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First Edition, 5,000 Copies, October 1963
75 nP.

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Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai
Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad-14

FOREWORD

India has been trying to establish a socialist and democratic society in accordance with her ancient culture and traditions. It is, therefore, obvious that the basic principles underlying the Co-operative Movement must necessarily constitute an integral part of socialist democracy that is sought to be evolved in this country. Through the Five Year Plans, an earnest effort is being made to spread the Co-operative Movement not only in agricultural programmes but in the industrial, housing and commercial spheres as well. The Third Five Year Plan has laid great stress on the urgent need of creating conditions "for the growth of a progressive co-operative rural economy with a diversified occupational structure in which the weaker sections of the community are brought speedily to the level of the rest."¹ The development of "a co-operative agro-industrial economy" in rural areas is regarded as essential for securing a large measure of integration between rural and industrial development in each region.

In a planned economy pledged to the values of socialism and democracy the Co-operative Movement

¹ *Third Five Year Plan*, p. 12

combines the advantages of private initiative, community welfare and large-scale management. The Government of India has recently set up several Working Groups to make detailed recommendations in regard to the extension of the Co-operative principles to small and medium industries, housing projects, transport and communications, fisheries, trade and commerce. It is only through such co-operative efforts that the small man could be enabled to achieve higher standards of living through the elimination of the middlemen. As Prof. Amlan Datta observes, the lasting solution of "the crisis in the spirit of man" could be found only in "Co-operative Socialism".¹

The *Gramdan* movement initiated by Acharya Vinoba Bhave is, doubtless, a great step forward towards the ideal of a co-operative society based on self-help and community living. It is a non-violent way of bringing about a collective ownership for furthering common interests, more specially of the poorer segments of the population. This movement is, indeed, full of revolutionary potentialities in changing the face of rural India in conformity with Gandhian ideals. It is in striking contrast with the "ruthless devious path that the Chinese followed in the development of their totalitarian collectives".² Louis Fischer has

¹ *Socialism, Democracy and Industrialization*, by Shri Amlan Datta, p. 66

² *Ideas, People and Peace*, by Chester Bowles, p. 128

rightly described *Gramdan* as “the most creative thought coming out of the East”.¹

The Navajivan Trust has rendered a great service to the Co-operative Movement in India by publishing this brochure which contains all the relevant quotations from Gandhiji's writings on the subject. I do hope that this brochure will be placed in the hands of every student in the large number of Co-operative Training Institutions all over the country. Co-operation could succeed in India and elsewhere only if a good number of well-trained and sincere workers are made available in both rural and urban areas. This collection of Gandhiji's writings on Co-operation will, surely, be helpful in reorienting the outlook of official and non-official workers in the Co-operative sphere.

20-8-1963

Shriman Narayan

¹ *Story of Indonesia*, by Louis Fischer, p. 316

PREFACE

The study of modern history leads to the conclusion that there are three successive stages of social progress. The first is individualism with liberty as its basic principle; the second is socialism with equality as its characteristic principle and the last is enlightened anarchy, i.e. Stateless democracy with fraternity as its dominant principle. Till the third stage is reached, it is Force which in the ultimate resort really rules. A free equality founded upon spontaneous co-operation is the highest social order as conceived by philosophic anarchists.

The three great messages given by the French Revolution—Liberty, Equality and Fraternity—are still to materialize. The principles of Liberty and Equality will find their true meaning only when the crowning principle of Fraternity assumes a real shape and form. Without it liberty becomes a licence to crush others; equality becomes a dull and deadening uniformity. It is only when the principle of Love, i.e. Fraternity is invoked and respected that true freedom and true equality will find their fulfilment in the co-operative Brotherhood.

Mahatma Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist. To him the ideal was "the greatest good of all". He

believed that the ideal he set before himself was capable of being realized only in the Stateless democracy based on non-violence, service and the largest amount of individual and local initiative. He distrusted the State, as to him the State whatever its form was the symbol of force, exploitation and soulless machine. He observed, "The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. . . . It does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality."

Mahatma Gandhi placed before us the ideal of Sarvodaya order. It rests on respect for the individual, equality and love. Decentralization is the foundation on which the superstructure of Sarvodaya order is built. Self-sufficient small peaceful communities are envisaged in this order. Co-operation is the silken thread that keeps all different units together. It is at once decentralization and Swadeshi blended together. Service motive will replace profit motive which rules the modern economic activity. The sanction of force that is visible in the State will be replaced by the sanction of love. Thus Co-operation strikes a golden mean between private sector with profit motive at one end and Statism with its soulless machinery on the other.

With the establishment of Village Panchayats, the Co-operative Movement has a vital role to play. The success or failure of Village Panchayats will depend upon the working of the Co-operative Movement.

The present co-operative societies are suffering from inefficient management, indifference of members, corrupt practices and selfish motives. We shall do well to remember the following observations of Mahatma Gandhi:

1. Co-operation should be based on strict non-violence.
2. The secret of successful co-operative effort is that the members must be honest and know the great merit of co-operation and it must have a definite progressive goal.
3. Without character, there is no co-operation.
4. We will not measure the success of the movement by the number of co-operative societies formed but by the moral condition of co-operators.

If we bear in mind Mahatma Gandhi's insistence on Ahimsa and Truth which expressed in terms of co-operation would be that co-operation should be voluntary and that honesty should be its corner-stone, we shall have as he says, "real freedom and a new order vastly superior to the new order in Soviet Russia".

In the words of Dr J. C. Kumarappa: "If the co-operative institutions function properly it will promote self-sufficiency in all our primary needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. When this happens there will be nothing to attract the cupidity of the

foreign manufacture. Hence there will be no international jealousies leading to global wars. Thus the development of co-operative institutions on right lines can lead to national independence and through that to international peace.”

Extracts from writings of Mahatma Gandhi which pertain to the subject of Co-operation are culled together in this small compilation. Though Mahatma Gandhi's writings on the subject of Co-operation are scanty, they contain precious and important message for the leaders of the Co-operative Movement. A few extracts from Dr J. C. Kuma-rappa's writings are included as appendices. It is hoped that the compilation will prove useful.

I am indebted to Shri Shriman Narayan for being kind enough to go through the typescript and write a Foreword to the compilation.

2-10-'63

H. M. Vyas

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CO-OPERATION

TO THE READER

I would like to say to the diligent reader of my writings and to others who are interested in them that I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after Truth I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment, and, therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 29-4-'33, p. 2

CHAPTER I
INDEPENDENCE

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble,

sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want, before we can have something approaching it. If there is ever to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verity for my picture in which the last is equal to the first or, in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last.¹

CHAPTER II SOCIALISM

Socialism is a beautiful word, and so far as I am aware, in Socialism all the members of society are equal—none low, none high. In the individual body the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. This is Socialism.

In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. In terms of religion there is no duality in Socialism. It is all unity. Looking at society all the world over, there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence. This man is high, that one is low, that is a Hindu, that a Muslim, the third a Christian, the fourth a Parsi, the fifth a Sikh, the sixth a Jew. Even among these there are subdivisions. In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs.

In order to reach this state we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to Socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the

game when it comes our way. This is no Socialism. The more we treat it as game to be seized, the farther it must recede from us.

Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such, you can add zeros to the one and the first zero will account for ten and every addition will account for ten times the previous number. If, however, the beginner is a zero, in other words, no one makes the beginning, multiplicity of zeros will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeros will be so much waste.

This Socialism is as pure as crystal. It, therefore, requires crystal-like means to achieve it. Impure means result in an impure end. Hence the prince and the peasant will not be equalized by cutting off the prince's head, nor can the process of cutting off equalize the employer and the employed. One cannot reach truth by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach truth. Are not non-violence and truth twins? The answer is an emphatic 'no'. Non-violence is embedded in truth and vice versa. Hence has it been said that they are faces of the same coin. Either is inseparable from the other. Read the coin either way. The spelling of words will be different. The value is the same. This blessed state is unattainable without perfect purity. Harbour impurity of mind or body and you have untruth and violence in you.

