RM No. 9. NOT FOR PUBLICATION % American Embassy
New Delhi, India
(written at Benares, January 25, 1947)

Dear Mr. Rogers:

I explained in the original of my letter 8 that mental confusion, a bothersome cold, and a round of parties rendered my 18-day stay in New Delhi fairly fruitless in terms of concrete results. That mental confusion was my primary malaise will be understood from the difficulty I had with the topic of economic planning, and from this letter, in which I shall refer to several interesting topics encountered on my trip. In failing to keep exclusively to my village subject (on which I will finish typing a report in a day or two), I spread my energies a little too widely. I hope this will teach me to work more solidly on one topic in the future; but it has at least given me a wide range of subjects which I will now be able to follow up in daily papers with some personal awareness rather than mere academic interest.

Travancore State furnished the most topical and exciting controversy of my trip. Boasting the highest literacy rate in India and a progressive advancement of industry in recent years, Travancore is nevertheless an example of an authoritarian state. One of the Maharaja's ancestors conveniently accepted for his family the task of serving as 'Trustees' for the 'Deity' of the State. Unlike the Maharaja of neighboring Cochin State, who has recognized the sovereignty of the people and is fostering self-government, the Maharaja of Travancore does not propose to relinquish his 'Trusteeship'. The actual power in the state is in the hands of the Dewan (Prime Minister), Sir. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. Just before my arrival the Dewan's troops had been forced to kill (by his own figure) some 300 striking coir workers, led by Communists, in a region noted for its famines during the war years and for its diseases such as elephantiasis. I travelled exclusively in Congress and Christian circles in Travancore, which was unfortunate in that I was therefore unable to find a single person to defend the Administration. Numerous arrests of political workers (Congressmen as well as Communists), and the suppression of two Opposition newspapers were cited to me as infringement of civil liberties. I heard repeated charges of bungling and corruption in the food rationing system; complaints that the Government had neglected the small agriculturist in its attention to industrial expansion, from which the profits are said to go mostly to non-residents of Travancore; and complaints at the Government's interference with religion (the tendency of this interference in recent years has been anti-Christian, but see below).

Obviously, charges of this sort must be subjected to examination, but I confess that their quantity was so great that I became somewhat prejudiced against the Administration, even though I knew I had heard only the Opposition side of the case, and had had neither time nor the varied contacts necessary to analyze it carefully. Holding such a prejudice, I was afraid to discuss the more drastic charges when I met the Dewan himself. Instead, we talked about the unsensational subject of the economic development of the state; but I entered the discussion too uninformed with facts and figures, and so as an interviewer was a failure. A few days later I left the state, having heard the same charges two or three times more. I felt that some of them might be exaggerated and that time may show that the economic policy of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has actually benefitted the state. It is certain, however, that the people are not allowed to govern themselves, despite

the obvious competence and forwardness of many sections of all the communities. I felt that the political consciousness of these groups is strong enough so that, without the support of the Indian Army, (which a National Indian Government might be expected to withhold), the present rule will not be able to maintain itself, without making drastic concessions to the people, for more than two years after national independence is finally attained. (Since I wrote the draft of this letter, the press has published details of a proposed new constitution which the Travancore Government put forward for the information of the public. It would appear to retain full effective control in the hands of the Dewan: very probably my judgment about the state of political consciousness and the future of the present rule is not shared by that Government).

Travancore introduced me to the general topic of authoritarianism is India. It is not a simple subject. There is no doubt that in speaking of effective democracy in my last letter I may have painted too optimistic a picture. In the Indian States and under the strong hand of the District Commissioner and his administration in British India, Indians have had centuries of rule from above. They have been deprived of education, but a much worse feature is that they have had neither the possibility nor the necessity of governing themselves, of taking initiative for their own advancement. That the trait of dependence on others has not been fully shaken off during the struggle for independence is shown by the history of both major political parties, in which direction still generally comes from above; in critical decisions from one man, Gandhi or Jinnah, though they do not ignore their Working Committees' views. Faced with the traditional mass lethargy and lack of self-confidence of Indians, many observers believe that authoritarian rule will continue.

I have included in this undifferentiated term, 'authoritarianism', three distinct types: hereditary monarchy, in the Indian States; foreign rule, of which one of the main results has been economic hardship for the Indian; and what might be called the 'hero-rule' in the political parties, wherein the party workers have rarely assumed final responsibility, preferring to rely on one man whom they fully trust. I stress the economic aspect of the foreign rule, because a fundamental fear of many people is that the British may give way only to be replaced by an Indian oligarchy resulting in economic exploitation of the lower classes, though the form of government and exploitation might be slightly different. Reasons for such fears are: present political consciousness, which is woefully weak in the villages, as I have seen, and among laborers (to a lesser degree, I believe), but relatively very strong among capitalists, the bigger landlords, and the urban middle class (what there is of it); secondly, the important part which these advanced economic groups have always played in politics, providing most of the financial backing for both major parties. Critical eyes are watching the present Congress Ministries, for example, to see whether the party financiers seem to be imposing their will on the policy decisions.

