigilant conscience and be guided by it, with God as witness.

I am trying to issue a statement explaining my position. I wish to satisfy as many co-workers as I can. Let us see if I succeed.

You do not seem to have understood the meaning of the remark "the ship is still in port"¹. It only means that, though the experiment is going on, while discussion about it is still continuing it cannot be said that it is being carried on in thought, speech and action. I can observe its effects only if I go on with it silently. Just now, therefore, it is being followed only in action. As for thought and speech, we joke about the matter daily. This is enough for today.

I can say nothing about the Frontier Province just now. I shall see about it afterwards.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5547.

328. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 2, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

A new phase in my search has commenced. I do not know where it will end. The statement, if it is issued at all, will have no relation to the one you have seen. But you must be patient. I can say nothing yet. All I can say is that something is coming over me.

¹*Vide* "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 22-6-1938

Nothing alarming. Only the step I have taken is not drastic enough. In what way I shall have to shape it I do not know. God will guide me.

You seem to have had smooth sailing with your Board. I am anxiously awaiting your letter.

Love

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3869. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7025.

329. *LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI*

July 2, 1938

CHI. KANTI

Saraswati has just showed me your letter. One moment you are angry and the next moment you are pleased. How can anybody, therefore, feel happy when you are pleased or unhappy when you are angry?

Have I ever considered your attachment to Saraswati wrong? I felt unhappy because I did not see what I had expected of you. But what does it matter? It would be best that you appear to me exactly as you are.

Saraswati has been jubilant since the day before yesterday, for she has concluded from your letter that she will be marrying you in a few days. She was afraid that I would oppose the marriage. She was in high spirits the whole of yesterday. She showed me your today's letter to her. I feel afraid now that there will be some hitch again. I strain myself on her account. I give her as much time as I can and do my best to cheer her. But I see that whenever her mind gets fixed upon something it is impossible to do that.

Otherwise I very much like her innocence, her simplicity and her childlike nature. I will look after her as long as she stays here. I will watch what effect your letter has on her. She has not yet talked to me. I did ask her of course.

You are right when you say that wherever my conclusions are based on incomplete information, they are faulty. They must be so. It may be called a virtue in a votary of truth, for his conclusions ought to be strictly based on the facts in his possession. He should not be led astray by any consideration of self-interest and should preserve an objective attitude. I should be happy if my condition is such as you have described it. That is what it should be.

I have received a letter from Nagpur saying that yesterday was

the last day for filling the posts. There were only nine posts for one of which you were a candidate, and there were sixty applications for those nine. What would you have done in such a crowd?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7339. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

330. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 2, 1938,

CHI. KANAIYA,

I hurt you in the morning, didn't I? But did you realize or not that there was love behind my anger? I could not bear even that mistake on your part which I knew you would make. It is a good sign. I want to see you perfect. If you have patience, you will certainly become so.

Are you not Narandas's son? Emulate his patience and faith. You should never yield to despair.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

331. TESTIMONIAL TO LALJI PARMAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 2, 1938

Shri Lalji Parmar was under training in the music department of the Gujarat Vidyapith and he has acquired enough proficiency to enable him to teach a bit. Only his teachers can give a definite opinion regarding his progress. I have seen the testimonials given by the former music teacher and the head of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Shri Lalji Parmar is a Harijan and it would be good if the Bombay Government could grant him some aid.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3289

332. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July [4,] 1938

CHI. JAMNALAL,

The car was expected here today at 6 to take Balkrishna² to the hospital. If it has not left and if you can send it, please do. A note is going to the hospital too. The car will be required only if there is still time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2994.

333. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 4, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Nobody has yet come from there. Kaka is here and I am sending with him whatever is ready. An article by me and a note³ on Sushila's findings concerning sugar are getting ready and will be sent by and by.

The conversation of the day before yesterday has greatly benefited me. It suggested some ideas to me, but there is no time to write about them here. We may discuss them tomorrow. I may have to visit Wardha at three o'clock. Tandonji and others are arriving. Inquire before coming here. A letter⁴ for Kanti is also enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11601.

¹ From *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*

² Balkrishna Bhave, who was suffering from tuberculosis

³ Presumably "Bad Teeth and Refined Carbohydrates", published in *Harijan*, 30-7-1938.

⁴ *Vide* the following item.

334. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 4, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

You must have received my letter of yesterday. You are very cruel indeed, and also childish. You may write as rude letters as you can but they will not make me angry. But why do you get so angry? You are wise and are capable of self-sacrifice, but it pains me to know that you are eaten up by anger. The knowledge that you are harming yourself does wring my heart. I feel afraid of you. It does not do you credit that I should weigh my words when writing to you.

Your letter to Saraswati was bad. She has been terribly upset. Here is her letter to me. Why pit an army against a goat? It was you who ensnared her. What is the meaning, then, of your growling at her now if she cannot live without you? She is your helpmate, your partner in dharma, and not your slave or your property. It is not proper that you should first make a doll of her and then treat her as your property. Do not dismiss all this in a fit of anger. Remember that I am a man of experience.

I am afraid there is no way out except marriage. After the marriage you may do what you like. Do not worry if I do not give my consent to the marriage. It should be enough for you that I do not oppose it. It would of course be best if you two could bear separation and be content with writing to each other from time to time and meeting occasionally. But that seems impossible so far as Saraswati is concerned. Think over what you should do after the marriage. Discuss the matter with me. My feeling is that you will have to give up study afterwards. But I shall be happy if my fear is proved wrong and both of you study together, as Saraswati says you will. You may now think calmly and do what you please. Meanwhile I am tending Saraswati like a flower.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I had finished this letter before I sent you the wire¹, but kept it back on getting your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7340. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

¹ The telegram is not traceable.

335. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 4, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What a heavy mail today ! You must have received the material sent earlier with Kaka. I hope you have sent the wire to Kanti. My stars seem to be unfavourable. But if one knows how to offer up misfortunes also to the Lord, even unfavourable stars become favourable. I have yet to learn that. Two articles are enclosed. Giri's letter is there. Kanaiyo is going there for it. About the rest in the next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11602

336. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

*[After July 4, 1938]*¹

Does Balakrishna need an understanding person for 24 hours? Then that should be arranged. Talk about it with Chimanlal. One person can go at night. Both Krishnachandra and Sankaran are good workers. It may be necessary to have three shifts during the day. Among those who can be with him are Anand, Kanu, Bhansali, Krishnachandra and, if necessary, even Chakrayya and Raj Bhushan. See what can be done.

From the Hindi original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ Inferred from Gandhiji's letter to Jamnalal Bajaj of July 4, 1938, on which day Balakrishna Bhave, who was suffering from tuberculosis, was to be taken to the hospital.

337. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS¹

SEGAON,
July 6, 1938

QUESTION: What is the place of religious instruction in the Wardha Scheme of Education?

ANSWER: We have left out the teaching of religions from the Wardha Scheme of Education, because we are afraid that religions as they are taught and practised today lead to conflict rather than unity. But on the other hand, I hold that the truths that are common to all religions can and should be taught to all children. These truths cannot be taught through words or through books. The children can learn these truths only through the daily life of the teacher. If the teacher himself lives up to the tenets of truth and justice, then alone can the children learn that truth and justice are the basis of all religions.

When Mahatmaji was asked whether it was possible to teach children between the ages of seven and fourteen equal respect for all religions he said:

Yes, I think so. The truth that all religions are the same in essentials, that we must love and respect others' faiths as we respect our own, is a very simple truth, and can easily be understood and practised by children of seven. But, of course, the first essential is that the teacher must have this faith himself.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-7-1938

338. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
July 8, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

What a question? Of course you pass through Wardha on your way to B². That means you may be here when the W. C. meets. And here you will find yourself in a crowded room. But that you don't mind.

¹ The questions were asked by Educational Officers from Congress provinces who had come for a fortnight's training under the Wardha Scheme and who met Gandhiji twice during the training. *Vide* also "Discussion with Delegates from Congress Provinces", 21-6-1938

² Bangalore.

How you manage to lose your voice from time to time ! You must go to a place where you can't be pestered. Is it not Segaoon [?] And now I can build for you also to your design !

J.'s¹ letter to S.² You have now, I hope. The talks have stopped of course. The reply has to go from W.C.

Yes, Jawaharlal is having a grand time. He is raising India in the estimation of the West.

It is perhaps as well that you will be the only member of your Peace Brigade. This work does not need thousands. True immolation of a few will do the trick.

You are wrong. I began work among women when I was not even thirty years old. There is not a woman in S.A. who does not know me. But my work was among the poorest. The intellectuals I could not draw. My appeals have always been from heart to hearts. I have felt like fish out of water in the company of intellectuals. Hence you are wrong in laying down the sweeping proposition you have. You can't blame me for not having organized the intellectuals among women. I have not the gift. And then my method of organizing is out of the ordinary, not necessarily superior. All I mean is that I have nothing to show on paper. But just as I never fear coldness on the part of the poor when I approach them, I never fear it when I approach poor women. There is invisible bond between them and me. And why do you miss the agony I am passing through? Is it not for woman kind? I am wringing my soul for adequate purity, to enable me [to] render greater service to them and through them to the whole of humanity. Ahimsa, which is my sheet-anchor, demands all this.

I expect your next letter to tell me you are well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3631. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6440

¹ Jinnah's.

² Subhas Chandra Bose.

339. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEGAON,
July 8, 1938

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Hope you have been behaving yourself and that Bhopal air has done you good. But tell me if you are ever going to be fit enough to do active work. Don't tell me that you did excellent work about Hyderabad famine and the like.

Love.

PLAYMATE

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

340. LETTER TO RAMNIK

July 8, 1938

CHI. RAMNIK,

I get from time to time news of your illness from your father. I understand that you are not recovering. To get well, to fall ill or to remain ill, all this is not in our hands. But it is in our power to preserve equanimity in all circumstances, not to forget God and not to lose the joy within. I hope you are preserving all this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8762. Also C.W. 1055. Courtesy: Champabehn Mehta

341. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 8, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

One point in *brahmacharya* is this that the vital fluid should not be wasted. It is supposed that it is not wasted when it moves upward. This is not correct. A man giving way to anger mis-spends it or rather destroys it, thus rendering it unfruitful. To that extent *brahmacharya* has been damaged. Similarly a man wastes his vital fluid when he indulges in intercourse for the sake of pleasure, as it is unproductive.

When a man has no desire for sensual pleasure and both the man and the woman desire a child and come together for that purpose, then alone is vital fluid completely fruitful. Such a couple are truly *brahmacharis*. But such a couple might be only one among crores. Apart from the one single occasion of copulation they live like brother and sister and refrain from any sensual indulgence in thought, speech, contact or any other way. Their intercourse for the purpose of procreation alone can in no way come under the category of gratification of the senses. This ought to clear your doubt.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1905

342. *THE STATES*

Events seem to have justified the wisdom of the Congress resolution of non-intervention in the affairs of the States. The constitution, however unjust, arbitrary and illogical it may be, is such that, legally and politically, every State, small or big, is an independent entity in its relation to the other States and that part of India which is called British in contradistinction from the States. The similarity common to all is that they are under the iron grip of British Rule. But geographically and ethnically the people of the States and the other parts of India are one and indivisible. We, the thirty-three crores of men and women, are blood relations who cannot be parted by any constitutional or military device. This natural relationship is working itself without let or hindrance because of the recognition of the constitutional fact while it lasts. That is the way of satyagraha or the way of non-resistance to evil. It is the aseptic method in which the physician allows the poison to work itself out by setting in motion all the natural forces and letting them have full play.

By its resolution of non-interference the Congress put the States people on their mettle, in other words set in motion the natural forces, i.e., the powers latent in the people themselves. In the few recent instances it has been found that the people having discovered their strength they used it without any aid from outside and won full victory. The result also was that the assistance of Congressmen was invoked by the States' authorities in order to settle the differences between themselves and their people. No doubt this method like every other known to mankind has its limitations. The Congress cannot

dictate unreasonable terms. The people must have a real grievance and they must approach it with pure hands. For the tool of satyagraha is ahimsa, i.e., self-suffering without inflicting suffering on the opponent for the vindication of a cause which must be absolutely just.

If only the people of the States can realize the full meaning and potency of satyagraha, i.e., of non-violence, they will win their relative freedom before India as a whole comes to its own. And they will have to before India has Independence. Thus they can have full liberty of non-violent speech, writing and action without having to deal with cumbersome British machinery. They can secure with comparative ease a more equitable, even if not an equal, distribution of the wealth produced in the States. They can, without much effort, regulate the privy purse of their Princes and can have cheap and pure justice guaranteed. They can deal with the problem of poverty and village reconstruction with infinitely greater ease than in unwieldy and bureaucracy-ridden British India. They can have real national education for the wanting.

This will be their swaraj—no doubt far short of the Independence that the Congress wants. But if the people of the majority of the major States attain their full height, the day of Independence will be hastened in a manner no one has dreamt of. Let not the reformers in the States therefore be unduly impatient; let them not forget their limitations and above all the conditions of success, viz., strictest observance of truth and non-violence. They must be ready to face bullets without flinching but also without lifting their little finger in so-called self-defence. A satyagrahi abjures the right of self-defence. Let it also be remembered that a satyagrahi's minimum is also his maximum.

Harijan, 9-7-1938

343. HIGHER EDUCATION

The Rt. Hon. Shri Srinivasa Sastri has criticized, as he had a perfect right to do, the views I timidly and very briefly expressed some time ago on higher education. I entertain a very high regard for him as man, patriot and scholar. It is therefore always painful to me when I find myself disagreeing with him. And yet duty compels me to re-express my views on higher education more fully than before, so that the reader may make out for himself the difference between his views and mine.

I admit my limitations. I have no university education worth the name. My high school career was never above the average. I was thankful if I could pass my examinations. Distinction in the school was beyond my aspiration. Nevertheless I do hold very strong views on education in general, including what is called higher education. And I owe it to the country that my views should be clearly known and taken for what they may be worth. I must shed the timidity that has led almost to self-suppression. I must not fear ridicule, and even loss of popularity or prestige. If I hide my belief, I shall never correct errors of judgment. I am always eager to discover them and more than eager to correct them.

Let me now state my conclusions held for a number of years and enforced wherever I had opportunity of enforcing them:

(1) I am not opposed to education even of the highest type attainable in the world.

(2) The State must pay for it wherever it has definite use for it.

(3) I am opposed to all higher education being paid for from the general revenue.

(4) It is my firm conviction that the vast amount of the so-called education in arts, given in our colleges, is sheer waste and has resulted in unemployment among the educated classes. What is more, it has destroyed the health, both mental and physical, of the boys and girls who have the misfortune to go through the grind in our colleges.

(5) The medium of a foreign language through which higher education has been imparted in India has caused incalculable intellectual and moral injury to the nation. We are too near our own times to judge the enormity of the damage done. And we who have received such education have both to be victims and judges—an almost impossible feat.

I must now give my reason for the conclusions set forth above. This I can best do, perhaps, by giving a chapter from my own experience.

Up to the age of 12 all the knowledge I gained was through Gujarati, my mother tongue. I knew then something of arithmetic, history and geography. Then I entered a high school. For the first three years the mother tongue was still the medium. But the school-master's business was to drive English into the pupil's head. Therefore more than half of our time was given to learning English and mastering its arbitrary spelling and pronunciation. It was a painful discovery to have to learn a language that was not pronounced as it was written. It was a strange experience to have to learn the spelling by

heart. But that is by the way, and irrelevant to my argument. However, for the first three years, it was comparatively plain sailing.

The pillory began with the fourth year. Everything had to be learnt through English—geometry, algebra, chemistry, astronomy, history, geography. The tyranny of English was so great that even Sanskrit or Persian had to be learnt through English, not through the mother tongue. If any boy spoke in the class in Gujarati which he understood, he was punished. It did not matter to the teacher if a boy spoke bad English which he could neither pronounce correctly nor understand fully. Why should the teacher worry? His own English was by no means without blemish. It could not be otherwise. English was as much a foreign language to him as to his pupils. The result was chaos. We the boys had to learn many things by heart, though we could not understand them fully and often not at all. My head used to reel as the teacher was struggling to make his exposition on geometry understood by us. I could make neither head nor tail of geometry till we reached the 13th theorem of the first book of Euclid. And let me confess to the reader that in spite of all my love for the mother tongue I do not to this day know the Gujarati equivalents of the technical terms of geometry, algebra and the like. I know now that what I took four years to learn of arithmetic, geometry, algebra, chemistry and astronomy I should have learnt easily in one year if I had not to learn them through English but Gujarati. My grasp of the subjects would have been easier and clearer. My Gujarati vocabulary would have been richer. I would have made use of such knowledge in my own home. This English medium created an impassable barrier between me and the members of my family, who had not gone through English schools. My father knew nothing of what I was doing. I could not, even if I had wished it, interest my father in what I was learning. For though he had ample intelligence, he knew not a word of English. I was fast becoming a stranger in my own home. I certainly became a superior person. Even my dress began to undergo imperceptible changes. What happened to me was not an uncommon experience. It was common to the majority.

The first three years in the high school made little addition to my stock of general knowledge. They were a preparation for fitting the boys for teaching them everything through English. High schools were schools for cultural conquest by the English. The knowledge gained by the three hundred boys of my high school became a circumscribed possession. It was not for transmission to the masses.

A word about literature. We had to learn several books of English prose and English poetry. No doubt all this was nice. But that knowledge has been of no use to me in serving or bringing me in touch with the masses. I am unable to say that if I had not learnt what I did of English prose and poetry, I should have missed a rare treasure. If I had, instead, passed those precious seven years in mastering Gujarati and had learnt mathematics, sciences, and Sanskrit and other subjects through Gujarati, I could easily have shared the knowledge so gained with my neighbours. I would have enriched Gujarati, and who can say that I would not have, with my habit of application and my inordinate love for the country and the mother tongue, made a richer and greater contribution to the service of the masses?

I must not be understood to decry English or its noble literature. The columns of *Harijan* are sufficient evidence of my love of English. But the nobility of its literature cannot avail the Indian nation any more than the temperate climate or the scenery of England can avail her. India has to flourish in her own climate and scenery and her own literature, even though all the three may be inferior to the English climate, scenery and literature. We and our children must build on our own heritage. If we borrow another, we impoverish our own. We can never grow on foreign victuals. I want the nation to have the treasures contained in that language, and for that matter the other languages of the world, through its own vernaculars. I do not need to learn Bengali in order to know the beauties of Rabindranath's matchless productions. I get them through good translations. Gujarati boys and girls do not need to learn Russian to appreciate Tolstoy's short stories. They learn them through good translations. It is the boast of Englishmen that the best of the world's literary output is in the hands of that nation in simple English inside of a week of its publication. Why need I learn English to get at the best of what Shakespeare and Milton thought and wrote?

It would be good economy to set apart a class of students whose business would be to learn the best of what is to be learnt in the different languages of the world and give the translation in the vernaculars. Our masters chose the wrong way for us, and habit has made the wrong appear as right.

I find daily proof of the increasing and continuing wrong being done to the millions by our false de-Indianizing education. Those graduates who are my valued associates themselves flounder when they have to give expression to their innermost thoughts. They are strangers in their own homes. Their vocabulary in the mother tongue

is so limited that they cannot always finish their speech without having recourse to English words and even sentences. Nor can they exist without English books. They often write to one another in English. I cite the case of my companions to show how deep the evil has gone. For we have made a conscious effort to mend ourselves.

It has been argued that the wastage that occurs in our colleges need not worry us if, out of the collegians, one Jagadish Bose can be produced by them. I should freely subscribe to the argument if the wastage was unavoidable. I hope I have shown that it was and is even now avoidable. Moreover, the creation of a Bose does not help the argument. For Bose was not a product of the present education. He rose in spite of the terrible handicaps under which he had to labour. And his knowledge became almost intransmissible to the masses. We seem to have come to think that no one can hope to be like a Bose unless he knows English. I cannot conceive a grosser superstition than this. No Japanese feels so helpless as we seem to do.

Nothing but a heroic remedy can deal with the deep-seated evil which I have endeavoured to describe. The Congress Ministers can, if they will, mitigate it if they cannot remove it.

Universities must be made self-supporting. The State should simply educate those whose services it would need. For all other branches of learning it should encourage private effort. The medium of instruction should be altered at once and at any cost, the provincial languages being given their rightful place. I would prefer temporary chaos in higher education to the criminal waste that is daily accumulating.

In order to enhance the status and the market value of the provincial languages, I would have the language of the law courts to be the language of the province where the court is situated. The proceedings of the Provincial Legislatures must be in the language, or even the languages of the province where a province has more than one language within its borders. I suggest to the legislators that they could, by enough application, inside of a month, understand the languages of their provinces. There is nothing to prevent a Tamilian from easily learning the simple grammar and a few hundred words of Telugu, Malayalam and Kanarese, all allied to Tamil. At the centre Hindustani must rule supreme.

In my opinion this is not a question to be decided by academicians. They cannot decide through what language the boys and girls of a place are to be educated. That question is already decided

for them in every free country. Nor can they decide the subjects to be taught. That depends upon the wants of the country to which they belong. Theirs is the privilege of enforcing the nation's will in the best manner possible. When this country becomes really free the question of medium will be settled only one way. The academicians will frame the syllabus and prepare text-books accordingly. And the products of the education of a free India will answer the requirements of the country as today they answer those of the foreign ruler. So long as we the educated classes play with this question. I very much fear we shall not produce the free and healthy India of our dream. We have to grow by strenuous effort out of our bondage, whether it is educational, economical, social or political. The effort itself is three-fourths of the battle.

Thus I claim that I am not an enemy of higher education. But I am an enemy of higher education as it is given in this country. Under my scheme there will be more and better libraries, more and better laboratories, more and better research institutes. Under it we should have an army of chemists, engineers and other experts who will be real servants of the nation and answer the varied and growing requirements of a people who are becoming increasingly conscious of their rights and wants. And all these experts will speak not a foreign language but the language of the people. The knowledge gained by them will be the common property of the people. There will be truly original work instead of mere imitation. And the cost will be evenly and justly distributed.

Harijan, 9-7-1938

344. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 9, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your pamphlet¹. The *Rentia Baras* day is or should be the time for drawing up an annual balance-sheet of the progress of khadi work and thinking out ways and means of speeding it up. I see that your resolutions are increasing in number every year. But in comparison to what we have to achieve, even this increased number of resolutions are nothing. According to the saying, 'drop by drop fills the lake', we should content ourselves with doing the best we are capable of. Let all participants in this *yajna* remember that we should not rest satisfied till the daily income of all workers including the spinners reaches eight annas for a day of eight hours. And in order to achieve that we should be proficient in all aspects of the charkha science. In that way we shall be able to improve the quality of the khadi without raising the prices very much. If we master that science, we can prove that khadi, though apparently costly, is actually bound to be cheap.

I hope to be able to send someone for the *Rentia Baras* day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8544. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

345. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
July 9, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I will read the Hindi book. It is not going to be easy. The whole policy will have to be reconsidered. If even one false step is taken, then there is serious danger of the whole structure which is being built falling to pieces. If you come on Tuesday we will think over it. Come in the afternoon if the time suits you. Write to me and let me know, when you get the time, what you thought after your talk with

¹ Issued on the 69th birth anniversary of Gandhiji; *vide* "Note to Narandas Gandhi", 9-7-1938

Tandonji. That will help me and also help you to clarify your thoughts.

Ponder carefully over what I have written¹ on education.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7684.

346. NOTE TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[About *July 9, 1938*]²

It will be very good indeed if this is implemented.³ Make some arrangement to ascertain whether everybody who makes the resolve keeps it.

[PS.]

I have already replied to your other points.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C. W. 8551. courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

347. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 10, 1938

CHI. LILA,

Do you expect a note from me every day? You should not be over-impatient to come here. You may come here whenever you get an opportunity in the normal course. I would also like your coming here, but you should not come at the cost of your work or health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9373. Also C.W. 6648. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

¹ *Vide* "Higher Education"

² The note is written on the pamphlet mentioned in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9-7-1938

³ The pamphlet carried an appeal by Narandas Gandhi to all the workers to take a vow of spinning 160 rounds of yarn a day, thus spinning 70,000 a year.

348. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

SEGAON,
July 11, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I write this just as I got your letter and before destroying it. You must not allow your imagination to destroy your sanity. I have taken no drastic step. I shifted to Pyarelal's hole for giving Hanna the privacy she needed. She is wholly unaccustomed to our ways. I have now come back and you will occupy your usual corner. Sharda is my constant attendant. Amtul Salaam sleeps by my side, fans me and covers me when I need more covering. She feeds me. Lilavati is helping Mahadev, Shanta having gone back to England. You must not be quite so idiotic as you seem to have become over my travail. It is there. But my faith in my original conception is not shattered. Only I must learn how to realize it. Bad dreams must be avoided. There must be no repetition of 14th April.

Hanna has been sent by Kallenbach to gain experience and to know me personally as she has known me through him for years. She is most lovable but I fear she is too delicate to be able to stay here long.

I shall expect you on 23rd, the day of the meeting of the W. C. It is quite cool just now but the road is fearfully muddy. You will feel a little crowded. But that you won't mind.

You are criminally wasting your body. There is no occasion for all the neglect of which you are guilty. Some people deem it a merit to neglect their bodies. I wish you would have your name removed from the register of these illustrious criminals.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

You inquire about my health. I assure you that it is in good order and condition. Hakumatrai was here yesterday. You can ask him. It is true I have lost weight. But that is of no consequence in blood-pressure cases. I must not attempt to regain it in this weather. If I keep well otherwise, the weight will be regained, at any rate most of it.

T.

From the original: C. W. 3870. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7026.

349. *LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR*

July 11, 1938

CHI. LILA,

What a letter from you ! What is the point of your staying on there in such a condition? If you do not like to remain there, come over here. I do not want to keep you there against your wishes. If I have killed your individuality, what good has your staying with me done you? I did not at all like your letter. Why do you not understand that you are free to do what you like?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9374. Also C. W. 6649. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

350. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

July 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Have you read Lilavati's letter? If you have not, you will know about it from my reply. Kanti it seems could give you fairly good work. Read carefully what I have written today. I feel like writing about something else too, but I will restrain myself. Mirabehn is down with malaria.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending that draft for Jawaharlal. I have kept with me a copy each of the articles.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11603.

351. *LETTER TO PYARELAL*

July 11, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You are at present ruling over me. I often feel like complaining but I dare not. How did I come to have so much fear?

I am perturbed by Hakumat Rai's warning. Sushila will not recover if she is forced to eat. She will recover only when the fear

which is lodged in her mind is removed. I have not seen such a woman anywhere. I cannot bear to look at her face. You see how unhappy Ba is.

I am trying hard to comprehend your idea of your duty but I am baffled. I find your fasts irksome. I shall suffer so long as you make me suffer. But is it not your duty to let me know?

Is my experience worth nothing at all? It is true that I no longer have the right to write like this after my lapse of April 14. But since you attach no importance to the lapse you should give my writing the importance it deserves.

I have freed you from all anxiety. If you must fast, I will not fast with you. Right now I am doing it without any deliberation. I am trying to follow whither God leads me. But who knows if it is not Satan rather than God guiding me? But I am carrying on in the belief that it is God who is guiding me. My wish is not to worry about you or Sushila. But that does not happen. I do worry about those who have become part of me. Free me from anxiety on your account if you can. Consider Sushila.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I do not think Sushila need see this letter. However, do what you think proper.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

352. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 12, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

For today I am sending Kanu. He will stay at least till Kanti leaves. And if you wish to detain him for tomorrow also he will stay on. I do not know whether you get Lilabhai's help or not. The burden should not be on you. I see that Deka is worth being trained. I have decided to observe silence as long as my heart-searching goes on. Of course if I grant an interview to anybody I will speak. The moment he leaves, I will stop speaking. I do not know how long I should keep this up. It will be all right if you do not come here in the present

atmosphere. Do not strain yourself to come. Come only if you can do so easily.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am enclosing the papers.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11604.

353. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 13, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I got your letter. You have not at all forfeited your right to come to me. You may certainly come whenever you are free. I will be perfectly content if you can preserve peace of mind there. Ultimately of course you will have to come here. Build up your health there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9589. Also C. W. 6561. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar.

354. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I send you herewith a letter from Agatha. Reply to it. Send Agatha's letter to Ghanshyamdass. It would be better to help her come here. Write about the fare, etc. Agatha may also write whatever she wishes.