Therefore, only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted Socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world. To my knowledge there is no country in the world which is purely socialistic. Without the means described above the existence of such a society is impossible.¹

‘What do you mean by your Socialism?’

My Socialism means ‘even unto this last’. I do not want to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf and the dumb. In their Socialism, probably these have no place. Their one aim is material progress. For instance, America aims at having a car for every citizen. I do not. I want freedom for full expression of my personality. I must be free to build a staircase to Sirius if I want to. That does not mean that I want to do any such thing. Under the other Socialism, there is no individual freedom. You own nothing, not even your body.²

CHAPTER III
INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND SOCIAL
PROGRESS

God is in every one of us.¹

To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world.²

The individual is the one supreme consideration.³

I want every individual to become a full-blooded, fully developed member of society.⁴

My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through non-violence.⁵

True democracy or the Swaraj of the masses can never come through untruthful and violent means, for the simple reason that the natural corollary to their use would be to remove all opposition through suppression or extermination of the antagonists. That does not make for individual freedom. Individual freedom can have the fullest play under regime of unadulterated *ahimsa*.⁶

In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master.⁷

The end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth. I use the adjective moral as synonymous with spiritual.⁸

If the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the services of society. If it is wrested from him he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom.⁹

I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member.¹⁰

The first step to Swaraj lies in the individual. The great truth: 'So with the individual so with the universe' is applicable here as elsewhere.¹¹

Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men.¹²

I do not believe that an individual may gain spiritually and those that surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita*. I believe in the essential unity of

man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him; and if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent.¹³

The nation cannot advance without the units of which it is composed advancing and conversely no individual can advance without the nation of which he is a part also advancing.¹⁴

Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. Swaraj government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life.¹⁵

To me political power is not an end but one of the means of enabling people to better their condition in every department of life. Political power means capacity to regulate national life through national representatives. If national life becomes so perfect as to become self-regulated, no representation becomes necessary. There is then a state of enlightened anarchy. In such a state every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no State. . But the ideal is never fully realized in life. Hence the classical statement of Thoreau that that government is best which governs the least.¹⁶

I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear because, although while apparent-

ly doing good by minimizing of exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.

The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but as the State is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence. . . .

What I disapprove of is an organisation based on force which a State is. Voluntary organization there must be.¹⁷

Our capacity for Swaraj depends upon our capacity for solving without reference to, or intervention of the government, all the varied and complex problems that must arise in the affairs of one of the biggest and the most ancient nations like us.¹⁸

CHAPTER IV CO-OPERATION

Drops in separation could only fade away; drops in co-operation made the ocean which carried on its broad bosom greyhounds.¹

The eye that would dispense with the help of the hands does not practise self-help, but is conceited and self-deceived. And as the different members of the body are self-reliant so far as their functions are concerned and yet are mutually helpful and mutually dependent, so are we . . . each following the rule of self-help in performing his own function, and yet co-operating with one another in all matters of common interest. Only then can we be said to be the servants of the country.²

Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being. Without inter-relation with society he cannot realize his oneness with the universe or suppress his egotism. His social interdependence enables him to test his faith and to prove himself on the touchstone of reality. If man were so placed or could so place himself as to be absolutely above all dependence on his fellow-beings, he would become so proud and arrogant as to be a veritable burden and nuisance to the world. Dependence on society teaches him the lesson of humility. That a man ought to be able to satisfy

most of his essential needs himself is obvious; but it is no less obvious to me that when self-sufficiency is carried to the length of isolating oneself from society it almost amounts to sin. A man cannot become self-sufficient even in respect of all the various operations from the growing of cotton to the spinning of the yarn. He has at some stage or other to take the aid of the members of his family. And if one may take help from one's own family why not from one's neighbours? Or otherwise what is the significance of the great saying, 'The world is my family'?³

Individual liberty and interdependence are both essential for life in society. Only a Robinson Crusoe can afford to be all self-sufficient. When a man has done all he can for the satisfaction of his essential requirements he will seek the co-operation of his neighbours for the rest. That will be true co-operation.⁴

Ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces.⁵

Men should live in co-operation and work for the common good.⁶

Society based on non-violence can only consist of groups settled in villages in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence.⁷

The centre of power now is in New Delhi, or in Calcutta and Bombay, in the big cities. I would

have it distributed among the seven hundred thousand villages of India. That will mean that there is no power. In other words, I want the seven hundred thousand dollars now invested in the imperial bank of England withdrawn and distributed among the seven hundred thousand villages. Then each village will have its one dollar which cannot be lost.

The seven hundred thousand dollars invested in the imperial bank of India, could be swept away by a bomb from a Japanese plane, whereas if they were distributed among the seven hundred thousand shareholders, nobody could deprive them of their assets. There will then be voluntary co-operation between these seven hundred thousand units, voluntary co-operation—not co-operation induced by Nazi methods. Voluntary co-operation will produce real freedom and a new order vastly superior to the new order in Soviet Russia. Some say there is ruthlessness in Russia but that it is exercised for the lowest and the poorest and is good for that reason. For me it has very little good in it. Some day this ruthlessness will create an anarchy worse than we have ever seen.⁸

Let it be remembered that co-operation should be based on strict non-violence. There is no such thing as success of violent co-operation. Hitler was a forcible example of the latter. He also talked vainly of co-operation which was forced upon the people and everyone knew where Germany had been led as a result.

It would be a sad thing if India also tries to build up the new society based on co-operation by means of violence. Good brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change is effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-co-operation, i.e. love, could the foundation of individuality be preserved, and real, abiding progress be assured for the world.⁹

The secret of successful co-operative effort is that the members must be honest and know the great merit of co-operation and it must have a definite progressive goal. Thus holding a certain sum of money in co-operation for the sake of making more money by charging exorbitant rates of interest is a bad goal. But co-operative farming or dairying is undoubtedly a good goal promoting national interests. Such instances can be multiplied.¹⁰

‘Without character there is no co-operation’ is a sound maxim.¹¹

Man is as much self-dependent as inter-dependent. When dependence becomes necessary in order to keep society in good order it is no longer dependence, but becomes co-operation. There is sweetness in co-operation; there is no one weak or strong among those who co-operate. Each is equal to the other. There is the feeling of helplessness in dependency. Members of a family are as much self-dependent as inter-dependent. There is no feeling of either mine

or thine. They are all co-operators. So also when we take a society, a nation or the whole of mankind as a family all men become co-operators.¹²

THE MORAL BASIS OF CO-OPERATION

[A paper contributed to the Bombay Provincial Co-operative Conference held on 17th September, 1917]

The only claim I have on your indulgence is that some months ago I attended with Mr Ewbank a meeting of mill-hands to whom he wanted to explain the principles of co-operation. The chawl in which they were living, was as filthy as it well could be. Recent rains had made matters worse. And I must frankly confess that, had it not been for Mr Ewbank's great zeal for the cause he has made his own, I should have shirked the task. But there we were, seated on a fairly worn out *charpai*, surrounded by men, women and children. Mr Ewbank opened fire on a man who had put himself forward and who wore not a particularly innocent countenance. After he had engaged him and the other people about him in Gujarati conversation, he wanted me to speak to the people. Owing to the suspicious looks of the man who was first spoken to, I naturally pressed home the moralities of co-operation. I fancy that Mr Ewbank rather liked the manner in which I handled the subject. Hence, I believe, his kind invitation to me to tax your patience for a few moments upon a consideration of co-operation from moral standpoint.

My knowledge of the technicality of co-operation is next to nothing. My brother, Devadhar, has made the subject his own. Whatever he does, naturally attracts me and predisposes me to think that there must be something good in it and the handling of it must be fairly difficult. Mr Ewbank very kindly placed at my disposal some literature too on the subject. And I have had an unique opportunity of watching the effect of some co-operative effort in Champaran. I have gone through Mr Ewbank's ten main points which are like the Commandments, and I have gone through the twelve points of Mr Collins of Bihar, which remind me of the law of the Twelve Tables. There are so-called agricultural banks in Champaran. They were to me disappointing efforts, if they were meant to be demonstrations of the success of co-operation. On the other hand, there is quiet work in the same direction being done by Mr Hodge, a missionary whose efforts are leaving their impress on those who come in contact with him. Mr Hodge is a co-operative enthusiast and probably considers that the result which he sees flowing from his efforts are due to the working of co-operation. I, who was able to watch the efforts, had no hesitation in inferring that the personal equation counted for success in the one and failure in the other instance.