Some of these observers, fearing such exploitation of the unconscious masses through a republican form of government, have said to me that the hereditary rule in the Indian States may be a good thing, at least at the present stage, for the welfare of the people, particularly the villages. Their hope is, of course, that the Prince himself and the Dewan whose appointment he accepts will be truly concerned with the advancement of the people and at the same time strong enough to protect them from strong economic groups. This is a hope which obviously has difficulties. In Hyderabad, I met one of India's best benevolent Dewans, Sir Miraa

Ismail, at present President of the Executive Council to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. A brilliant administrator, creative and just in promoting the people's welfare, simple in his habits and extremely gracious and friendly in his manner, Sir Mirza has earned the confidence of wide popular groups. Yet in his words I read the paternalism which must look after its children because, it believes, they are now and will continue to be incapable of tending to their own needs. When he leaves will the children be any more fit ? It may even be asked: will efficient administration continue without the guiding control of his firm and able hand ? (In this instance it will be instructive for me to study the present and future condition of Mysore and Jaipur States, where Sir Mirza has already served as Dewan). To my mind, only if his major effort is to prepare the people rapidly for self-rule will his administration fulfill its highest possibility. And, this example apart, where is the guarantee that hereditary rule will first consider the interest of the villagers ? In short, one is forced back to the conclusion that such hereditary 'trusteeship' of the people's well-being is just as uncertain and subject to abuse as is the 'trusteeship' which Gandhi partially entrusts to the advanced economic groups. That brings us back to the main question: how will these groups use their trusteeship ? If they are inclined to abuse it, will they be able to maintain themselves in power, either by force or by skillful politicking ?

To analyze this question properly, one would have to devote very careful study to the personalities of the leading men involved; to the growth and developing attitude of those groups which finance politics; to the actual political workers; and finally to labor and peasant movements which may eventually come to play a significant role. Such a study I have obviously not made, so should not be giving opinions. Yet at the moment I do have a general opinion on the question, subject to alteration though it may be. Thinking of some of the real workers for independence whom I have met, my impression is that the long struggle has increasingly strengthened and expanded the spirit of opposition to non-responsive governments, and has in considerable measure developed a responsibility of thinking and acting for oneself; so that, having achieved so much, these workers will not readily permit the bigger interests who have financed the movement to replace the British Raj with a class Raj. In fact, the older workers may be impelled by young Socialist blood (in both the Congress and the Muslim League, I believe) to retain or speed up the impetus of this revolutionary evolution in its Post-British economic and social development. This, as I say, is only my preliminary observation on a complex subject. I turn to simpler topics.

In Madras I had a long talk with Mr. L. N. Rao, of the Servants of India Society, who introduced me to one of India's biggest minority problems, the aboriginals. I had never been adequately conscious of the number of these tribesmen and animists: 25,000,000. Hillsmen for the most part, they have been subjected in varying degrees to contact with the outside world. The results of such contacts, or of continued isolation, are a matter of much controversy. One viewpoint is very effectively presented by the anthropologist, Dr. Verrier Elwin, in his booklet, "Loss of Nerve". Dr. Elwin, who lives among tribesmen, says that they have been demoralized, confused, and mentally and emotionally warped by the impact of modern economic, legal, and social forces on their crude but self-contained societies. Examples of these forces are government restrictions on such age-old customs as the 'ritual hunt' and the system of shifting cultivation; or attacks on tribal religion, home distilleries, home crafts, etc. The title itself, "Loss of Nerve", carries the whole story, when one thinks about it.

Here is a true sociological problem. In this booklet, Dr. Elwin's purpose is diagnosis only, not solution, as he says. I have not read his other works as yet. But other solutions have been proposed, and in them political considerations play an important part. Under the Government of India Act of 1935, these tribesmen have been put in "Excluded Areas" of various categories, not subject to jurisdiction from elected governments, either Provincial or Central, but administered by members of the Political Service responsible through Provincial Governors to the Governor-General. To the nationalists this has seemed to be only a scheme for preserving pockets of British influence, like the Indian States, scattered throughout the country. Congress therefore says that the artificial political barriers must be abolished; that the tribal areas must be incorporated within the new linguistic provinces that are to be created; and that education and other aids must be given to bring them within the orb of modern society. Aside from political arguments, they also give sociological reasons for such a policy. They point to the nature of the case: two unequal societies are side by side, the stronger and bulkier now committed to a program of social advancement, the weaker necessarily having intercourse with its neighbor and being affected by it. It is inevitably the weaker, they point out, whose ways must adjust to the new patterns: so better for the stronger conscientiously to go ahead and foster adjustments, in consultation with the weaker, than to postpone them or to let the stronger forces impose themselves on the weaker in an uncontrolled manner, merely prolonging the confusion and malaise. Views of this nature, for example, are presented by A. V. Thakkar in his handbook, "Problem of the Aboriginals in India". And such views are naturally politically preponderent. (However, there are internal political differences which I have not studied, in particular regions. Congress and the Muslim League may differ on the Assam minorities; Hyderabad State may differ with the Congress on both the reallocation of provincial boundaries and on particular minority groups. Such conflicts would complicate a problem that is properly outside the realm of politics). I don't think the divergence of opinion on this large human problem need continue to be very sharp, if the excitement of political settlements dies down, if the policy is worked out in accordance with individual tribal cases by competent men, in touch with the hillspeople, and unhurried. I was much impressed with the attitude of Mr. L. N. Rao, who has done social work among them in the Nilgiris Hills, in Malabar. He expressed with considerable enthusiasm his appreciation of their primitive yet unspoiled culture, their dances and songs, their straightforward and simple life. Having lived with Kachins in northern Burma I knew what he was talking about, though I would not call the Kachins aboriginals. And so he hopes that when outside influences come in they will preserve and build, rather than destroy. I shall attempt to keep in touch with him to follow his own activities toward that end. I should think his attitude could become universal, if reason and tolerance are exercised.