Do not forget to bring *jamun* or, if they are not available, their stones.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11605

355. A MESSAGE TO "THE ARYAN PATH"

SEGAON,
[July 14, 1938]

I welcome your advertising the principles in defence of which *Hind Swaraj* was written.¹ The English edition is a translation of the original which was in Gujarati. I might change the language here and there if I had to rewrite the booklet. But after the stormy thirty years through which I have since passed, I have seen nothing to make me alter the views expounded in it. Let the reader bear in mind that it is a faithful record of conversations I had with workers, one of whom was an avowed anarchist. He should also know that it stopped the rot that was about to set in among some Indians in South Africa. The reader

¹ A special issue of *The Aryan Path* exclusively devoted to *Hind Swaraj*, then being planned, came out in September. The contributors included such eminent Western thinkers as Frederick Soddy, G.D.H. Cole, C. Delisle Burns, John Middleton Murry, Hugh I'Anson Fausset, Gerald Heard and Irene Rathbone. Though none of them found themselves wholly in agreement with the thesis advanced in *Hind Swaraj* they all nevertheless saw the great importance of the work. Frederick Soddy, for instance, though disagreeing with Gandhiji, suggested that "anyone who wishes to change the world would do well to study" the book. To G. D. H. Cole Gandhiji's case against the West looked "infinitely stronger" than it did in 1908, when "the ephemeral civilization of the West looked stable under Western eyes". C. Delisle Burns saw the highest merit of *Hind Swaraj* "in its emphasis upon moral issues and opposition to the pursuit of private wealth and power". John Middleton Murry considered *Hind Swaraj* a "great book", "one of the spiritual classics of the world", and compared Gandhiji's vision of real swaraj to the Christian vision of the Kingdom of Heaven. Gerald Heard thought *Hind Swaraj* was superior to Rousseau's *Social Contract* and Karl Marx's *Das Capital*, for it did not mark the end of an age but the beginning of a new order. Irene Rathbone found the book "enormously powerful", the language of which forced her "by its tremendous honesty to search my own honesty". She thought the work was "simple and logical, economical, condensed, poetic". Hugh Fausset summed up *Hind Swaraj* as a book whose purpose was "to save India, not from Englishmen, but from the modern civilization which is eating into the vitals of the West". He had enough trust in the indestructible vitality of the human spirit to be sure that it would not allow itself to be lastingly mechanized. The machine was exposing ruthlessly the consequences that must happen to men and nations who had lost their integrity. *Hind Swaraj* was an attempt at restoring man to his true estate, and was, for this reason, "one of the best modern handbooks of that real revolution which must happen in us all, if we are to fulfil the creative purpose of life".

may balance against this the opinion of a dear friend, who, also, is no more, that it was the production of a fool.¹

M. K. GANDHI

The Aryan Path, September 1938, Vol. IX, No. 9, p. 423.

356. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON,
July 14, 1938

CHI. PREMA,

You have not asked for a reply to your letter,² but I felt like writing at least a postcard. Though I do not write to you, I naturally think of you on innumerable occasions. May you go on making steady progress. The rest from *Harijan*, and from Mahadev.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10395. Also C. W. 6834. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

357. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

[July 15, 1938]³

MY DEAR IDIOT,

What a sad and wretched letter, yours of 11th. I am enjoying myself and you are sorrowing for nothing. When you come here, you will laugh at your own folly. My misery is superficial if there is any yet left. My peace cannot be permanently taken away by anything or anybody. You simply do not know me if you think that my experiences have undone me. If there is real attempt at purification, it must strengthen me and make me more joyful. But how can I help you if you must allow your imagination to run riot?

¹ Mahadev Desai in a preface to *Hind Swaraj* published by the Navajivan Trust wrote: "When Gokhale saw the translation, on his visit to South Africa in 1912, he thought it so crude and hastily conceived that he prophesied that Gandhiji would himself destroy the book after spending a year in India." (p. 14).

² The addressee had written to Gandhiji on her birthday for his blessings and had also asked some questions which she said Mahadev Desai could answer if Gandhiji was busy.

³ According to the addressee the postmark on the envelope bears the date 16-7-1938.

You have to apologize about women. I could not organize intellectual women as such.¹ I have not organized intellectual men as such. But this thing does not lend itself to argument. I simply cannot subscribe to the charge that there has been any neglect on my part about organizing women. It may be that I have not had the qualifications for doing better. But that would [be] no charge against me. However I do not mind your complaint. I rather like it. It shows that there are things in which we look at things differently. And why not? True affection does not demand identity of outlook. But I do not even on this point despair of convincing you that I could not have done better than I have. My passion for *brahmacharya* has that meaning. I must be wholly pure if I have true love for womankind.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

I believe apricots did arrive—all rotten. Apples have come. I shall certainly eat them. You must be well quickly.

From the original: C. W. 3632. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6441

358. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith some letters. I do not know if you brought liquid paraffin for Mirabehn yesterday. If you did not bring it, then please remember to bring it. If you do not come, send it with the person who comes. I hope you have asked Vyas about *jamun* stones and written to Bombay to discontinue sending fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11606

359. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 15, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I am returning Rajaji's letter. He is filled with great despair from all sides. But his sense of humour saves him.

Blessing from

BAPU

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 8-7-1938

[PS.]

A letter from Rajkumari is enclosed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10900

360. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 15, 1938

CHI. LILA,

Do take tea if you cannot maintain your health without it. If you can do without it, try to forgo it. But you have got to keep good health. If you apply mud-pack to the stomach at night, it should do some good. Instead of tea, one can take hot water and milk with jaggery or honey. About bananas Mahadev will have told you. Be it good things or bad things keep writing to me. It is desirable that you get rid of bad thoughts. But if they do come, it will only be to your good to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

361. SPEAKERS AND POLITICS

Some controversy has raged round the propriety of the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies taking an active part in politics. There has been the Speaker's ruling and a full debate and a resolution in the U. P. Assembly to the effect that the Speaker can consistently with the due discharge of the obligations of office take an active part in politics. Shri Sambamurti was with me for a few days and exhaustively discussed the question with me. He read to me copious extracts from authoritative treatises dealing with the Speakers' duties in the Parliaments of the world. And there has appeared an article in *Harijan* by Shri Satyamurti. I had a long discussion on the question with Shri Purushottamdas Tandon during his recent visit to Wardha.

After all these discussions and study of the subject I seem to hold a view perhaps different from those I have heard and read. Mine is derived from my conception of the acceptance of office by Congressmen. When I advised the Working Committee to authorize acceptance of office, the idea was that whilst the letter of the Government of

India Act should not be transgressed, its interpretation should be stretched to the farthest limit so as to widen the liberty of the people and to strengthen the Congress. The Act was not to be worked in the manner conceived by its authors, but while it lasted should be fully used for the advancement of the Congress goal and therefore in a manner least expected by its authors. Such being my conception of office acceptance, British and foreign precedents are of little use to me. Moreover, in the nature of things, they can help us but little for the simple reason that unlike ours the constitutions of the world's Parliaments are not imposed on the respective peoples but are their own creation.

A Congressman who is a member of an Assembly, no matter what office he occupies there, is subject to the discipline of the Congress and has to carry out its instructions from time to time. Therefore, so long as the Government of India Act does not in so many words prohibit it, the Congress may, if it thinks it necessary, require Speakers in the Congress Provinces to take an active part in the politics of the country.

But the Congress, as far as I know, has not considered the question. In my opinion Congressmen who are members of Assemblies, whether as mere members or Ministers or Speakers, have in every act of theirs to bear in mind the fact that they have, in virtue of the Congress constitution, to conform to truth and non-violence. Thus the conduct of a Congressman in an Assembly would have to be that of strictest honesty and courtesy in dealing with his opponents. He will not resort to shady politics, will not hit below the belt, will never take a mean advantage of his adversary. The greater his position in the Assembly, the greater is his responsibility in these matters. A member in the Assembly no doubt represents his constituency and his party but he also represents the whole of his province. A Minister no doubt advances his own party but never at the expense of the nation as a whole. Indeed he advances the Congress only so far as he advances the nation. For he knows that if he has no sword to give battle to the foreign ruler, he has it not to give battle to his adversary inside the nation itself. And since the Assembly is the place where all communities meet together willy-nilly, it is the place where by winning over his opponents he expects to forge sanctions which can be made irresistible. All the problems that affect the body politic including communal unity can be solved if the Assembly is regarded not merely

in terms of the Government of India Act but as an instrument to be used for solving questions which representatives of different communities composing the nation can be expected to solve if they had unrestricted powers. And the Government of India Act does not prevent the use of the Assemblies for solving the many problems which are outside its scope but which are necessary for national progress.

Looked at from the point of view here suggested, the Speaker's position assumes very high importance, greater than that of the Prime Minister. For he has to discharge the functions of a judge while he occupies the chair. He has to give impartial and just rulings. He has to enforce decorum and laws of courtesy between members. He has to be calm in the midst of storms. He has opportunities of winning over opponents which no other member of the House can possibly have.

Now if a Speaker outside the House ceases to be impartial and indulges in party polemics, he cannot possibly carry the weight he would if he observed impartiality and calmness everywhere. I claim that if a Speaker cultivates the habit of uniform impartiality outside his own very limited sphere, he will enhance the Congress prestige. He can, if he realizes the unique opportunity his office gives him, pave the way for the solution of the Hindu-Muslim tangle as also many others. Thus in my opinion the Speaker, if he has to be that not only inside but outside the House, must be a first-class Congressman. As a man too he has to have a character without reproach. He must be able, fearless, naturally just, and above all truthful and non-violent in thought, word and deed. Then he may stand on any platform he likes.

Harijan, 16-7-1938

362. SOME OBJECTIONS

A Muslim correspondent writes:

During the last four months opinions have been appearing in the Urdu Press regarding the Wardha scheme. As usual nobody seems to have read the report carefully or to have thought out the subject of basic educations. The objections centre round three points:

- (a) that religious instruction has been completely ignored;
- (b) that boys and girls are to be taught together; and
- (c) that a respect for all religions is to be inculcated.

These objections have been culled from the Urdu Press.

Religious instruction in the sense of denominational religion has been deliberately omitted. Unless there is a State religion it is very

difficult, if not impossible, to provide religious instruction as it would mean providing for every denomination. Such instruction is best given at home. The State should allow enough time for every child to receive such instruction at home or otherwise. It is also conceivable that the State should provide facilities for private tuition by those denominations which may wish to instruct their children at school provided that such instruction is paid for by such denominations.

As for co-education, the Zakir Husain Committee has not made it compulsory. Where there is a demand for a separate school for girls, the State will have to make provision. The question of co-education has been left open. It will regulate itself according to the time-spirit. So far as I am aware the members of the Committee were not all of one mind. Personally I have an open mind. I think that there are just as valid reasons for as against co-education. And I would not oppose the experiment wherever it is made.

As to the necessity of teaching equal regard for all religions, I personally hold strong views. Till we reach that happy state, I see no prospect of real unity among all the different communities. I regard it as fatal to the growth of a friendly spirit among the children belonging to the different faiths if they are taught either that their religion is superior to every other or that it is the only true religion. If that exclusive spirit is to pervade the nation, the necessary corollary would be that there should be separate schools for every denomination with freedom to each to decry every other, or that the mention of religion must be entirely prohibited. The result of such a policy is too dreadful to contemplate. Fundamental principles of ethics are common to all religions. These should certainly be taught to the children and that should be regarded as adequate religious instruction so far as the schools under the Wardha scheme are concerned.

Harijan, 16-7-1938

363. A FALLACY

July 16, 1938

An A.I.S.A. agent asks what he is to say to his co-workers who have formed a union and presented him with terms. I regard the formation of such unions a fallacy. The workers have evidently missed the scope and the message of the A.I.S.A. It is a philanthropic organization formed by the Congress and has been given an autonomous charter for the specific purpose of developing the central village industry of hand-spinning and all it implies. Those who are

engaged in this voluntary organization not only derive no pecuniary advantage from it but are expected, if they can, to give their labour free of any hire. And since in this the poorest country in the world many persons cannot do so, a large number are paid an emolument only enough to sustain them. Whilst every attempt is made to make them comfortable, they are not regarded as employees in the ordinary sense. There are no profits shared by anyone. If there are shareholders or proprietors, they are the spinners, weavers and the like. Even the consumers are not beneficiaries. They are expected to wear khadi not because it is cheaper or better to look at than mill cloth, but because it gives employment to the largest number of half-starved half-employed persons, mostly women. The whole of the takings go to these dumb artisans after deducting the salaries and other expenses incurred in running this vast philanthropic organization.

If, therefore, any body of workers form unions as against the Association, they are against the artisans. What they take has to come out of the pockets of the artisans or the consumers. It would be manifestly absurd to tax the consumers in the interest of the workers. Will they, the workers, not realize that the agents are themselves as much workers as they themselves? In several cases the agents are purely honorary. It is of course a different thing where an agent is found to be going beyond his sphere of duty and acting as if he was the lord and master of, instead of being co-worker with, the men working with and under him. In such a case the workers have their remedy through the central office but surely not through unions after the orthodox style. In the one case they are a necessity, in the other they are not only superfluous, but they are, as I have said above, a fallacy and, if persisted in on a wide scale, they may kill the Association of which they are part creators and trustees.

Harijan, 16-7-1938

364. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
July 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This will be my last.

Your advice can't be accepted. You do not know the facts. You have exaggerated everything. I believe I am slowly finding my way. I have imposed silence on myself without limit of time, to be broken at

will. I do break it to see people to whom I must give appointments or to those here who may be ill or when I must speak to express my wants. This answers my purpose well. It enables me to conserve my energy and go through my work. Do not be alarmed. I shall break it to speak to you. I am quite sure that your sadness will leave you as soon as you reach Segaon. Of course you are coming here 23rd evening, if weather permits your coming.

There is nothing the matter with me. The B. P. keeps fairly steady. I take my walks regularly.

The rest from Sharda.

Vijaya went to her home yesterday. Balkrishna went to Varoda today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3871. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7027

365. *LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR*

July 17, 1938

CHI. LILA,

You will have tried the remedies I suggested. Constipation must be cured.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11607

366. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

July 17, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The article about khadi with my revisions is enclosed. I am sending other material also. Your notes are of course there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11607

367. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

July 17, 1938

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have read your note. I have forwarded to him the question arising out of the point you make. The rest seems all right. It is short and to the point. I am doing well. Taramati and the children will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

368. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 18, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Sheriff ¹ spent nearly an hour and a half with me yesterday. He showed me during our talk the correspondence he has had with you. He wanted to know why you had not replied whether or not you had written to Sir Manmath² regarding him. I told him that you would never write to Sir Manmath. All the same I promised to find out from you. Please let me know now.

I have drafted the reply to be sent to Jinnah. You will read it when you come.

About the rest, Mahadev writes to you from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 221

¹ Minister for Law and Justice in the Congress Ministry of Central Provinces. He had recommended to the Governor the release, on ground of mercy, of certain persons convicted of rape of a thirteen-year-old Harijan girl. The working Committee had decided that he should resign from the ministry.

² Manmathnath Mukherjee, a retired judge of the Calcutta High Court, who had been entrusted, on Gandhiji's advice, with an inquiry into Sheriff's case. His verdict was against Sheriff.

369. *LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL*

SEGAON,
July 18, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have reached there safely. I hope the journey was comfortable. Ba's verandah looks deserted without you. Sushila seems to have lost her occupation. Remember that crying is prohibited. I am awaiting your letter. Sushila and Arun arrived yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIJAYABEHN
C/O NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI
VAROD, *via* BARDOLI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7088. Also C.W. 4580. Courtesy:
Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

370. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

July 18, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. You are silly. Who told you that only the educated have intelligence? What is education? Do they not send you *Harijan*, etc., at Siwan? Today, of course, I am sending the copies from here. If you are eager to study, there is still time. You have not yet become old. Come here from Malabar if you can. Probably I shall be here then. Kanti has gone to Bangalore and Saraswati to Trivandrum.

You can find solitude, or whatever you call it, only here. Siwan, Patna, etc., may be all right for service, but during the rest of the time you should stay only here. I will cure you of your despondency. Do not ruin your health completely. I must hear from you once a week at least.

Manilal's Sushila came yesterday. Vijaya has gone to Bardoli with her father. There is thus rise and fall in the tide. Balkoba went away yesterday to live in the hut at Varoda. Anasuya gave birth to a son three days ago.

I am all right. I continue to take milk and fruit—mangoes, if available, otherwise prunes and *mosambis*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3516

371. *LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH*

July 18, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

What you write about light is correct. But some inconveniences have to be endured. Often they are remedied by themselves while we put up with them. It is not proper that I should interfere in such matters. You yourself should find a way out patiently and with love. Don't you think this is the right thing?

I have written a letter to Nana after my talk with Kanchan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8572. Also C.W. 7030. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah.

372. *LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI*

SEGAON,
July 18, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

How can you afford to show yourself weak? On the contrary, you should be glad if Ramdas stays on in S.A. for some more time. More than anything else, he is bound to keep good health there. That is no small thing. Is it right for you to be unhappy for selfish reasons? Is it not better that Ramdas should be happy where he is and does what dharma requires of him rather than that you two were together and felt unhappy looking at each other? You are absorbed in your work and it is right that he should do there as he pleases. He will return when God wills that he should. If, therefore, you have not pulled yourself together, do so after you get this and smile at your foolishness.

I understand what you say about the books. I am making inquiries.

You are doing right by taking the medicines. If you do not improve your health, how will you be able to keep up your study? Sushila and Arun have arrived. Vijaya has left for her place with her father.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

373. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 18, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your question is relevant when considering *brahmacharya*. Whether procreation by itself is right or not is a separate issue. We can even question whether it is right for a *brahmachari* to engage in any activity at all. But the problem before us is to determine when *brahmacharya* is violated. I hold that no violation of *brahmacharya* occurs when a man does anything while remaining free of passion and attachment. The vital fluid is power and its proper use does not impair *brahmacharya*; this is the assumption underlying my interpretation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4295; also S.G. 65

374. LETTER TO SARASWATI

July 18, 1938

CHI. SARU,

Your letter is very good. Continue thus to say what is in your heart. Remain cheerful. We should live as God wills. A few years will soon pass and then pangs of separation will be forgotten. You will in any case meet Kanti through the letters. This separation is only for the good of you two. You can come to me when you have become stabilized. Sending you away only gave me pain. I had built such high hopes. I was to teach you everything and listen to your singing but God willed otherwise.

What harm can there be in Sharda's reading your letters? Your letters are so innocent. But I shall withhold them from her unless you give your permission. Sharda is a serious-minded girl. She is not the

one to blabber unnecessarily.

Your health must be better. Sushila Gandhi has arrived with Arun. Sita is at Akola.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6167. Also. C.W. 3440. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi.

375. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 19, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

Here is a letter received by Dr. Shaukatullah Shah from H.E.'s office about Harold Ansari. Poor Shaukatullah has not yet built up any practice worth the name. He has sent all the money he could scrape together. And now he has nothing. He and Zohra, Dr. Ansari's daughter, were with me for two days. Shaukatullah had drafted a reply which I advised him not to send. Now I would like you or Polak to find out and tell me what this Education Department is and what is its function. Does it help students in distress? I am anxious to find the money here. But this is a difficult case. In any case Harold's studies must not suffer. If therefore the Department can make an advance, they should do so in the hope of recovering it from the heirs or Harold himself when he begins to earn. If you know Harold and his mother, do please get in touch with them and guide me. I am writing to Harold too. I have never met the boy. Of course I knew nothing of Dr. Ansari's domestic affairs.

I am sending you the papers Dr. S. has left with me. Please return after use.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

376. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

DEAR NAWAB SAHEB,

Zohra and Shaukat were with me for two days. They left yesterday. It was distressing to learn from them that they were unable to discharge the obligations left by Dr. Ansari. His boy Harold has to finish his education. Harold's mother has to be supported. This means £35 per month for 3 years at the end of which Harold should finish his education. Dr. Ansari has left petty debts amounting to Rs. 12,000. I know the intimate friendship that existed between you and the late Dr. Ansari. I know too that you sent some help after Dr. Ansari's death.

But as Zohra and Shaukat were talking to me I could not help thinking of you and asking you to come to the rescue if it is at all possible for you to do so. I hardly need add anything by way of pleading this cause. For I know that you had known Dr. Ansari before I had the privilege of knowing him.

I hope you are keeping excellent health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

377. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 19, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You do not seem to have got the mail sent from here in the morning by the time you sent the mail from there. It contained four letters and a list of medicines for Sushila.

You did right in not coming. When there is no work, you can skip the day.

The Danish engineer has captivated my heart. One does not come across many such frank faces.

I am sending with this some other letters. "Skill overhead"¹ is all right. As we reduce "overhead charges", we increase "over-head

¹ *Vide* "Duty of Khadi-weavers", where Gandhiji has used this expression.

skill”. But if “skill overhead” does not seem correct English, you may change it suitably after understanding the meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11608

378. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 19, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I hope you reached there safely and are not worrying. It was very good indeed that you came. There was a long and fine letter from Saraswati. I knew only this time that she could write. She seems to feel quite at home with me. She feels the separation from you a good deal but is trying to bear it. Sushila and Arun have arrived. Do you not write to Prabhavati? Do write. She is in Patna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7341. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

379. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

July 19, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letters. So far I have not been able to write to you. It is now three days since Sushila and Arun arrived here. Arun is all the time asking to be taken to Akola. We hope he will calm down by and by.

I understand your anguish. Do what you think is proper. Consider calmly all the pros and cons and do what you feel it is best to do.

Do not worry about things here. It is good that Ramdas has come and stayed here for a few days.

My health, one may say, is quite good. Ba also is fine. Segaoon is rather crowded just now. It is difficult to manage in the rainy season. There is not sufficient room for sleeping. But God helps us to manage somehow.

Hanna is unfit for this place. She has a very delicate constitution. She is not able to put up with any discomfort. She cannot digest the food either. She will leave on the third.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4877.

380. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,

July 19, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have sent something¹ for *Harijanbandhu* as per your suggestion. It is a good beginning.

If the atmosphere there is congenial, it would be good to visit the Harijan colony and take up the welfare work. But this should be done only if persons other than those already engaged in the spinning *yajna* volunteer. All the activities are likely to fail if only one group tries to conduct them. Do not therefore take up anything unless it is supported by your own experience. I have merely suggested it for the sake of variety. Otherwise, the real object of celebrating *Rentia Baras* is to concentrate on the charkha alone during this period.²

About Purushottam³, I will write in my letter to Jamna⁴.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8545. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

¹ *Vide* "Notes"

² The programme chalked out by the addressee on the occasion of 69th birthday of Gandhiji called for 69 days' spinning.

³ Addressee's son

⁴ Addressee's wife

381. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON,
July 19, 1938

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

If you had not asked the questions which you did,¹ I would have been really pained and you would have committed an offence.

I am in correspondence with Rajaji on the subject of popularizing Hindi. I also have not understood his policy. It would not be proper to rush to the Press before understanding his point of view.

Ministers many certainly be criticized in public, but the criticism should be balanced and well informed. No opinion should be formed on the basis of Press reports and, before criticizing, one should seek clarification from the Minister one wishes to criticize.

The shortcomings which you point out in the behaviour of satyagrahis really exist. Read the article² which I have written for the next issue of *Harijan* about the causes of such shortcomings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5545.

382. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

These two friends belong to the Quilon Bank³. They wish to tell you their story and also want your advice.⁴ Give them some time. It is a sad story.

They want to see Sir Purushottamdas also. I have given them a note.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 222

¹ Vide "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 1-7-1938

² Vide "How Non-Volence Works"

³ One of the larger banks of Travancore.

⁴ Vide also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 19-7-1938

383. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 19, 1938

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

What is this news item about a Congress platoon of 10,000 to be formed in Farrukhabad? If an armed platoon is envisaged, is it compatible with the Congress creed of non-violence?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 10132. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi

384. TO SEGAON WORKERS

July 19, 1938

A painful incident occurred today. A boy was grazing cows near our field. Balwantsinha tried to dissuade him and on his refusal gave him a push. This is a matter of shame for us. I have told the villagers that if Balwantsinha does this kind of thing again he shall leave Segaon. We must understand that we are servants not masters and we can live here only through the kindness of the villagers. We have no right at all to swear at or touch anyone.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4674

385. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

9 p.m., July 19, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Give the two friends from Travancore the accompanying two letters, one¹ is addressed to Vallabhbbhai and the other² to Sir Purushottamdas.

The friend from Denmark seemed to me to be an excellent man. I have already written you this, but his face is still before my eyes and so you find me mentioning it again.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sampurnanand

² Not traceable

Some other letters also are enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Urgent

If two commodes can be spared from Maganwadi, send them here and also the two thin mattresses belonging to Nimu.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11609.

386. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

July 20, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

There is only one solution. You must swallow the bitter pill of yesterday¹ and keep up the effort to overcome your anger. Nothing is too much for the sake of *goseva*. No one can be angry by himself. Anger can be mastered only where it is generated. Do you not agree? We are servants. How can a servant raise his hand against the master?

I know Ganpatrai.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am returning your letter.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1907.

387. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 21, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

A letter was published in *The Hindustan Times* about Shuaib which he has sent to me. He has also sent me a copy of his letter to you. That letter should not have been published without being shown to Shuaib. I have written to him that you must not have seen it at all. As far as possible, such letters should not be published without being shown to you. You must have now published, without giving Shuaib's name, the facts sent by him. If you have not, do so now. You must

¹ *Vide* "To Segaoon Workers", 19-7-1938

have asked “Fair play” why he sent such a report. If he sticks to his report, you may then write to Shuaib and inform him accordingly.

We are after all in the midst of a raging fire.¹ You will see in the next issue of *Harijan* what I have been able to write ultimately.² I have completely changed the approach.

These days I am generally observing silence. I speak only when absolutely necessary. The practice suits me very well.

Sushila and Arun are here. Kallenbach’s niece also is here. Rajkumari is coming here the day after tomorrow for three days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 20004.

388. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 21, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

You must have received my postcard. I got your letter. It was very good indeed that you did not get angry with Ramachandran. If we go deep into the matter we will find nothing over which to get angry with other people. And, therefore, how can anyone ever have the right to get angry? Is not anger described as a mild form of madness in English? And as the *Gita* says, its root is *kama*. I will keep on writing to Saraswati.

It will be very good if you concentrate on your studies.

All of us are well here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you read *Harijan*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7342. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

¹ Presumably the reference is to the ministerial crisis in C.P.

² *Vide* “Functions of the Working Committee”, 6-8-1938.

389. WHAT IS SARVODAYA ?¹

SEGAON,

July 21, 1938

Sarvodaya is impossible without satyagraha. The word satyagraha should be understood here in its etymological sense. There can be no insistence on truth where there is no non-violence. Hence the attainment of sarvodaya depends upon the attainment of non-violence. The attainment of non-violence in its turn depends upon *tapascharya*. *Tapascharya*, again, should be pure. Ceaseless effort, discretion, etc., should form part of it. Pure *tapascharya* leads to pure knowledge. Experience shows that although people talk of non-violence, many are mentally so lazy that they do not even take the trouble of familiarizing themselves with the facts. Take an example. India is a poor country. We wish to do away with poverty. But how many people have made a study of how this poverty came about, what its implications are, how it can be removed, etc.? A devotee of non-violence, should be full of such knowledge.

It is the duty of *Sarvodaya* to create such means and not to enter into controversies. Editors of *Sarvodaya* should forget Gandhism. There is no such thing as Gandhism. I have not put anything new before India; I have only presented an ancient thing in a new way. I have tried to utilize it in a new field. Hence my ideas cannot be appropriately called Gandhism. We shall adopt truth wherever we find it, praise it wherever we see it, and pursue it. In other words, in every sentence of *Sarvodaya*, we should catch a glimpse of non-violence and knowledge.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7680.

390. NOTE TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,

July 21, 1938

Herewith the list of rules with my letter on the subject and an article² for *Sarvodaya*.

¹ Gandhiji sent this message for the first issue of *Sarvodaya* published by D. B. Kalelkar and Dada Dharmadhikari.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

You forgot here that article for *Harijan*. It is also sent herewith.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10909.

391. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

July 21, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You must have got my postcard. Amritlal is sending the name of the medicine. Try to regain the lost weight. It is raining hard here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7089. Also C.W. 4581. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

392. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEGAON,

July 21, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I re-read your letter with care. I think that my answer should have sufficed. The only answer to the question as to when the desire for procreation may be regarded justified is when a couple desires offspring without desiring sexual pleasure. This was believed so in the case of Dasharatha. The whole process has been given the character of dharma.

What you write about the mastery over sexual passion is correct.

My interpretation of “हत्वापि स इमँल्लकान”¹ is that he who is wholly free from attachment will not kill at all. Thus the expression may be regarded as an exaggeration. My walking up to Wardha may not be called dharma but it is not *adharma* either. The same is true of the utterance on procreation.

Now this answers all your doubts. If not, put them to me in the form of questions and I shall answer.

¹ “Even though he slay all these worlds”—*Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII. 17 ; vide “Discourses on the “Gita”

One suggestion. My pronouncements should not be taken as authority. They are not all revelations. Some are empirical, some rational. Such utterances have the same status as every other utterance which means that any saying of mine which is not acceptable to your heart or mind may be totally rejected. There will be no need to compile my opinions if you act thus. Does anyone need to compile quotations to realize that the earth is round?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4296. Also S.G. 66

393. *LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR*

July 22, 1938

CHI. LILA,

If you think that by not writing to me you save my time, you are making a mistake. I would be satisfied if you wrote once in a while. If it is necessary for you to take tea for the bowels to move, you may take just enough for that purpose as medicine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9590. Also C.W. 6562. Courtesy:
Lilavati Asar

394. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 22, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter only today and am replying immediately. A letter for Jayaprakash is enclosed. If you want to resort to satyagraha, you must not do so without consulting me. And in any case you must not worry. Do not ruin your health. One's duty is but to try. Worries weaken us in our effort.

Navin has come today.

I am keeping good health. My diet these days consists of two pounds of milk, *mosambis*, as many as I can eat— at present I eat about ten or eleven daily—and garlic water with jaggery thrice day. I feel better with this diet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3517

395. *LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN*

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 22, 1938

BHAI JAYAPRAKASH,

Prabha writes in great distress that you totally neglect your health. The decision to go to Malabar also seems to be cracking up. After all even for your own work preservation of health is necessary. I would request you to go for the sake of Prabha's peace if not for any other reason. Her health too is not good. But she will automatically improve when you get well.

I hope you will follow my advice.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 3518.

396. *LETTER TO R.*

July 22, 1938

BHAI R.¹,

Balkrishna conveyed to me your message. I find your case similar to that of a man living in the midst of fire yet pleading to be protected from fire. I think you should satisfy your sexual desire through G.² This is the way of the world. Those who want to be free of passion cannot do so by merely wishing it. The wish must be accompanied by incessant effort. This is beyond you. This is what I feel. If your heart indicates another way and you can master your sexual impulses I for one shall be extremely happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 212.

¹ The names have been omitted.