I am an enthusiast myself, but twenty years of experimenting and experience have made me a cautious and discriminating enthusiast. Workers in a

cause necessarily, though quite unconsciously exaggerate its merits and often succeed in turning its very defects into advantages. In spite of my caution I consider the little institution I am conducting in Ahmedabad as the finest thing in the world. It alone gives me sufficient inspiration. Critics tell me that it represents a soulless soul-force and that its severe discipline has made it merely mechanical. I suppose both—the critics and I—are wrong. It is, at best, a humble attempt to place at the disposal of the nation a home where men and women may have scope for free and unfettered development of character, in keeping with the national genius, and, if its controllers do not take care, the discipline that is the foundation of character may frustrate the very end in view. I would venture, therefore, to warn enthusiasts in co-operation against entertaining false hopes.

With Sir Daniel Hamilton it has become a religion. On the 13th January last, he addressed the students of the Scottish Churches College and, in order to point a moral, he instanced Scotland's poverty of two hundred years ago and showed how that great country was raised from a condition of poverty to plenty.

“There were two powers, which raised her—the Scottish Church and the Scottish banks. The Church manufactured the men and the banks manufactured the money to give the men a start in life. . . . The Church disciplined the nation in the fear of God which is the beginning

of wisdom and in the parish schools of the Church the children learned that the chief end of man's life was to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever. Men were trained to believe in God and in themselves, and on the trustworthy character so created the Scottish banking system was built.'

Sir Daniel then shows that it was possible to build up the marvellous Scottish banking system only on the character so built. So far there can only be perfect agreement with Sir Daniel, for that 'without character there is no co-operation' is a sound maxim. But he would have us go much further. He thus waxes eloquent on co-operation:

'Whatever may be your day-dreams of India's future, never forget this that it is to weld India into one, and so enable her to take her rightful place in the world, that the British Government is here; and the welding hammer in the hand of the Government is the co-operative movement.'

In his opinion it is the panacea of all the evils that afflict India at the present moment. In its extended sense it can justify the claim on one condition which need not be mentioned here; in the limited sense in which Sir Daniel has used it, I venture to think, it is an enthusiast's exaggeration. Mark his peroration:

'Credit, which is only Trust and Faith, is becoming more and more the money power of the world, and in the

parchment bullet into which is impressed the faith which removes mountains. India will find victory and peace.'

Here there is evident confusion of thought. The credit which is becoming the money power of the world has little moral basis and is not a synonym for Trust or Faith, which are purely moral qualities. After twenty years' experience of hundreds of men, who had dealings with banks in South Africa, the opinion I had so often heard expressed has become firmly rooted in me, that the greater the rascal the greater the credit he enjoys with his banks. The banks do not pry into his moral character; they are satisfied that he meets his over-drafts and promissory notes punctually. The credit system has encircled this beautiful globe of ours like a serpent's coil, and if we do not mind, it bids fair to crush us out of breath. I have witnessed the ruin of many a home through the system, and it has made no difference whether the credit was labelled co-operative or otherwise. The deadly coil has made possible the devastating spectacle in Europe, which we are helplessly looking on. It was perhaps never so true as it is today that, as in law so in war, the longest purse finally wins. I have ventured to give prominence to the current belief about credit system in order to emphasize the point that the co-operative movement will be a blessing to India only to the extent that it is a moral movement strictly directed by men fired with religious fervour. It follows, therefore, that co-operation should be confined

to men wishing to be morally right, but failing to do so, because of grinding poverty or of the grip of the Mahajan. Facility for obtaining loans at fair rates will not make immoral men moral. But the wisdom of the Estate or philanthropists demands that they should help on the onward path, men struggling to be good.

Too often do we believe that material prosperity means moral growth. It is necessary that a movement which is fraught with so much good to India should not degenerate into one for merely advancing cheap loans. I was therefore delighted to read the recommendation in the Report of the Committee on Co-operation in India, that

'they wish clearly to express their opinion that it is to true co-operation alone, that is, to a co-operation which recognizes the moral aspect of the question that Government must look for the amelioration of the masses and not to a pseudo-co-operative edifice, however imposing, which is built in ignorance of co-operative principles.'

With this standard before us, we will not measure the success of the movement by the number of co-operative societies formed, but by the moral condition of the co-operators. The registrars will, in that event, ensure the moral growth of existing societies before multiplying them. And the Government will make their promotion conditional, not upon the number of societies they have registered, but the moral success of the existing institutions. This will mean tracing the course of every pie lent to the

members. Those responsible for the proper conduct of co-operative societies will see to it that the money advanced does not find its way into the toddy-seller's bill or into the pockets of the keepers of gambling dens. I would excuse the rapacity of the Mahajan if it has succeeded in keeping the gambling die or toddy from the ryot's home.

A word perhaps about the Mahajan will not be out of place. Co-operation is not a new device. The ryots co-operate to drum out monkeys or birds that destroy their crops. They co-operate to use a common thrashing floor. I have found them co-operate to protect their cattle to the extent of their devoting the best land for the grazing of their cattle. And they have been found co-operating against a particularly rapacious Mahajan. Doubts have been expressed as to the success of co-operation because of the tightness of the Mahajan's hold on the ryots. I do not share the fears. The mightiest Mahajan must, if he represent an evil force, bend before co-operation, conceived as an essentially moral movement. But my limited experience of the Mahajan of Champaran has made me revise the accepted opinion about his 'blighting influence'. I have found him to be not always relentless, not always exacting of the last pic. He sometimes serves his clients in many ways and even comes to their rescue in the hour of their distress. My observation is so limited that I dare not draw any conclusions from it, but I respectfully

enquire whether it is not possible to make a serious effort to draw out the good in the Mahajan and help or induce him to throw out the evil in him. May he not be induced to join the army of co-operation or has experience proved that he is past praying for?

I note that the movement takes note of all indigenous industries. I beg publicly to express my gratitude to Government for helping me in my humble effort to improve the lot of the weaver. The experiment I am conducting shows that there is a vast field for work in this direction. No well-wisher of India, no patriot dare look upon the impending destruction of the handloom weaver with equanimity. As Dr Mann has stated, this industry used to supply the peasant with an additional source of livelihood and an insurance against famine. Every Registrar who will nurse back to life this important and graceful industry will earn the gratitude of India. My humble effort consists firstly in making researches as to the possibilities of simple reforms in the orthodox handlooms, secondly, in weaning the educated youth from the craving for Government or other services and the feeling that education renders him unfit for independent occupation and inducing him to take to weaving as a calling as honourable as that of a barrister or a doctor, and thirdly by helping those weavers who have abandoned their occupation to revert to it. I will not weary the audience with any statement on the first two parts of the experiment. The third may be allowed

a few sentences as it has a direct bearing upon the subject before us. I was able to enter upon it only six months ago. Five families that had left off the calling have reverted to it and they are doing a prosperous business. The Ashram supplies them at their door with the yarn they need; its volunteers take delivery of the cloth woven, paying them cash at the market rate. The Ashram merely loses interest on the loan advanced for the yarn. It has as yet suffered no loss and is able to restrict its loss to a minimum by limiting the loan to a particular figure. All future transactions are strictly cash. We are able to command a ready sale for the cloth received. The loss of interest, therefore on the transaction is negligible. I would like the audience to note its purely moral character from start to finish. The Ashram depends for its existence on such help as *friends* render it. We, therefore, can have no warrant for charging interest. The weavers could not be saddled with it. Whole families that were breaking to pieces are put together again. The use of the loan is pre-determined. And we, the middlemen, being volunteers, obtain the privilege of entering into the lives of these families, I hope, for their and our betterment. We cannot lift them without being lifted ourselves. This last relationship has not yet been developed; but we hope, at an early date, to take in hand the education too of these families and not rest satisfied till we have touched them at every point. This is not too ambitious a

dream. God willing, it will be a reality some day. I have ventured to dilate upon the small experiment to illustrate what I mean by co-operation to present it to others for imitation. Let us be sure of our ideal. We shall ever fail to realize it, but we should never cease to strive for it. Then there need be no fear of "co-operation of scoundrels" that Ruskin so rightly dreaded.¹

CHAPTER VI

CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE AND CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

The most important question for consideration . . . was whether cow farming should be in the hands of individuals or done collectively. I myself had no hesitation in saying that she could never be saved by individual farming. Her salvation, and with her that of buffalo, could only be brought about by collective endeavour. It is quite impossible for an individual farmer to look after the welfare of his cattle in his own home in a proper and scientific manner. Amongst other causes lack of collective effort has been a principal cause of the deterioration of the cow and hence of cattle in general.