Now to members of another minority, of a very different sort, the Christians in India. In earlier letters I have mentioned the former untouchables in the Punjab, whom I also found in the South, who have been converted to Christianity. In the South I also met a different group of Christians. Prof. C. J. Chacko, the husband of my missionary cousin, Dr. Dorothy Dunning Chacko, is a member of the Syrian Christian community, which has probably existed in Malabar since the first century. Christians of this and other sects play a leading part in the educational and economic life of Cochin and Travancore, where they number about one-third of the population, and in other regions as well. I met many among these advanced groups, as the Chackos and several other people gave me numerous

introductions for my trip. I stayed with missionaries or Indian Christians in Travancore, the Central Provinces, and the United Provinces (where the Chackos now live), and visited Christians in six other cities in these regions. I feel it unfortunate that such a large proportion of my time was spent in a milieu unrepresentative of India (Christians number only some 7,000,000), but arrangements fell that way. Anyway, it is instructive to observe how minority groups in an advanced position sometimes behave. Hesitating to generalize, because I imply no reference to any of my hosts, nor do I believe that a majority of Christians here fall under my remarks, I must nevertheless frankly state that many of the group have, at the moment, a rather distasteful attitude of superiority toward other peoples of India. Consider their status for causes (not justification, however) of this attitude. Their advanced economic position has made them susceptible to conquest by the 'nouveau riche' complex; their opportunities for educational advancement, giving them effective superiority over many people, add to the complex; they belong, either historically or by conversion, to Churches which assume the superiority of their own religion (at least some of the missionaries in their midst make that assumption and act on it); which religion happens to be that of the ruling race, with whom they therefore feel a bond of superiority.

I have met so many true Christians that I am sorry to mention this condition. But if Westerners and Christians fail to accept the fact that some of their well-meant activities have produced unhappy results, they will also fail to exercise tolerance in judging discriminatory actions or harsh statements which Indians may be tempted to make in return. Actually, I have heard of very few retaliatory tendencies of this sort among Indians. But the Travancore Government, as I have said, has tended to anti-Christian, pro-Hindu policies in recent years. Examples of its actions which I think could reasonably be termed anti-Christian in their effect are: restrictions on establishment of new cemeteries or new places of worship; discrimination against Christians in Government appointments; re-proselytizing of Christians to Hinduism through promise of jobs, etc. Christians in Travancore are even more exercised over other actions, such as the government's prohibition, with additional strings attached, of religious instruction during regular school hours in schools which receive government funds; but after trying to judge such complaints fairly in the limited time at my disposal, I was unable definitely to accept them as justified. Any governmental interference with religion is by theory incompatible with our concepts of freedom, so I do not defend these actions. (Though it must be said that religion is so important in India that it may be unwise to use our own American standards in judging government's relation to it). But if we realize that the past economic advantage of the Christian group has been accompanied by some snobbishness or clannishness on the part of that group, some of the causes (here again not justification) of the Travancore policy become apparent.

Instead of bristling at this instance, thus perpetuating a cycle of ill-feeling, Christians all over India should consider it soberly and take stock of their manners and actions. I have deep admiration for one American missionary wife in Allahabad, who has written a frank courageous letter to one of the Christian periodicals, enjoining her fellow-missionaries to ask themselves the question: "Are we wanted here?"; and, through regional or national missionary committees, to find out from Indian authorities whether some missionaries are wanted and others aren't; and, if certain ones are not, to ask them to leave. Such drastic self-discipline will probably not be adopted, nor indeed am I sure it is necessary, but I hope the letter will stimulate certain missionaries and Indian Christians to a less self-assured outlook.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Thorne

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

VILLAGE POVERTY IN INDIA

Observations on present conditions and some curative programs now underway.

I.

I have had the opportunity of touring India for some two months. Feeling that the condition of India's 360,000,000-odd people in her 700,000-odd villages is her most important human problem, I attempted to spend as much of my time as possible visiting villages, stopping in them overnight, talking to villagers through interpreters, and meeting individuals and organizations now engaged in village uplift work of one sort or another. As a result of this attempt, although other topics of interest kept intruding on my mind, the majority of my time and attention was oriented toward the village.

My most effective observation was done in widely separated areas: in Shahpur and Amritsar Districts, Punjab Province; in Poona District, Bombay; in Trichinopoly District, Madras; along the Malabar Coast in Madras and in the States of Cochin and Travancore; and in Nagpur District, Central Provinces. Needless to say, there is great diversity of agricultural and climatic conditions, of historical and cultural backgrounds, among these regions and peoples. And yet there is one fundamental, if negative, unity through all of them: rural poverty and its basic causes are universal. In each area, some villages were relatively strong while others were wretchedly poor; and in each area some villages contained both relative prosperity and deep poverty side by side. Confronted by this condition, I paid more attention to the one central problem than to the diversity of India.

This paper, of which the central theme is village poverty and its cure, is an attempt to describe a newcomer's view of the village problem. A comprehensive study of Indian rural conditions would require not only exhaustive book study but also continued contact with villagers until one could understand their thoughts as well as their spoken language. This I have obviously not done. My own visual observations, rough statistics which I was able to obtain in individual villages, conversations, with individuals concerned about the village problem, and finally my own judgments - perhaps better call them hunches, considering the hasty nature of my tour - are recorded in this report. I have tried to determine the most serious defects in the villages, for my ultimate interest is in solutions, as will be seen in Section IV. It is certain that solutions must grapple with the fundamental faults if they are to succeed.

Before discussing different aspects of the picture, I wish first to give a simple description of a strong village and its people, to show that there is much to build on and considerable hope for the future; and then to describe some weak people, to show that there is a problem.

On visiting a village for a short time only, I have usually been tempted to judge the strength of the community by the physical condition and social outlook of the people, rather than by examining only their material possessions. Thus it was that in the village of Vyahad, near Nagpur, although I immediately noted the large houses and their spacious yards, it was the independence and health of the women and the spirit of the children which made me feel I was in a good environment, where the people were living an integrated, if simple, existence. The women, even in going

about their ordinary household tasks, carrying water from the river, or stopping to gossip in the street, displayed a vigor in their work and freedom in their manner. I found the children in the morning actually conducting their own school, writing and calculating, reading their lessons, because their teacher had indulged in some intoxicating shrub the night before. I learned that this was not habitual with that gentleman, and decided that the presence of such occasionally human frailties amidst a group of sturdy and active people is perhaps even a sign of a normal society of men.