² *Ibid*

397. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

8 p.m., July 22, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I forgot to give today three of the accompanying letters. I did not look into the pad.

I hope you remember that Rajkumari is coming tomorrow, the 23rd. She is arriving by the Grand Trunk Express. Come after making arrangements for receiving her at the station. If it is raining, she should be detained there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S. N. 11610.

398. HOW NON-VIOLENCE WORKS

A Congress leader said to me the other day in the course of our conversation, "How is it that in quality the Congress is not what it used to be in 1920-25 ? It has deteriorated. Ninety percent of the members are not carrying out the Congress discipline. Can you not do something to mend this state of things ?"

The question is apposite and timely. I can't shirk responsibility by saying I am no longer in the Congress. I have gone out of it for the purpose of serving it better. I know that I still influence the Congress policy. As the author of the Congress constitution of 1920. I must hold myself responsible for such deterioration as is avoidable.

The Congress started with an initial handicap in 1920. Very few believed in truth and non-violence as a creed. Most members accepted them as a policy. It was inevitable. I had hoped that many would accept them as their creed after they had watched the working of the Congress under the new policy. Only some did, not many. In the beginning stages, the change that came over the foremost leaders was profound. Readers will recall the letters from the late Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das reproduced in *Young India*. They had experienced a new joy and a new hope in a life of self-denial, simplicity and self-sacrifice. The Ali Brothers had almost become fakirs. As we toured from place to place, I watched with delight the

change that was coming over the Brothers. What was true of these four leaders was true of many others whom I can name. The enthusiasm of the leaders had infected the rank and file.

But this phenomenal change was due to the spell of 'swaraj in one year'. The conditions I had attached to the fulfilment of the formula were forgotten. Khwaja Saheb Abdul Majid even went so far as to suggest that, as the general of the satyagraha army, which the Congress had then become and still is (if only Congressmen realize the meaning of satyagraha), I should have made sure that the conditions were such that they would be fulfilled. Perhaps he was right. Only I had no such prevision in me. The use of non-violence on a mass scale and for political purposes was even for myself an experiment. I could not therefore dogmatize. My conditions were meant to be a measure of popular response. They might or might not be fulfilled. Mistakes, miscalculations were always possible. Be that as it may, when the fight for swaraj became prolonged and Khilafat ceased to be a live issue, enthusiasm began to wane, confidence in non-violence even as a policy began to be shaken, and untruth crept in. People who had no faith in the twin virtues or the khadi clause stole in, and many even openly defied the Congress constitution.

The evil has continued to grow. The Working Committee has been making some attempt to purge the Congress of the evil but has not been able to put its foot down and risk the loss of numbers on the Congress register. I myself believe in quality rather than quantity.

But there is no such thing as compulsion in the scheme of non-violence. Reliance has to be placed upon ability to reach the intellect and the heart—the latter rather than the former.

It follows that there must be power in the word of a satyagraha general—not the power that the possession of limitless arms gives, but the power that purity of life, strict vigilance, and ceaseless application produce. This is impossible without the observance of *brahmacharya*. It must be as full as it is humanly possible. *Brahmacharya* here does not mean mere physical self-control. It means much more. It means complete control over all the senses. Thus an impure thought is a breach of *brahmacharya*; so is anger. All power comes from the preservation and sublimation of the vitality that is responsible for creation of life. If the vitality is husbanded instead of being dissipated, it is transmuted into creative energy of the highest order. This vitality is continuously and even unconsciously dissipated by evil, or even

rambling, disorderly, unwanted thoughts. And since thought is the root of all speech and action, the quality of the latter corresponds to that of the former. Hence perfectly controlled thought is itself power of the highest potency and can become self-acting. That seems to me to be the meaning of the silent prayer of the heart. If man is after the image of God, he has but to will a thing in the limited sphere allotted to him and it becomes. Such power is impossible in one who dissipates his energy in any way whatsoever, even as steam kept in a leaky pipe yields no power. The sexual act divorced from the deliberate purpose of generation is a typical and gross form of dissipation and has therefore been specially and rightly chosen for condemnation. But in one who has to organize vast masses of mankind for non-violent action the full control described by me has to be attempted and virtually achieved.

This control is unattainable save by the grace of God. There is a verse in the second chapter of *Gita* which freely rendered means: "Sense effects remain in abeyance whilst one is fasting or whilst the particular sense is starved, but the hankering does not cease except when one sees God face to face."¹ This control is not mechanical or temporary. Once attained it is never lost. In that state vital energy is stored up without any chance of escaping by the innumerable outlets.

It has been said that such *brahmacharya*, if it is at all attainable, can be so only by cave-dwellers. A *brahmachari*, it is said, should never see, much less touch a woman. Doubtless a *brahmachari* may not think of, speak of, see or touch a woman lustfully. But the prohibition one finds in books on *brahmacharya* is mentioned without the important adverb. The reason for the omission seems to be that man is no impartial judge in such matters, and therefore cannot say when he is or is not affected by such contacts. Cupid's visitations are often unperceivable. Difficult though therefore *brahmacharya* is of observance when one freely mixes with the world, it is not of much value if it is attainable only by retirement from the world.

Anyway, I have practised *brahmacharya* for over thirty years with considerable success though living in the midst of activities. After the decision to lead the life of a *brahmachari* there was little change in my outward practice, except with my wife. In the course of my work among the Indians in South Africa, I mixed freely with women. There was hardly an Indian woman in the Transvaal and Natal

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59.

whom I did not know. They were so many sisters and daughters to me. My *brahmacharya* was not derived from books. I evolved my own rules for my guidance and that of those who, at my invitation, had joined me in the experiment. If I have not followed the prescribed restrictions, much less have I accepted the description found even in religious literature of woman as the source of all evil and temptation. Owing as I do all the good there may be in me to my mother, I have looked upon woman never as an object for satisfaction of sexual desire but always with the veneration due to my own mother. Man is the tempter and aggressor. It is not woman whose touch defiles man but he is often himself too impure to touch her. But recently a doubt has seized me as to the nature of the limitation that a *brahmachari* or *brahmacharini* should put upon himself or herself regarding contacts with the opposite sex. I have set limitations which do not satisfy me. What they should be I do not know. I am experimenting. I have never claimed to have been a perfect *brahmachari* of my definition. I have not acquired that control over my thoughts that I need for my researches in non-violence. If my non-violence is to be contagious and infectious, I must acquire greater control over my thoughts. There is perhaps a flaw somewhere which accounts for the apparent failure of leadership adverted to in the opening sentence of this writing.

My faith in non-violence remains as strong as ever. I am quite sure that not only should it answer all our requirements in our country, but that it should, if properly applied, prevent the bloodshed that is going on outside India and is threatening to overwhelm the Western world.

My aspiration is limited. God has not given me the power to guide the world on the path of non-violence. But I have imagined that he has chosen me as His instrument for presenting non-violence to India for dealing with her many ills. The progress already made is great. But much more remains to be done. And yet I seem to have lost the power to evoke the needed response from Congressmen in general. It is a bad carpenter who quarrels with his tools. It is a bad general who blames his men for faulty workmanship. I know I am not a bad general. I have wisdom enough to know my limitations. God will give me strength enough to declare my bankruptcy if such is to be my lot. He will perhaps take me away when I am no longer wanted for the work which I have been permitted to do for nearly half a century. But I do entertain the hope that there is yet work for me to do, that the darkness that seems to have enveloped me will disappear,

and that, whether with another battle more brilliant than the Dandi March or without, India will come to her own demonstrably through non-violent means. I am praying for the light that will dispel the darkness. Let those who have a living faith in non-violence join me in the prayer.

Harijan, 23-7-1938

399. DUTY OF KHADI-WEARERS

July 23, 1938

I have before me several letters, some protesting against the constant rise in the price of khadi, and some piteously appealing to me to show the way to poor middle-class people for buying dear khadi.

The A. I. S. A. exists only for the betterment of the khadi producers, the majority of whom are poor women spinners. I hold that the Association cannot be satisfied till every woman who puts in an honest hour in spinning gets one anna per hour. We are on the point of reaching half an anna per hour, and if the consumers and the Congress Governments do their duty, the Association expects to give the anna per hour much earlier than most people expect.

This must mean some rise in the price of khadi, but not a proportionate rise. City people should know that ceaseless effort is being made to evoke greater skill among the artisans so that the whole of the increase in the wages may not fall upon khadi. Overhead charges are also being constantly reduced. Skill overhead increases with experience. But sixteen times increase in the wages of spinners cannot all be brought about merely by increased efficiency. Therefore some rise in the price of khadi is inevitable with the increase in the wages. This is being unequally distributed among the different varieties so that the heaviest rise will take place in the khadi that is purchased by the monied classes. Everything that can be done to ease the burden on poor buyers is being done and will be done by the Association.

But khadi-wearers should know that the economics of khadi are different from the ordinary economics which are based on competition in which patriotism, sentiment and humanity play little or no part. Khadi economics are based on patriotism sentiment and humanity.

Before the new policy of the Association was laid down, its aim was to cheapen khadi, mostly in disregard of the wages of the

spinners, the most helpless artisans perhaps in the world. This continued for nearly a decade. It was a mistaken policy, but the mistake was unconscious and based on faulty reasoning. I must take the largest share of the blame for the mistake. Khadi-wearers had the sole benefit of the mistake. Is it right for them to complain when the mistake is being repaired and the spinners are gradually being paid what is their due ?

The Association has expected hearty co-operation from the khadi-wearers and I am glad to be able to say that on the whole the increase in the price of khadi has not been resented by them. Many consider it a privilege that they are partners in the tardy justice that is being done to the dumb sisters whose need is infinitely greater than that of the wearers of khadi.

I know that there are many middle-class persons who find it difficult to make the two ends meet, and for them every additional anna becomes a problem. And they will not spin. They have my sympathy. But they cannot have it both ways. If they will not spin, they should cut down their requirements or reduce other expenses. In this climate we do not need the clothes we use. Where there is a will there is a way.

A correspondent suggests that khadi is mainly supported by the poor middle class, and contends that if the prices are not brought down to the level at which they can buy it, it will not survive. If that is the condition on which alone khadi can live, it deserves to predecease me. Happily there is a fallacy behind the argument. The question of cheapness mainly affects the city-dwellers. If all of them, rich and poor, took to khadi, they could hardly use more than ten percent of the possible production of khadi. The rest has to be used by the producers themselves who are villagers. The question of price does not affect them materially, if at all. It is true that khadi has not penetrated the villages to the extent expected. During the transition period, therefore, it has to depend upon the patriotic spirit of city dwellers both rich and poor. Those who believe in the message of khadi will not consider any price too dear for khadi. It is the only real insurance against famine and unemployment. Even if India were to be industrialized overnight, much of the unemployment would remain. In this country the problem is to find work for a whole nation which has one-fourth of her time without occupation. If pestilence, poverty and blood-shed are to be avoided, there is no remedy but khadi and

other village industries. Those who believe in this mission of khadi and who believe also in a living wage being paid to the spinners, will not grudge the increase that has to be made in the price of khadi. They may rely upon the Association moving with the utmost caution. The past two years' experience warrants the hope that the public welcome the increase in the wages that the spinners are receiving.

Harijan, 23-7-1938

400 . LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 23, 1938

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Pray don't come tonight. The weather is awful. Wet, wet, wet everywhere. Tomorrow you will come anyhow, unless of course you are ill and it is raining hard as it is now. Your corner is of course reserved.

Love.

BAPU

From the original:C. W. 3633. Courtesy:Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6442

401. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You were wise not to come. It is wet all around. Khan Saheb wants to come for the night. It would be better for him not to. He may come tomorrow if it is dry or after the Working Committee meeting. Even the cot meant for him is not here. Rajkumari also should not come tonight. I think it is impossible to bring the car. It is certainly risky. She may come tomorrow during day-time. The letters are enclosed.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I completely forgot to send this letter. Fortunately for me, I am able to send it now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S. N. 11611

402. LETTER TO AMRITAL T. NANAVATI

July 23, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Since Vasumati has asked for time, you should tell her that you cannot spare more time. Give her fifteen minutes. Explain to her that she can get much in fifteen minutes if she works with concentration.

Do not worry if you cannot at present give help in preparing *bhaji*. Those who feel hurt by people's criticism become old prematurely. Such persons violate *brahmacharya* according to my definition of it and those who do so become old.

We should feel unhappy about our own shortcomings. When others impute faults to us we should laugh it away. If they are inclined to listen we can explain to them. It is our duty to explain to those who have formed a wrong opinion about us. We should treat others as if they were our kith and kin.

By all means take Sunday off. On that day you may help in preparing *bhaji*. Cultivate a sense of humour.

There were four or five mistakes in Dahyalal's *Gita* recitation yesterday. Observe all such mistakes and correct them. His recitation has certainly improved, but there is scope for further improvement.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G. N. 10749

403. LETTER TO PYARELAL

July 23, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

You were to write something on education. You have not done it yet. It will be good if you write. Why not give your own experience? You should not think that you cannot express yourself if you hold a view different from mine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

404. LETTER TO SARASWATI

July 23, 1938

CHI. CRAZY SURU,

What a letter ? You must have had my postcard and the letter¹ as also the telegram² I sent. How can I comfort you ? Even if I call you back here you will have no peace in Kanti's absence. I wanted to keep you with me. You are deluding yourself to no purpose. Do not harass Kanti. Let him pursue his studies. There you have your father, mother, grandfather and uncle with you. What more do you want ? You will have no rest here even for a day. You will daily exhort me either to send for Kantibhai or to send you to him. What shall I do then ? Think well and give up this madness and folly. Do write to me daily if you want to. I never wrote to your uncle: "Save me from Saraswati." Why should I wish to be saved from you ? Are you not my beloved daughter ? I hope you can read my hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6168. Also C. W. 3441. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

405. TO THE KATHIAWAR HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH³

July 24, 1938

While sending the foregoing⁴ Shri Narandas writes⁵ :

Shri Narandas also suggests that one half of the amount collected may be donated to Harijan service work, one-fourth to khadi work and one-fourth to the National School. The suggestion has my approval. A total of Rs. 17,000 has already been donated to Harijan service in this manner. The quantity of yarn spun and the amount of

¹ Vide "Letter to Saraswati", 18-7-1938

² This is not traceable.

³ This was published under "Notes".

⁴ Not translated here. It was an appeal to khadi workers in Saurashtra for their co-operation in the spinning programme of 69 days to celebrate the 69th birthday of Gandhiji on *Bhadrapad Vad* 12, according to the Vikram calendar.

⁵ Not translated here. Narandas had stated in the letter that the spinning programme had been inaugurated in the National School on July 15 with prayers and flag-salutation.

money collected have kept on increasing from year to year. If that happens this year, too, all the three causes will receive increased aid. There is, therefore, no doubt that if the men and women engaged in Harijan and khadi service do their work conscientiously, a substantial sum of money will be collected and greater interest will be created in spinning.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-7-1938

406. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 24, 1938

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I don't know whether it is your misfortune or mine. I wrote yesterday a note to you and by my stupidity it was left out. I have been waiting for you all the morning. If you come after 2 p.m. I shall have taken the weekly silence. I see Jivraj¹ is coming with you. I suppose he does not want to hear my voice. He wants to see my face and take the b.p. I hope you are quite fit. How nice if you could walk.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3634. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6443

407. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What weather! I will keep myself ready tomorrow, at 2.45 p.m. I have sent a note to Subhas Babu saying that I am prepared to be present at the bungalow at that time. I would prefer that. I would not like so many dragging themselves here.

The cart is just leaving here. In the last resort Rajkumari may come in that cart. If she is not well, she need not. And if I have to go there tomorrow, she may as well stay there. Here it is wet all around. Navin² has drawn a life-like portrait of Ba. Why need Jivraj go in such

¹ Dr. Jivraj Mehta

² Son of Vrajlal Gandhi

weather! His health is more delicate than mine. Do not write too much. I do not like your keeping late hours. I am writing.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I do not understand why Rajagopalachari was to come. Vallabhbhai, therefore, may telegraph to him whatever he thinks proper. There is nothing special for which I should like to give him trouble. Ask Vallabhbhai to reply to me regarding Sheriff.¹ Let me also have his opinion about the will². I hope he is dealing firmly with the C. P. affair. Take out enough from the fruit baskets for your use there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11612

408. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You must have got the two letters sent with the doctor.

Write to Narahari and tell him that Parnerkar cannot be spared. Apart from the moral consideration, he is busy at present in the farming and the co-operative dairy experiments. If he wants, he may have the man sent by Trivedi. You may send the thing to Jugatram over your signature³. Write to Krishnan and ask him to keep me informed. The Trivandrum affair was well settled. I did have fears about Khare. The cart must have reached by now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11613

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 18-7-1938

² Vithalbhai Patel's will in favour of Subhas Chandra Bose

³ The source is obscure here.

409. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
July 24, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your postcard. I might put up with your not improving here, but I cannot tolerate your not doing so there. Here I will have the satisfaction of giving you intelligent treatment. I do not have any faith in the treatment given to you there. Therefore, take every step after due deliberation. Living entirely on butter-milk is perfectly all right. I might be satisfied if you gave me the details of the vaid's treatment.

The blood-pressure is at my normal level. It remains at about 172/102. I take milk up to 2¼ lb. and 9 *mosambis*. Sometimes the number goes up to eleven. For the last two days I have been having peaches brought by Khan Saheb. He and Rajkumari have come here. They have not met yet because of the rains.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7090 Also C.W. 4582. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

410. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

July 24, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Desire for progeny has a place as service has. Some go to the length of prescribing that the seekers of *mukti* should refrain from any activity whatsoever. But we have not accepted this as our creed. The appointed work must be done without attachment. If a man in full mastery over passion desires offspring he may procreate. We cannot be arbitrary in our judgment.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4297. Also S.G. 67

411. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON,
July 24, 1938

CHI. SHARMA,

Mahadev does keep writing to you. I can write very little these days. I have to take care of the body. Doing a lot of work in a short time necessitates giving up a great deal of work. There was no special occasion for my writing too. You have had the permission to go to Satis Babu.¹ I hope everything is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi in *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 271

412. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

July 24, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Water accumulates in a puddle in the southern verandah of Jamnalalji's cottage. Earth or sand should be spread there to form a slope as has been done in my verandah and there should be a gunny screen to keep off water.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1906

413. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 25, 1938

CRAZY DAUGHTER,

You created a fine scene today! You conclusively proved that we do not understand each other. I had said I would have *roti* today as also the vegetable though prepared separately. And you threw away the *roti*? In what I said there was no suggestion of not taking the *roti* and vegetable served by you. Such anger! And for what crime! You will gain nothing by being so angry with poor me. It is as well that I

¹ The addressee was to go to Satis Chandra Das Gupta to learn about cheap remedies for villagers.

am observing silence. Now tell me what I should do ? Shall I fast ? Or give up all service from you ? What is a girl of such a temper not capable of ? Why do you not leave me if I am so unworthy ? Maybe it is best for you to leave me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 403

414. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

SEGAON,

July 27, 1938

MY DEAR MATHEW,

I have your letter. I shall watch your progress. Hope your mother is on the road to recovery. You left a good book with me.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1539

415. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

July 27, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

I saw your handwriting after a long time. Mahadev is trying to get that book. There is no truth in what the Bombay doctor says. Countless people protect their teeth with the *babul* twigs. Yes, there is one thing. Those who go on brushing the gums with a twig and that too without chewing it into a soft brush do cause their gums to recede. But this has no connection with the *babul* juice. The juice has the quality of strengthening the gums. Pyorrhoea is not caused by external infection but results from internal decay.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope the children are well

SHRI VALJI DESAI

GONDAL

KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7479. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

416. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
July 27, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Balkoba has gone to Varoda. He is fine.

Get rid of your fever. Try to find out what medicine the vaid is giving you. It is no doubt an advantage to you that the milk there is thin. It means that there is less fat in it.

Khan Saheb has arrived in Wardha. When the work of the [Working] Committee is over, he will come to Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7091. Also C.W. 4583. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

417. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
July 27, 1938

CRAZY DAUGHTER SURU,

There has been no letter from you for some three or four days. Write daily until until you are well. Remember God and recite the following *bhajan*:

दोरु अक्षर सब कुल तारे वारी जाउँ उस नाम के।
तुलसीदास प्रभु राम दयाघन और देव सब दाम के ॥²

and repeat Ramanama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 3442. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

¹ “I dedicate myself to that name, the two letters of which bring salvation to all. The Lord Rama of Tulsidas is like a cloud showering mercy, while all other gods need gratification.”

418. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 28, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. I am returning Saraswati's letters. She writes to me also in the same strain. I feel that you two should get married and after marriage, as you suggest, stay separately in Bangalore and observe self-control till your studies are over. But I see positive harm in keeping Saraswati in Bangalore without marriage. After you get married, Saraswati perhaps may not insist on staying with you and may come to me or go to Trivandrum. I am prepared to write to Ramachandran on hearing from you. I have discussed the matter with Navin. If Ramachandran put those questions, it is a painful thing.

If you have given up milk and ghee, you have certainly not done right. It would be *duragraha*. Resume normal food immediately. If necessary send me a wire.

Saraswati regularly writes to me, and so do I to her

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.W, 7343. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

419. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your letter and wire. This is just to tell you all is well here. Too busy to say more. I am in the midst of friends and work.

Hanna still on glucose and oranges.

Love there to the Tyabjis and for yourself.

Yours,
ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3872. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7028

420. LETTER TO C. A. TULPULE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

Though the fullest *brahmacharya* is unattainable whilst one is in the flesh a very near approach is perfectly possible in my opinion. The way to it is yet unexplored. So far as I am concerned I am exploring it in the hope of finding it. What progress I have made makes me hopeful.

The sphere of limitations simply means the limits nature has put upon us as fractions of the Divine. A fraction is not the whole.

If a person has as full control as is possible for a human, his willing affects his surroundings. I have personal experience of that in several instances. It may be argued that correspondence between the willing and the alleged response were mere coincidences. For such doubters I have no reply.

I hope this answers all your questions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIC. A. TULPULE
TILAK ROAD
POONA CITY

From a copy:C.W. 2898. Courtesy:C.A. Tulpule

421. A CLARIFICATION

July 30, 1938

An ex-professor writes a long letter on my article on higher education¹ from which I take the following relevant extracts :

There is need for further clarification of your views on higher education as they have appeared in the *Harijan* of the 9th inst. I agree with many of your views—especially those regarding the enormity of the damage caused by the foreign medium. I also feel that what passes as higher education today contains much brass mistaken for gold. I speak from experience as I was a teacher in the line of the so-called ‘higher education’ till very recently. It is

¹ *Vide* “Higer Education”

your third conclusion about general revenue and claims of higher education and its corollary, viz., that universities should be self-supporting, that has left me unconvinced. I believe that every country to be a progressive country must have sufficient facilities for the pursuit of all branches of knowledge—not merely chemistry, medicine and engineering, but every kind of knowledge—literature, philosophy, history, sociology, both abstract and applied. All higher pursuits require many facilities which cannot be had without State support. A country depending only on voluntary effort for such pursuits is sure to fall behind and suffer. It can never hope to be free and be able to maintain that freedom. The State must be jealously watchful over the position of higher education in all fields. Voluntary effort must be there and we must have our Nuffields and Rockefellers¹. But the State cannot and must not be allowed to remain a silent spectator. It must actively come forward to organize, help and direct. I wish you to clarify this aspect of the question.

You say at the end of your article:“Under my scheme there will be more and better libraries.” I do not find the ‘scheme’ you speak of in your article, nor am I able to make out how ‘more and better libraries and laboratories’ will come into being thereunder. I am of opinion that such libraries and laboratories must be maintained and so long as donors and voluntary agencies are not coming forward in sufficient numbers, the State cannot divest itself of this responsibility.

My article is clear enough if the expression “definite use” mentioned in it is given its extensive meaning. I have not pictured a poverty-stricken India containing ignorant millions. I have pictured to myself an India continually progressing along the lines best suited to her genius. I do not, however, picture it as a third-class or even a first-class copy of the dying civilization of the West. If my dream is fulfilled, and every one of the seven lacs of villages becomes a well-living republic in which there are no illiterates, in which no one is idle for want of work, in which everyone is usefully occupied and has nourishing food, well-ventilated dwellings and sufficient khadi for covering the body, and in which all the villagers know and observe the laws of hygiene and sanitation, such a State must have varied and increasing needs, which it must supply unless it would stagnate. I can therefore well imagine the State financing all the education my correspondent mentions and much more that I could add. And if the

¹ Viscount Nuffield established the Nuffield Foundation for medical, scientific and social research and John D. Rockefeller similarly endowed many charitable corporations for the advancement of learning.

State has such requirements, surely it will have corresponding libraries.

What, however, according to my view the State will not have is an army of B.A.s and M.A.s with their brains sapped with too much cramming and minds almost paralysed by the impossible attempt to speak and write English like Englishmen. The majority of these have no work, no employment. And when they have the latter, it is usually clerkships at which most of the knowledge gained during their twelve years of high school and college is of no use whatsoever to them.

University training becomes self-supporting when it is utilized by the State. It is criminal to pay for a training which benefits neither the nation nor the individual. In my opinion there is no such thing as individual benefit which cannot be proved to be also national benefit. And since most of my critics seem to be agreed that the existing higher education, and for that matter both primary and secondary, are not connected with realities, it cannot be of benefit to the State. When it is directly based on realities and is wholly given through the mother tongue, I shall perhaps have nothing to say against it. To be based on realities is to be based on national, i.e., State, requirements. And the State will pay for it. Even when that happy time comes, we shall find that many institutions will be conducted by voluntary contributions. They may or may not benefit the State. Much of what passes for education today in India belongs to that category and would therefore not be paid for from the general revenue, if I had the way.

But the agreement of my critics on the two main points, medium and the realities, cannot lull me to rest. They have criticized and tolerated all these many years the existing system. Now that the opportunity for reform has come, Congressmen ought to become impatient. If the medium is changed at once and not gradually, in an incredibly short time we shall find text-books and teachers coming into being to supply the want. And if we mean business, in a year's time we shall find that we need never have been party to the tragic waste of the nation's time and energy in trying to learn the essentials of culture through a foreign medium. The condition of success is undoubtedly that provincial languages are introduced at once in Government offices and courts, if the Provincial Governments have the power or the influence over the courts. If we believe in the necessity of the reform, we can achieve it in no time.

Harijan, 30-7-1938

422. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[July 30, 1938]

With regard to the recent ministerial crisis in C.P., it has been suggested that Dr. Khare was asked to sign a prepared draft containing humiliating admissions. I have no hesitation in saying that this suggestion is baseless. Dr. Khare accompanied by several members of the Working Committee, came to Segaoon on July 25, and after discussion he prepared a statement to be issued to the Press.¹ I made corrections and additions to it, but after reading my corrections and additions he changed his mind and said that he would consult his friends and then decide whether to issue it or not. In my opinion there was nothing humiliating in it, if only because it contained nothing but facts. I hardly think Dr. Khare will dispute this. The best thing, however, is for the public to have the statement itself before it. I invite Dr. Khare to publish a facsimile of it. I have kept no copy of his own with my amendments. He took it with him to Nagpur.

Harijan, 6-8-1938

423. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 2, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith a letter to Dr. Khare. Send with it a copy of my statement². I hope you have gone through it closely. Send a copy to me also.

I hope Lilavati is feeling better. She must be wearing the glasses.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11615

¹ For the text of the statement and Gandhiji's corrections, *vide* "Statement of Dr. N. B. Khstr", 25-7-1938

² *Vide* the preceding item.

424. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 30, 1938

CHI, JAMNALAL,

You have told somebody here that you wish to come and stay here. If you wish to come, everything is of course ready. But if you are not coming, I should like to keep Kishorelal here for some time. But this does not mean that you should drop the idea of coming. I will ask Kishorelal only if you are not coming. I wish you to visit Ramana Maharshi as early as possible.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 2995

425. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

July 31, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is for the sake of telling you all well again. Khan Saheb is leaving tomorrow. Hanna the day after. Probably Kishorelal will come to stay here for a few days on Tuesday.

Your apples are still being eaten.

Jivraj brought a new thermos yesterday. That is the result of entrusting you with a mission—quite a paying thing !

Love

TYRANT

From the original:C.W. 3873. Courtesy:Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7029

426. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

July 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I had got word, before you brought it, that David would be coming at 3.

¹ The addressee called on Ramana Maharshi on August 19, 1938.

I am replying to Dr. Khare. Send the letter¹ today. What a pitiable condition!

Two other letters also are enclosed.

What *The Hindu* says about the Governor is strange. I wish to write even more strongly than that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11616

427. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,

June 31, 1938

CHI. CRAZY SURU,

I have your letter. I hope that you have calmed down now. Kanti's letters too keep coming and they cause me anxiety. Why do you despair ? Even as regards food you have to build up your health on a regular diet.

Manu has arrived. Sushila has stayed on for two or three days at the Mahila Ashram with Tari. It has stopped raining these days.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi:G.N. 6169. Also C.W. 3443. Courtesy:Kantilal Gandhi

428. INSTRUCTIONS ON PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CHOLERA²

August 1, 1938

Segaon has cholera. Therefore nothing should be taken by anybody from Segaon. Those who have got cholera may be isolated where they are, unless they could be conveniently shifted elsewhere.

¹ Not traceable

² According to the source D.B. Kalelkar, Narhar Athavale, Pandurang Bhurke, Gajanan Dabke, Murlidhar Sabnis and Shripad Joshi had drunk of unfermented palm juice, *nira*, on July 30 and on July 31 developed symptoms which the Civil Surgeon of Wardha diagnosed as those of cholera. On August 1 Aryanayakum reported the matter to Gandhiji who wrote out these instructions. Athavale, Bhurke and Dabke later succumbed to the disease.