The world today is moving towards the ideal of collective or co-operative effort in every department of life. Much in this line has been and is being accomplished. It has come into our country also, but in such a distorted form that our poor have not been able to reap its benefits. *Pari passu* with the increase in our population land holdings of the average farmer are daily decreasing. Moreover what the individual possesses is often fragmentary. For such farmers to keep cattle in their homes is a suicidal policy; and yet this is their condition today. Those who give the

first place to economics and pay scant attention to religious, ethical or humanitarian consideration proclaim from the housetops that the farmer is being devoured by his cattle due to the cost of their feed which is out of all proportion to what they yield. They say it is folly not to slaughter wholesale all useless animals.

What then should be done by humanitarians is the question. The answer obviously is to find a way whereby we may not only save the lives of our cattle but also see that they do not become a burden. I am sure that co-operative effort can help us in a large measure.

The following comparison may be helpful:

1. Under the collective system no farmer can keep cattle in his house as he does today. They foul the air, and dirty the surroundings. There is neither intelligence nor humanitarianism in living with animals. Man was not meant to do so. The space taken up by the cattle today would be spared to the farmer and his family, if the collective system were adopted.
2. As the number of cattle increases, life becomes impossible for the farmer in his home. Hence he is obliged to sell the calves and kill the male buffaloes or else turn them out to starve and die. This inhumanity would be

averted, if the care of cattle were undertaken on a co-operative basis.

3. Collective cattle farming would ensure the supply of veterinary treatment to animals when they are ill. No ordinary farmer can afford this on his own.
4. Similarly one selected bull can be easily kept for the need of several cows under the collective system. This is impossible otherwise except for charity.
5. Common grazing ground or land for exercising the animals will be easily available under the co-operative system, whereas today generally there is nothing of the kind for individual farmers.
6. The expense on fodder will be comparatively far less under the collective system.
7. The sale of milk at good prices will be greatly facilitated, and there will be no need or temptation for the farmer to adulterate it as he does as an individual.
8. It is impossible to carry out tests of the fitness of every head of cattle individually, but this could easily be done for the cattle of a whole village and would thus make it easier to improve the breed.
9. The foregoing advantages should be sufficient argument in favour of co-operative

farming. The strongest argument in its favour is that the individualistic system has been the means of making our own conditions as well as that of our cattle pitiable. We can only save ourselves and them by making this essential change.

I firmly believe too that we shall not derive the full benefits of agriculture until we take to co-operative farming. Does it not stand to reason that it is far better for a hundred families in a village to cultivate their lands collectively and divide the income therefrom than to divide the land anyhow into a hundred portions? And what applied to land applies equally to cattle.

It is quite another matter that it may be difficult to convert people to adopt this way of life straight-away. The straight and narrow road is always hard to traverse. Every step in the programme of cow service is strewn with thorny problems. But only by surmounting difficulties can we hope to make the path easier. My purpose for the time being is to show the great superiority of collective cattle farming over the individual effort. I hold further that the latter is wrong and the former only is right. In reality even the individual can only safeguard his independence through co-operation. In cattle farming the individual effort has led to selfishness and inhumanity, whereas the collective effort can abate both the evils, if it does not remove them altogether.¹

‘Should peasants pool together their land and divide the crop in proportion to the area of the fields they hold?’

My notion of co-operation is that the land would be held in co-operation by the owners and tilled and cultivated also in co-operation. This would cause a saving of labour, capital, tools, etc. The owners would work in co-operation and own capital, tools, animals, seeds etc. in co-operation. Co-operative farming of my conception would change the face of the land and banish poverty and idleness from their midst. All this is only possible if people become friends of one another and as one family. When that happy event takes place there would be no ugly sore in the form of a communal problem.²

The system of co-operation is far more necessary for the agriculturists. The land belongs to the State; therefore, it yields the largest return when it is worked co-operatively.

Let it be remembered that co-operation should be based on strict non-violence. There is no such thing as success of violent co-operation. Hitler was a forcible example of the latter. He also talked vainly of co-operation which was forced upon the people and everyone knew where Germany had been led as a result.

It would be a sad thing if India also tries to build up the new society based on co-operation by means

of violence. Good brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change is effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-co-operation, i.e. love, could the foundation of individuality be preserved, and real, abiding progress be assured for the world.³

CHAPTER VII
HAND-SPINNING—THE GREATEST
VOLUNTARY CO-OPERATION

Probably very few workers have noticed that progress of hand-spinning means the greatest voluntary co-operation the world has ever seen. It means co-operation among millions of human beings scattered over a very wide area and working for their daily bread. No doubt agriculture has required much co-operative effort, but hand-spinning requires still greater and more honest co-operation. Wheat grows more by nature's honesty than by man's. Manufacture of yarn in our cottages is dependent solely on human honesty. Hand-spinning is impossible without the willing and intelligent co-operation of millions of human beings. We have to arrive at a stage when the spinner like the grain-seller is assured of a steady market for his yarn as well as the supply of cotton slivers, if he or she does not know the process of carding. Is it any wonder if I claim that hand-spinning can drive away, as if by magic, the growing pauperism of the masses?

An English friend sends me a newspaper cutting showing the progress of machinery in China. He has evidently imagined that in advocating hand-spinning I am propagating my ideas about machinery. I am doing nothing of the kind. I would favour the use of

the most elaborate machinery, if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided. I have suggested hand-spinning as the only ready means of driving away penury and making famine of work and wealth impossible. The spinning wheel itself is a piece of valuable machinery, and in my own humble way I have tried to secure improvements in it in keeping with the special conditions of India. The only question, therefore, that a lover of India and humanity has to address himself to is how best to devise practical means of alleviating India's wretchedness and misery. No scheme of irrigation or other agricultural improvement that human ingenuity can conceive can deal with the vastly scattered population of India or provide work for masses of mankind who are constantly thrown out of employment. Imagine a nation working only five hours per day on an average, and this not by choice but by force of circumstances, and you have a realistic picture of India.

If the reader would visualize the picture, he must dismiss from his mind the busy fuss of the city life or the grinding fatigue of the factory life or the slavery of the plantation. These are but drops in the ocean of Indian humanity. If he would visualize the picture of the Indian skeleton, he must think of the eighty per cent of the population which is working its own fields and which has practically no occupation for at least four months in the year, and which therefore lives on the borderland of starvation. This is the normal

condition. The ever recurring famines make a large addition to this enforced idleness. What is the work that these men and women can easily do in their own cottages so as to supplement their very slender resources? Does anyone still doubt that it is only hand-spinning and nothing else? And I repeat that this can be made universal in a few months' time, if only the workers will. Indeed it is on a fair way to becoming universal. Experts only are needed to organize it. People are ready, and what is most in favour of hand-spinning is that it is not a new and untried method but people have till recently been using it. Its successful reintroduction does need skilful endeavour, honesty, and co-operation on the largest scale known to the world. And if India can achieve this co-operation, who should deny that India has by that one act achieved Swaraj?!