I began to find that a simple, habitual religion was adding strength to the lives of these people. The evening before, when I entered the village at dusk, I had been surprised to find not one but several shrines to Hanuman, King of the Monkeys, each with its flickering oil lamp shining on the head and chest of the red idol, the symbol of the God's strength. The main temple of the village is a striking white building with elaborate decorations; here worship to the God Vishnu is conducted with music and ritual both night and morning. I attended a temple service, trying to accustom my ears to the bells and clappers, the unfamiliar songs; and watching men and women come in to sit for a few minutes, receive a word from the temple priest, and quietly leave. This religion goes right into the home. In each dooryard a special flowering shrub has been set apart in its own sacred plot, dedicated to a Deity with whom the family feels a bond. Daily the shrub is watered, daily they go through a simple ritual before it, thus gaining the renewed assurance in life which comes from familiar and traditional custom. Later I asked the unlearned temple priest to tell me the nature of his religion: he had no words, even in his own language, to explain his faith. I wondered if he could tell me anything about the religion of Gandhi, or what Gandhi had done for India: and he was unable to say. Simple, yes; isolated, yes: but self-sustained and self-sustaining - this was the strength of these people, in contrast to so many whom I have seen.

The basis of this strength is a sufficiency of resources and the intelligent, steadfast way in which they are utilized. Although much of the land is held by a non-resident malguzar, to whom most of the villagers have to pay rent, they have supplementary income which meets their needs. The major material factors are four: the existence of large and good forests nearby; the presence of wells and intelligent use of them for garden crops (which supply the villagers with vegetables and fruits before the excess is sold in the town, a health-preserving practice which is absent from most villages); strong village crafts; and a nearby road for transportation of produce to Nagpur, 18 miles away. Firstly, the forests provide fuel so that cow dung, instead of being burned, can be applied to the land, and is. (The exception: the village smithy, which finds the fire produced by cow dung hotter and more sustained for heating metal). Secondly, even the landless laborers and small tenants can go to the forest when not working at agriculture, to secure wood and haul it to the city for sale. Thirdly, good wood is provided for the craftsmen, enabling them to produce their own bullock carts, rangis (small vehicles which humans ride), plough shafts, chairs, well hoists, oilseed pressers, homes, and even toys for the children and for sale. The strength given by forests to this economy has not been dissipated through degeneration of craft skills, which are being passed on to sons, for these products are not subject to competition from outside factories. The spirit of craftsmanship flourishes, and is even shared by the chamars, untouchables who prepare shoes and leather water hoists from cowhides. In the activity of each person, whether a housewife grinding her wheat or jowar into flour with her stone chakki, a chamar sewing rough sandals from hide, or the blacksmith hammering out a wheel rim, and his wife pumping the bellows for the fire, there is individuality and apparently a feeling of

surety: the confidence, and even artistic pride, which come from handling familiar materials in a competent way, producing something concrete. It would be rewarding to stay with such people for several days, not only one.

With the sturdiness of these and other villagers in mind, I find myself reluctant to write about the weak ones. And, as a student said to me the other day, it is almost impossible to convey the idea of village poverty to people who have not seen it. Yet it must be done: for the degradation of humanity is the worst tragedy and problem of India.

It should be relatively easy for the stranger to picture the elemental physical conditions of poverty; how a diet of starchy grains, with little milk, few vegetables, and for the Hindus no meat, constantly undermines the strength of the people; how malaria and dysentery debilitate millions of Indians, taking away their energy and endurance, shortening their lives; how cold and dampness, met with meager shelter and clothing, age the limbs and joints; and how famine or epidemic attacks each generation, so that thousands die and parentless children go begging into the city streets. The outsider can probably visualize crowded homes, narrow muddy lanes, the questionable streams and wells from which drinking water is drawn, the stagnant animal ponds breeding mosquitoes. He knows the drudgery of the women, the crude care that the mother receives at childbirth. And the children's story is familiar: playing in the dust at the age of three, doing chores at five: "No one in this village has been educated in this generation or the last. The children have to go behind the cows; the nearest school is three miles away". (Village of Ludeo, the Punjab). These facts he can understand.

But he can not understand poverty until he studies and contemplates and imagines the full meaning of the words, "Loss of Nerve", until their import sinks deep into his consciousness. These are the words used by the anthropologist, Dr. Verrier Elwin, to summarize the bewilderment, the crushed initiative, loss of self-confidence, and mental and emotional disruption among individuals and society in the aboriginal tribes of India, as a result of the impact of a strange, uncompromising outside world. They are applicable to beaten men and spiritless villages in all parts of India.

An example, though a mild one, was the disheartening confession (or assumption, for in their lack of nerve they underrate themselves) of mental inadequacy by a group of villagers in the Punjab when I asked them about their sons in the Army. "When your boys come home on leave, do you talk with them about the places they have seen, and what they have done?" "No", they replied, "we can't talk with them about such things. We don't know enough to understand what they are telling us". Their lack of knowledge is to me less serious than the lack of confidnece and assurance which their resignation displayed. Although poverty and dependence has turned some of the men and women I have seen into whining complainers, although some men spend their few annas for toddy and arrak to drown their misery, the vast majority of the poorest, especially the landless laborers and the Harijans in the south, have no vices and merely exist in silent patience, rarely voicing their defeated condition. And yet, without speech they spoke out to me through their whole appearance: "We don't know. We can't do. We need help."