No one should be allowed near them except those who have been entrusted with nursing. The latter should be bare-bodied or have special clothes which should be put away when they come into contact with the outside world. They should wash themselves in permanganated water (rose coloured) every time they come in contact with others. All should drink only boiled water and have simple food, rather underfed than overfed. Those who have no scruples may be inoculated.

Send me report through Mahadev. He starts from Maganwadi at about 12.30 p.m. Did Kaka drink *nira* ? It should be stopped for the time being.

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-9-1938

429. LETTER TO HANNAH LAZAR¹

[August 1, 1938]²

If he has money to spare, he has to send you back when the climate is bearable and you have trained yourself in South Africa for the Indian life as you now know it—no risks can be taken here. And what is the use of your going away from me for three months? And if you have to go away, then off to the far south, that is to say, since you can't stay here in Segaon for three months, you have to go away. Therefore, the safest thing is to go to the far south, i. e., South Africa, and then, if all is well, you may return when the cold climate sets in.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

430. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 1, 1938

CHI, MAHADEV,

I have written a rather long article. The typing has not begun yet. It can therefore go only tomorrow. If possible I will send it tonight.

Dhiru is coming tomorrow. Navin will go there today. I have still to read the mail sent by you. I do not know when I shall be able to write about picketing. I am sending Nayakum's article. You will see

¹ Niece of Herman Kallenbach

² As noted by the addressee

that I have divided it into two parts. I will have no objection if they are combined.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11618

431. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*August 1, 1938*]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

Bablo also would require something. Please, therefore, have this. I suppose someone will give the ticket, etc., to Hanna when she goes there. She is to be sent off tomorrow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11558

432. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 1, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I am in a very great hurry. It is good that you sent the names of the medicines. Observe the rule about writing on a fixed day in the week.

Hanna is leaving tomorrow. Khan Saheb has left. Kishorebhai and Manu are coming tomorrow. And so the number will remain the same.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7092. Also C.W. 4584. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

¹ *Vide* the following letter in which Gandhiji writes : “Hanna is leaving tomorrow.”

433. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After August 1, 1938]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Cholera has broken out in Karanji. Help has been sent, but let this man take a note to C. S. He will bring from there medicines, the doctor, etc., whatever is available. Send the post. When will the oranges start coming ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 11557

434. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 2, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Kanu has frightened me. He says you flatly refuse to take medicine. This is not right. Sushila and Amritlal are going there. Having heard that Mahodaya needs help, I am sending Sushila. Take whatever medicine she gives, either oral or for external application. I have told her that she must give no medicine containing non-vegetarian or alcoholic ingredients.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 10902

435. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I have deliberately hardened my heart and am not coming there to you. You need not reply to this letter. Get well soon. Do send for me whenever you consider my presence necessary.

My *vandemataram* to Bhai Daftari.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:G.N. 10903

436. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Pandurang and Dabke have gone where all of us will go sooner or later. I kept back this fact from you. But why keep it a secret ? It is necessary that you should not let the news affect you. Is not our study of the *Gita* tested in digesting such news calmly ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10904

437. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, BURMA CONGRESS
COMMITTEE

[On or before August 5, 1938]¹

YOUR WIRE². I DO NOT KNOW WHAT INFLUENCE I CAN HAVE ON BURMESE FRIENDS. THE RIOTS³ ARE MOST DEPLORABLE WHAT-EVER THE CAUSE. THEY SHOW THAT WE BOTH HAVE NOT PASSED THE BARBAROUS STAGE. HOW I WISH THE HEADS OF BOTH COMMUNITIES COULD DEVISE WAYS AND MEANS OF AVOIDING A REPETITION OF SUCH TRAGEDIES.

The Hindu, 5-8-1938

¹ The news item reporting this is dated August 5.

² This read : "Happily with the services of Indian and Burmese elders peace is being restored. The Burma Congress Committee believes that a suitable public statement by you will go a great way in removing the misunderstanding, if any, and restoring the original cordial relations and amity between Indians and Burmans."

³ Between Buddhists and Muslims which broke out on July 26. *Vide* also "Recent Riots in Burma", 20-8-1938.

438. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
August 5, 1938

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR
BOMBAY HIGH

ARRANGE SALVATION ARMY SEND IMMEDIATELY TWELVE
STERILE EGGS.

BAPU

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

439. LETTER TO SHAUKATULLA SHAH

August 5, 1938

MY DEAR SHAUKAT,

Since this was written I have your letter. I think we need not worry for the moment. Miss Harrison must have overtaken the immediate need. I am making my effort. Haven't heard from Bhopal.¹

You must set Zohra right.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a copy:Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy:Pyarelal

440. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 5, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

Mahadev has replied to your letters. I am writing this with the greatest difficulty. I have been thinking a great deal about you. From Saraswati's latest letter which I have received, it seems that she is calm. Ramachandran also writes to say that she is regaining poise. If so, it is very good indeed. I think it is best that Saraswati should stay at

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Nawab of Bhopal", 19-7-1938

Trivandrum at present. All the same I will be ready for all contingencies. You should stop worrying. Whatever is to happen will happen. Keep me informed. Give up your anger towards Ramachandran. Do not distrust him. Your respect for him should not diminish.

Kakasheb is down with cholera. Chances are he will survive. Chimanlal has been sent to the hospital for an operation for piles. Two very dear co-workers of Kaka died of cholera. Nana Athavale¹ is also down with it. Such is the position. Manu has come. She is very happy. Write sometimes to Ba.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati:C.W. 7345. Courtesy:Kantilal Gandhi

441. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,

August 5, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Chimanlal has been sent to hospital for an operation for piles. Please send someone to find out if he requires anything. If you yourself can visit him, do so.

Kaka is all right I hope. Tell him that I have sent a telegram² to Bal three days back.

Look after your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10752

442. LETTER TO SARASWATI

August 5, 1938

CHI. SARU,

If I am not to call you crazy shall I call you wise ? Have you really grown wise ? Why would Kanti be uneasy if that were true ? Kanti's letters reveal that you are only crazy. Tell me now what I am to believe. Give me all the details: what your diet is, how many hours

¹ Narhar Lakshman Athavale, a worker of the Mahila Ashram

² Not traceable

you sleep, what you study and whether you play the *vina*. Do you go to school or study at home ? Do you keep cheerful ?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Manu has arrived. Kakasaheb has had cholera but I hope he will survive.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6170. Also C.W. 3444. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

443. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 5/6, 1938

CHI, VIJAYA,

I am writing this with great difficulty. As Kakasaheb is down with cholera, Amritlal is at Wardha nursing him. Chimanlal has been sent to the hospital for an operation of piles. Most probably Kishorelal will come tomorrow. Two very devoted young co-workers of Kaka fell victims to cholera and have left this world. Nana of Mahila Ashram has also fallen a prey. I have frequently to go to Wardha. Such is the position. I hope you are improving. Cholera has spread a little in Segaon too.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUMARI VIJAYABEHN
AT NARANBHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL'S HOUSE
VARAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7093. Also C.W. 4585. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

444. FUNCTIONS OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE

August 6, 1938

Press cuttings on the ministerial crisis in C.P.¹ make most

¹ The crisis in the C. P. Ministry had begun soon after the assumption of office by the ministry headed by N. B. Khare. First a minister had made recommendation direct to the Governor concerning the release of certain convicts (*see* footnote 1, p. 178) and later there were differences among ministers leading to tension. In April the

instructive reading. That the resolution of the Working Committee condemning the action of veteran leader like Dr. Khare would come in for some severe criticism was a foregone conclusion.¹ But I was not prepared for the ignorance betrayed by the critics on the functions of the Working Committee.

Dr. Khare was not only guilty of gross indiscipline in flouting the warnings of the Parliamentary Board, but he betrayed incompetence as a leader by allowing himself to be fooled by the Governor, or not knowing that by his precipitate action he was compromising the Congress. He heightened the measure of indiscipline by refusing the advice of the Working Committee to make a frank confession of his guilt and withdraw from leadership. The Working committee would have been guilty of gross neglect of duty if it had failed to condemn Dr. Khare's action and adjudge his incompetence. I write these lines in sorrow. It was no pleasure to me to advise the Working Committee to pass the resolution it did. Dr. Khare is a friend. He has run to my aid as a physician when quick medical assistance was needed. He has often come to me for advice and guidance and has expressed himself to be in need of my blessings. I banked on this friendship when, on the 25th ultimo, I appealed to him bravely to stand down and work as a camp-follower. He himself seemed to be willing but he was badly advised, and not only declined to accept the Working Committee's advice but sent a letter instead, questioning the propriety of the whole of the action of the Working Committee in connection with his ill-advised and hasty resignation of office and equally hasty formation of a new Cabinet. I hope that on mature reflection he would have seen the error of his conduct and taken the action of the Working Committee in a sportsmanlike spirit. There is no moral turpitude involved in his action. He is a good fighter. He is free with his purse in helping friends. These are qualities of which anyone may be proud. But these qualities need not make the possessor a good Prime Minister

Congress Parliamentary Committee managed at a meeting at Pachmarhi to resolve these differences and achieve a settlement. But Khare did not keep the terms of the settlement and continued to function without consulting the Working Committee or the Parliamentary Committee. In order to get rid of certain ministers he submitted his resignation to the Governor and asked the ministers concerned to resign. When they refused to oblige, the Governor dismissed them and later invited Khare to form a new ministry.

¹ The Working Committee condemning the action of Khare held him to be "unworthy of holding positions of responsibility in the Congress organization". For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Working Committee Resolution on C. P. Crisis"

or administrator. I would urge him as a friend to work for the time being as a camp-follower and give the Congress the benefit of the admitted qualities I have recited.

If Dr. Khare was impatient of his recalcitrant colleagues he should have rushed, not to the Governor, but to the Working Committee and tendered his resignation. If he felt aggrieved by its decision, he could have gone to the A. I. C. C. But in no case could any Minister take internal quarrels to the Governor and seek relief through him without the previous consent of the Working Committee. If the Congress machinery is slow-moving, it can be made to move faster. If the men at the helm are self-seekers or worthless, the A. I. C. C. is there to remove them. Dr. Khare erred grievously in ignoring or, what is worse, not knowing this simple remedy and rushing to the Governor on the eve of the meeting of the Working Committee to end his agony.

It is suggested that the men who succeed him are self-seekers and incapable, and can make no approach to Dr. Khare in character. If they are as they have been portrayed by their critics, they are bound to fail in the discharge of the onerous responsibility they have undertaken. But here again the Working Committee has to work within the limits prescribed for it. It cannot impose ministers on a province. After all they are elected members, and if the party that has the power to elect them chooses to do so, the Working Committee has no authority to interfere so long as they remain under discipline and are not known to be persons unworthy of public confidence. But the crisis should surely put the Ministers on their mettle. It is up to them to show by their conduct that the charges levelled against them are baseless, and that they are capable of discharging their trust ably and selflessly.

It speaks well for the impartiality of the Indian Press in that several journals found it necessary to condemn the action of the Working Committee in pronouncing the opinion it did on the part H. E. the Governor of C. P. played during the unfortunate crisis. I am not in the habit of hastily judging opponents. The criticism of the resolution has left me unconvinced of any injustice done to the Governor by it. In estimating his action, time is of the essence. In accepting the resignations of Dr. Khare and his two colleagues, in demanding resignations from the other three Ministers, in expecting an immediate answer, in summarily rejecting their explanation and

dismissing them, and for this purpose keeping himself, his staff and the poor Ministers awake almost the whole night, the Governor betrayed a haste which I can only call indecent. Nothing would have been lost if instead of accepting Dr. Khare's resignation there and then, he had awaited the meeting of the Working Committee which was to meet two days after the strange drama. In dealing with a similar crisis the Bengal Governor acted differently from the C. P. Governor.

Of course, the Governor's action conformed to the letter of the law, but it killed the spirit of the tacit compact between the British Government and the Congress. Let the critics of the Working Committee's action read the Viceroy's carefully prepared declaration which, among other declarations, induced the Working Committee to try the office experiment, and ask themselves whether the Governor was not bound to take official notice of what was going on between the Working Committee and Dr. Khare and his colleagues. These indisputable facts lead one to the irresistible conclusion that the Governor, in his eagerness to discredit the Congress, kept a vigil and brought about a situation which he knew was to be uncomfortable for the Congress. The unwritten compact between the British Government and the Congress is a gentleman's agreement in which both are expected to play the game.

The resolution therefore gives English administrators more credit than evidently the critics would give. Englishmen are sportsmen. They have ample sense of humour. They can hit hard and take a beating also in good grace. I have no doubt that the Governor will take the Congress resolution in good part.

But whether he does so or not, the Working Committee was bound to express what it felt about the Governor's action. It wishes to avoid a fight if it can; it will take it up if it must. If the fight is to be avoided, the Governors must recognize the Congress as the one national organization that is bound some day or other to replace the British Government. The U.P., the Bihar and the Orissa Governors waited for the Congress lead when a crisis faced them. No doubt, in the three cases, it was obviously to their interest to do so. Is it to be said that in C.P. it was obviously to the British interest to precipitate the crisis in order to discomfit the Congress? The Working Committee resolution is a friendly warning to the British Government that if they wish to avoid an open rupture with the Congress, the powers that be should not allow a repetition of what happened at Nagpur on the night of the 20th July.

Let us understand the functions of the Congress. For internal growth and administration, it is as good a democratic organization as any to be found in the world. But this democratic organization has been brought into being to fight the greatest imperialist power living. For this external work, therefore, it has to be likened to an army. As such it ceases to be democratic. The central authority possesses plenary powers enabling it to impose and enforce discipline on the various units working under it. Provincial organizations and Provincial Parliamentary Boards are subject to the central authority.

It has been suggested that, whilst my thesis holds good when there is active war in the shape of civil resistance going on, it cannot whilst the latter remains under suspension. But suspension of civil disobedience does not mean suspension of war. The latter can only end when India has a Constitution of her own making. Till then the Congress must be in the nature of an army. Democratic Britain has set up an ingenious system in India which, when you look at it in its nakedness, is nothing but a highly organized efficient military control. It is not less so under the present Government of India Act. The Ministers are mere puppets so far as the real control is concerned. The collectors and the police, who 'sir' them today, may at a mere command from the Governors, their real masters, unseat the Ministers, arrest them and put them in lock-up. Hence it is that I have suggested that the Congress has entered upon office not to work the Act in the manner expected by the framers but in a manner so as to hasten the day of substituting it by a genuine Act of India's own coining.

Therefore the Congress conceived as a fighting machine has to centralize control and guide every department and every Congressman, however highly placed, and expect unquestioned obedience. The fight cannot be fought on any other terms.

They say this is fascism pure and simple. But they forget that fascism is the naked sword. Under it Dr. Khare should lose his head. The Congress is the very antithesis of fascism, because it is based on non-violence pure and undefiled. Its sanctions are all moral. Its authority is not derived from the control of panoplied black-shirts. Under the Congress regime Dr. Khare can remain the hero of Nagpur, and the students and citizens of Nagpur, and for that matter other places, may execrate me or/and the Working Committee without a hair of the demonstrators' heads being touched so long as they remain non-violent. That is the glory and strength of the Congress—not its weakness. Its authority is derived from that non-violent attitude. It is

the only purely non-violent political organization of importance, to my knowledge, throughout the world. And let it continue to be the boast of the Congress that it can command the willing and hearty obedience from its followers, even veterans like Dr. Khare, so long as they choose to belong to it.

Harijan, 6-8-1938

445. LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

MAGANWADI,
WARDHA (C. P.),
August 6, 1938

DEAR DR. GOPICHAND,

I have your letter of the first instant. I had the earlier letters also. Bapu had no opportunity to have a talk with the Maulana, because other important subjects engaged the whole of the time and attention of the w. c. Bapu thinks that no member of the Parliamentary Board has a right to dictate any important course of action without reference to the Working committee. You will therefore represent the matter to the Working Committee, who will consider it at the next meeting.

Yours sincerely,

MAHADEV DESAI

From the original : Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

446. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEGAON,
August 6, 1938

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I got your letter too late to be able to send you my blessings on the 3rd. You did not give either your son's or his bride's name. The marriage celebration must have passed off without any trouble. Please convey my blessings to both. May both of them devote themselves to service and may God grant them long lives.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4680. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

447. NOTE TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 6, 1938

I understand. I shall not keep you away from serving me. Do sleep when you feel sleepy. It will be good if you give up trying to get up at night. I shall wake you up if I feel the need. You must fix the quantity of your food. More on hearing the details regarding the piles.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4298. Also S.G. 68

448. TO SEGAON WORKERS

August 6, 1938

We should bear in mind the following:

1. Spittle is also excretion. Therefore we must never clean the utensils where we spit or wash our soiled hands.
2. We should not use water direct from the tap as it wastes water and not many people can use the tap at the same time. Therefore everyone must collect the water he needs in a *lota*.
3. No one should brush his teeth at the place meant for washing hands and mouth. The teeth must be brushed at a separate place and the mouth rinsed with water from a *lota*. Brushing of the teeth too should be done near a hedge or where people do not happen to walk.
4. We should never spit or blow the nose on the paths.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 4674

449. LETTER TO H.J. KHANDEKAR

[Before August 7, 1938]¹

I would urge you not to enforce your threat.² It would be an abuse of satyagraha.³ You cannot impose a Harijan on the Ministry. You can agitate in a peaceful manner for the inclusion of a Harijan in the cabinet, if you are satisfied that among the members of the C.P. Assembly there is a competent Harijan prepared to accept the Congress discipline, enjoying the confidence of the Harijan members and able to shoulder Ministerial responsibility. I am sure you will not insist that in every case and irrespective of merit a Harijan must have a place in the C.P. Ministry.

The Hindustan Times, 8-8-1938.

450. HARIJANS AND HINDU HOTELS

The strike of the Hindu hotel owners does credit neither to them, nor to Ahmedabad, nor does it afford protection to Hinduisim. These hotel owners could close down their hotels if others did not go to their hotels because of the presence of Harijans there. But resorting to strike is tantamount to preventing the Congress Government from doing justice.

The question arises whether the Hindus on strike are on the side of the Congress or opposed to it. Are they enemies of Hinduism or are they its well-wishers? If they consider themselves supporters of the Congress, they should lovingly feed Harijans despite having to put up with difficulties. If, while doing so, other Hindus stop coming to their restaurants, they should put up with this. If all Hindu restaurant-owners practise this dharma, other Hindus would either be forced to take advantage of those very restaurants or wholly give up eating in such restaurants. In the latter eventuality the restaurant-owners should look for a new source of livelihood. They should on no account forsake their dharma.

If they are Congressmen—and they should be—they should

¹ The news item from which this has been extracted is dated August 7.

² This sentence is from a report in *The Hindu*, 8-8-1938.

³ The addressee, a Harijan member of the C.P. Congress Committee, had threatened to start a satyagraha if a Harijan was not included in the C.P. Cabinet.

regard untouchability as *adharma* and, if that is so, it is evident that by resorting to strike they are practising *adharma*.

This strike indicates that the ordinary mass of Hindus share the opinion on the restaurant-owners. If that is so they are opposed to the Congress. But that cannot be so, because Ahmedabad has always sided with the Congress. How can they not be convinced that the practice of untouchability cannot survive in this age? Akha Bhagat has taught us that untouchability is a superfluous appendage and the cutting off of such a limb is beneficial.

Moreover, today, we find Hindus everywhere eating in all sorts of places. Their religion does not come in their way there. They frequent Irani restaurants. They freely visit English hotels. There is no prejudice against Harijans in those places.

If Harijans put on the caste mark on their foreheads, wear beads and go to restaurants without proclaiming their caste, who can prevent them? How can one find out about their caste? There is no doubt that many Harijans go to restaurants in this way. Is the strike then merely for the crime which the Government has committed in issuing the order to enforce its own law? If those who regard untouchability as their dharma actually wish to put it into practice, they should stop going to restaurants, taking foreign medicines; they should refrain from eating sweets whether foreign or Indian, as there is every possibility of Harijans having had a hand in their making. Foreign medicines are not made by Hindus and who knows how many Harijans may not have touched them before they reach the consumer? Today there are many vaidas who do not practise untouchability. Is not their medicine polluted? And the less said about sweets the better. All this is worth considering. And those who do so will certainly come to the conclusion that those who practise untouchability should give up many other things. And, as that is not possible, they should realize the difficulty involved in it and tolerate the presence of Harijans in restaurants.

The path of those who regard untouchability as being opposed to dharma is simple. If no restaurant-owner opens the doors of his restaurant to them these people should start restaurants in whatever way it is possible and lovingly feed those visiting them. If anyone feels that Harijans are dirty, that their clothes are unclean, rules of cleanliness applicable to all can be enforced with regard to restaurants. Absence of cleanliness is not a monopoly of Harijans alone.

A few words about the duties of the Government. So long as public opinion is in favour of the Congress, the dharma of the latter is clear. On no account will it tolerate untouchability. It will sink or swim with Harijans. Even if the Congress can rule over the entire world by doing injustice to Harijans, it should regard it as dirt. Abolition of untouchability is an indispensable part of Congress policy. If no one starts a restaurant which would be open to all, either the municipality or the Government should run such places as required at its own expense. If such a restaurant does not find enough customers it could be closed down. But not a single Hindu restaurant should be allowed to function which does not permit the entry of Harijans.

Now a few words to the Harijans. Just as Congressmen and sanatanist Hindus have to practise their dharma, so have the Harijans. These men and women have to see to it that they do not lose the game which is almost theirs. I have before me letters written by some proven Harijan workers. In these they have mentioned that at some places either in order to show their enthusiasm or to show their gratitude towards the Government, or for some other reason, Harijans, in large numbers, had surrounded restaurants and attempted to enter them. They were not even properly dressed. Those who do so render no service to Harijans but rather do them harm. They misuse laws laid down by the Government. Some rights are such that they cannot be utilized fully as soon as they are given. Some time must elapse before they are fully enjoyed and we should patiently put up with it. This right to enter restaurants is of this nature. Not a single Harijan must visit them to assert a right. Any Harijan who is really hungry and is passing by a restaurant, who has the money and is clad in clean clothes, should certainly go to the restaurant. He should suffer any insult which he encounters while doing so, he should inform the Harijan Sevak Sangh of this without taking any offence and the latter will certainly take steps to ensure that he is not insulted again. And, finally, if steps outside of the law prove to be futile, he will resort to legal help. The statement made by Shri Muldas in this connection is very useful. Harijan men and women will see it published in the current issue and I hope that they will put it into practice.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-8-1938

451. *LETTER TO DIRECTOR, THE TIMES OF INDIA, BOMBAY*

SEGAON,
August 7, 1938

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of 28th ultimo and a copy of *The Story of the World in Pictures*.

I do not consider myself in any way qualified to pronounce an opinion on ventures like yours. I would therefore ask you to excuse me for my inability to comply with your request.

Yours faithfully,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

452. *LETTER TO PERINBEHN CAPTAIN*

SEGAON,
August 7, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter was welcome. If you knew of my relations with Parsi women, you would not feel the distrust that you do. I cannot even dream of having ill will for Nariman.¹ I was responsible for bringing him in to the Working Committee. But my conscience still tells me that whatever happened as a result of the inquiry conducted to probe into the mistakes committed by him was perfectly right.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11562

¹ K. F. Nariman had accused Sardar Patel of using his influence to get B. G. Kher elected as the leader of the Congress Party in the Bombay Legislative Assembly in March, 1937. The matter was referred to a tribunal consisting of Gandhiji and Bahadurji. Their judgment went in favour of Sardar Patel. Nariman and his followers then accused Gandhiji of favouritism.

453. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 7, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

I have kept back both your articles. The one about Shan-karacharya seems unnecessary. The argument does not sound convincing. The other about the *Manusmriti* is rather imaginative. It makes pleasant reading but it does not help much in understanding the meaning of the *Smritis*. What would you suggest?

How is Dudhibehn? How is the children's education going on? How is their health? And yours? Here Kaka and a few others have had cholera. Two workers have passed away.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7480. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

454. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 7, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I was told that Vijaya's letter was sent to you yesterday. Even though the doctor has given permission, let Kaka start eating gradually. Do not give him plum-water. Its effect is not good. Nothing can equal *mosambi* juice. Let him take semi-liquid porridge of sago, and that also only if he feels hungry. He may take a mixture of five *tolas* milk, five *tolas* water and one spoonful of sago. It is advisable to go slow. I hear that Dharmadhikari had been sent for. In any case he had been given permission. If that is so, I must apologize to him.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10754

¹ *Vide* the following item.

455. LETTER TO NANA DHARMADHIKARI

August 7, 1938

BHAI NANA,

I thought that you had left without permission and that is why I was angry. I see now that you had been called away. No doubt I thus did you an injustice, though unintentionally. I make amends for it now by acknowledging my mistake through this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 4754

456. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON,

August 7, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. I do not like your being ill. I should like Jayaprakash to come here after his work in Malabar is over. In the beginning of October I shall have to go to the Frontier Province. Here Kaka, Nana and some other workers have had cholera. Two very fine young workers have succumbed. Kaka barely survived. Cholera is raging all around. It is raging in Segaoon, too. Sushila has been working hard. Manu is here. Navin and Dhiru also are here. I am arranging to send *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan*.

Mirabehn, Ba and the rest are well. I am also keeping well. I take milk and eat *khakhra*, vegetables and fruit.

Rajkumari is coming on the 9th. She is in Poona. Kanti is in Bangalore. I am observing voluntary silence and it is going on. I speak only when necessary.

Rajendra Babu is going to the south in two or three days to see a sadhu, a *maharshi*.¹ You know him by name because you were to go to his ashram while returning from Travancore. His name is Ramana Maharshi.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3519

¹ Rajendra Prasad visited Sri Ramana Maharshi's Asramam from August 14 to August 18. He then requested the Maharshi for a message for Gandhiji. The Maharshi said: "*Adhyatma shakti* is working within him and leading him on. That is enough, what more is necessary?" (*Talks*, under 18-8-1938)

457. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 7, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I got your letter. I was much relieved. I am sending milk from here. Sushila, Pyarelal and I think that it would be better if you refrained from taking milk today. Fruit and lime juice will be enough.

Do not worry about the weakness, but there should be no injury to the piles. For their quick shrinking it is better to avoid food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10582

458. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 7, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I think that the women alone will not be able to cope with the vegetables. Two of them are guests. And the sick Ba should be left out of account. Mirabehn also is not there. You should, therefore, put the responsibility on a man. For the present let it be Navin. He should carry on with whatever help he may get from the women.

A bucket for everybody is too much. Everybody must have a *lota* of course. A lantern for everybody is also a luxury. We should always think of what the poor do and try as far as possible to live as they do.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8571. Also C. W. 7069. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

459. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

August 7, 1938

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I shall want the motor-car tomorrow, Monday, at 12 o'clock, if it is not raining. Balkrishna is to be taken to Nagpur.

It was my fault that the car was kept here the whole day yesterday. I was sorry Kishorelal did not turn up yesterday. My heart cried and memory failed. What am I to do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9123

460. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

If you cannot find Jayantiprasad's address there, please return the letter here. It is all right that you did not come. The story about . . .¹ has got a wide publicity from there. How did it happen? Please make an inquiry. From what Santok writes, what has happened is serious. This refusal has shocked me a good deal indeed. Such incidents test me fairly severely. 'In a man brooding on objects of the senses attachment to them springs up.'² I am cancelling the note about Sarvat. I do not wish to give him publicity in that way. I am returning the rest to you, believing that you will prefer to get it typed by Babla. If that is not so, return it early in the morning so that I may get it typed here.

There has been one more case of cholera here. Sushila, Kanu and Soptekar were therefore busy in the village from 6.30 to 11.30 in the morning. Eighty persons were inoculated. The man was on death-bed. May be he will survive.

For today I am sending milk for Chimanlal from here. Most probably I will do that every day.

There are many letters to be posted. Check the addresses on them. There is no need to despatch them urgently. Sushila and Balkrishna will leave tomorrow by the 1 o'clock train. I have already written to Radhakrishna Bajaj about the car. However, please inquire about it. If it is raining, then of course we will not let them go. Kishorelal has come. He does have some fever. Yesterday he had an attack of asthma too.

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ The omission as in the source

² *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 62

[PS.]

I do not have the courage to write about Manahar. If you have and if you wish to ask, you may. I am afraid there will be a negative reply from that quarter also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11621.

461. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 7, 1938

Dharma says that you should not accept any money from your uncle. Whatever book I may sanction may be purchased with the public funds.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4299

462. TELEGRAM TO S. K. PATIL

August 8, 1938

S. K. PATIL
BOMBAY

WITH REFERENCE YOUR LETTER SORRY HAVING CAUSED
WORRY CONFUSION PLEASE IGNORE ADVICE CONTAINED MY
AND DO TELEGRAM WHATEVER YOU THINK BEST IN CONGRESS
INTEREST.¹

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

463. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 8, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

It will be better to keep Kaka hungry rather than overfeed him. Do consult the doctor, though of course not about food—that you may ask me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10755

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's letter regarding the suspension of the Joint Honorary Secretaries of the Girgaon District Congress Committee.

464. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 8, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I hope you are better. Go slow about food.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10583

465. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 8, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I would ask you to stop fasting on Mondays and Thursdays so long as you do not get over your weakness. If I am entitled to command you, this is my command, Your weakness is unbearable to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

466. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 8, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I could not wholly understand your letter. What have I or Sushila done to aggravate your uneasiness? I never at all interfere with your discipline. I am trying to root out the very desire to do so.

I am sure that you will not disregard my letter.

In what way are you in darkness? I really do not understand. Why do you not leave everything to God? But everyone does not worship Him in the same way. Your way of worshipping may be appropriate for you. I am trying to understand in what way it is so.