Spinning would spell the organization of crores into a joint co-operative effort, the conservation and utilisation of the energy of the millions, and the dedication of crores of lives to the service of the motherland. The carrying out of such a gigantic task would, further, give us a realization of our own strength. It would mean our acquiring a thorough mastery of the detail and innumerable knotty problems which it presents, e.g. learning to keep account of every pic, learning to live in the villages in sanitary and healthy conditions, removing the difficulties that block the way and so on. For, unless we learn all this, we would

not be able to accomplish this task. The spinning wheel, then, provides us with a means for generating this capacity in us.²

A dear friend asks me to answer the question that has occurred to him and his other friends. 'Is there co-operation in spinning? Does it not rather make people purely individualistic, self-centred, and keep them separate from one another even as so many pebbles?'

The briefest and the most decisive answer I can give is: 'Go, watch any well-organized spinning centre, and test the thing for yourself. You will then discover that spinning cannot succeed without co-operation.'

But brief though this answer is, it is, I know, useless for those (and they are the majority) who cannot or will not make the time for paying such a visit. I must, therefore, try to convince by describing such a centre in the best way I can.

In speaking to a co-operative society in Madras last year I said that through hand-spinning I was trying to found the largest co-operative society known to the world. This is not an untrue claim. It may be ambitious. It is not untrue because hand-spinning cannot serve the purpose for which it is intended unless millions actually co-operate in it.

The purpose is to drive away enforced idleness and pauperism which is the result mainly of that idleness in India. This purpose, it will be admitted, is grand enough. The effort must be correspondingly great.

There must be co-operation from the very commencement. If spinning makes one self-reliant, it also enables one to understand the necessity of interdependence almost at every step. An ordinary spinner must find a ready market for her surplus yarn. She cannot weave it. There can be no market for her yarn without the co-operation of a large number of people. Just as our agriculture is possible only because there is co-operation, be it ever so little, of millions in regard to the cultivation and disposal of the produce, so will spinning be successful only if there is co-operation on an equally large scale.

Take the working of a typical centre. At the central office is collected seed cotton for spinners. The cotton is ginned by ginner perhaps at the centre. It is distributed then among carders who re-deliver it in the shape of slivers. These are now ready to be distributed among the spinners who bring their yarn from week to week and take away fresh slivers and their wages in return. The yarn thus received is given to weavers to weave and received back for sale in the shape of Khadi. This latter must now be sold to the weavers—the general public. Thus the centre office has to be in constant living human touch with a very large number of people irrespective of caste, colour or creed. For the centre has no dividends to make, has no exclusive care but the care of the most needy. The centre to be useful must keep itself clean in every sense of the term. The bond between it and the

component parts of the vast organization is purely spiritual or moral. A spinning centre, therefore, is a co-operative society whose members are ginner, carders, spinners, weavers and buyers—all tied together by a common bond, mutual goodwill, and service. In this society the course of every piece can be traced almost with certainty as it floats to and fro. And as these centres grow and draw the youth of the country who have the fire of patriotism burning brightly in their hearts and whose purity will stand the strain of all temptation, they will, they must, become centres for radiating elementary knowledge of hygiene, sanitation, domestic treatment of simple disease among the villagers, and education among their children suited to their needs. That time is not yet. The beginning indeed has been made. But the movement can grow only slowly. It is not possible to show substantial results till Khadi has become a salable article in the bazaar like *ghee* or, better still a postage stamp. For the present a vast amount of energy has to be spent in educating the people to buy Khadi in the place of any other cloth, even as a child would eat and bless the rice cooked by its mother without stopping to think of the quality or the price of the rice so cooked. If it did, it would find that the rice cooked by the mother was far too dear for the labour and the love spent upon the working. And so will it be with Khadi one day, when the children of Mother Hind wake from their deep sleep and realize that yarn

spun and worked by the hands of her daughters and sons can never be too dear for her crores of children. When this simple truth dawns upon us, spinning centre will multiply a hundredfold, a ray of hope will penetrate the dark Indian cottages, and that hope will be the surest foundation for the freedom we want but do not know how to achieve.³

I would suggest to the workers that now that the true message of Khadi has been understood they should take all the steps simultaneously. A commencement has to be made with cotton growing with a fair knowledge of the conditions of cotton cultivation. It should be possible to grow cotton for village use almost anywhere. Concentration in the most favourable soil is necessary when the ambition is to supply the world. But the reverse holds good where the ambition is to supply the village need. A corner in a field can easily grow enough cotton for the village farmer; or a village may grow cotton for itself in co-operation. If this is done, it is simple enough to see that no imported cloth can beat cloth thus produced locally, either in cost or durability. The process induces the greatest conservation of energy.⁴

CO-OPERATION IN VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

The village worker should acquire all-round knowledge about building up the whole village. There will be some sewing work in the village, smithy, carpentry, leather work, agriculture, etc. The village worker should seek to bring about co-operation among the workers in these various occupations so as to make them serve as harmonious parts of one whole. This should not be too difficult for a worker resolved to employ his body and mind fully.¹

Social worker should first make a systematic, detailed inquiry on the spot as to what occupations could be undertaken in each village. They should then proceed to organize those occupations on a co-operative basis.²

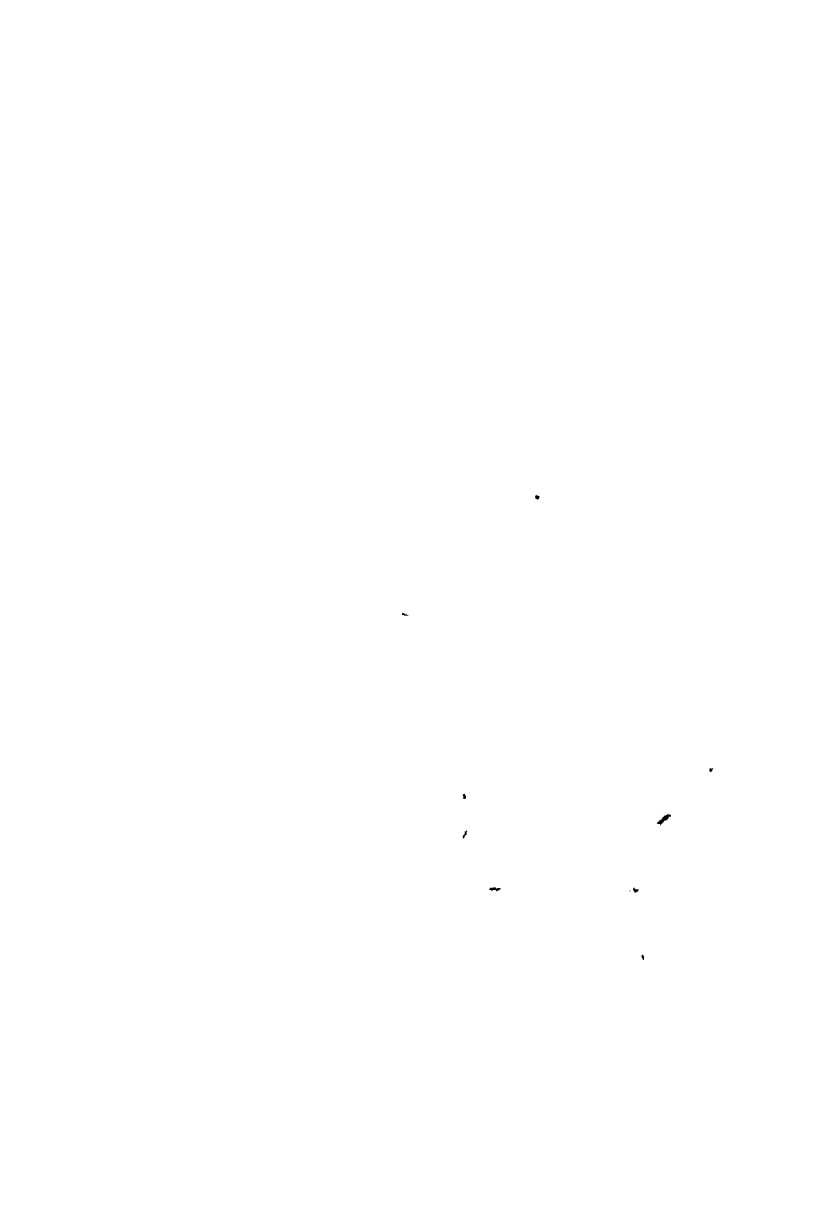
Though articles may be manufactured by villagers in their cottages, they can be pooled together and the profits divided. The villagers may work under supervision and according to plan. The raw material may be supplied from the common stock. If the will to co-operative effort is created, there is surely ample opportunity for co-operation, division of labour, saving of time and efficiency of work.³

‘We may have co-operative societies not only for Khadi but also for oil-pressing, hand-paper etc. In’

course of time these bodies in the various villages may, if necessary, merge into a union.'