I shall not easily forget a village in a non-irrigated area of the western Punjab. Totally dependent on the whims of the rain for their agricultural strength, the people sometimes prosper and sometimes nearly starve. But the major characteristic is

the disparity of income within the village. First I sat on the broad porch of the village zaildar, one of a group rather nauseating to me who by thorough paternal domination and control of their villages have won the good graces of the Government and who flourish in the midst of squalor. In his home I was surrounded by immense and costly carpets, fancy and luxurious robes, and I was asked by the zaildar to see his family book, containing commendations by officials for services rendered by his grandfather (starting in 1864), his father, and himself. His services in the last few years have been to recruit his villagers as soldiers and send them off to war, to collect money from his villagers for war loans, and to buy war bonds himself, and he complained to me that he had not received a sufficient award of land in compensation for these acts. I left his fine house.

I wandered 200 yards into the interior of the village, through crowded narrow lanes, past dingy shops and houses, and found the poorest and most miserable home I have ever seen. In a tumbled yard where one buffalo munched on some weeds, an old man, with a dirty open sore along his mouth, squatted by a fire. Inside his dungeon-like house, scarcely ten feet square, his sick wife lay huddled on a rude bed, gasping for each breath, shaken by fever. One emaciated arm that protruded from her thin shawl showed me the skin and bones that kept her crippled body together; but I could not conceive how her will to live could maintain her from day to day in such a fruitless and painful struggle. She was a pitiful, helpless figure, almost a mockery of mankind.

And then I had an extraordinary experience. As I turned away, her aged husband approached me with a rupee, and put it in my hand. Ashamed because he had no milk or tea to offer me, he would give me this treasure as token hospitality. I was already shaken by the poverty of the scene, and by the inhumanity of men who can permit such conditions to endure. His startling action confused me. Feeling inhuman myself because I could do nothing really effective, I returned the rupee and handed him five more. Thinking materially, this was the very least I could do; thinking of the human spirit which had prompted his action, I knew it was an insult to him and might be a further blow to his self-respect. But I did not know what else to do.

Who can say what hidden force brings forth such spontaneous loyalty as his? I would like to think it the pure impulse of a human soul: one man being generous and hospitable to another. But I am afraid a more complex influence is involved. I was a white man, his superior, as he thought, for he was brought up to consider all white men and his zaildar as superiors, to depend on them. To his 'superiors' he has given his trust, his loyalty: from them he has received rags and contempt. Who will give this man a portion of self-reliance, to balance his humility and make him a truly noble human being? Or is this selfless humility, perhaps his only instinct, a more noble and divine quality than I can appreciate? The peasant and God walk together, Tagore tells us in his song-offering:

> "Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where
> live the poorest, and lowliest, and lost.
>
> When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance cannot reach
> down to the depth where thy feet rest among the
> poorest, lowliest, and lost.

Pride can never approach to where thou walkest in the clothes of the humble among the poorest, and lowliest and lost.

My heart can never find its way to where thou keepest company with the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost."

Man has forsaken these men, and, it is our hope, God has joined them in companionship. Elsewhere, Tagore has told us of the Baul peasants in Bengal, humble, illiterate, and poor, but possessing a deep spiritual anchor, which they have revealed to the poet in their words and songs. We gratefully accept his testimony to the truth of the beatitude, "Blessed are the meek". And yet, viewing so many men crushed amid suffering, we question the power of spiritual aid alone, for so many of them reveal no spirit in their crippled condition. Full of our own joy in the opportunities of life, possessing some feeble compassion of our own, we therefore presume to improve the peasant and his lot. This too is after Tagor's own heart, for he has sun to us the oneness of human society, its supply and yet its need of sympathy, truth, and creative activity. And so we step outside the realm of the spirit into the more familiar world of matter. We pick up our tried tools - analysis and reason - and try to solve these problems around us.

II. The Economic Burden.

The village I have just described flashes before us one of the glaring defects of Indian rural economy: the existence of men like the zaildar. They are, in effect, parasites in the community, non-productive people who drain away income which has been produced from the soil by the labor of others. Without becoming blinded by this injustice, so that we neglect even deeper defects, we may consider it a bit more fully. The variety and forms of superior rights in land are so numerous that I haven't begun to make a detailed study of them. Before I went into the villages I did not have a clear conception of the particular distinctions in each region, and I found that within a village it was often difficult to differentiate among the types without preliminary knowledge. In looking back over my notes for the various Provinces, I have found that much confusion over detail reigns in my mind. This will have to await further book study for clarification; here I will describe the major features, as I understand them.

Speaking generally, superior rights in land fall into two categories, overlordship and landlordship. (Sometimes one man is overlord of some land and landlord of other land, which baffles the student in a village trying to talk through an interpreter who does not fully understand the difference himself - but I shouldn't be offering excuses). Overlordship can best be explained by translating the word by which it is most widely known in India: zemindari. A zemindar is a "holder of land", not an owner in the full sense. In this land he has certain duties and certain rights. His major duty is to collect the basic land tax from the actual cultivators and pay to it the Government. One of his rights is to collect for himself somewhat more from the cultivator than the basic land tax. Another of his rights is to exercise varying amounts of proprietary control over the cultivators and their tenure. For the cultivator himself is not an owner either. He has inherited, or purchased from an inheritor, the right to cul-

tivate the land he holds and the duty to pay to the zemindar the fixed tenure rate, which in effect is the basic tax plus X. In some cases X equals zero, that is, the tenure rate equals the tax rate: here the zemindar gets no profit. But in most cases X has a positive value, as will be illustrated by the following example.