My orders are not unnatural. They certainly cannot be so in your case. That is why I wrote that I was commanding you only if I

was entitled to command you. It meant that the command should easily go down with you. It should have immediately occurred to you that what Bapu said was justified. Since that has not happened, take it that my order is withdrawn. I do not want to force it on you if it makes you unhappy. I only want to do what will bring you peace.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

467. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 9, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending whatever is ready. Hope you are well. Do not be too eager to come.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11643

468. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 9, 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. The practicability of Mr. Kallenbach's suggestion will depend on my ability to send teachers from here. But that is nil. It is difficult to get teachers who would satisfy me. Even if I come across such a teacher, he would have to be paid a salary which we cannot afford. Thus whatever arrangement you think of making will have to be made locally. My opinion, therefore, is that the plan of a school will not work.

So I have to think only about *I. O.*¹ If the people there give a clear guarantee to make good the loss, not oral but such as will satisfy the bankers, then it is your duty to keep it going.

If Rustomjee Trust offers some help, there is no harm in accepting it. But I would like only direct help from the people.

¹ Indian Opinion

If the *I. O.* can be kept going, Sushila must return there. I think that essential for helping you as also for her and your peace of mind. Sushila's presence by your side will by itself be a source of comfort, such as you cannot have from anything else.

I feel that if Sushila goes there, Arun should accompany her and Sita should stay here. Both of you should learn to bear such separation. I am considering here only the welfare of the children.

In case Sushila goes there, you should treat Phoenix as your home and stay there. You should overcome your desire of coming over here too often. It is, of course, a different thing if you get an unsought opportunity of coming.

You should overcome the desire to see your elders. If separation from one's people is one's dharma, one must cheerfully abide by that dharma.

Today this is enough. The other news Sushila may give if she wishes and knows how to.

If Ramdas can be tempted to stay there, then there is nothing better than that. In that case the children of both of you should also be trained to look after the work there.

About Hanna also, whatever Sushila may write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4878

469. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 9, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I read your letter to Sharda. Do not take all the freedom about food that the doctors may give. Eat only as much as the body demands. If you do that you will be able to return early and there will be no complication.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10584

470. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

How wholly confidential? But you did right. Herewith is a telegram for Ramachandran. Sell the eggs to Bharatan and Nayakum. If they do not want them, send them to the hospital.

I went and saw Nana last night. While on the way, I got a note from him and so went on foot with Sushila. His condition at the time was good. The present report is not bad. From there I returned in the car.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11622

471. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 10, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There is no change in Pyarelal's condition. At the moment there seems to be no danger. Kaka will regain strength slowly. Do not be impatient.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kaur and Krishna, Jamnalal and Ramana Maharshi, Ba.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10763

472. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 10, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter and *rakhi*. I am writing this letter with the *rakhi* tied round the wrist. Congratulations on the improvement in your health. Kaka and Nana are fairly well. The danger seems to have

passed. I am doing well. The diet is practically the same. Girdhari and his wife (recently married) have come here for today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajkumari arrived on Tuesday.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7094. Also C. W. 4586. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

473. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 10, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

You are right in taking less milk. I have nothing else to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10585

474. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 10, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

What tyranny is this! My claim as father and mother to you two, brother and sister, is absolutely nullified. Why did you go there? Why should you interfere if Sushila has patients on hand? But you were bent on going and you said that Sushila was free not to go if she did not want to.

So leaving the patients at God's mercy and yours, I have sent her to the hospital crying. Now explain to her her duty and pacify her if you can. Come back soon. It should not be necessary for me to go there.

Girdhari and Draupadi are sitting right in front of me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

475. LETTER TO UMABAI L. ATHAVALE

SEGAON,
August 11, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you are not brooding over Nana's¹ death. I am impressed by your courage. After seeing you, I am able to understand Nana's spirit of sacrifice and self-control better. Nana's body has perished, but his spirit will remain in the Mahila Ashram and will be a source of inspiration to the sisters.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 75

476. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Post tthe accompanying to Jairamdas at Hyderabad. Send the following telegram today, if possible:

“Jairamdas

Prem Bhavan

H'bad. (Deccan)

Girdharijidas had reported your health. You must leave Sindh. G. D. will suggest Nainital. Love.

Bapu.”²

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11623

¹ Narhar L. Athavale, her son

² This is in English.

477. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

August 11, 1938

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

If Premji is well enough he should be ready to leave today. I shall write to Jhaverbhai about the piles, he will arrange about the operation.

Consult Munnalal about Bankelal, I have already done so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1908

478. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 12, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. You should not be impatient. I am trying to help you according to my lights. I hope you will not spoil things by your impatience. Do not give up your faith in Ramachandran and others. If you slight him, my efforts will be wasted. I have had a letter from Saraswati about her having got dysentery and I have therefore wired to Ramachandran. I am not at all negligent in this matter.

What a silly thing to say? Why you didn't get cholera ! If you accept my diagnosis you will make rapid progress. Nana Athavale passed away yesterday.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7346. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

479. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 12, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You may certainly call a meeting of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay if you wish. Delhi will not suit. If you think my presence will be

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Umabai L. Athavale", 11-8-1938

necessary, call the meeting in Bombay. The best place, of course, will be Wardha. If you agree, consult Jamnalal by wire. From the point of view of facilities Bombay will probably be better. You need not consult my convenience. It will be better if the notice of the meeting is issued early. Do what you think best. On second thoughts, I am inclined in favour of Bombay. Allahabad also may be considered. We never hold meetings there. But this is only a suggestion for your consideration.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 223

480. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 12, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

At the moment I am unable to talk. If I try I am likely to burst into loud wailing. I cannot reason with you. You have thrown a new light on things today. No vows, no religion—since I know no satisfaction outside these, how can I understand?

Still, I shall talk with you when I am in a position to do so. In the mean time you may take the liquids that you like. If the stomach is still heavy with what you took in the afternoon, what can you drink? I have now given up insisting on anything. Do whatever brings you satisfaction. I had thought you were under my protection. But where do I have the purity for it? You are under the protection of God. Let His will be done.

Am I also not under His protection? I shall be guided by Him. Right now, the doors to light are closed. The light of love will shine when the time for it comes.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

481. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 12, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

It is not right that you do not take liquids. What I am doing is not because I am angry with you. If I am angry, it is only with myself. I am not sorry that you are not taking glucose. Now I am thinking about my own duty. If you are inclined to help me, be calm and regain your health by taking whatever you want to while keeping within limits. I do not wish to force you to eat or drink anything against your will. I had only come to persuade you. During that visit I got a certain impression. How can I ignore it? It prevents me from holding you guilty. Could it be that it is I who am under the influence of evil stars? Or, if what I am doing is right, why bewail it? Hence I would urge you to take the necessary treatment. It is not at all right that just because I am not able to eat at present you also should not eat.

Blessings, from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

482. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 12, 1938

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Go through this and give me your opinion. I do not wish to use the money received from you on such matters without your approval. And it might not even be possible to divert such a large amount considering the expenditures I am incurring these days. Anyway, I want your free opinion about it. Dr. Shaukat has nothing at present. Begum Ansari owns some rural property over which Dr. Ansari's brother has staked a claim. Nobody wants to help Harold except Shaukat and Dr. Ansari's daughter Zohra. Ansari of course was

always giving him money. I am not very clear what it would be best to do. You should write to me unreservedly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C. W. 7994. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

483. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,

August 12, 1938

CHI. SURU,

You are nothing but crazy. What a letter you write ! You are calm one day and agitated for the next several days. If you continue thus it will ruin your life as well as Kanti's. Everything can be accomplished by patience only. If you give up patience you will ruin everything. So, if you will but listen to me, you will compose yourself and get well. How can even I be of any help to you in your agitated state? I do want you to see Kanti soon but not by straying from the path of dharma, not by straying from propriety. Now, what would you like to do? Get well quickly. Get rid of the dysentery. Your letter this time has caused me considerable pain.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 6171. Also C. W. 3445. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

484. IS VIOLENCE CREEPING IN?

Mahadev has passed on to me information containing complaints about violence being done by Congressmen. One complaint is that, in the name of peaceful picketing, picketers are resorting to methods bordering on violence, such as making a living wall beyond which no one can pass without being hurt or hurting those who make the wall. As the author of peaceful picketing I cannot recall a single instance in which I had encouraged such picketing. A friend has quoted Dharasana against me. I had suggested the occupation of salt works. But that is wholly inapplicable to the case under consideration. In Dharasana the objective was the salt works of which possession had to be taken and maintained as against the Government. The action could hardly be called picketing. But to prevent workers from going

to their work by standing in front of them is pure violence and must be given up. The owners of mills or other factories would be fully justified in invoking the assistance of the police and a Congress Government would be bound to provide it if the Congressmen concerned would not desist.

Another instance brought to my notice is that of a body of Congressmen having taken possession of the offices of a Congress Committee recognized by the Provincial Congress Committee. This is surely unpardonable unruliness.

The third instance is that of breaking up meetings by shouting and otherwise creating disturbances.

The fourth is that of reviling capitalists as a class and inciting people to loot them.

All these are clear instances of violence and indiscipline. I am told that such unruliness is on the increase. I have before me a letter which bitterly complains that whereas capitalists used to get justice during the old regime, now under the Congress regime they not only get no justice but are even insulted and humiliated.

There can be no doubt that the British system favours capitalism. The Congress, which aims at securing full justice for the famishing millions, cannot favour capitalism. But the Congress, so long as it retains non-violence as its basic policy, cannot resort to usurpation, much less allow any class of persons to be insulted or humiliated in any way whatsoever or allow any Congressman or a body of Congressmen to take the law into their own hands.

Nor can the Congress tolerate violent picketing or speeches inciting to violence.

If violence is not checked in time, the Congress will go to pieces purely from internal decay. It is up to the heads of provincial and subordinate committees to root out the evil without the least delay. If on the other hand Congressmen in general are tired of non-violence, the sooner the first article of the constitution is revised the better it will be for all concerned and the country. Let it not be said of the great organization that it used truth and non-violence as a cloak to cover untruth and violence.

Harijan, 13-8-1938

485. *TWISTING OR INTERPRETING*¹

A friend writes a long letter with reference to my article on 'Speakers and Politics'.² What is discussed in the letter can be put thus in the form of a question:

When you say that the language of the Government of India Act should be stretched to the farthest limit, so as to give the greatest strength to the movement for Independence, do you imply that the Speaker should, or can, knowingly twist any section of the Act so as to give it the desired meaning?

I should be surprised if such an implication could be extracted from my article. It will amount to encouraging untruth. A Speaker who knowingly gives an interpretation contrary to the plain meaning of a text, renders himself unfit for the high office and discredits the Congress cause. He must, at all cost, preserve the Congress credit for honesty and integrity. What, however, I have meant is that where a section is manifestly capable of two meanings or more, he is bound to give that which favours the national cause. And when a section bears only one meaning which is manifestly restrictive of the people's liberty, he must unhesitatingly give that meaning. I have no doubt that such impartiality on the part of a Speaker will enhance his reputation and to the extent increase the moral prestige of the Congress. Having discarded violence, the strength of the Congress depends wholly upon the moral fibre and fearlessness of individual Congressmen.

Harijan, 13-8-1938

486. *LETTER TO SHAUKATULLA SHAH*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1938

MY DEAR SHAUKAT,

Here is another instalment from Miss Harrison. I have got no news from Bhopal. I do not know what should be done now. I am trying. But that takes time. Is anything possible about the village?

¹ This was published under "Notes".

² *Vide* "Speakers and Politics"

Even if I get something, I do not know that I can get £ 900 for which the guarantee is required.

How is Zohra doing?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

At the time of replying please return the enclosures.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

487. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 13, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending these letters. Agatha's letter which should have gone with Ghanshyamdas's has been left out. I am now getting a copy made. Pyarelal has 100.6° temperature and feels quite weak. We can do nothing but wait and see what happens. You may come at your usual time. Treatment is going on.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Get a copy of Perinbehn's letter made there and bring it along.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11624

488. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 13, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Once you are on your feet, we shall discuss about the change in your diet. I may say even now that your argument is not correct. If Amritlal shares everybody's food, he will not remain fit for your service. But we shall argue about it later on.

I will have a talk with Amritlal about ghee. Pyarelal's fever has gone up to 104.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10905

489. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 13, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Hope Kaka passed the night comfortably. Here Pyarelal is laid up with typhoid.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10757

490. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 14, 1938

BHAI JIVANJI,

What kind of an article do you expect from me? Should you not leave me out of it? You should give me a reward if I can carry out even your other assignments.

I understand about the *Autobiography*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9946. Also C. W. 6921. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

491. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I saw your post just now. If worrying about me gives you peace of mind, by all means do so. This incident itself is such as will not allow me any peace of mind. I get a good deal of it, of course, through silence. I can see how shallow my non-attachment is. As for Pyarelal, after doing the best we can about his treatment, why need I worry about him?

I will go through your thing. Pyarelal has started with 101.2. He keeps cheerful. He had good sleep. He is still sleeping. Outwardly at

any rate he remains peaceful. He does not resist me in anything. Let us see what happens.

Send a wire to Mridu as under:

“Can come between seventeenth nineteenth. Hope Madan better. Love to all. Bapu.”

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11625

492. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 14, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

The ghee is the same that we had. Ba says that if you heat it again, it will be all right.

We need not worry about Kaka getting loose motions. He will improve only gradually. Pyarelal seems better. At the moment of writing, i. e., at 8.45, the mercury shows 103.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Has not the loom been installed yet?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 10758

493. DISCUSSION WITH HENGCHIH TAO¹

[Before *August 15, 1938*]²

GANDHIJI: I am exceedingly sorry to receive you when I am in distress. I may not break my silence even to speak to you. But of course you will say whatever you want to. You may speak, I may not.

Prof. Tao explained that he was a member of the People's Council of Action of all China. This was a body of 140 or 150 drawn from all parties in China, under which the whole of China was united to meet Japanese aggression All parties. . . were

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". Since Gandhiji was observing silence his part of the discussion was conducted in writing.

² *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 15-8-1938, from which it would appear that Gandhiji had met Tao before that date.

united in fighting the common danger, under one supreme military command of Chiang Kai-shek. . . . Tao was happy that a Medical Mission from India was sailing to China as a token of India's sympathy, and he asked Gandhiji if he had any suggestions to offer in order to fight the war to a successful conclusion.

G. I do not know that I can throw any light on the problem at the present moment. My method is so radical that it is wholly inapplicable to your struggle. You cannot all of a sudden change the course of the struggle. A nation in arms cannot all at once give up arms and accept non-violence as its weapon.

Prof. Tao saw the difficulty and explained that the Chinese had not even time to think, the aggression was so sudden and so unprovoked. But he would like to discuss problems of national reconstructions. He had given up University work in order to take up peasants' education and he was deeply interested in the Wardha Education Scheme. "What exactly is the core of the Scheme?" he asked.

G. The central fact is some village craft through which the whole of the man or the woman in the child can be drawn out.

"But there was the difficulty of teachers," said Prof. Tao, and Gandhiji laughed. "We had the same difficulty. Would you have trained teachers to learn a craft or craftsmen to learn the art of teaching?" asked Prof. Tao.

G. The average educated man can be expected easily to master a craft. Our craftsmen will require much longer time to acquire the necessary general instruction than an educated man, say like you, can require to learn say, carpentry.

"But," said Prof. Tao, "our educated man is after fat jobs and money. How can he be interested in this?"

G. If the scheme is sound and appeals to the educated mind, it must prove attractive in itself and thus wean the educated youth from the lure of gold. It must fail, if it does not evoke sufficient patriotism from the educated youth. There is one advantage with us. Those who have received instruction through the Indian languages cannot enter colleges. It is just possible that they will find the scheme attractive.

Prof. Tao was deeply interested in our present political struggle. How were we going to acquire power at the centre?

G. If we are true to our salt in the seven provinces, the accession of strength that will come to us will put us on the way to power at the centre.

T. But the power is being felt everywhere, and the Congress prestige has risen. Has it not?

G. The Congress prestige has risen. The people have become conscious of their power and strength. The Government also recognize this. My fear is that this power may throw us off our balance.

Prof. Tao reverted to the question of mass education. He made an attempt to describe the Chinese system of “relay” teachers whereby each man or woman who had learnt something had to pass it on to the next one he or she came across. Even the child, the “little” teacher, had to share his or her learning with his illiterate parents, and the Chinese through this system were liquidating illiteracy and ignorance on a mass scale.

G. I have no doubt that it can. I would like you to write for me a short note on how the “relay” teachers and the “little” teachers are taught, how they teach and with what result.

Prof. Tao said he would gladly comply.

Prof. Tao would not go without a message from Gandhiji for the people of China. He explained that even a non-violent message would be welcome They were engaged in a war of self-defence, but in other respects they were observing non-violence On May 20 Chinese planes had flown over Japanese towns, and they might easily have spread death and destruction among the people of Japan in retaliation for the bombing of so many Chinese ports by Japan. But instead of raining bombs they rained handbills and leaflets showing the wrong of the war

G. But the self-inflicted restraint won't last when the real stress comes. The temptation will be irresistible. I shall not be surprised. It is inevitable. There is no love in war. We have got to come to the conclusion that either there is to be complete non-violence or undiluted violence. Is not this enough message?

Prof. Tao wondered if some day the Chinese might expect to have Gandhiji in their midst.

G. I almost came to your country when those who had invited me had to stop me from going owing to the disturbances that had taken place. I do want to see peace reigning in your land during my lifetime. Nothing will please me better than to visit your great country some day.

Harijan, 27-8-1938

494. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHAGANJ,
August 15, 1938

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
74 WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY HIGH

YOUR "ARGUMENT" SOUND. MISGIVINGS JUSTIFIED BUT
INCLUSION SEEMS INEVITABLE.

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

495. LETTER TO C. P. RAMASWAMI IYER

[August 15, 1938]¹

DEAR FRIEND,

In order better to guide R. and through him the State Congress and if at all possible to avoid friction between the State and the people, I am sending Shri Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to study the situation and to offer friendly assistance. She expects to leave here tomorrow and to proceed to Trivandrum after a day's stay in Madras. The Rajkumari will not address public meetings or do any public propaganda. I hope you will make full use of her services.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C. W. 4217. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7853

496. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 15, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Pyarelal's fever has risen to 104. It is futile to hope for it to come down soon. But one good sign is that, though today is Monday, he took *mosambi* and lime juice. He appears cheerful. Sushila devotes all her time to nursing him. Pyarelal would not accept service from

¹ In the text Gandhiji says about Amrit Kaur: "She expects to leave here tomorrow." Amrit Kaur left on August 16.

anybody except her. There is also the cholera work for her in the village. May God protect both !

I am sending one article. I have now finished another, on Burma.¹ The fingers refuse to work any longer now.

You yourself may write to Sarup. Send her what you can. Send a wire to Mathuradas as follows:

“Your arrangement sound. Misgivings justified but inclusion seems inevitable. Bapu.”²

Bring the Australian friend. Since I gave so much time to Tao, why not to this gentleman?

The Burma article cannot be sent before tomorrow.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 11626

497. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 15, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You did very well in going to Rajkot. So long as your star is in the ascendent, such occasions are bound to arise. Chudgar³ is following a wrong path. Let him do what he likes. If the subjects of the State have some salt in them, they would not try to fly in the air but fight on peacefully without looking for outside help. If they do so they cannot but win. And if the Congress does not abandon principles, it will become strong even in the States.

You were bound to fall ill. You are a sardar⁴ of others, but seem to be a slave of yourself. A true sardar is one who commands himself. If you regulate your time and draw up rules for doing all your work, you will live long. Do not dismiss this suggestion, saying, ‘Here is a pan laughing at a pot.’ Mahadev also is paying for his carelessness.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 223-4

¹ Vide “Recent Riots in Burma”, 20-8-1938

² This is in English.

³ Popatlal Lavjibhai Chudgar, a barrister of Saurashtra

⁴ Leader

498. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 15, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Why should I feel bad if you enquired about my blood-pressure? But what reply could I give? what is the way when anxiety is eating me? I continue my efforts. But what about my responsibility for whatever is happening? My constant thought is only that you should soon be well and leave your bed. Did I not write to you that illness would be unbearable to me? But I did not know how unbearable it would be. What can I do?

Blessings from

BAPU

[P.S.]

There is no need to reply to this. It will be sufficient if you have peace.

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

499. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,

August 15, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

What can I write? You will know everything from Sushila's letter. Pyarelal gets whatever service he needs. I have become quite useless. Pyarelal's illness is a test for me. It is a difficult test. I am sure Pyarelal will live. If not, I shall be responsible for his death.

Do come over if you want. Do not worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

500. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[After August 15, 1938]¹

PYARELAL,

It can take a little more jaggery. The skin should be cooked a little longer. The seeds should be cooked too. The seeds are not eaten. But their property is different. You can eat them if you like the taste.² How long did it take to cook in jaggery? I did tell you about cutting them, did I not? You can eat anything else you wish.

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

501. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

[On or before August 16, 1938]³

There are two things, I want you to do:

- (1) To go to Travancore to set the quarrel right;
- (2) To visit Kathiawar for the birthday celebrations which begin on 23rd September.

You can well tackle both. But if you don't feel like going, you shall not.

From the original: C. W. 4219. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7855

502. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 16, 1938

CHI AMRITLAL,

I hope Kaka is able to walk about a little. Pyarelal is better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10759

¹ The note is written on the reverse side of a letter dated August 15, 1938.

² This sentence is in Gujarati.

³ In the source the addressee has dated the note "Segaon, August 1938". She was in Segaon till August 16.

503. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 16, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

I got your letter. Are you now planning to go to Ahmedabad and improve your health there? What more will you have there? It is a different thing, of course, if you wish to consult a doctor. But let that be. My only desire is that wherever you go you should get well. What a fine body you had and now it is so shattered. Hereafter write to meat Delhi. Address the letters: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi. I shall be there for eight days at least. Ba will accompany me. Amritlal came here the day before yesterday. Nanabhai had also come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7095. Also C. W. 4587. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi.

504. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 16, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Send the milk early. Rajkumari is going to Travancore today. Pyarelal may be said to be better. But the fever is still there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10587.

505. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 16, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I would certainly feel happy if you allowed someone or other to sit with you by turns. As it is I find it difficult to take even a minute of Sushila's time. If while she nursed you, you had someone by your side it would not be so difficult. But what pleases you will please me. I

am letting you know what has been agitating me these last two days.
Give your reply to Sushila.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

506. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 17, 1938

RAJKUMARI
CARE AMMU SWAMINATHAN
MADRAS, CHETPUT

PYARELAL NOT BAD. I HAVE GAINED ONE POUND. HOPE YOU WELL.
LOVE

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 3875. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7031

507. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
August 17, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It was difficult to part with you in the state you were.

At the time of writing Pyarelal is not quite what he was yesterday. He had a restless night. But deep down in me there is the faith that he will pull through.

Shuaib Qureshi came the same time you went, by the same train.

You left your glasses and some papers which I enclose here with. Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I am keeping the glasses with me.

I hope you will keep well there. Do not overstrain yourself. Have no anxiety about the mission.

I am well. The diet and silence continue. the silence gives me the peace I need. More food I cannot do justice to at present.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3874. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7030

508. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 17, 1938

BHAI MUNSHI,

In your difficulties Girish's¹ fever is a great calamity indeed. It is difficult to understand so many relapses. As an antidote, I am sending the whole *bhajan* from which I had sent one line to Lilavati. To me that *bhajan* has given great comfort.

My opinion about the 'Rifle Club' is this: seek the opinion of the Working Committee about this matter. I think we cannot refuse the request outright. Licences may be given to all those who submit to rules and regulations. The Congress Government will not bear the expenses. Its policy will remain non-violent.

I will be ready to write in *Harijan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7640. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

509. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 17, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I take it that you are daily writing to Bal. I was careless about writing to him regularly. Tell Kaka not to start thinking about the future from now. We shall think about everything after he has completely recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is not quite well today. However, there is no cause for worry.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10760

¹ Addressee's son

510. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 17, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have learnt everything about the operation from Sushila. After the remaining complaint is completely cured, there should be no difficulty in building up the body. I hope you get milk regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is not quite well today. There is no cause for worry, though.

Tell Shankaran that I got his note. He wants a change. Ask him about his food, etc. Ask him to write to me again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10588

511. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 17, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

There seems to be something. the matter with my health today. I could not even sleep at night. Could yesterday's conversation be the reason for it? I did not wish to express my opinion. But since you insisted I wrote it to you. Right now I have only one wish: not to entertain any thought, utter any word, write any sentence, that may hurt you. I am only counting days for you to recover fully. I hope for your part you will make full efforts. If you resolve to get well, you will certainly succeed.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

512. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 18, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

It was really good news about Kaka. I hope the progress will continue. Pyarelal's ship is in mid-sea. The temperature is lower than in your case. It had risen up to 105 yesterday. One reason may be that he has a strong constitution.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There is no letter from Vijaya. I have written to her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10761

513. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,

August 18, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You are quite lazy in writing letters. That will not do. Have you not promised to write every third day ? One must keep one's promise even unto death.

Pyarelal's typhoid still persists. In Segaon the cholera is raging. We can do nothing but wait and see. I am observing complete silence these days. That is the only way in which I can preserve my peace of mind.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7096. Also C.W. 4588. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

514. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 18, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I am glad the operation is successfully over. I understood about Shankaran. How long will you have to remain there ? Pyarelal's fever will go only when it has run its course.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10589

515. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 18, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Today if the rain stops, otherwise tomorrow under any circumstances. You yourself should go to see Gajanan . . .¹ having fallen ill. . . If he does not feel comfortable there, he may stay at the Harijan Ashram. Let him not . . . endanger his health . . . Ask him and find out if he wants anything. A co-worker of his has got cholera. Who is he? Where does he come from ?

Here all . . . carefully . . .

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8570

516. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*About August 18, 1938*]²

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have been thinking about Khare. Do give up the idea of writing the article. About Pyarelal, I will let God guide me.

¹ The letter is illegible at many places.

² About this day Pyarelal's condition was critical. In "Letter to Amritlal T. Navavati", p. 259, Gandhiji wrote, "Pyarelal's ship is in mid-sea."

Herewith is a bottle containing Balkrishna's¹ sputum. If the bottle can be returned, he wants it back. We shall pay no attention to his fever just now. Let them send any medicine they think proper.

You need not worry about me. I have been forewarned. So there will be no trouble. Ultimately God's will must prevail. Read the letter addressed to Shanta and give it to her.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If Shantikumar can pay the money, let him do so. Let him not do so against his will at all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11536

517. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 19, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I understand what you write about Maharashtra. We should stay where God ordains. How can we make any distinction between Maharashtra and Gujarat? However, you will not come to Segaon in an unnatural way. You will see your path clear before you if it becomes necessary for you to come.

Just now there is no need for you to come. There is enough work for you there. You have to attend to a hundred things there. What would you do here? What part would you play in the quarrels here? What service can you render to Pyarelal? What service can he ask of you? He does not accept much service from anyone except Sushila. He lets the others take turns by his side and shift the cot. But it is Sushila who does the real nursing. They are a wonderful pair, the brother and sister. I have not seen their like anywhere.

I understand about Lilavati. Her good lies there. Suffer her, therefore, and train her.

Tell Radhakishan that neither he nor anyone else need make any preparations about Sunday. As we refrain from opposing them,

¹ Balkrishna Bhave was suffering from tuberculosis at this time.

they will calm down.¹ It would be better if the Inspector-General of Police also does not come. What will he do even if he comes?

Shuaib will pass the night there, as it might rain in the morning. His luggage has gone to the station. If you need anything send for it. I have thought it better to lodge Shuaib with you. That is the only correct course for us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11627

518. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

August [19]², 1938

CHI. MANILAL,

I have only sent you my opinion³. If you get 200 subscribers who would pay £25 each or 100 who would pay £50 each, and if you get an assurance regarding the *I. O.* expenses and do not have to go about for collections, you ought to stay on there. You should increase your efficiency. If you become steady there, Sushila and Arun may go there and Sita may stay here. She seems to be progressing very well in her study at Akola. If Sushila goes there, you will of course get help and also peace of mind. I do feel that, when Sushila is living near me, I am observing silence and so cannot train her or get her trained as I should like to do. Moreover, as I take my meals by myself, I cannot watch what she and Arun eat. If I were in better shape, Sushila's swollen body and Arun's weak one also would certainly have improved. But what can we do? She can receive from me only as much as her fate permits. She can be said to have been freed from my clutches. It is no easy thing to get caught in my clutches. Well, God's will prevails in all things.

Just now Pyarelal is confined to bed. There have been three bad deaths. Now Pyarelal is in mid-sea. He is being nursed carefully, of course. I hope he will survive.

¹ The reference is to the Harijan satyagrahis who wanted a Harijan to be included in the C.P. Ministry; *vide* "Discussion with Harijan Satyagrahis", 27-8-1938 and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", After 27-8-1938.

² The date in the source reads "29", though perhaps Gandhiji intended to write "19".

³ *Vide* "Letter to Manilal Gandhi", 9-8-1938

What you write about Ramdas is correct.
I have already told you that no school can be run in Phoenix.
Hanna must be an old face there now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4880

519. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 19, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Relieve Salekar so that he can go to fetch the medicine. Entrust his work to Rajbhushan. If there is any difficulty about this, let me know.

BAPU

[PS.]

Gunvant should not take it. Let him discuss with me. I did not read one of the letters. The telegram in reply to this is given just now so that it can be sent early tomorrow. You need not put yourself to inconvenience to come here in the morning. If you can come conveniently, you may. Perhaps that may be enough. This was one . . .¹

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8569. Also C.W. 7034. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

520. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 19, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

The mistake regarding plums should not be repeated. Nana Dharmadhikari should go only after the work for which he had come is over. He need not stay on because of Kaka. If the latter wants him, however, by all means let him stay. In fact what I said was just off hand, so there was no question of your being guided by it.