I do not have much to say on this point. Wherever we can get reliable workers work should be started. There is no harm in beginning simultaneously the three types of experiments you have enumerated. But we can get rid of many worries if we do not hold ourselves responsible for Khadi sales. So long as Khadi remains a salable commodity, these worries are bound to be there. I also realize that we cannot entirely get rid of them today. But so long as we believe that Khadi, like bread, must be made at home and that we should not maintain ourselves on bazar-made biscuits even if cheaper, we shall have to explain to the people that to use bazar-made goods is to court disaster. If the people grasp the idea, we shall have to devise an easy method of Khadi manufacture at home. Our slogan will be "cloth even like bread". All difficulties will then disappear. The co-operative bodies will then have their own shape and form which need not now be anticipated.⁴

I do not know any cure . . . except a gigantic effort in right education on a mass scale. And that could be done best through the propagation of simple handicrafts and industries on a co-operative basis. It would help as nothing else to drive away unemployment, poverty and ignorance and inculcate upon the people a sense of interdependence and community of interests.⁵



APPENDICES

by

J. C. KUMARAPPA

(Extracted from his *Economy of Permanence*)

APPENDIX I

MULTI-PURPOSE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

Co-operative Societies are ideally suited organizations not only for developing village industries, but also for promoting group effort by the villagers. A multi-purpose village society can make itself very effective in a variety of ways such as:

1. Stocking of raw materials for industries and foodgrains needed by the village people.
2. Marketing of surplus village products and distributing the requirements of the people.
3. Supplying and distributing seeds, improved implements and tools, manures, such as bonemeal, flesh and fish manure, seeds etc.
4. Maintaining a common stud-bull for the area.
5. Standing between the government and the people in the matter of collection and payment of taxes, etc.

Much of the wastage caused to foodgrains in transport and handling and expenses of bringing foodgrains to a central place and redistributing them again to the village can be eliminated through the agency of a co-operative society which can be a very reliable medium both from the government as well as from the public point of view.

The farmer retains the necessary amount of wheat for his family requirements and the surplus he deposits in the Co-operative Society and in return he gets the things he requires on the strength of credit he has thus created with the society. Government revenue could also be paid in kind in the same way and not necessarily in cash. Today revenue collections in cash from villagers cause a great hardship. If stocks of grain are held by co-operative societies in villages, the remuneration also of local officials can be conveniently paid partly in kind.

Money economy does not report true values. The values are changed as money passes from one individual to another. There is a great difference in value between the rupee in the hands of a poor man and a rupee in the hands of a rich man. Such transfers either increase the national wealth or impoverish the nation. Superficially a rupee appears to be a rupee, but in practice it is not so. A rupee in the hands of a poor man may mean 4 or 5 days' food provisions, whereas in the hands of a millionaire it may represent the value of a cigar. Thus, when a rupee passes from

the hands of a poor man into the hands of a millionaire it loses its value considerably; conversely, money when it goes from the rich to the poor enhances in value. Hence we have got to see that in our economy we prevent money going into the hands where it will lose its value and this is what the multi-purpose co-operative society should attempt to do. It will collect the produce from the villager and will pay the government revenue in wheat or other commodities. It will pay government officials on government account in articles of food which will provide a balanced diet and when all this is carried out, ultimately, there will be only a very small adjustment to be made between government and the multi-purpose societies and that also can be done by transfer of surplus between different regions. If that can be managed we shall neutralize, though not eliminate, the evils of money economy and retain the true value as dictated by commodity value as distinct from money value.

APPENDIX II
CO-OPERATIVE FUNCTIONS

The Function of a Bank

The function of any bank is to lubricate the wheels of commerce and industry and keep them moving smooth with the least friction. In addition to this a co-operative institution has to bring about active co-operation between the various factors in the whole economic organization.

The Western banks, based on money economy, count their progress by the amount of deposits etc. they have received and profits made. We cannot do that. We have to appraise the work of a bank in its relation to the well-being of the people. It has to perform various functions in the economic activity of the people and serve their needs even if it means a loss financially. We cannot ascertain the part a bank has played by any calculation based on rupees, annas and pies.

Western banking system has been, like the needle of the hypodermic syringe, used by the financial exploiters to draw out the life blood of the producers. The last famine of 1943 in which about 3 millions lost their lives in Bengal alone, is largely attributable to such misuse of banking powers vested in the Reserve Bank which enjoys, along with the Imperial Bank, the advantage of being the custodian of public funds, but

their work is a tragedy to the people of the land. This is because of the misuse of money.

Money, when used as an instrument of exchange or as a means of storage of purchasing power, functions satisfactorily. The tokens used as money are generally imperishable as compared with commodities and hence the money-holder is at an advantage as he has the bargaining power. A plain-tain-seller has to dispose of his goods before they get spoilt but the money-holder suffers from no such disadvantage. He can hold on to his money for any length of time. Therefore, in this inequality there is a factor which may be used by the money-holder to exploit the commodity-holder. Banks as a rule are holders of money. How they use their advantageous position will determine the part they play in commerce and industry. Where a bank uses its power for strengthening its own position as an institution, and if the position of its customers deteriorates as a consequence, such a bank cannot be said to fulfil its purpose in the economic organization. This is as regards money as a medium of exchange.

Money as Storage of Purchasing Power

Again, as regards its comparative imperishability, the right use of this quality in money is to afford storage of purchasing power to the people. A farmer cultivates his fields and disposes of his produce after harvest. He realises a certain amount in money. This money has to last him till the next harvest. That

is, he should be able to exchange it for other commodities of like value over a period of twelve months. If in this period the purchasing power is altered, the position of the farmer also fluctuates in the same way. Therefore, an unalterable storage of purchasing power is a prime necessity in an agricultural country like ours. In this function, multi-purpose co-operative societies can help by restricting the spread of money economy, thus limiting the chances of fluctuation and speculation and by rendering reasonable banking services based on the security of commodities as will prevent the farmer having to dispose of his whole stock at a time.

Co-operation

This brings us to the second function of co-operation. Co-operation implies the elimination of competition and working in a kind of partnership resulting in advantages to all. Its basic requirement is an identity of interest of parties to the enterprise. There can be no exploitation in co-operation. Therefore there can be no co-operation with an exploiter at one end and his victim at the other end. Foreigners come to sell their goods to us. That is their only interest in us. It is for that, they hold others in political bondage. If co-operative societies help hand-loom weavers to obtain American yarn they are linking up incompatibles and therefore are not functioning in the true spirit of co-operation. Their legitimate sphere would be to bring local village spinners and weavers into a living touch with one another. They have to bring

about co-operation 'all along the line—raw material produced with the artisan and then with the consumer. The co-operative societies should be the link binding all parties together—like a silver wire that holds the pearls together.

A co-operative bank can protect the unsophisticated villagers from being duped by the government minions. Such institutions can collect the produce, store it, pay on behalf of their constituents, dues, taxes, revenue, etc., sell the goods at proper market rates, right through the year, without dumping the whole stock at a time on the market and thus causing extreme fluctuations in the price of commodities. They can function like the watertight compartments of the ocean liner and be the shock absorber in the economic organization.