In Vyahad, the village I have mentioned, the zemindar (here called a malguzar) holds roughly 84% of the village land. The total land revenue which he annually pays to Government on this land is Rs. 650. The total sum which he receives from the tenureholders (they individually look upon it as rent) is Rs. 847. The balance he keeps. 36% of the tenure holders have "absolute occupancy rights", meaning they can sell to another their right to cultivate and duty to pay on their specific holdings, without permission from the zemindar, but have to pay him a 5% commission on the sales rate. 60% of the tenure holders have "occupancy rights", meaning they have to secure the zemindar's permission before selling, and that he himself can exercise first option, at the assessment value of the land. The remaining 4% have "sole proprietary rights": their ability to sell is unfettered. These tenants are all fortunate, for although they are somewhat bound down by these restrictions, they have at least inherited or purchased security in their holdings. In the Punjab, as well as in other places, tenants can in many cases be evicted at will by the zemindar. This enables the latter to replace a tenant by another if the production of the first is inadequate to meet his due 'rent'.

The origin of such queer prerogatives for the zemindar goes back into history. His ancestor may have been an overlord on this land when the British made the original settlement, or may have done them a service: in either case the family was assigned the overlordship in perpetuity. (The present zemindar may have purchased this hereditary overlordship from the original family). It is obvious that, in collecting land revenue and passing it on to Government, the Zemindar performs an administrative function. It is equally clear that the extra amount secured from the tenant cultivator is not a light burden for him. Furthermore, zemindars whose ancestors were of some standing when the original settlement was made may hold thousands of acres. If they were tribual chiefs, or otherwise respected or blessed with power, they may have in effect retained considerable autonomy over their villages, performing judicial and other administrative functions. Some have helped their peasants in many ways; others have kept them heeled. Within a fully republican society they would be an anachronism. (Two particularly unique forms akin to overlordship which might be mentioned are the jagirdars, which I observed in the Punjab, whose ancestors rendered service at some point in history - in many cases in putting down the uprising of 1857 - and whose families are therefore awarded an annual blanket donation of all the land revenue from a village or group of villages; and the inamdars, in Bombay Province, who have been granted a considerable tax exemption on their landholdings so that they pay, in one case I observed, a fixed sum only one-fourth of the actual tax assessment of their land).

I must here mention the other general group, landlords, for there are points in common between the two which can be discussed together. A landlord, as the name implies, actually owns land, acquired through inheritance, purchase, debt settlement, foreclosure of mortgage, etc., and his income is rent. The bigger landlords are usually non-agriculturists, residing in the towns and performing no useful function in connection with the land. In Mayanoor, Trichinopoly District, for example, four city dwellers own about 45% of the village land. The big zemindars follow the same practice. Our Vyahad malguzar holds land in dozens of other villages, and finds

little difficulty in maintaining himself in Nagpur, where he has commercial or financial interests: in his villages he keeps only a country house for perhaps an annual visit. Beneath such non-resident landlords and zemindars are hierachies of managers, tenants, and sub-tenants. There may be four or five levels, each hiring and supervising the level beneath it: bargaining with sub-tenants and laborers over terms of employment; collecting rents for their superiors and paying wages to labor; deciding what crops shall be sown; and collecting in cash or kind a salary from their employers. Some of these intermediaries are close enough to the cultivator, and conscientious enough, so that they keep up his productive efficiency, by insisting that he use manure and improved seeds, for example. Others among them, like most of their big employers, perform no function in connection with actual production from land: their position as income-receivers from an already overcrowded land is similarly unwarranted and burdensome to the cultivator.

For every big landlord and zemindar there are scores or hundreds of smaller ones. In four villages in the Punjab where I secured tenancy figures, between 65% and 80% of the land was cultivated by tenants, working for small zemindars who themselves live in the village and cultivate the remaining land. Such small zemindars or landlords are often among the more constructive and able agriculturists. They also can directly supervise the farming practices of the tenant. The question of abolishing or revising the rights of millions of these small zemindars is much more complex than in the case of the big ones; both from the administrative point of view, from the standpoint of advancing agricultural production, and with consideration of the effect on these small zemindars themselves, the problem will demand a more intricate solution.

To the actual cultivator, all these superior rights and parties mean cost for land, whether called rent or taxes. This cost may be 33% or 50% of his produce, if in kind; a fixed sum if in cash. Generally speaking, though world grain prices are the decisive factor, it is more burdensome for the peasant to sell this produce to meet fixed annual costs, for his production fluctuates from year to year. I have not studied figures to learn what percentage of land in India is cultivated by tenants. Among the twenty-six villages I visited, in four 75% to 100% of the land is cultivated by tenants, in at least six others the figure is more than 50%. To the individual tenant, rent is the biggest fixed cost, one which in wide areas leaves him virtually at the subsistence level. This high cost of land to the tenants seriously impairs the efficiency of their production, for it deprives them of funds badly needed for land improvements; where their tenure is insecure they lack incentive to improve. From the standpoint of justice, the inequality in distribution of agricultural income is hardly defensible. On both these counts, I believe that the elimination or drastic reduction of superior rights on the land, both of zemindars and landlords, is desirable for the improvement of the rural economy.

It would, in fact, be relatively simple if reorganization could stop at such a point, complex as such reorganization would inevitably be. But tenancy is only a branch of the problem. Even in the villages where it was most noticeable I felt that the heart-root of the problem goes much deeper, and will require much digging before it is finally rooted out. Overpopulation of presently cultivated land is its name, and I shall try to describe its features in some of the villages I visited.

In the village of Patas, Poona District, as the village mahar (clerk of land records, called patwari in the north) was explaining to me the old map of the village

lands, I selected one plot at random and asked him to tell me about it. In 1869 this plot, totalling 18 acres, was owned by one man. Today the same land is divided into 19 separate plots. On each inheritance by one generation from the elder, the land has to be apportioned among the sons according to quality as well as quantity: the original piece was categorized as good, fair, poor, and each category divided among the first man's sons; for the next generation a like categorization and division had to be made, and so it goes. Six descendants of the 1869 man now own sixteen of the nineteen plots; the other three have been sold or relinquished as settlement of debts to two more people.