I will tie the *rakhi*.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10762

¹ Omission as in the source

521. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[After August 19, 1938]¹

CHI. NANAVATI,

Send detailed report about Kakasaheb. If there is a letter from Vijaya send that too. Ba has become more impatient than I. I had already told Mahadev that the Punjab tour was cancelled because of my illness. If the message has not been conveyed, please do it. If necessary send a wire tomorrow or write a letter. If Dharmadhikari has not returned admonish him and send him off. A public worker cannot leave his duty to visit his dear ones. He should know that there will be enough men to look after Kakasaheb.²

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10753

522. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[After August 19, 1938]³

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have given instructions for sending you ghee. Add a few drops of ginger juice to Kaka's drink. If calomel does not suit him, one ounce of castor oil can be given every half hour. But ask Mahodaya about this. Have you not started giving glucose yet ?

Blessing from

BAPU

[PS.]

I tied the *rakhi*.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10764

523. HOW TO SAVE HANDLOOM WEAVERS

August 20, 1938

The statement that the handloom industry has defied mill competition is only partially true. There are not today half as many handloom weavers as there were, say, twenty-five years ago. There was a time when, as the spinning-wheel spun the whole of the yarn

¹ From the reference to Nana Dharmadhikari in the preceding item.

² The letter was signed by Kanu Gandhi, under instructions from Gandhiji.

³ From the reference to *rakhi* in the letter of August 19 to the addressee.

required by the nation, the handloom wove all the cloth required. When the mills were established the spinning-wheel all but died out for the very simple reason that it gave a paltry return and was never a whole-time occupation. But the loom offered stubborn resistance, for the reason, among others, that it was a full-time occupation by itself and paid the weaver enough to eke out a living. When the spinning mill came, the weaver fell back upon it for his hanks of yarn. He even welcomed the change because he could get more evenly spun and stronger yarn. Little did he know that he was to become perfectly helpless if the mills for any reason could not supply him with yarn. Unlike the village spinner the millowner dictated the price of his yarn. By and by the weaver who wove simple patternless khadi could not withstand the mill competition and he died. And for the past few years the weaver of fancy cloth has felt the pressure from weaving mills. Public taste is slowly but surely changing. If the mills cannot exactly copy the patterns woven by the village weaver, they can, as they do, produce new patterns and by efficient advertising attract customers. Therefore several thousand Orissa weavers are idle for want of custom. A similar cry came to me the other day from Ahmednagar, a strong weaving centre. My advice to them all was that if these weaving families would but introduce carding and spinning in their homes, they could be wholly independent of mill yarn and enlist the never-failing assistance of the A. I. S. A. It might be that the weavers might not earn as much as before because of part of their time being given to spinning. But now, under the revised policy of the A. I. S. A. which aims at giving one anna per hour to the spinner and is actually giving one and half pice per hour, the weaver would hardly feel the reduction in his income. And in any case a reduced wage is surely better than starvation.

Let it be borne in mind that the weaver, in introducing spinning and carding in his family, has to go in for very little outlay. The wheel he already has. It will no doubt require some improvement. He has to invest in a carding-bow costing a few annas.

I understand that the Orissa Government is banishing mill yarn from their jails and restricting their cloth purchases to khadi. They deserve congratulations for conforming to the constructive programme of the Congress. Let the workers in charge of the organization remember the prescription herein suggested, and they will find that production of the yarn required will be the easiest by educating

the weavers to take up spinning. They will also by this method probably find that khadi can be, comparatively speaking, more cheaply produced than if they were to wait till they trained raw villagers to become efficient spinners. No doubt they will have to introduce spinning in all the villages. For that is the goal of the A. I. S. A. But they may not neglect the handloom weavers till the high purpose is accomplished.

Harijan, 20-8-1938

524. RECENT RIOTS IN BURMA

August 20, 1938

A telegram says :

Burma riots deserve more attention than you paid. Whatever Government information, no peace till tenth, when I left Rangoon by aeroplane. Indians frightfully perturbed. They adopted your non-violence, suffered terribly. Effective steps urgently solicited.

The step that I took immediately on receipt of a wire from Rangoon was the only effective step I could then take.¹ I was not then even in possession of facts. Now there is before me a narrative of the cause of the Burmese fury. It appears that a Burman wrote a tract in disparagement of Islam some time ago. A Burman Buddhist who had become a convert to Islam wrote a counter-tract attacking the original and also attacking Buddhism. No Indian had a hand in the writing of the counter-tract. It did not attract notice at once, but the Burmese Press fiercely criticized it and inflamed the Burmese mind. The result was the savagery which took many precious, innocent lives and destroyed property worth, it is said, millions. Nor was it confined to Rangoon; it spread throughout Burma wherever there were Indian settlers.

If, as my correspondent says, "Indians adopted your (i. e., my) non-violence," I can only say they suffered less than they would have otherwise done. Non-violence has no limits. If a particular dose does not seem to answer, more should be administered. It is a never-failing remedy.

But why call it my' non-violence? Probably the wire is a gentle rebuke to me, so much as to say that my remedy failed. The pertinent question is whether they believed in non-violence as a sure remedy against violence, or was it undertaken because there was no help for it ? I, however, need not wait for a reply. If one is to believe the papers,

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to President, Burma Congress Committee", 5-8-1938

there was not complete non-violence practised by the Indians. I have, however, no difficulty in believing that a considerable number observed non-violence whether from belief or necessity.

The question for consideration, however, is: 'what of the future?' There will no doubt be some kind of an inquiry. There may be some compensation paid to the losers. There would be some punishment meted out to the offenders who are not likely to be the prime movers but their dupes. I must confess that I am uninterested in these proceedings. There will be no insurance against future outbreaks.

Indians in Burma should realize that they are at the mercy of the inhabitants of Burma. They have no Government in India that can really afford them protection. We know what is happening in the other parts of the world; nor is it to be wondered at. England will never go to war with any nation or country because it has insulted or wronged Indian settlers in that country. It may, it will, make representations, sincere of course; it will lodge energetic protests even. But there her help will end. And in a case like the Burmese riots, the relief that the Government of India can afford will be next to nothing. What does it do when riots take place in India itself? It can do very little after they are over. The utmost it can do is to take measures to quell riots when they take place. What have even Congress Governments been able to do after the riots that have recently taken place in some Congress Provinces? They do not admit of relief being granted to the sufferers except in rare cases. What is possible in Burma I do not know.

I am concerned with attainment of permanent peace in so far as permanence is possible in this very impermanent life. When once religious animosity is roused, it has a knack of repeating itself with periodic regularity, if radical measures are not adopted by the communities concerned. One such measure is cultivation of mutual respect for the several religions professed by the parties. If the Buddhists of Burma have little regard for Islam and the Muslims for Buddhism, the seeds of dissension are there. They will take little watering to sprout into the savagery such as we saw the other day. I would, therefore, suggest a mutual understanding of these great religions.

My fear is that at the bottom of the riots there is an anti-Indian

feeling, due, perhaps to economic causes. For though Muslims seem to have suffered most, Hindus too seem to have come in for a fair share of the Burman fury. Therefore, Indian settlers must see to it that their dealings with the Burmans are fair and above board. It is said that everything is fair in trade, and that no turpitude attaches to a trader taking advantage of his customer's ignorance and demanding from him even an unconscionable price for his goods. That kind of dealings will surely acerbate feelings. Wherever we have gone, even before the British rulers took possession of our country, we have depended solely on the goodwill of those among whom we have lived and with whom we have traded. Such is the history of our relations with Zanzibar, Aden, Java, etc.

Times have however changed. The people all over the world have become conscious of their rights. Whereas formerly foreign settlers in other lands did questionable things with impunity, they cannot do so now. Honesty has never been so much proved to be the best policy as it is now for those who do not or cannot back their dishonesty with gunpowder and poison gas. If India is to escape that training and is to adopt, as a free nation, peace as her motto in every walk of life and in every country where her children go, they will have to practise strictest honesty in their human dealings.

To the Burmese friends one word. When I was in Burma some years ago, Burmese priests were good enough to invite me to their conference and honour me with their address under the shadow of the mighty Pagoda. They were good enough, as Buddhists, to claim me as one of them. It therefore hurt me when I read of the mob fury which knew no distinction of sex or age and wreaked vengeance on persons who could never have had anything to do with the offending pamphlet. I have the greatest veneration for the Buddha. He is one of the greatest preachers of peace. The gospel of the Buddha is gospel of love. It passes comprehension how representatives of that faith could give themselves up to savagery, and that on an apparently flimsy pretext. The pity of it is that, if the newspaper reports were true, even priests, the repositories of the Buddha's gospel, were to be seen among the mob, not stilling its fury, but actually taking part in loot, arson and murder. Would that the wise men among them would do a little heart-searching and take steps to prevent a recurrence of the tragedy which all right thinking persons must deplore !

Harijan, 20-8-1938

525. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August 20, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
STATE GUEST HOUSE, TRIVANDRUM

YOUR WIRE. PATIENT BETTER. SELF WELL.
PRAYING SUCCESS YOUR MISSION. ANXIOUS
SARAS WAT'S CONDITION. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 3876. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7032

526. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 20, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

There must be a wire awaiting me at Maganwadi. I heard yesterday that you were to be State Guest. I do hope my letter¹ went through all right (or alright ?).

Pyarelal is decidedly better today. The temperature is only 101 against 103 at this time yesterday (8 a.m). If he is restored it would be a great and good thing.

I have no doubt that you will be able to fix up everything nicely. I had a visit yesterday from the President of the T [ravancorre] National Congress. Of course I was silent. He is an able man. He spoke with sweet reasonableness.

I hope you will keep well and drive to the Cape if you have time. Would like you to drop in at Tiruvannamalai for a day to see the Maharshi² on your return. My b. p. was 160/100 this morning.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original : C. W. 3635. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 6444

¹ Vide "Letter to C. P. Ramaswami Iyer", 15-8-1938

² Ramana Maharshi. In *Letters to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur*, the addressee says : "But both Mahadev Desai and I refused to see him as we said our hearts were Gandhiji's and Gandhiji did not appreciate the argument."

527. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[August 20, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have asked the man to go there directly. Sushila says that no ice is required. And moreover he feels better today. Pyarelal said in the morning that probably the mercury would not rise tomorrow. Today he has started with 101. He also slept well in the latter part of the night.

Send this telegram² :

I understand about Maharashtra. Lilavati should not have minded not being permitted to come yesterday. If there is no special work today, do not come. From the letters sent herewith get a copy made of Limaye's letter. That has not been done here.³

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11631

528. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

August 20, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

You have made a mountain out of a molehill. I only described my sorrow in the letter to Manilal. As long as I cannot make you sit down by my side for your meals, I would not suggest any change in your diet. The same is true about Arun. Moreover, as I do not speak I cannot joke with you either. I can suggest much even while joking.

I am not dissatisfied with you. Do I not believe you to be wise ?

When did I ever say that women were unfit for service ? Yes, I have declared myself unworthy. That unworthiness may perhaps be overcome. As you are ready to serve, you have earned the merit of having actually served.

It is not easy to please Ba. Have I not told you this ? But she is simple-hearted. We should, therefore, not mind what she says.

¹ From reference to Pyarelal's temperature, which came down to 101° on this date; *vide* the preceding item.

² For the text, which is in English, *vide* "Telegram to Amrit Kaur", 20-8-1938

³ The letter is unsigned.

I do wish indeed that you should increase your reading and learn to write Gujarati articles for *Indian Opinion*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4879

529. LETTER TO PARVATIDEVI GHORPADE

August 20, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

I learnt about you from Bhai Kaujalgi's letter to Gandhi Seva Sangh and also read the account of the concessions that you have given to the people of your state. I compliment you on your generosity. It is worthy of you. May god make you more generous still and grant you long life.

Blessing from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 7454

530. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

August 20, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I got your message. I have been writing as much as I can. I remember your suggestion. If God wills it, I will write before the incense burns out. But who permitted you to resume work ? If you exert your mind and body so soon, the weakness will be prolonged. Pyarelal is better.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10906

531. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 20, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Most probably the Nagpur students will come. If Mahadevi wants to come, let her come.

But what will she do ?

¹ Dowager queem of Mudhol State

I of course continue to observe silence. Who knows what I shall think it right to do when the students arrive ?

Blessing from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10765

532. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 20, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I understand about you. See that Shankaran does not fall ill. There is no change in Pyarelal's condition.

Blessing from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10590

533. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

SEGAON,
August 21, 1938

DEAR PATTABHI,

Please make a searching inquiry into this complaint¹ and let me know the result. I do not want to publish the letter before knowing your verdict.

Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

534. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

August 21, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

As I start this letter, here is Sushila ready for massage. So I will be brief. You seem to be progressing very well. See also that the discharge of pus from the gums stops.

Pyarelal's fever persists, but he is improving. There is no danger so far. His mother came yesterday evening. I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

¹ Some people had been reported to have incited people to occupy land by force.

Chimanlal will be discharged [from the hospital] tomorrow or the day after.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7097. Also C.W. 4589. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

535. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 21, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Balwantsinha says that Bankelal does very little work. Please inquire. Ask the village . . .¹ about him. Get a full report. Make a thorough inquiry.

Who looks after Kuwadu ?

Install the loom in the new building. Nayakum has kept the bag ready.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

What did you do about Dahyalal yesterday ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8568. Also C.W. 7036. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

536. REPLY TO NAGPUR DEPUTATIONISTS²

August 21, 1938

I realize your regard and support for Dr. Khare, I also have great love for Dr. Khare, but we who are fighting the independence battle have to forget family relations while doing our duty. After introspection I found that no wrong or injustice had been done to Dr. Khare. You have no material for comparison. I myself framed the Congress constitution in 1920 wherein the All-India Congress is the final appellate authority which everybody can approach. The Working

¹ A word is illegible here.

² A deputation of over 150 students and others led by V. A. Khare had come from Nagpur to see Gandhiji. They expressed support for Dr. N. B. Khare and demanded withdrawal of the Working Committee's resolution concerning him. Since Gandhiji was observing silence he wrote out this reply

Committee or leaders referred to, if found guilty, deserve punishment.

I advise you to prepare your case in favour of Dr. Khare to be placed before the A. I. C. C. I have said whatever I wanted to. I cannot address a public meeting at seventy. I have no desire to prove Dr. Khare's guilt, nor do I wish you to lessen your love for Dr. Khare. Time alone will tell and Dr. Khare will admit his mistake. I have patience. If I realize that I did injustice in this case unknowingly, I will apologize.

I do not wish to win independence through hooliganism which will destroy the Congress if it enters that body. Everybody has the right to criticize provided the criticism is fair, decent and truthful. No ban was imposed on Dr. Khare for contesting the election of the leadership of the C. P. Assembly Party nor did Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose threaten any member while exercising his right to vote, not did I deprive Dr. Khare of his right to contest the election.

The Working Committee's resolution against Dr. Khare was recommendatory, not mandatory. The charge of favouritism against the C. P. Ministry was inquired into, and the wrongs redressed, while the charge of bribery and corruption was not proved. The Working Committee can correct its mistake if it has committed any. If the members of the Working Committee had the right to attend the party meeting none could remove them. It could convene the meeting at Wardha. That resolution was drafted after consulting constitutionalists and lawyers who committed no mistake in framing it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-8-1938

537. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 22, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending as much as is ready. I did not understand about the hotel. I went through all the articles yesterday and sent them to you. Only the article about Nagpur is left with me now. It does not contain your translations. I must have with me my replies. However, I will see at night. There is no time now during the day. I shall have to make several additions and omissions. If the article on the hotel is with you, you may insert your additions in it.

Sushila must have sent the articles about khadi. I had also given her your letter to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11628

538. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 22, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

Your work must be flourishing. Pyarelal passed the night well. His mother has come. That has lessened my worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10766

539. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 22, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

Probably you will be discharged today. Pyarelal passed the night fairly well. The rest from newspapers or . . .¹

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10591

540. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Why need we reply to the *Sentinel's* canard²? What a canard! I feel that falsehoods which no one is likely to believe should be ignored. If you feel otherwise, however, we may reply.

¹ A word or two are illegible here.

² The reference is to a canard spread by the Delhi correspondent of the *Daily Express* that Gandhiji was about to take *kayakalpa* or rejuvenation treatment. This was published by other newspapers also.

I will not, I cannot, send the report about the tourists with Prabhu Dayal. It will require time. I will, therefore, get it typed here.

Pyarelal passed the night fairly well.

Please send the ice.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Chimanlal is being discharged today. So if you are coming by car, bring him with you, or if anybody is coming from the bungalow he may come with him. In the last resort, he may come by tonga. If a tonga suits you better, you may hire one. But in any case the carriage will have to be arranged by you.

Telegram for Rajkumari:¹

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11629

541. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[August 23, 1938]²

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There is no cause for worry about Kaka. We shall have to proceed carefully. Ask Dr. Mahodaya if it would not be better to give two grains of calomel every half an hour eight times. Go on giving him glucose, as much as he can digest. Give him small quantities of *mosambi* juice. There are toxins in the body and they will remain for some time. If he commits no mistake in eating, all will be well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10767

542. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

August 23, 1938

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have entrusted to Mahadev the task of writing to you or sending anything to you. I assume that you will be ready to start as soon

¹ For the text of the telegram, *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", 24-8-1938

² The date is as supplied by addressee.

as you get the call. If there is any change in the programme inform Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10592

543. *TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR*

WARDHAGANJ,
August 24, 1938

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
GUEST HOUSE
TRIVANDRUM

GOD WILL SOLVE DIFFICULTIES. PATIENT
PROGRESSING.

BAPU

From the original C.W. 3878. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7033

544. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

August 24, 1938

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Just time to send you love. All well.

BAPU

[PS.]

You see how considerate I have been. Say thank you.

From the original : C.W. 3877. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7034

545. *LETTER TO PRITHVISINGH*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 24, 1938

MY DEAR PRITHVISINGH,

I write to you in English so that you may get this earlier.

I had your letters. I am glad you are having good treatment and that you have mental peace. I know that non-violence in thought is the most difficult of attainment. And yet without the co-operation of thought, non-violence, in word and action does not become an all-

prevading irresistible force that it undoubtedly is. Such non-violence comes only through God's grace. And that grace descends only on those who make a ceaseless effort—much greater surely than what we make to attain material ends.

I am pursuing my work. Much depends upon the external atmosphere.

You will continue to write regularly to me.

A letter is being sent to your people. I have already told you they met me and I was pleased they came.

Pyarelal is suffering from typhoid. But he is on the mend.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5630. Also C.W. 2941. Courtesy : Prithvisingh

546. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA

August 24, 1938

You may depend upon my doing all I can in behalf of your project¹.

SIR M. VISVESVARAYYA

BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

547. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 24, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Fresh ginger is needed for Pyarelal. I have of course made inquiries in Varoda. Rajaram will see about it. But if he is not able to procure it, please see to it yourself.

Ice and vegetable soup have been discontinued for the present. He will take whey.

If you have not written for grape-fruit along with pomegranates, do so now. Through God's grace my silence is continuing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11632

¹ Of setting up an automobile factory in India

548. *LETTER TO S. GANESAN*

SEGAON,
August 25, 1938

MY DEAR GANESAN¹,

you are mad. Can't you be at peace with yourself ? I am glad you withdrew your letter².

Yours,
BAPU

SHRIS. GANESAN
8 PYCROFT ROAD
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS

From a copy: C.W. 4347. Courtesy: D. C. Jha. Also G.N. 6614

549. *A MESSAGE*

August 25, 1938

There will be no peace without non-violence in the hearts of many. There will be no non-violence without prayer, and prayer is vain without correspondent work.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

550. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

[August 25, 1938]⁴

CHI. KAKA,

I am sending the article after revising it. The changes are self-explanatory. Did not Subnis drink *nira* ? Have you regained sufficient strength now to come ?

¹ Editor, *Swatantra Sangu*, Madras

² This seems to have expressed the anguish of workers at some of the provisions of the Temple-entry Bill then under consideration.

³ This was sent to Muriel Lester for "Prayer for Peace in the World".

⁴ There is reference in the letter to Pyarelal having started taking whey "from yesterday". In "Letter to Mahadev Desai", p. 279, Gandhiji mentions Pyarelal being given whey. This letter would thus appear to have been written on August 25.

Pyarelal is progressing. Fever is going down. He has started taking whey from yesterday.

Why do you make yourself unhappy because you are a Maharashtrian ? Atonement has to be made by all. It is better that the poison that is inside comes out. If we do not increase it by opposing it, it will spend itself.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You did not see Amritlal, did you ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10911

551. TELEGRAM TO SATIN SEN

August 26, 1938

HELPLESS.	SELF	WORKING	UNDER	HANDICAP.
SUFFERERS	SHOULD CLUB		TOGETHER	AND
FIND	HONEST	LABOUR.		

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

552. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 26, 1938

SHRI KUMARAPPA,

Please tell Bharatan I was pleased¹ to read his good article in the *Aryan Path*.

From a photostat G.N. 10135

¹ This word is not very clear in the source.

553. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SEGAON,
August 26, 1938

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You should have no worry on you while you are rebuilding your body. In this we may well copy Englishmen. Out of office they forget the office cares and every day come fresh to work. If they get ill they know that they must rest and trust that without them the nation's business will go on as usual. This is true *Gita* living. It is the soundest economy.

Yes, I remember the two girls.

Know that it was not Premi² who prompted my wire. I had made up my mind when Girdhari³ gave me the account. Premi's letter added zest to the wording of the wire.

Premi made a definite promise to write to me in Hindi. She has now a rare opportunity of learning it there and so have you all. Premi will have no letter from me till she has redeemed her promise.

Love to you all and the Kripalanis.

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is decidedly on the mend.

From the original : C. W. 11043. Courtesy: Arjun Jairamdas

554. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 26, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your presumption about ice is correct. It will not be needed now. Therefore do not be too sure of Rajaram's coming there. It has started raining now. Is it but God's wrath or is He weeping at our sins ?

¹ The first paragraph of the letter has been reproduced "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 27-8-1938, under the date August 27, 1938.

² Addressee's daughter

³ Girdhari Kripalani, nephew of J. B. Kripalani

Telegram to Ramachandran:

“Under circumstances you should act as you think proper without mentioning me. God be with you. Bapu.”¹

To Rajkumari:

“No sorrow over your so-called failure. Self well. Pyarelal rapidly progressing. Love. Bapu.”²

If you have sent a wire in the morning in reply to hers, then do not bother about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11633

555. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

SEGAON,

August 26, 1938

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What you write is quite proper. I only wanted to have your reaction. All money needed for the boy³ will be provided by Bhopal.⁴ The matter was weighing very heavily on my heart.

Yes, anarchy in the Congress seems to be on the increase. I am doing and will continue to do my utmost to check it, but the results rest with God. Anyway, the outcome can be nothing but good if our efforts are pure.

The news about Viyogi Hari has made me very happy. The weather here is very bad these days.

You should come and stay for a while in Segaoon when it gets better. Jamnalalji's cottage is quite good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7995. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ The telegrams are in English.

² *Ibid*

³ Harold Ansari; *vide* “Letter to G. D. Birla”, 12-8-1938

⁴ The Nawab of Bhopal; *vide* “Letter to Nawab of Bhopal”, 19-7-1938

556. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Night, August 26, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

We have to send money to Nimu. She has sent a reminder. Pyarelal's fever has practically gone. There is no other complaint.

Do not force yourself to come. The work should not accumulate but you should not strain yourself to finish it either. I constantly feel that we are going to have to bear a very heavy burden. I have been working rather hard. I cannot say how long I shall be able to continue in this manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

We forgot about the *Ramayana*. The enclosed was sent by Ramdas.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11634

557. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

August 26, 1938

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

You should be patient. You alone can rectify the failing you have pointed out. Be an ideal [teacher] and impress the boys with your love.

Khadi can prove cheaper only if you spin the yarn yourself. They will be acquiring learning of another kind through spinning, etc., and you should explain the economics of Khadi through that activity.

I had even tried to prevent the police from going. But how could I compel them? The only thing I could do was not to put up with the thing and I did not. However, the newspapers have a way of saying all kinds of things.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 11687

558. *MY SO-CALLED INCONSISTENCIES*

During my student days improperly so called (for they properly began after the period of examinations and are not yet over for me) I learnt a saying of Emerson's which I never forgot. "Foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds," said the sage. I cannot be a little mind, for foolish consistency has never been my hobgoblin. My critics are shocked over my recent remarks on picketing. They think that in describing as a species of violence the formation of a living wall of pickets in order to prevent the entry of persons into picketed places, I have contradicted my sayings and doings during the civil disobedience campaign. If such is really the case, my recent writing must be held as cancelling my comparatively remote sayings and doings. Though my body is deteriorating through age, no such law of deterioration, I hope, operates against wisdom which I trust is not only not deteriorating but even growing. Whether it is or not, my mind is clear on the opinion I have given on picketing. If it does not appeal to Congressmen, they may reject it, and if they do, they will violate the laws of peaceful picketing. But there is no discrepancy between my past practice and the present statement. When civil disobedience was first organized by me in South Africa, my companions discussed with me the question of picketing. The registration office had to be picketed in Johannesburg, and the suggestion made was that we should form there a living wall of pickets. I at once rejected the idea as violent. And pickets were posted in marked positions in a big public square so that no one could elude the eagle eyes of the pickets and yet everyone could go to the registration office, if he liked, without touching anyone. Reliance was put upon the force of public opprobrium which would be evoked by the publication of the names of 'black legs'. This method was copied by me here when liquor shops were to be picketed. The work was specially entrusted to the women as better representatives of non-violence than men. Thus there was no question of the formation of a living wall. Many unauthorized things were no doubt done during those days as they are now. But I cannot recall a single instance in which I countenanced the kind of picketing condemned by the article that has come in for sharp criticism. And is there really any difficulty about regarding a living wall of pickets as naked violence? What is the difference between force used against a man wanting to do a

particular thing, and force exercised by interposing yourself between him and the deed ? When, during the non-co-operation days, the students in Benares blocked the passage to the University gates I had to send a peremptory message and, if my recollection serves me right, I strongly condemned their action in the columns of *Young India*. Of course I have no argument against those who hold different views from mine regarding violence and non-violence.

The other inconsistency imputed to me has reference to my advice to factory-owners to invoke the assistance of the police to defend themselves against what I have described as violent picketing. Having condemned the Ministries for calling in the aid of the police and even the military for suppressing riots, how could I advise employers of labour to ask for, and Ministers to supply, police assistance, ask my critics.

This is what I wrote¹ in *Harijan* about the Ministerial action in U.P.:

It has been suggested that when we have our independence riots and the like will not occur. This seems to me to be an empty hope, if in the course of the struggle for freedom we do not understand and use the technique of non-violent action in every conceivable circumstance. To the extent that the Congress Ministers have been obliged to make use of the police and the military, to that extent, in my opinion, we must admit our failure. That the Ministers could not have done otherwise is unfortunately only too true. I should like every Congressman, I should like the Working Committee, to ask themselves why we have failed, if they think with me that we have.

Surely here there is no condemnation of the Ministers' action. I have deplored the necessity for it as I would deplore such necessity in the matter of picketing. But till the Congress has developed a peaceful method of dealing with violent crimes, its Ministers must use the police and, I fear, even the military, if they are to undertake the administration of the affairs of the country in the present stage of its career. But it will bode ill for them and the country if they do not devise methods of dispensing with the use both of the police and the military or at least of visibly reducing their use to such an extent that he who runs may notice the reduction. There certainly is a way. I have ventured to give a faint indication of it. But it may be that the Congress organization is not really fitted for the great task. Without a living faith in non-violence, neither the military nor the police can be supplanted.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sharda C. Shah", 22-3-1938

Cries come in from many quarters of growing insubordination, indiscipline and even open violence among Congressmen. I hope that the charge is untrue of the majority of Congressmen.

Harijan, 27-8-1938

559. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

August 27, 1938

I am developing ideas about dealing with the growing violence and untruth. The two go hand in hand.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

560. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

August 27, 1938

CHI. VALJI,

I read your third article and am returning all the three. The idea of composing a new *Smriti* is a tempting one, but I am not qualified. If I assume that I am qualified, I would require the leisure that is possible in jail. Outside I have no choice. I have to take up the work that comes to me and do it as best as I can. There is some freedom of choice in jail. If you wish to contribute in the composition of a new *Smriti*, you will have to go deep into the thing. There are many interpolations in the *Smritis*. Some portions, though not interpolations, deserve to be rejected. Even in the Vedas everything contained is not eternal truth. The Vedas are a mixture of poetry, history and eternal verities. We should try to pick out the last. We should formulate rules of interpretation. And after that, we may place before the people our interpretations right from the Vedas to the Puranas, as the substance of Hinduism. You have got the necessary ability for this, but have I ? This task is beyond the ability of a single person. For this we should have a group from among ourselves. You will now get some faint idea about how my mind is working. I do know what is dharma, but I do not know how to put it as the Vedas do. I am not sufficiently well-versed in the Shastras. And the most important thing is that I am not completely free from attachment. I aspire to be so in this life. But I will not feel sorry if I fail. I am using all the strength God has given me to destroy attachment, etc. It is not impossible for me to attain to that state, but I do not know whether I have that much time left to me.

Please, therefore, do not give me anything raw just now. Your language is attractive, but I will not yield even to that attraction and accept all that you send just now. Please improve your health if you can.