The test of the proper functioning of co-operative institutions can be seen not in their financial balance sheets but in the bazars around. If these shops are stocked with mill produced goods or foreign imported articles it signifies that there has been no co-operative effort to bring the various factors of production to supply all our needs. If the co-operative institutions function properly it will promote self-sufficiency in all our primary needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. When this happens there will be nothing to attract the cupidity of the foreign manufacturer. Hence there will be no international jealousies leading to global wars. Thus the development of co-operative

institutions on right lines can lead to national independence and through that to international peace.

Manure

Much of the waste of the village, including sweepings, bones, human excreta, etc., that endanger the sanitation of the village at present, could be utilized by making compost manure. This is very easily done and it is as good a manure as cow dung. Bones and oil cakes, which are usually exported out of the country, should not be allowed to leave the villages. The bones should be crushed locally with the help of the *chunam chakkis*, after being charred a little in the *chunam bhattis* and the manure distributed amongst the farmers. Manure making in villages may be given out on subsidised contracts. This will ensure the cleanliness of the village while raising the status of the sweepers engaged in making compost and manure to the level of traders.

Oil mills, which take away oil seeds from the villagers and give only oil in return, sending the cake abroad, are depriving the land of the valuable form of fertilizer. This must be stopped altogether. This is one of the fundamental reasons why oil seeds should not be allowed to go out of the villages but should be crushed in the local country *ghanis*. This will retain both the oil and the cake in the villages and enrich men, cattle and the land.

In the name of increasing the fertility of the soil, great attempts are being made to introduce chemical

fertilizers. The experience gained through the use of such chemical fertilizers throughout the world is clear enough to warn us of their inroads. They do not add to the fertility of the soil but act as stimulants or drugs so that the land yields up its fertility resulting in immediate bumper crops, but in the end bring about a corresponding exhaustion of the land. They also destroy a host of earth-worms so essential to maintain the fertility of the soil. In the long run, such artificial fertilizers prove to be most injurious to the land. Behind the specious pleading for the chemical fertilizers lies the anxiety of the fertilizer factory owners to push the sale of their products irrespective of the harm or injury they do to agriculture.

Seeds

Selected and improved varieties of seeds are essential if agriculture is to flourish. What is wanted in this regard is the machinery for effective distribution of seeds in the form of co-operative societies which should run seed farms under able research workers.

Grain Storage

Enormous loss of grain occurs through bad storage alone. Such loss is estimated on a conservative basis to be about 3.5 million tons, an amount equal to the declared deficit of grains in India during 1946. The qualitative loss caused by insects, rodents, dampness etc., all caused by bad storage arrangements resulting in all kinds of diseases, is equally great.

If storage arrangements are made locally all the waste through bad storage, loss by insects etc., and conveyance charges will be eliminated.

The storage problem is both an urgent and a permanent one and should be tackled in all earnestness and seriousness. In any case, holding stocks in ill-protected godowns, as at present, should be stopped.

Big towns and cities, where proportionately larger stocks of grain are to be held, can build *pucca* cement godowns. These can be built either by the municipality or by private people to be rented out for grain storage, or better still, by Co-operative Societies. These godowns should be licensed and subjected to periodical inspection, like the boilers, as at present.

If the stocks are held in the villages where they are produced and all their movements to towns and back to villages are eliminated, the chances of their getting damaged are, of course, reduced.

Individual holders of stock also should be educated in the methods for the preservation of grain.

Conservation of Raw Materials in the Villages

The greatest handicap from which village industries suffer is the utter resourcelessness of the artisan. Being unorganised he is unable to stand against the competition from his resourceful and organised rivals, the mills. With all the resources at their command, the mills practically monopolize the raw materials and corner the market even for the finished products, leaving

the isolated artisans utterly helpless. The financial policy of the banks, discriminative railway freight rates and the capitalistic marketing organization, all favour the working of large-scale production to the exclusion of the artisans. The artisans are left with hardly any raw materials in the villages. This process needs to be reversed. All raw materials produced in the villages should be conserved and consumed in their place of production and only the surplus that remains after satisfying local needs should be allowed to be sent out. Production should be directed towards raw materials needed by village industries rather than towards those required by factories.

Supply of Tools and Implements

Tools and implements of village industries are not generally of uniform efficiency throughout the land and often even in one province. Research should be directed towards devising suitable instruments.

Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies should arrange for the regular supply of equipment and spare parts to village artisans.

District Demonstration Centres

Demonstration centres of Co-operative Societies should be located in rural areas. Their functions should be as follows:

- (1) To manufacture and supply implements and tools to village artisans and to introduce

improved implements in place of old type ones.

- (2) To train carpenters and other artisans and to teach them the latest methods introduced into the various industries.
- (3) To collect tools and exhibits of local art and display them in a museum.
- (4) To carry on industrial and health surveys in the district.
- (5) To work in co-ordination with other co-operative societies and the Hindustani Talimi School for the general uplift of the villages.

APPENDIX III
VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

The Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies can supply raw materials, stock the finished goods and help in distributing all village industries products especially those connected with food-processing, textiles and other primary needs. They should be ever watchful of the interest of the villagers. In particular the following recommendations may be attended to:

- (1) Rice mills should be disbanded and the engines could be used for irrigation purposes as has been already suggested.
- (2) Hullers used for polishing rice should be banned.
- (3) People should be informed about the better nutritive value of whole unpolished rice and about the method of cooking it, along with practical demonstrations. Polishing of rice should be prohibited or its degree of polishing should be very strictly controlled, or par-boiling of paddy should be encouraged.
- (4) Where paddy husking is carried on an industrial scale, for business purposes, in the case of predominantly paddy growing areas, expensive equipment such as paddy separators, winnowers, etc. should be supplied on

hire to a group of artisans through the Co-operative Society.

- (5) In view of the fact that the use of unpolished rice is to be advocated and popularized, the movement of paddy from one place to another will become necessary. In order that the freight on the extra weight of paddy may not enhance the cost of rice, the freight charges on paddy should be suitably adjusted.
- (6) In areas where the implements for dehusking paddy and polishing rice are the same, and both the processes are combined into one of pounding paddy, resulting in polished rice, dehusking implements, i.e. *chakkis* either of wood, stone or mud, should be introduced to restrict polishing. Such implements might be supplied as also the equipments for other industries, through the District Demonstration Centres. The polishing of rice might be discouraged by imposing a tax on implements that polish rice and the degree of polishing obtained with these should be subject to supervision and control.

Paddy and other grains and seeds required by the village should be stocked in the village itself and only the surplus could be sent out and that only through the Co-operative Society.

Flour-grinding

(1) Good quality stones for hand *chakkis* and equipment for the bullock and water-driven *chakkis* should be made available through the Demonstration Centres.

(2) The production and use of fine white flour, *maida*, should be banned.

(3) Flour mills grind large quantities of grain and hold their stocks of flour for long periods. This causes such flour to deteriorate. Therefore, such mills should be discouraged.

(4) Bullock-driven flour *chakkis* should be introduced where the necessary facilities exist.

(5) Wherever water power is available from running water of a river or a canal, water-driven flour *chakkis* can be set up.

(6) Such *chakkis* might be owned co-operatively by the villagers as in the Punjab.

Oil-pressing

The main difficulties in resuscitating the village *ghanis* are the following:

The villages are practically denuded of the oil-seeds at the harvest time. To set this right only surplus oil-seeds should be allowed to go out of the village.

At some places the local *ghanis* are so inefficient and small that it is well nigh impossible to make them a practical proposition. Even in a single province

there are numerous types of *ghanis*. A detailed survey of the working of all such *ghanis* should be carried out. The working and advantages of improved *ghanis* should be demonstrated.

There is at present a great dearth of *ghani* carpenters even of the old type. Oilmen find it very hard to get their timely service. Their difficulty of getting equipment and spare parts is equally great. Training should be given to oilmen and carpenters in the technique of the improved *ghanis* at centres which will also provide the necessary equipment and spare parts.

Tahsil Co-operative Societies of oilmen or the Multi-purpose Village Societies will be the best medium for stocking oil-seeds, controlling the prices of seeds, oil and cake, eliminating adulteration etc.

Gur-making

Gur-making from palms is being done on a commercial scale in Bengal and Madras where the industry has been well established.