I wish I had had time and the linguistic skill to dig into case histories of this sort: to find out how big the 1869 owner's immediate family was and how many additional individuals were engaged in labor on this land; to find out the exact number of people now laboring on it and now totally dependent on it; and to learn what alternative sources of income they had found to counter the increasing division. Such cases would add up to a complete and useful picture if carefully studied. But we can reasonably imagine some of the story, as an illustration, not for its actual figures. Perhaps the 1869 man, in addition to his own sons and draft animals, had one tenant family with another team of animals to work part of the land. Roughly ten people would then be drawing their support from this land, perhaps three adult males engaged in working it. After the first inheritance perhaps little adjustment was needed: the tenant's family probably stayed. But when the 1869 man's grandsons inherited their holdings of four to six acres apiece, the luxury of a tenant could no longer be afforded: one of them probably purchased the tenant's animals, the latter becoming a hired laborer. (Of course if he could, he would move with his animals to some other land, but as this competition of division was taking place on all sides, some sort of lower status was inevitable). During these 75 years, the land must have received some improvements: perhaps a new well was sunk; the new cattle produce more manure (but the additional households need more dung cakes for fuel!); and better seeds are undoubtedly used. But, at the present time, one or two of the descendants themselves have apparently been forced to sell out to non-residents: either they in turn became tenants and laborers or perhaps made the big move to Bombay or Sholapur to seek mill employment, or to Poona for railroad work. To sum up, eight households, with perhaps forty people now share ownership of the original land; probably six men and four draft teams are engaged in work on it. Some of these eight men must have a further source of income; when we know, however, that the same process has been going on throughout the Province (and India), and that additional sources of employment (industry and new lands) have been slower in multiplying, we can visualize the general problem: overpressure: more and more people dependent on the same quantity of land as generations pass, and still the process goes on to rock bottom, subsistence.

In considering mass poverty, production must be considered as preliminary to consumption; one almost might say that production should receive first attention in analyzing the problem, though distribution is intimately allied with it. The economist gives us simple tools to work with in discussing production. He tells us that the productive agents with which man is provided can be grouped into four categories: land, including all the natural and climatic resources in a given situation; human labor, which may be skilled or unskilled; capital, which on the farm includes all implements, farm buildings, work animals, irrigation, fertilizer, seeds, etc.; and management, the skill which is supposed to organize the other three into the most efficient production team possible. He further says, and it is fully demonstrable, that there is a proper

combination of these four factors which will give the highest output: and the first lesson here is that when successive units of one agent are combined with a fixed quantity of the others, a point is eventually reached where the successive inputs result in smaller and smaller increments of produce, the ultimate conclusion being that the weeder, eager to work hard but given a limited space, starts trampling his sprouting plants and thus actually reduces his crop. This ultimate absurdity rarely occurs in space, for he can see when he starts to cause damage, and if he has no more land, he can sit idle. In India, millions of men are combining their labor with land in a proportion which has long since passed the optimum production point. In all regions I visited there were overcrowded villages where, in addition to the three or four months between working seasons when not much work is accomplished, the cultivators of small quantities of land do not have enough regular work even during the planting and weeding season. The odd jobs which they can find around the village must be of minute productive value. Human power is being wasted. There is not enough land to go around, yet there the people are, with low productive efficiency, individually and combined: even their extra efforts are never translated into proportionately extra output. And, as is commonly known, the economist's theory works in time as well as space, though more subtly; so, for example, when too much intensive labor is applied over the years the land loses fertility and produttion actually drops.

I'm really not overfond of economics, but the above theory has another variation which is useful. There is another combination of the four factors of optimum output, this one more practical, for it takes into account the costs of the four agents in comparison with the price which the finished product will bring: the first lesson of this formula is that the initial inputs of an agent cost heavily in relation to the value of the production increase realized. Thus the farmer who is told to buy fertilizer knows that he will pay more for the first applications than he will get in return. Often he can not afford to take this initial loss so he does not learn the second lesson: that when further inputs of fertilizer are applied over a few years they become economically productive to him and build up the soil.

Not to speak of capital expenditure on fertilizers, however, a small peasant has preliminary basic costs which add up to an uneconomic producing unit. I have already referred to the rent paid by tenants, of which a portion is passed on by their landlords or overlords to Government in payment of the land revenue. For the millions of small owners and zemindars who cultivate their own land and pay their own land tax, the latter itself is the fixed cost of land. Though not as large as rent paid by tenants, this basic land tax by itself is in nature burdensome to the smallest cultivator. The tax falls with equal incidence on lands of equal value in a given assessment area. If Peasant A has one acre of well-irrigated land and his neighbor B has twenty acres adjacent, both A and B pay at the fixed rate per acre, Rs. 2/4 or whatever it may be according to the assessment. Although the tax paid by both A and B is in the same proportion to their respective incomes, if the yield per acre is the same, it is obvious that this proportion of A's smaller income means more to him than does the like proportion to B, with a more substantial income. One might think, considering the minute size of many Indian land holders, that a blanket exemption from land revenue could be granted to all who produce less than a specified amount, and a graduated agricultural income tax applied above such amount. (In practice, I learned, the Settlement Officer occasionally assigns a slightly higher rate to the biggest owners in the assessment circle, but I doubt if this sufficiently alleviates the burden to the smallest. Probably an agricultural income tax will in time come, but tax authorities will examine many statistics to decide how much more costly it would

be to administer, whether it would bring less total revenue, etc., before that day).