Is the politics there unbearable ?
Pyarelal is free from danger.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

561. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

August 27, 1938

CHI. DEVDAS,

I could not spare the time to reply to you. I also have formed the same impression about Khan Saheb that you say you have. However, he is so suspicious that one cannot know when he might do what. But being a man of God, he remains unharmed by mistakes and perhaps he may live his whole life in this way and remain blameless. He suffers from mental lethargy and so does not know what to do in particular circumstances. And, moreover, he is simple-hearted. He would believe everything that a man whom he has come to trust told him, would not believe anything said by anyone against whom he is prejudiced, and get angry with those that did. Even so, he is a saintly person, and so one does not mind his faults.

Pyarelal has pulled through this time. Showing him what you have written would have an adverse effect. He is not fit enough just now to bear your jokes and it would not do showing him the letter after it has been edited ! If his temperature is not normal today, it will be so in a day or two. He follows my advice on most things. He gives me no trouble, and so you need not worry. My silence has benefited me so much that if and when I have to give it up, I shall find it hard to

do so. Most certainly there is anger in me. The silence eats it all up. After all, how much anger can I give vent to by writing ?

We are going through a period of wet adversity. Water is dripping everywhere. You will see evidence of it in this also. I fully realize now the meaning of living in a village.

I am enclosing Ramdas's letter.

Ramachandran is likely to be arrested in a day or two. Rajkumari will return from Travancore tomorrow. Poor woman, she did her very best. But after all we can only try, is not that so ? We have left, and should leave, credit or discredit to God. If we do not act thus, we would come to grief. I may not give you any more time now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2011. Also the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy : Narayan Desai

562. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 27, 1938

CHI. MRIDU,

There is no harm in holding public meetings in support, provided the speeches at the meetings are courteous and not critical. The purpose should be to help the members representing the Congress. You yourself should write to Bhulabhai.

Mrs. Subbaroyan is very sensitive. Ask her why she felt insulted. I know her quite well. She was happy to find support in *Harijan*.¹ She has written a good letter to Mahadev. Do not be impatient.

I have instructed Mahadev to write to Bhulabhai. The Working Committee has not taken any decision in this matter. You should write to the President urging him to guide the legislators. That is all.

¹ Mrs. Radhabai Subbaroyan had proposed a bill to restrain polygamous marriages among Hindus. The Act as it was to be enacted, had been spelt out in the *Harijan* of July 23, 1938.

Leena¹, Madan² and Mummy will be doing well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 11807. Courtesy : Sarabhai Foundation

563. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 27, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Do not be in a hurry to regain strength. If you can suck the pomegranate seeds without swallowing the stones do so. Stop all work until you are free from fever for 24 hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ Addressee's sister

² Madan Mohan Mangaldas, husband of Leena

564. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN SATYAGRAHIS¹

[August 27, 1938]²

Harijan friends . . . calling themselves ‘satyagrahis’ marched to Segaoon on Saturday last and demanded justice from Gandhiji. Gandhiji was of course silent, but he received them and asked them in writing if they would be content with written replies. They said they would. He asked them to explain the purpose of their visit.

“We gave you notice,” their spokesman said, “that unless you could have a Harijan appointed as a Cabinet Minister we should go to Segaoon and do satyagraha there. You asked us to desist. We did so and wrote to you to say so. But after that, having heard nothing from you we decided to fulfil our promise.”

GANDHIJI: But what do you want, and what do you mean by satyagraha?

HARIJANS: We want a Harijan to be in the Cabinet and a seat reserved in the Cabinet for a Harijan as there is one reserved for a Mussalman.

G. But that is not in my power.

H. It is. You were prepared to lay down your life for the Harijans at Yeravda and your fast led to the Yeravda Pact. You can do everything for the Harijans.

G. I am doing all that is in my power. But let that be. What do you mean by satyagraha?

H. We will remain here without food until another party from Nagpur comes to relieve us.

G. You are welcome to do so. You want me to provide you with room. Well we are cramped for space, but you tell us where you will sit, and we will vacate the place for you.

H. We will be fasting, and five or six people will have to stay with us to attend to our needs whilst we are fasting.

G. I am not concerned with that. You select the place and we vacate it for you.

One of the Ashram inmates went out with them to show them over the place. He returned to say that they wanted a room adjoining a hut reserved for women and also the verandah in front of it.

G. Explain to them that that room is reserved for women and

¹ Extracted from Mahadev Desai’s “Notes”

² Desai says the Harijans met Gandhiji on “Saturday last”. This would be August 27.

they might select some other place.

He did so, but came and reported that they would have no other place.

G. Vacate it then. Let not Ba be perturbed. She can come and occupy my room, and I will go there or in the house outside which is built for Aryanayakum.

Harijan, 3-9-1938

565. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After August 27, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith both your articles.

You must have received one bundle of letters sent with Rajaram.

Herewith also I am sending a few letters which are ready. Rajkumari has reached safely. The 'satyagrahis' are quite well. They do not give any trouble.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11617

566. LETTER TO HANNA LAZAR

August 28, 1938

MY DEAR HANNA,

Just one line to tell you I have your letter from Mombassa with your carefully prepared notes with considerably made multiple copies.

I hope you had an enjoyable voyage and that you have regained lost health. You must make proper preparations for your next visit here.

Except from you no further letter from Johannesburg.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal is normal today. How nice you were not here during the typhoid he was passing through.

From the original: Gandhi-Kallenbach Correspondence. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ From the reference to satyagrahis; *vide* the preceding item.

567. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

August 28, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I sent a note with Mahadev only yesterday about the medicine to be taken. Let us see what effect it has. Strength will return only by degrees.

Let C.S.'s statement be published. It will be enough for the present if your Marathi article appears in Hindi. Then we shall see. What a mountain is being made out of a molehill !

It would help if you have the legs and the body massaged. About the glucose injections, hot-water fomentation is the best remedy. However, you may try a mud-pack once. The rule for a patient is that he should not endure anything silently. That does not show his courage but betrays his ignorance. The doctor should know where you are having the pain. When he asks you to endure it, you should of course do so. Do not mind your having taken my time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7682

568. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

August 28, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Bhogilal Parekh has specially sent some apples. I am sending six out of them for you. Pyarelal is well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10907

569. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*

August 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

What an argument! Anyone going from Maganwadi asks neither Bharatan nor Zaverbhai. This does not show lack of co-operation. It is

a question of procedure. What kind of co-operation would it be if a man on his way here visited Jamnalal, Kishorelal, Rajendra Babu, Jajuji and others and also Harijan Ashram, Aryanayakum, Mahila Ashram and Balkrishna and asked if they had any work! The rule is that a man should not go anywhere without reason. So I myself stopped sending a note to you. I have not considered it my dharma to send you all the news about this place. Is it clear now?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Vijaya does not seem to be writing everything to me.

BAPU

[PPS.]

I learnt only yesterday about Pyarelal's niece. Pyarelal is quite well.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10768

570. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

August 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

There is no question of ordering anybody. You alone understand Kaka's needs. You also know about the conditions here. So you alone can say best where you can be more useful or where you will have more satisfaction. Kaka himself is not able to decide because it is not as if he could not do without you. I cannot say because I do not have all the data. You alone can have that, so the burden naturally falls on you. I will approve of whatever decision you come to

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10769

571. MESSAGE TO HARIJAN SATYAGRAHIS

August 28, 1938

BROTHERS,

I am pained to see the troubles that you are taking because I do not know what useful purpose your troubles are going to serve. I

consider that your vow is born of lack of knowledge. Whatever that may be, your fast cannot effect a change in my views. We should not coerce anyone by resorting to fasts. I therefore appeal to you that you should give up the fast and then resort to any other kind of agitation.

At the same time I [do not] consider that agitation of any kind is necessary because it is the duty of every Congress Ministry to include a Harijan in the Cabinet if a capable Harijan is forthcoming.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-8-1938

572. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

WARDHAGANJ,
August 29, 1938

BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSALARI, DELHI

NO CAUSE SORROW.¹ GOD BLESS HER SOUL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 2466

573. LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1938

MY DEAR PROFULLA,

I am glad you are having an exhibition for khadi and allied village industries and hope that it will be a glorious success as well from the point of view of numbers who attend as of sales.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

I am out of stock for palm-gur and need it badly for Pyarelal who is just convalescent. Please send the maximum quantity carried at the minimum cost per railway parcel or postal, whichever is cheaper.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The addressee had lost his mother on August 26.

574. LETTER TO LALI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1938

MY DEAR LALI,

It is good that you have trust in my judgment. But I must not abuse that trust. So instead of using it, I left it to you to decide where you would be happy. Now you will prove the wisdom of your choice by becoming a worthy lad both in character and cleverness.

You will give me at least a monthly detailed report of your progress.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

575. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 30, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I trust Lilavati did not suffer much. Ba was asking bitterly why I let her go.

Send a telegram to Jawahar:

“Wire Indu’s health. Love all. Bapu.”¹

It has become a problem how to cope with the work. I wished to write for *Harijan* but found it impossible to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have read Kishorelal’s article. Let it be published as it is.

BAPU

[PPS.]

Did you send the money to Nimu?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11635

¹ This is in English.

576. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was born in 1887 A. D. She is the only daughter of the late Raja Sir Harnam Singh. The late Raja Saheb was the uncle of the Maharaja of Kapurthala. The Rajkumari was educated in England for eight years. She has been taking a prominent part in the women's movement since 1928. At present she is President of the All-India Women's Conference. Her way of living is exceedingly simple. She has been wearing khadi for years. She is a member of the Spinners' Association and the Village Industries Association and takes great interest in both these activities. This information should suffice for you.

Tell Chhaganlal that if he wants to arrange a tour of Kathiawar for her for a few days, he may do so. It is not absolutely obligatory to arrange the tour. It may be dropped if the atmosphere at present is not favourable. I have prepared her for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The Rajkumari is a Christian by birth, and a Hindu by conduct. She cannot be taken to a temple.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8546. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

577. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

SEGAON,
August 30, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Who can help one who makes herself unhappy without cause? Joy and sorrow are mental creations. I experience this every moment. If Jayaprakash does not go to Malabar at all, will it mean that you will not be permitted to come? When he goes to Malabar he may take you from here, or he may go directly there and

you may leave this place at the same time and join him there. My visit to the Frontier Province may perhaps start around the 20th September. In that case you will remain here. I shall have to be back from there around October 20.

Pyarelal has no fever now, but feels weak. The danger is over. My silence is for an indefinite period. God alone knows when it will be over. But you are not concerned with that. You will be able to talk to your heart's content, and I will reply to you by writing. But the truth is that you do not need to talk. It is enough for you to stay with me to have peace of mind. I need not worry about you then. Please, therefore, come if you can. I will see about your studying.

I am well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3520

578. *LETTER TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA*

SEGAON,

August 30, 1938

BHAI GOPICHAND,

Rajkumari showed me your letter. I understood you had asked my personal opinion. If no tangible service is possible by remaining in the Assembly and if the Congress M.L.A.s do not extend any help, it would be best to get out of the bother. Even as it is, I had not liked your getting into the Assembly.

Now I have had a letter from Dr. Dharma Vir. If he cannot at all meet the trustees, why not relieve him? There has been some difference of opinion here. Can't we find another doctor? In that case I feel he would have to be allowed a certain measure of freedom.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Dr. Gopichand Bhargava Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

579. *LETTER TO S. GURCHARAN SINGH*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you are free. Your threat pains me and it is unworthy. Why should discharged political prisoners think that they have a right to expect the nation to support them and pay the expenses of the education of their relatives? Sacrifice loses all value when it demands its price with compound interest. And how should your threatened hunger-strike make wrong right?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

S. GURCHARAN SINGH
OVERSEER
EX-POLITICAL PRISONER

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

580. *LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA*

August 31, 1938

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

Ramdas Gulati saw the museum for the spinning models. His engineer eyes saw defects in the building. I asked him to reduce them to writing. Here is his report¹. You should study it and if the defects pointed out are really defects you should find who is responsible and, where possible, they should be remedied. How much progress in Hindi?

Love.

BAPU

Encl. 1

From a photostat G.N. 3595

¹ Not traceable

581. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1938

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Owing to my limited energy, I have been obliged to repress my desire to write to you.

I await your reply to my wire about Indu.¹

I note your warning about federation. I discount the news, i. e., if it is more than a rumour. They won't call it without first securing Congress consent. This they can't get.

Then about the Jews. I feel entirely like you. I boycott foreign goods, not foreign ability. And I feel keenly for the persecuted Jews. As a concrete proposal I suggest your collecting the names of the most deserving ones and making it plain to them that they must be prepared to throw in their lot with us and accept our standard of living. The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1938. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.
Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 286

582. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 31, 1938

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please find enclosed a cheque from Gokaldas, Send him a receipt from there. I have not written to him from here. I hope jamna is calm.

What is the news about Harakhchand?

Manju has not replied to my letter. Can't Purushottam satisfy her love of music?

Blessings from
BAPU

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 30-8-1938

[PS.]

You have been covering years well. Cover many more and continue to serve.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8547. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

583. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI*

August 31, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I am sorry about the ghee. I did not know at all. There is a sort of chaos here. And moreover there was no note from you. As soon as I came to know, I arranged for it. Now you must have got it. Gajanan brought Kaka's letter only this morning, so there has been no delay in sending ghee. A reply to Prabhu is enclosed. It may go only if Kaka approves.

I got the *hundi* for Rs. 69. There seems to be a famine of ghee just now. Because of an epidemic among the cattle, the supply of milk has been reduced somewhat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10770

584. *LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD*

August 31, 1938

DEAR RAJENDRA BABU,

It seems to me that we do not read in the right spirit what our opponents write. The point is not that the language is abusive. The socialists are carrying on massive activities for an ideal. We should not ignore them. There is some criticism of the Bihar Bill in the current *Congress Socialist*. There are other articles too. Read them. Write an article about the Bihar Bill in reply to the article in the *Congress Socialist*. If something has been written about the matter I should like to see it.

I am sending with this three Hindi weeklies. Glance through them. Somebody at least should read such things. We should not be unaware of all these ideas.

Leaflets should be distributed among the peasants on behalf of the Congress governments. This suggestion should be implemented at once.

Show this letter to Kishorelal and Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original : Rajendra Prasad Papers. Courtesy : National Archives of India

585. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[August, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please have this wire despatched: 'Dr. Zakir Husain. Hope new Institute will fulfil expectations. Gandhi.'

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11614

586. A LETTER

[About August 1938]²

For what is Rajaram going to Wardha? Are the *mosambis* over? Ba says that there are still many *mosambis* left. Find out correctly and tell me. How many are there? They are more than enough. Pyarelal would need very few or none at all. Who all are taking *mosambis*? Chimanlal, etc.? The point is that it should not be made a duty for Rajaram to go. If it can be managed, he should not be sent in such rains. I have been facing such problems from the days of South Africa. There too a particular man went to the city every day. I came to know about it. I took up cudgels and resolved that he should go only twice a week. Thereby, I saved energy, time and money. Any one

¹ As placed in the source

² From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Vijaya N. Patel, "Letter to Chimanlal N. Shah" and "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 24-8-1938

who observes non-violence should learn to put up with inconveniences. Creating only means of comfort is the religion of violent creatures. Hence, let it be made clear that Rajaram should not be sent unless there is a particular reason. It is not a question only of today. If it is necessary, he may go today. If he goes, and does not deliver the post, let the post be left behind. Let everyone understand this. Whatever advantages are given to me would mean that much of my time is saved.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 11323

587. *LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI*

August 31, 1938

CHI. SUMI,

Improve your handwriting still further. Write to me in Hindi sometimes so that I may know how well you write it. Kanam and Arun are quite happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

588. *LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI*

August 31, 1938

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. You must have received the money. I can say nothing about my vow of silence¹. I feel quite comfortable with it. It will be given up when God wills so. My silence does not inconvenience either me or anybody else. The cholera epidemic has almost subsided. Pyarelal's fever has left him. Tell Ramdevji that he will get a letter from me soon.

Do not worry about passing. It will be enough if you study as best as you can. What became of your plan of going to Hardwar?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Gandhiji had started observing silence from August 18, to regain lost health.

589. *LETTER TO RAJKUMAR SINHA*

[On or before *September 1, 1938*]¹

CHI. RAJKUMAR,

I have your second letter today. For my health I am working under enormous strain. Therefore delay in writing to [you] and other friends must not be interpreted as negligence on my part of the main work which has brought you and other friends in touch with me. Let this suffice for you that there can be no peace for me till every prisoner is accounted for.

Your soldier-like bearing and promptness when you came to me captivated me. I hope to enlist you as a true soldier of peace. But that later.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAJKUMAR SINHA

CAWNPUR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. courtesy: Pyarelal. Also *The Hindu*, 2-9-1938

590. *TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
THE VICEROY*

September 1, 1938

UNDERSTAND GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING CASE OF B. K.
DUTT² POLITICAL PRISONER LODGED BIHAR PROVINCE
AILING SERIOUSLY. HAVE PRESSING LETTERS ABOUT
HIM. REQUEST HIS EXCELLENCY'S INTERVENTION EARLY
RELIEF IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The *Hindu* report carrying this item is dated September 1, 1938.

² Batukeshwar Dutt, a close associate of Bhagat Singh

591. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

September 1, 1938

CHI. SUSHILA,

Tell me who is the better person—Surendra or Manilal? Manu is never tired of praising Surendra. Have you seen any shortcomings in Manilal? Does he curb you in any way? So much for jest.

I certainly like it that Sita is coming over but will it not affect her studies? From my point of view, children do learn here but what they learn is of a different kind altogether. The two cannot be combined.

Do you and Manu mind my silence? I certainly feel like speaking for your sake, but silence is very important for my peace of mind and my work. Both of you, therefore, should willingly put up with it. Even though I do not speak, don't you both play with me? Show this to Manu and both of you give me your willing permission.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4881

592. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 1, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Munnalal's letter was not meant to be read by you. You are still considered an invalid. Besides, you should not be upset by what Munnalal says, but should accept anything that may be good in it. In any case, the letter is not for Mother¹. I would consider it sinful even to tell her anything. With you and Sushila around, I am not worried about Mother. I take it that there will be no hesitation in asking for whatever may be needed by her. I must know when she does not get what she asks for. The origin of Munnalal's letter lies in the conversation between Sushila and me. I had asked Sushila to keep an eye on things. She brought to my notice instances of uncleanliness. I made inquiries and then there was a certain improvement. The matter went further and it was desired that rather than make comments in front of

¹ Taradevi Nayyar

everybody one should put down things in writing. That was why Munnalal wrote that letter. Thus, knowing as I do his nature, I cannot find fault with him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

593. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 2, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Let Maulana Saheb come today at 2 o'clock. I will leave the *takli yajna* or finish it earlier according as I feel inclined at the time. When you come, bring some good vegetables for Mother¹ if available. Durga or Lila may go to the market.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11639

594. LETTER TO HARISHANKAR PANDYA²

[On or before *September 3, 1938*]³

The Sardar is not going to foment trouble. He has been President of the Rajakiya Parishad. He has been honoured as a guest in several States. He owes a duty to his co-workers of the Parishad. He goes merely as a guide. It is strange that you should regard his coming as outside interference. I expect you to take advantage of his presence to produce harmony if the agitation is confined to a minority. You may depend upon the Sardar. Knowing as I do so many of the workers, I am unable to regard them as ill-meaning agitators. Please share this with Bhayats, Lohana Samaj and the Muslim Council, who have wired to me. I hope wiser counsels will prevail.

The Hindu, 3-9-1938

¹ Pyarelal's mother

² The addressee, as well as some others, had sent telegrams requesting Gandhiji to dissuade Vallabhbai Patel from going to Rajkot in connection with the Kisan agitation there as the situation did not call for outside interference.

³ The news item reporting this is dated September 3.

595. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 3, 1938

I have been in close touch with the prime movers affected by the tragedy which is now being enacted in Travancore, and I had hoped that I should be able to avoid having to make any public statement. After a study of the available evidence and interviews with representative men from Travancore, I have come to the conclusion that the Travancore Government are resorting to repressive methods, far in excess of the requirements, if there are any.

The Travancore Government contend that the Travancore State Congress activities are disloyal and subversive. I have studied the documents alleged to contain evidence in support of such a charge and have failed to find anything of that nature. On the contrary, I have seen emphatic repudiation by the State Congress of the charge unless constitutional agitation for responsible government is to be called subversive.

I have, however, read the memorial of the Working Committee of the Travancore State Congress, making the most serious charges unsupported by any evidence against the able Dewan, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. They should never have been made, even if the memorialists had evidence in support. Such evidence is irrelevant to the case for responsible government. It would have its place in a memorial for the removal of the Dewan. There is no doubt that these charges have harmed the memorialists and therefore the State Congress, though they cannot weaken the case for responsible government.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the case for responsible government will be strengthened by the frightfulness being committed by the Government of Travancore if only the people will not be demoralized and will continue to adhere to non-violence. If reports about violence by students are true, I appeal to the students to desist and allow the movement to develop non-violently.

Leaders who have been locked up should make amends by withdrawing the charges against the Dewan.

I had the honour of meeting the young Maharaja and the Maharani. I have had the privilege of knowing Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar for many years. I appeal to them to retrace their steps and allow

the State Congress to function so long as its activities remain peaceful. Surely the common law of the State is enough to cope with individuals using violent language or resorting to actual violence. But at this hour of the day, to expect the people to submit to the suppression of free speech or of demands, however advanced these may be is to invite trouble.

In my humble opinion, the prevention of Shrimati Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya from entering the State was a first-class tactical blunder. It passes comprehension how Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, himself a foreigner, prohibited the entry of a distinguished Indian lady on the grounds, according to him, of her being an outsider. She was amenable to the State law if she had committed any breach thereof. I thought it was only reserved for the English administrators to treat Indians going from one province to another as foreigners. It ill becomes the Indian Princes and their advisers to follow the pernicious practice of the English administrators—a practice of which many Englishmen are heartily ashamed. The Government may, by the terrible repression they have resorted to, succeed in killing the movement for the time being, but it will never die and will leave a bitter memory behind. I hope that wiser counsels will yet prevail and the State Congress will be permitted to function properly.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

596. CHOICE BEFORE CONGRESSMEN

Since the publication of my article¹ on violence said to be creeping into the Congress ranks, evidence is coming in to corroborate the complaints made by my correspondents. Violence at Congress elections, they say, is on the increase. It looks as if Congressmen are not able to digest the power that has come to the Congress. Everyone wants to have a share in the spoils of office. And so there is an unhealthy competition to capture committees.

This is not the way to win swaraj, nor is it the way to work the office programme. The holding of any office in the Congress Government must be in the spirit of service without the slightest expectation of personal gain. If A is satisfied in ordinary life with getting Rs. 25 per month, he has no right to expect Rs. 250 on becoming a minister or obtaining any other office under the Govern-

¹ *Vide* "Our Failure", 22-3-1938

ment. And there are many Congressmen who are taking only Rs. 25 per month in voluntary organizations and who are well able to shoulder ministerial responsibility. Bengal and Maharashtra are teeming with able men who have dedicated themselves to public service on a mere pittance and who are well able to give a good account of themselves no matter where they are put. But they are not to be tempted to leave the fields they have chosen, and it would be wrong to drag them out of their invaluable self-chosen obscurity. It is true all the world over, and more true perhaps of this country, that as a rule the best and the wisest men will not become ministers or accept positions under Governments. But I have digressed.

We may not always get the best and the wisest men and women to run Congress Governments, but swaraj will become a distant dream if the ministers and other Congressmen holding offices are not selfless, able and incorruptible. We are not likely to have such men if congress committees become job-hunting arenas in which the most violent would win.

How to preserve the purity of the organization is the question. Anyone who subscribes to the credal article of the Congress and pays 4 annas can demand registration as a member. Many sign the congress pledge without believing in the necessity for observing truth and non-violence as conditions of attainment of swaraj. Let no one cavil at my use of the expressions 'truthful and non-violent' as synonymous with 'legitimate and peaceful'. From the very commencement of the Congress constitution I have used those adjectives without challenge. The word 'non-violence' was first introduced by me in the resolution on non-co-operation carried in Calcutta by the Congress. Can anything be untruthful and yet be legitimate, violent and yet be peaceful? Be that as it may, I claim that those who commit a breach of these two primary conditions, no matter by what adjectives they are known, can have no place in the Congress organization so long as it is governed by the present constitution.

Similarly those who do not use khadi as habitual wear have no place in any Congress committee. This condition should apply also to those who do not carry out vital resolutions of the Congress, A.I.C.C. or the Working Committee. My prescription would be that those who commit a breach of any of these conditions should automatically cease to belong to the Congress. It may be urged that the remedy is too drastic. It is, if it is regarded as a punishment. If it is the automatic

result of a particular act or omission of a person, it is no punishment. I know that thrusting my finger into a furnace will surely burn it and still I thrust it; my suffering is no punishment, it is the natural consequence of my action. Punishment depends upon the will of the judge. Natural consequences are independent of any person's will.

It will be urged that under these conditions the Congress will cease to be a democratic organization, it will become a close corporation.

I hold a wholly contrary view.

Democracy of the West is, in my opinion, only so called. It has germs in it, certainly, of the true type. But it can only come when all violence is eschewed and malpractices disappear. The two go hand in hand. Indeed malpractice is a species of violence. If India is to evolve the true type, there would be no compromise with violence or untruth. Ten million men and women on the Congress register with violence and untruth in their breasts would not evolve real democracy or bring swaraj. But I can conceive the possibility of ten thousand Congressmen and women who are cent per cent true, and free from having to carry the burden of innumerable doubtful companions, bringing swaraj.

Let us reflect upon the past a little. Over fifty years ago a handful of men and women took it into their heads to meet together and represent and speak in the name of the dumb millions. Time has proved the validity of their claim. Since then the prestige of the Congress has risen not in proportion to its numbers, not in proportion to the display of intellect on the platform or in committee rooms, but it has risen in proportion to the ability of Congressmen to suffer and sacrifice, themselves for the nation. No one will deny that when in 1920 the Congress definitely became a democratic, duly elected body having a large number of voters on its rolls, it found itself possessed of new power only because it deliberately adopted truth and non-violence as its means of reaching its goal. And even at the present day, the Congress has quite an insignificant number of men and women on its register compared to the tremendous power it wields. The reason to my mind is that it shows a measure of sacrifice cohesion and discipline unequalled by any other organization in India. But as an experienced servant and general I make bold to say that we shall have to show a much higher measure of these qualities if we are to win independence before many years are out. It is my deliberate conviction based on closest observation that we can secure all we want, within

much less time than perhaps any one of us imagines, simply by showing high efficiency and equally high honesty in every one of the Congress activities.

It would ill become us as truly brave men and women to wish ill to the British in order to gain our end. In non-violent warfare wishing ill to the enemy is not permissible. A non-violent person relies upon his own strength and refuses to trade upon his opponents' weakness.

With all the earnestness I can command I, therefore, plead with every Congressman who believes in his pledge to make his choice: either to apply the purge I have suggested, or, if that is not feasible because of the Congress being already overmanned by those who have lost faith in its creed and its constructive programme on which depends its real strength, to secede from it for its own sake and prove his living faith in the creed and programme by practising the former and prosecuting the latter as if he had never seceded from the Congress of his ideal. If one or the other thing is not done, I see grave danger of the Congress collapsing by the weight of its own weaknesses.

It has given me no pleasure to pen these lines. But having felt the urge, I would have been untrue to the Congress if I had not uttered the warning. It is the voice of silence. For the reader should know I took silence over a fortnight ago for an indefinite period. It has given me peace I cannot describe, and it enables me to commune with Nature.

Harijan, 3-9-1938

597. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 3, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I wrote these yesterday. Today, I have been awake from 1.30. Since my mind has been possessed of the H. M. matter I have been writing about it. Please remember that you are not to come today before three. See that both the telegrams are sent without any mistake. It should not be necessary to tell you this, but I mention it considering the burden on you. The word 'mistake' should be interpreted in two senses—one, that the copy should be identical with the original and, two, if you think I have made any mistake, correct it. If there is any

doubt, ask me. If you wish to wait till you have shown it to V. you may do so. The urgency is about Travancore.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11620

598. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,

September 3, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I did not even remember anything about Bombay. You may now do what you think proper.

Has Amritlal decided anything? I like what you say about the *Smriti*. If you can work with the others and select extracts, do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10908

599. LETTER TO PYARELAL

SEGAON,

September 3, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Your health today makes me a little scared. Take care and regain your health. Do not give up fruit juice. Take also buttermilk. It will be some time before you can take vegetables. Barley can be started again.

You have seen the letter Sushila has written me. I did not want to involve you in the problem at this time, but now it seems it cannot be avoided.

Mother says that I should order Sushila to apply for that job. Sushila does not seem to like the idea. Whether she will have complete peace of course rests in your hands and mine. But whatever peace she can have depends only on her staying with both of us. Hence, in my view, Mother should let Sushila do what she wishes. If you agree with this, would you persuade her on my behalf? If you think this is beyond your capacity at the moment, then let me know. I will see about it. If you are entertaining a different idea, let me know, so that I

can think it over again.

We may have to go to Delhi from here around the 19th and then on to the Frontier Province. I hope you will be ready by that time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

600. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 3, 1938

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

My spirit was always with you. It is sad that you were not by Mother's bed-side at the moment of her death. But do we regard death as death? It is a great transformation. The body is constantly changing. When the self which had associated with it has deserted it, why lament over it? You can come here when you want. I shall shortly go to Delhi. Hence if you want to save the expense you may. The weather here is also not too good.

Blessings to all brothers from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2465

601. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,

September 4, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

How long will you live on medicines? Which kingdom do you aspire to win? Go slow. Do only as much as you can. Take care of your health, otherwise you will be guilty of violence.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 224

602. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 4, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

About the first letter, I can only say that I never suspected the palate¹.