PRESERVATION AND PLANTING OF MORE PALMS:
Felling of palm trees should be prohibited. Government-owned waste land, unsuited for agricultural purposes, should be utilized for raising palms so as to be sufficient to replace cane gur and sugar by palm gur in due course. Also cultivation of palms on similar private lands and field bunds should be subsidised. Adequate supply of seedlings should be arranged and proper methods of cultivation should be taught.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES: Co-operative Societies should take up the production and market the produce. They should also supply, where needed, equipments such as pans and centrifugal machines on hire.

Bee-keeping

Bee-keeping is doubly useful. It enables better fertilization of the crops giving the farmers a better yield, and at the same time provides honey, a nutritious article of diet.

The demonstration centres can keep a few colonies of honey bees and the work can be extended in other villages where bee pasturage is available. A preliminary survey of the area by an expert in bee-keeping will be necessary for this purpose. Once the centre is able to domesticate the bees, it can provide facilities for agriculturists to receive training and to obtain the necessary equipments at moderate rates.

Cotton and Wool

In areas where cotton can be grown adequate lands must be assigned for growing at least 127 lbs. of lint per head of the population and its spinning and weaving should be organised on the lines indicated by the programme of work followed by the All-India Spinners' Association.

Similarly, in sheep rearing areas production of woollen goods should be encouraged by aids to sheep-breeding, grading of wool, etc.

Leather-tanning

Export of raw hides and skins from India are amongst the largest in the world. If we can convert all this raw material into leather ourselves we shall be providing occupation to millions of Harijans. Time being the essence of tanning, much finance is needed. Hence the work must be done co-operatively. Societies should purchase the hides, etc., and pay piece-work wages on various processes and market the goods either as finished leather or as manufactured articles.

(1) Leather is being tanned in all provinces, but all are not of equally good quality. Calcutta 'Chrome' and Madras 'Gavi', which are considered to be of standard quality, are not attempted elsewhere. Other varieties are far inferior to these two. The reasons for this should be found out and the same standard of tanning should be introduced everywhere.

(2) Export of raw hides and skins should be discouraged by Government levying a very heavy duty on their export.

(3) A cart for carrying the carcasses should be supplied by Co-operative Societies at nominal cost to a group of *chamars*. At present, for want of such conveyance, the carcasses are dragged on the ground. It is estimated that this process reduces the value of the leather by about 50 per cent.

(4) The circumstances under which the industry is now carried on are very unhygienic and demand a complete reorganization. This can be brought about

if proper arrangements are made at a site a little away from the village dwelling places, for building sheds, pits, drainage, supply of water, etc. and if the processes, which are unhygienic, be carried out by simple machinery. If this involves a transformation of the scattered *chamar* families into a central tannery for a tahsil or district, the change may be for the better. Such tanneries may be owned and managed by Co-operative Societies only of the *chamars*.

(5) At present, there are few selected places where leather manufactured goods are produced on a very big scale and distributed over the whole country. This system must be discouraged and local manufacture of practically all the leather goods, such as foot-wear, money purses, suitcases etc. should be encouraged; either the local manufacture may be subsidized or the imports taxed.

Subsidies should be given to individual contractors or Co-operative Societies for the preparation of manure from blood, flesh and bones from the carcasses. The subsidy should be in proportion to the output of manure.

(6) Glue, guts, brushes, and other bye-products can also be prepared by these societies. The horn industry can be profitably introduced among *chamar* families. It should be encouraged by subsidy for some time and by the purchase of the finished products by the government for its use. The necessary equipment should, of course, be supplied on hire.

Soap-making

A survey of deposits of *sajji matti* should be carried out. And wherever such deposits of *sajji matti* are found, soap makers should be allowed to collect them without any tax or royalty being demanded of them. Incidentally, it may be observed that the removal of this deposit improves the quality of the land. Caustic lye prepared from *sajji matti* and non-edible oils should be utilized for soap manufacture in villages.

Lighting

The non-edible oils as neem, *karanji*, candle nut, *pardi*, *mahua*, *rayan*, etc. which are very little used at present, should be utilized also for lighting purposes. Every effort should be directed towards making the villages self-sufficient in lighting.

Vegetable oil lamps like, the 'Magandipa' devised by the A.I.V.I.A. can be distributed from the demonstration centres along with other equipments, and the local artisans should also be encouraged to produce them.

Paper-making

(1) The Provincial Government may start hand-made paper industry in the jails where the required raw materials are available in the vicinity. For this purpose a survey of the local raw materials needed for paper-making should be carried out by an expert.

(2) All the chemicals required for paper-making should be made available by Co-operative Societies

to the hand-made paper production centres at controlled rates.

(3) One central workshop should be maintained, in co-operation with other industries for making the required machinery such as beater, calender, moulds, screw press, envelopes-making machine, etc.

Paper makers should be supplied with the latest type of equipments such as hollander beater, calender machine, screw press etc., either on hire or on the hire-purchase system through the Co-operative Societies. These societies may also supply pulp where such pulp calls for power-driven machinery for its making.

(4) Such raw materials as office records, waste paper and grasses available in the government forests useful for paper-making, which are auctioned at present to the highest bidder, should be reserved for hand-made paper producing centres and should be supplied to them through their co-operative societies at moderate rates. Similarly, the finished products prepared by the centres should be purchased by the Government for their stationery and office record purposes, through the Co-operative Societies at such prices as will leave the paper makers in a position to maintain a reasonable standard of life.

(5) TRAINING: The required expert staff for hand-made paper producing centres can be trained at the Provincial Training Centres.

(6) Priority should be obtained from the railways for the transport of hand-made paper and its

equipments. Hand-made paper should be exempted from the terminal and octroi duties.

Pottery

(1) The first requisite of the pottery industry is the analysis of the available clay in the province. This should be undertaken by the Government.

(2) Clay-mixing is an art requiring considerable knowledge of chemistry. Hence it should be done in a central place like a Co-operative Society, or a jail, and the mixed clay should be distributed to individual potters. Alternatively, the existing potters should be taught the art of clay mixing if possible, by giving them a set of formulas for particular types of clay.

(3) As in the case of other industries, the Co-operative Societies can be the agency for the distribution of clay as well as the improved potters' wheel on hire.

(4) The glazing and firing of particular types of pots will have to be done again co-operatively. Both the processes of clay-mixing and firing and glazing should be done on a service basis co-operatively by the potters themselves. Pots, which do not require very high temperature firing, and which are ordinarily done at present in the villages by groups of potters, can be fired better by introducing improved furnaces in place of temporary ones. Properly constructed furnaces will reduce the consumption of fuel.

The big furnaces required for brick-tiles-firing should be co-operatively organized. The shape and strength of bricks and tiles should be improved.

(5) Facilities should be provided for potters to receive short-term training in all the processes, such as clay-mixing and improved modelling, firing and glazing, at some convenient place.

Sanitation and Manure

(1) What forms should the latrines take in the villages should be found out after alternative methods have been tried out. It may be that more than one type may be found suitable and necessary. Experiments must be made in regard to types of latrines etc., to keep the villages in a sanitary condition. Bore-hole urinals should be installed in suitable places in the villages.

(2) Subsidies should be given to individual contractors for converting human excreta and all the dirt of the village into compost manure. The subsidy being proportionate to the amount of manure produced should be such as to attract individuals to this job. Unless it is made a profitable business proposition, it is not likely to be attractive. The grant or subsidy, at least for some years, is essential to make it attractive.

(3) The custom of housing cattle inside the village and often in the dwelling places themselves,

requires attention from the point of view of village sanitation. Though this is a long-term problem, the sanitation of the village is difficult to maintain without proper provision for stables and mangers.

Wherever new extension of a town or village has to be made, the cattle housing should be provided for in a place a little away from the dwellings. Sanitation of the village is one of the main considerations that weigh with some who advocate common dairies of the villages, instead of individually owned and kept cattle.

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[Note : *H* stands for *Harijan*, *Y.I.* for *Young India*, *Natesan* for *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, (4th ed.) Natesan, Madras, *Khadi* for *Khadi — Why and How*, (1959)]

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