About the other, I can say that I allow the massage if I need it, otherwise I stop it in a few minutes. Why should I let Amtussalaam come when I do not need her services? I did not know that she woke you up every night. But you will have to sleep near me when Amtussalaam leaves me and when Lilavati will not be there. Then you will see how I box your ears. You must apologize to Munnalal. Beware of constipation.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4301

603. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[September 5, 1938]¹

I have read Dr. Khare's own defence. The only part that directly concerns me I owe it to the public to answer. It is painful for me to have to contradict Dr. Khare.

He came to Segaon voluntarily. He came as a friend. There was no protest on his part when he came. It was not without full argument that he felt convinced of the charges I brought against him. When he realized the force of my argument, he said he placed himself unreservedly in my hands. I told him that as he had admittedly lost his balance, if he felt like consulting his friends whom I had named, he should do so. There was no desperate hurry. He said he was quite capable of deciding for himself and that there was no need to consult other friends. Then I said he should better write out himself what he had admitted. He suggested that I should draft a statement, as he was no draftsman. I said nevertheless that I wanted his language. If I felt it did not cover sufficiently what he had admitted, I would revise it or

¹ The Gujarati original has *swada*, which means relish of the palate.

¹ From *The Hindustan Times*

add to it.

After some hesitation he took pen and paper and drew up the draft. I then took it up and made the corrections and additions.¹ He read them twice or thrice and said he could never admit betrayal of trust and that in any case he would not make any statement there and then but would accept my suggestion that he should consult his friends. Three o'clock the following day was the time limit fixed for the receipt of his answer. I have consulted the President, Maulana Saheb and Sardar Patel, who are here, and they confirm my version.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

604. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 5, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith a telegram for Devdas. We will not take anything in *Harijan* in that way. Your labour, however, has not been wasted.

I will get your note typed here. My article is almost ready. If it is ready earlier, or even otherwise, I will send it complete from here. Somebody will come.

Your letter was welcome. It is brave of you to write directly to me. I have torn up the letter after reading it. It is a strange story ! I will write when you come. There is nothing to worry about. The thing is so ridiculous. Do we have the time just now for such things? Do your duty without thinking about my blood-pressure. It would have been altogether wrong if you had not written the letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11640

605. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 5, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

Let no one hurt Mother's sentiments. You will not hurt

¹ For Khare's draft statement and Gandhiji's corrections, *vide* "Statement of Dr. N. B. Khare", 25-7-1938

Sushila of course.

Mahadev's letter about Rajkumari contained her views about all of you. My reply to your letter is still pending.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

606. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

September 5, 1938

BHAI RADHAKISANJI,

Bhai Chakrayya needs some handloom goods. You may give him whatever you can. How are Anasuya and the child? I have almost forgotten them both.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9124

607. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before September 6, 1938]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please send the following wire to Shankerlal: 'Suggested dates Delhi accepted. Hope you better. Bapu.' I am sending with this the bottle of honey. Lilavati forgot it as usual.

Mother has arrived there. She knows what is dharma but shrinks from acting accordingly. My advice is that you should tell her that she should decide the matter with me. If, however, you can see way clear, do guide her. Tell me also if you have any suggestions to make. I have intentionally kept you out of this. How much burden can I put on you? I feel no burden.

BAPU

¹ From the contents it appears that the letter belongs to the year 1938. The month and the date are presumed from Gandhiji's letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, wherein he says, "The date of the W. C. is now finally fixed"; *vide* "Letter to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", 6-9-1938

[PS.]

Please send this to Saxena¹: 'Hope paper will always represent truth and non-violence. Gandhi.'

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 11642

608. LETTER TO ABDUL GHAFAR KHAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 6, 1938

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

The date of the W.C. is now finally fixed. It meets at Delhi on 20th. I reach there on 20th. I hope you will attend. This means that I can go to the Frontier Province immediately after the Delhi meeting. You will now advise me please.

Will you also tell me whether you want me to take Amtul Salaam with me or not?

I hope you are doing well. Are you reading *Harijan* regularly? You should if you are not.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

609. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 6, 1938

I have read the Travancore Dewan's statement with the attention it deserves. I fear I cannot take shelter under ignorance of the Press messages published from time to time on the tragedy that is being continued in Travancore.² Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's defence reads like an edition of the reports that used to be issued on behalf of the British Government during the civil disobedience campaign. Not even the massacre of Jallianwalla was justified exactly as the Travancore shootings are now being justified. Was not General Dyer's action subsequently condemned? So is it likely to be in this case.

¹ Mohanlal Saxena, General Manager, Associated Journals, Lucknow, the publishers of the *The National Herald*, the first issue of which appeared on September 9, 1938; *vide* also "Letter to Amtussalaam", 9-9-1938

² The Dewan in his statement had said, "Mahatma Gandhi is thoroughly unaware of the facts. . ."

I ask Sir C. P. Ramaswami to copy Sir Mirza Ismail and appoint an outsider of unimpeachable integrity to enquire into the whole affair. Let him declare a general amnesty and allow free expression of opinion. Instead of importing the military and a Special Officer to carry on repression, I invite the Travancore Government to request someone like the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, if Congressmen are anathema, to go to Travancore and help them to re-establish peace there without further military action.

Harijan, 10-9-1938

610. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 6, 1938

This is no rebuke to you. You have done all this with the best of motives for the love of me. But without a knowledge of the manner of doing things, all our love may miscarry. Love waits, prays and is infinitely patient. You have been impatient to do good. If you have understood this you will dance with joy that you have in me a knowing friend whose love knows no bounds.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4218. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7854

611. LETTER TO HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI

September 6, 1938

DEAR SISTER,

I got your loving gift. I have heard that women are in the habit of concealing their age. Have you justified this belief by concealing yours? Be that as it may, live a full hundred years.

If you want my compliments for spinning a hundred rounds more, you have them. But where is the room for compliments when one is doing one's duty?

You may come whenever you wish to.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI HARSHADABEHN DIWANJI
KHAR
BOMBAY

From Gujarati : C. W. 9795

¹ The first three sheets of the letter are not traceable.

612. LETTER TO LORD BRABOURNE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 7, 1938

DEAR LORD BRABOURNE¹,

I am touched by your prompt and sympathetic reply to my wire about political prisoner B. K. Dutt. I thank you for it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers, Courtesy : Pyarelal

613. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may begin in the morning with juice of fruits—either *mosambi* or grapes. Increase the quantity of milk by 8 oz. Take less rice. Eat more wheat instead. You do drink enough water. Stop walking too much, but do continue pacing about for two hours slowly and at uniform speed. The hour for retiring at night must be strictly observed. Do not worry if any work is left unfinished. A few things can be got done here. More in the next letter. Do not put yourself to any inconvenience for coming today.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11641

614. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 7, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I do not remember the letter in which you had asked questions. When it is necessary to reply to your letters or act on them, I do not hesitate even to send a telegram. Saraswati has been writing

¹ Governor of Bengal, then acting as Viceroy. He had acknowledged Gandhiji's telegram of 1-9-1938 and said he had agreed to the prisoner's release on grounds of ill-health subject to certain conditions.

to me and saying that she is perfectly peaceful. You should write to me about the unhappy circumstances in her family. If I can do something, I may try.

What Rajkumari writes about my health is not correct. I consider my health fine.

I would be satisfied if yours was as good as mine, barring the blood-pressure.

There is no time for more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7347. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

615. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

September 7, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

Who wants to get married, you or I? If you can wait, why need I be in a hurry? And as long as you are ill how can I give you away?

But please know that the treatment there is mere quackery. So, if you wish, come over here. But not in my absence. Go to Manjubehn. Let her examine you and suggest whatever remedy she likes. It would be better if you did not go to Maroli just now. I will not have your illness being prolonged there. I would bear it even if you were to die here because I would be sure then that scientific treatment had been given. Try Manjubehn first. Naranbhai will not now stand in your way.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7098. Also C.W. 4590. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

616. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 7, 1938

I have written to Vijaya. Manjula may examine her. She may go to Maroli if it is necessary. Let her not try quack remedies.

How is it that you too get fever? What is it due to?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10771

617. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

September 7, 1938

CHI. JETHALAL,

I got your fine letter yesterday. I finished reading it just now at 6.30 in the morning. I have now given it to Parnerkar to read.

If you are persuading the people to make ghee in their own homes, you should also show them the correct method of making it. I do not understand how you guard against adulteration.

Your second letter is based on hasty reasoning. But that does not matter. Experience will correct the errors of reasoning. Instead of judging the world, we should judge ourselves and do what we can. Bearing in mind that He who controls us all is perfect, we should be content with whatever we are able to do. Have faith that in the measure in which you are able to improve your village, other villages also will improve, and concentrate on that task. You do maintain accounts for everything, starting with cattle feed. Don't you? How much milk does a cow give? How much butter and ghee?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9866. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

618. LETTER TO PYARELAL

September 7, 1938

CHI. PYARELAL,

I have told Sushila what I had to. Now her good lies in her doing what she thinks proper. She need not act under pressure from Mother. But if she is moved by Mother's love, she should not grumble. We do many things moved by parental love and find joy in doing them. I shall be content with whatever she does.

As for you, what can I say? I see that our ideas of duty differ. You see the same thing in one way, I in another way. So we must tolerate each other and pray that the veil of untruth may be lifted and we may both see the same truth.

What I wish is that, if possible, you should assure me and Sushila that you will not take any step at least while I am alive. Even that you should not do mechanically. Do it only if you can do so naturally.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

619. LETTER TO TARADEVI NAYYAR

SEGAON,

September 7, 1938

DEAR MATAJI,

You can write to me in Urdu. Your letter has pained me a great deal. Those who live with me never turn beggars. I consider myself the richest person. Beggars are those who work for salaries, because they are always wanting more and more. They want promotions, no matter how. I urge you not to press Sushila. Persuade her by love and argument. Let her go her way if she is not convinced at heart. Parents who order their grown-up children about, commit a sin. Save yourself from such a sin. Pyare and Sushila are enjoying greater authority than you ever did. You had money power. Why delight in the memory of these things and why shed tears thinking about them? Did not Father do good to others? Can one do good only by securing a big job? Are not Pyare and Sushila doing altruistic work? Their life is full of it. Enough is enough. Listen to me and free Sushila of anxiety in good cheer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

620. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 7, 1938

MY DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I do not know what I should say; you repeat the same question which I have answered again and again. Bhansalibhai writes to me; but does he complain? Whatever I say reaches his head and heart.

Whatever I say to you does not satisfy you— I cannot discuss your food. If I ask you to strain less, you will exert more. If I ask you to sleep, you will not listen. Even if you try to sleep, your heart will protest that it is not correct advice. How can I know what was said to the Maulana? Tell me, how can I make you understand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 728

621. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[September 7, 1938]¹

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Ba and Bapuji have received your letters of the 2nd. Bapuji says that Ba is now no longer fit for such work and therefore should be spared.

We shall certainly meet in Delhi.

Yours,

MAHADEV

From the Hindi original. Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

622. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

[After September 7, 1938]²

STUPID GIRL,

Your letter of today has pained me much. Why are you so weak? How is it that you want to serve and at the same time lack self-confidence? Whatever happens, I do not wish to see you sad. Remember today's *bhajan*.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ From the postmark

² This note is written on the reverse of a communication carrying the postmark "September 7, 1938".

623. A LETTER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unable to speak to Subhas Babu yesterday. But I have written to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat S.N. 11649

624. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON,
September 8, 1938

MY DEAR AGATHA,

My capacity for work is very limited and work is daily mounting. Hence the delay in writing to you. But there has been not a moment's delay in action on this side. The whole sum is guaranteed. I gave Shuaib your address and he definitely promised to give the whole thing proper form and write to you. He was to send you or Harold £100 on a/c. I am now taking action.¹

The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

625. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

September 8, 1938

MY DEAR SHWAIB,

No news from you! Have you sent £100? The matter admits of no delay.

¹ *Vide* the following item.

What about your mission?
My right hand needs rest. This is with the left hand.
Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

626. LETTER TO SHAUKATULLA SHAH

September 8, 1938

MY DEAR SHAUKAT,

This is with the left hand as the right needs rest. Mahadev has been telling me everything. Poor Zohra!

I hope you are getting full assistance from Dr. Bidhan.

I have your warning about the guarantee for Harold. The idea is that the Bank should be put in funds and that £100 should be sent at once.

I am sure Ammijan is at perfect peace with herself.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

627. LETTER TO POTHAN JOSEPH

September 8, 1938

MY DEAR POTHAN,

I am on my back just now for the abdominal bandage. Hence the pencil hand.

I shall read your article.

You may fail ten times out of ten, and you will come to me as often as a penitent. What my word may have done for a moment it may also do permanently. There is nothing in me. But God may speak to you through me.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

628. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

September 8, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

There is falsehood, that is madness, in every line of Sheralekar's letter. Why reply to him?

You may come whenever you wish. Three o'clock will be the best time. How did Amritlal get indigestion?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10909

629. *LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH*

September 8, 1938

CHI. MUNNALAL,

The first decision you need to arrive at is whether you can dedicate your whole life to Segaoon. The co-workers are what they are. I gave you those letters so that you might examine your heart. You yourself have engaged Govind, Dasharath, etc. It is your duty to live and work with them. You should spin and weave with them. You have to make yourself an expert in the science of khadi. This was your pledge from the very beginning and I have cherished that hope. You should ponder over Kanu's hint in this regard.

Do you reflect over all you read? I doubt it.

What does sitting with me mean? By all means sit if you have free time. The days are over when I could give you personal attention. I would be satisfied if I could cope with the work I have. But I feel that the body is bound to become weaker day by day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8591. Also C.W. 7031. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

630. LETTER TO SAMPURNANAND

September 8, 1938

BHAI SAMPURNANAND,

I agree with everything that you have said. The Congress has merely given a new name to the language. It has not made any other difference. No honest person would reject a word because of its Hindu or Muslim origin. What can we say of others? And it has become fashionable these days to oppose anything done by the Congress or Congressmen. Do you want to know my views on the subject or something else? Because I have spoken and written at length on this subject.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From Hindi: C.W. 10133. Courtesy: Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi

631. NOTE TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

September 8, 1938

You are quite mad. If I love you a lot I have also made you cry a lot. I do not know in what way you torment me. But if you are truly my daughter, worrying about you should be, as it is, a matter of joy to me.

Leave Mother to me. If you stay here, it will only be with her blessings, not otherwise.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy : Dr. Sushila Nayyar

632. *LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR*

[About *September 8, 1938*]¹

CHI. KAKA,

We cannot be sure about Sheralekar.

You did well in leaving the dentures there. There is so much humbug in the so-called Shastras that revised editions should be brought out. But who will do it?

Pyarelal can now move about.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10910

633. *MESSAGE TO "THE NATIONAL HERALD"*

[On or before *September 9, 1938*]²

I hope the paper will always represent truth and non-violence.

The Hindu, 9-9-1938

¹ There is a reference to Sheralekar's letter in Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", 8-9-1938

² The first issue of *The National Herald* appeared on September 9.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH¹

NEW DELHI,
March 3, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of the 24th February, 1938. I am sorry for the delay in replying as I was not well. In your letter I missed the note of response, first whether you are of opinion that you see light now and the moment has come, and secondly, if so, whether you are prepared to take the matter up in right earnest, and thirdly, I find that there is no change in your attitude and mentality when you say you would be guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as Dr. Ansari is no more. If you pursue this line you will be repeating the same tragedy as you did when you expressed your helplessness because Dr. Ansari, holding pronounced and die-hard views, did not agree and you had to say that although you were willing, but what could you do? This happened, as you know, before you went to the Round Table Conference. At the Round Table Conference the tragedy was repeated by you when you seemed to be willing to accept provisionally certain terms: but you there also expressed that you were helpless as the Hindus were unwilling and you, as a representative of the Congress, would have no objection, if the Hindus and Mussalmans came to an agreement.

We have reached a stage when no doubt should be left that you recognize the All-India Muslim League as the one authoritative and representative organization of the Mussalmans of India and on the other hand you represent the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. It is only on that basis that we can proceed further and devise machinery of approach.

Of course, I shall be glad to see you, although I shall be equally glad to see Pandit Jawaharlal or Mr. Bose, [as] you may desire. The matter as you know will not be clinched without reference again to you by either of them. Therefore, I will prefer to see you first. In any case, I am sorry to say that I cannot come to Segaon to see you before the 10th March. I have to go to Bombay and also I have fixed various other engagements of my tour. But we can fix up the time and place that may suit us both.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

¹ *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", 24-2-1938

APPENDIX II
*A TRAGEDY*¹

I proudly write in these columns about Gandhiji's health, discussing the causes of its breakdown, warning people, asking them to give him more rest. Ruthlessly I have turned out people wanting to see him, and have even interrupted talks and interviews, lest they should strain him over much and raise his blood-pressure. Fancy, therefore, my misery and my shame when I found one morning at Delang that what he considered a serious blunder on my part had raised his blood-pressure to the breaking point and might have brought about a catastrophe. Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, 29th, 30th and 31st—which in that peaceful atmosphere of Orissa should have been the most blissful days—were the most miserable days I have ever had in my life. But they were, if anything, more miserable for Gandhiji, as I found from his heart-broken and heart-breaking utterance on the afternoon of the 30th. I thought I had made amends indeed at that morning's prayer by telling everyone present how I had been the cause of the terrible breakdown, but Gandhiji was not present when I spoke. But he knew that I had spoken about the incident, and so he devoted his speech to the incident. I bespeak the indulgence of the reader for inflicting on him this tale of personal woe. But I do it on public grounds, as he will find at the end of the story.

The circumstances were somewhat like these. My wife, who rarely attends the annual meetings of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, or for that matter any such meetings, came to Delang, especially, I was told, with a view to being able to go to Puri. And Gandhiji told me that I should make every arrangement for her going to Puri. Personally I disliked her having come for the sake of Puri, and had no heart to make any arrangements. I was once again asked if I had made the arrangements, and asked a third time. My wife to my surprise did not know that the Puri temple was not open to the Harijans. During Gandhiji's Harijan tour she was in jail. But that was no excuse for the ignorance. On the very first day in the course of his exhibition speech Gandhiji made it clear that the temple of the Lord of the World was not open to the Harijans, and so long as it remained so, the Lord was not, in his opinion, the Lord of the World, but the Lord of those who fed and feasted under His shelter. I had hoped that this speech would be a warning to all, including my wife, though I had a fear that she would go into the temple. I must also confess that I had a lurking suspicion that Gandhiji's repeated insistence on my making arrangements for her going to Puri sprang out of the depth of his ahimsa—the ahimsa that had made him serve liquor to Tommies in the Zulu Rebellion, and to serve meat to his friends at table in South Africa. I had also hoped that because she was going there with a number of other friends, including Gandhiji's second son Manilal, she would not go into the temple when the rest stood out. What I did not do was to din into her head that her going into

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 4-4-1938

the temple would break Gandhiji's heart. As I have said, I was stupid enough not to realize the possible reaction and had even fancied that in the boundless charity of his heart he had found room for forgiving a temple-goer like my wife. I must therefore confess that even if she had definitely told me before going that she had made up her mind to go into the temple, I should not have resisted her. I did not want to disturb her faith to that extent. She knew that I was against it, she also knew that I have a horror of these temples—temples which even when they are opened to the Harijans, would not be better unless they were purged of the unscrupulous *pandas*. But if she thought it would do her soul good to go into the temple, I did not in my heart of hearts feel like standing in the way. As for Kasturba Gandhi, I must say that I had assumed she would stand out and her presence would perhaps act as a check on my wife and others. But as it happened, my wife went in, another friend went in, and also went in Kasturba. Some members of the party stayed out, including my little son who put up a plucky fight with the *pandas*.

On Monday evening when they returned and Gandhiji knew the whole story, he was sad. He had a sleepless night. He called Kasturba and my wife and me to account. The explanation, part of which is contained in the argument above, failed to satisfy him. It even irritated him. He held that I was primarily to blame. He held that I should have explained to them the history of the movement, how Gandhiji had gone to Puri in 1934, how violence was organized there, how he had to undertake the Orissa pilgrimage on foot, how reformers were warned not to go to the temple until Harijans were admitted, and if my wife still did not listen, Gandhiji's assistance should have been sought, and if then too she insisted on going she should have been free to go. He held that I had not been watchful enough and that I had thus been unjust to him, my wife, myself and to the cause. And so he thus poured out his heart to the members of the Sangh :¹

This pouring out of the agony of his heart was for me an added agony. He was so disconsolate. The next day he felt too weak to speak and went into silence for the whole day as a measure of precaution. What could I do in the circumstances? I was afraid lest I should make matters worse by entering into explanations and arguments. I felt like waiting until he had regained his normal pressure and strength. But the thought of my having been the cause of the collapse tormented me. If I was guilty of a grievous error of judgment, how could I continue to serve him? How could I correctly represent and serve the Harijan cause? What right had I to be his door-keeper? I had the hell of a night, and in sheer desperation I wrote to him a note imploring him to put me away. This exasperated him all the more and made the cross heavier to bear. He would prefer death, he said, at the hands of one who loved, to life at the hands of one who did not love him ! Instead of realizing my folly and repairing it by going to Puri with a band of satyagrahi pilgrims, he said, I had gone into hysterics over a well-meant rebuke ! Instead of serving my wife, he said, I had in my blind love of her

¹ For the full text of the speech, *vide* "Speech at Gandhi Seva Sangh Meeting", 30-3-1938

encouraged her superstition !

All this was too stunning for words. I felt that Gandhiji, who has performed several spiritual operations using the chloroform of love, had performed this one without that chloroform. In resentment I cried :

To live with the saints in heaven
Is a bliss and a glory,
But to live with a saint on earth
Is a different story.

May it not be that he had made a mountain of a molehill ?

But who am I to judge? As I write this I feel that I was perhaps too dense to probe into the workings of his highly sensitive mind. And after all he who had devoted half a century of vigilant endeavour to the pursuit of truth and ahimsa should be trusted to judge a situation better than I, ever liable to be swayed by passions and desires. What may appear to me to be trifles may be matters of life and death to him. I realized that however difficult life with him may appear sometimes, separation would be still more unbearable. He disclaims saintship. He claims to be no better than the smallest of us. I realized that I had grievously erred in associating even in thought those doleful lines with him. Whether he is a saint or a mere mortal, like all of us, I see that my cry for separation was a fit of frenzy. For when I look upon the note that I wrote to him, I feel I could not have gone five yards before returning as a penitent.

And after all is said and done, one thing stands out in bold relief—Gandhiji's uncompromising love of the Harijans and his anxiety to lay down his life for that cause. The poignant utterance became a call to greater dedication for the cause. The incident burnt into every one of those who attended the Sangh meeting this year the lesson that no one shall tamper with that most important item of the constructive programme and that everyone shall be wide awake. The week of retreat in sacred Orissa became more sacred with the cleansing effect of the electric shock that Gandhiji gave them, and the members went home with a message that they are not likely easily to forget.

M. D.

Harijan, 9-4-1938

APPENDIX III
LETTER FROM KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN¹

May 11, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I write to acquaint you with the conclusions which have been reached by the Government of Bengal in the matter of the premature release of terrorist convicts. In formulating these proposals, Government have given the most careful consideration to the suggestions which you were good enough to put forward in your letter of April 12.

It is necessary to emphasize at the outset that the scheme which is embodied in the succeeding paragraph is to be regarded as a connected plan, the different parts of which form a single and indivisible whole. As such, it is communicated not only for securing your own acceptance, but also the acceptance of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee as well as the leader of the Congress party in the Assembly.

Government desire to commend the scheme to your most earnest consideration, because the declared acceptance by you, and by the Congress of Government's policy in this matter is a vital precedent condition to the adoption of the plan. In the absence of that acceptance Government will regard these proposals as null and void and will continue to discharge their responsibilities in this matter, according to the policy which has already been announced in the Legislature.

The scheme is as follows :

(1) To release forthwith terrorist convicts suffering from serious and continued illness.

(2) To release as soon as possible those convicts who have not been convicted of offences involving the actual commission of murder and serious violence, and have a comparatively short period of their sentences not in excess of 18 months still to serve.

(3) To place the cases of the remaining convicts before an Advisory Committee which will examine them on individual merits and make such recommendations in each case to Government as it thinks fit.

The decision as to the orders to be passed in each case, after consideration of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, will rest with Government.

(4) The Advisory Committee will be appointed by Government and will consist of 9 members as follows :

- (i) The President, a retired judicial officer of high standing;
- (ii) A member of the Coalition Party;

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Khwaja Nazimuddin", 15-5-1938

- (iii) A member of the Legislative Assembly from the Congress Party;
- (iv) A member of the Legislative Assembly from amongst the representatives of the Scheduled Castes;
- (v) A member of the Legislative Assembly from the Liberal Party;
- (vi) A member of the Legislative Council from the Congress Party;
- (vii) A European member of the Legislature;
- (viii) One other Muslim member; and
- (ix) An official.

The names of the members constituting the Committee will be announced as early as possible.

As an integral part of the scheme it shall be agreed and accepted between the Government, yourself and the Congress as follows :

(1) That no attempt will be made hereafter by the Congress, or by any other body with the support, tacit or open, of the Congress to secure an advance upon these terms, and the matter shall cease to be a political issue;

(2) That you and the Congress will actively discourage all forms of agitation for the accelerated release of prisoners, all attacks in the Press on the policy of Government in the matter of terrorist prisoners, all demonstrations and receptions on the release of such prisoners or thereafter, and all statements, writings and speeches favourable to terrorists or terrorism;

(3) That you and the Congress will take every step possible to create and maintain public opinion against hunger-striking and will publicly condemn such a course if adopted.

In proposing these terms and conditions, the Government of Bengal have gone to the utmost limit which they consider to be compatible with the discharge of their responsibilities for the eradication of this canker of terrorism, which has for so long been a recurrent factor in the political life of the Province. They have done so in the hope of mobilizing public opinion and of contributing to the creation and maintenance of the atmosphere calculated to render a recrudescence of terrorism unlikely. Government earnestly desire the active association with themselves of all who genuinely wish for the ordered and non-violent political development of the country. Your own support I claim with the confidence of one who knows how much you have the same object at heart.

I should be glad, therefore, if you will be good enough to communicate your views on these proposals as early as possible, and I would suggest that it would be appropriate if you would communicate with Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and the Leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly, Bengal, with a view to obtaining their acceptance. . . .

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1938

APPENDIX IV

STATEMENT OF DR. N. B. KHARE¹

July 25, 1938

I have already admitted an error of judgment committed by me in presenting my resignation to the Governor on the eve of the meeting of the Working Committee. I admit that I have been guilty of indiscipline. I, as an old Congressman, should have known the value of discipline. I realize now² the enormity of the error, which has resulted in the dismissal of the Congress Ministers by the Governor under his constitutional powers under the Act³.

I am sincerely sorry for what has happened on account of this loss of balance and I think that it is my duty to relinquish all positions of trust in the Congress, whose cause I have put in jeopardy by my action. I shall be content if I am permitted to serve as a camp-follower. I shall do everything in my power to retrieve the prestige which the Congress has lost through my action.

I hope that all Congressmen will rally round the Working Committee in its endeavour to form a united and stable ministry, for there are rumours of a split in the Province between Maharashtra and Mahakoshal. I hope that good counsels will prevail and we shall not think in terms of Maharashtra and Mahakoshal. I shall try my best to prevent any such split.

The Hindu, 3-9-1938

APPENDIX V

WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON C. P. CRISIS⁴

After having heard the Parliamentary Sub-committee and given anxious consideration to the events that have happened since the agreement arrived at in Pachmarhi between the Ministers in the presence of the members of the Parliamentary Sub-committee and the Presidents of the three Provincial Congress Committees concerned, and after having had several interviews with Dr. Khare, the Working Committee have reluctantly come to the conclusion that by the series of acts committed by Dr. Khare, culminating in his resignation of his charge and demanding the resignation of his colleagues of their charge, Dr. Khare was guilty of grave errors of judgment, which have exposed the Congress in the C. P. to ridicule and brought down its prestige. He was also guilty of gross indiscipline in that he

¹ *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 30-7-1938 and "Statement to the Press", 5-9-1938

² "Now" was deleted by Gandhiji.

³ "Under the Act" was deleted by Gandhiji.

⁴ *Vide* "Functions of the Working Committee", 6-8-1938

acted in spite of warnings against any precipitate action.

His resignation was the direct cause for the exercise, for the first time since office-acceptance by the Congress, by a Governor of his special powers, whereby Dr. Khare's three colleagues were dismissed. The Working Committee note with satisfaction that these three Congress Ministers showed their loyalty to the Congress by declining, without instructions from the Parliamentary Sub-committee, to tender their resignations which were demanded by the Governor.

Dr. Khare was further guilty of indiscipline in accepting the invitation of the Governor to form a new Ministry, and, contrary to the practice of which he was aware, in actually forming a new Ministry and taking the oath of allegiance without reference to the Parliamentary Sub-committee, and the Working Committee, specially when he knew that the meetings of these bodies were imminent.

By all these acts of his Dr. Khare has proved himself unworthy of holding positions of responsibility in the Congress organization. He should be so considered till, by his services as a Congressman, he has shown himself well balanced and capable of observing strict discipline and discharging the duties that may be undertaken by him.

The working Committee have also come to the reluctant conclusion that H. E. the Governor of the C. P. has shown, by the ugly haste with which he turned night into day and forced the crisis that has overtaken the province, that he was eager to weaken and discredit the Congress in so far as it lay in him to do so. The Working Committee hold that, knowing, as he must have, what was going on among members of the Cabinet and the instructions of the Parliamentary Sub-committee, he ought not to have, with unseemly haste, accepted the resignation of the three Ministers and demanded the resignation of the other three, dismissed them on their refusal to resign, and immediately called upon Dr. Khare to form a new Ministry and sworn in the available members of the new Ministry without waiting for the meeting of the Working Committee which was imminent.

Harijan, 30-7-1938