At harvest time, the poorest peasant has to have cash to meet these fixed costs of land; to pay the water rate if he is in a canal area; to make interest payments on his mortgage or repay his debt; to buy clothes, kerosene oil, and other essentials of life (including a bit for a harvest celebration, if possible). He must sell enough produce to meet these essential charges. This hardly leaves him sufficient for his family's consumption throughout the year; consequently, at sowing time, not having enough grain for seeds, he must again go into debt to buy seeds; possibly, in the last months before harvest time, he must go into debt to purchase more grain for food. Of course the producer who has an economic holding of land does not have to sell such a high percentage of his produce. He therefore has enough for seeds and full consumption and is spared this additional capital cost, credit. In the villages I really failed to study the agricultural debt as thoroughly as I should have, and don't know the exact quantitative burden of the cost of credit. In some areas, moneylenders continue to receive high interest rates. In many regions, cooperative credit societies have for some decades been the major governmental aid to the peasant, and they appear to have eased his position. During the war, I was told, the bigger zemindars and landlords have often been able to clear their debts; I did not learn to what extent the poorer peasant has been able to do the same. It is easy to see, however, that the need for cash is a burden to the smaller peasant: to him the value of money fluctuates badly from month to month. At harvest time money is cheap, for he has it; during the year he may have to incur interest costs to get it. Or, if he is fortunate enough to produce fruits, vegetables, and possibly milk, he finds it necessary to sell all such valuable food in town to obtain cash, thus discriminating against his own diet and body. In the Central Provinces, even fodder is taken from the village to the town, thus discriminating against the cattle. For if his draft animals are not working during the off season, they can get by on less; and if his milch animals produce less than a pint of milk per day, as is common in the Central Provinces, the extra fodder which he might give them will not bring him as much milk income as he will get for the fodder in town. In short, the small peasant in inefficient combination with the land is constantly forced to slight the input of capital into his productive team. He has little incentive to purchase a good breed bull at expensive price, for it will take several generations of breeding to produce paying progeny from such low quality cows. He can not by himself meet the initial cost of digging a new well which would improve his land; even to the village as a whole it is sometimes an insurmountable burden. No one even speaks of modern farm machinery for such small units of cultivation, for many years and much reorganization must pass before Indian agriculture is rationalized to the extent that modern machinery will be usable: it is even difficult and initially uneconomical for the peasant to invest in an improved plough or seeder. These are all familiar problems, and will be found in elementary economic textbooks (beyond which I have not read). If we believe the economist, or if we see a village and talk to its people, we know that such production units are badly out of balance and inefficient.

What is true for the individual is also true on a village scale and regionally. The parts add up to a similar whole. Within the village and region as a whole, unequal distribution of land obviously aggravates the situation, but it is equally obvious that the overall burden on the land is too great. In Mayanoor, Trichinopoly District, there are today some 300 agriculturists (I shall use the term to include all adult males whose major source of income is work on land - not including women and children). They cultivate 650 acres, 60% of them irrigated, the rest rainfed. Four

men own an average of 70 acres, and reside in town. Ten own an average of 10 acres; twenty-five own between 1 and 5; thirty own less than 1. This leaves some 230 landless laborers and sub-tenants (although generally owners will not lease their land to individuals who do not themselves own land and draft animals - most of these 230 are therefore laborers). Statistics on the latter group, though rough, reveal how manpower exceeds the land. Perhaps 80 of them are hired by the bigger owners as permanent year-around help. The remaining 150 are hired by the day or week only in the working seasons. During the four month cultivation and transplanting period, I was told, they usually have work for 70-80 days; during harvest time for 30-35 days. For all this group the only alternative jobs are mat weaving (which 40 of them know), occasional work they are able to get on the road, or coolie wages for a few for carrying bananas from the nearby plantation to the railroad station. Only from such irregular sources do they get subsistence; as productive units, dabbling here at one thing, walking miles for an odd job elsewhere, and sitting idle, they contribute very little to the sum total of goods and services in India. Great alternative employment must be found for such manpower. From their own point of view, they are a highly competitive group. The weakness of their bargaining position, even during the war while outside employment was at a high level, is amply shown by their wartime experience. Previously, they were traditionally paid in kind, a share of the produce; during and after the war when the value of grain has exceeded the value of money (grain deficiency in the country; cash inflation), the owners have forced the laborers to take payment in cash. The owners may shuffle a little of this extra grain into the black market, while the laborers are forced to spend cash for grain which was formerly obtained directly.

The difference between a very intensive supply of labor on the land and one which is only fairly intensive is shown in regional contrasts. In this Mayanoor example the average acreage per agriculturist is about 2-1/4 acres; per working buffalo team and plough, 9 acres. Similarly, in the densely populated Amritsar District, in the eastern Punjab, in five villages visited, there are 2-1/2 acres to each agriculturist, while each plough and team works an average of eight acres. In the relatively thinly populated canal colonies of Shahpur District, on the other hand, the average per agriculturist is more than eight acres. These numerical averages are but approximate, and they in no way show exactly how the men go about their work, but the alternative sources of part time work - crafts and outside jobs - seem to be about equal in the three regions. It would be instructive for me to study surveys which show how villagers in different regions utilize their time. Some of the above difference can be accounted for: the Shahpur peasant puts 60% of his land to wheat, 30% to cotton, the rest to fodders, and his water comes directly from the canal to the land. In the five Amritsar villages, 40% of the land is in wheat, 20% in rice, 15% in fodder and garden crops, the rest in cotton, maize, sugar cane, etc.; the peasant here has to draw most of his water from wells and to take his market crops to town perhaps twice a week. In Mayanoor, the great majority of the land is in rice, which takes more time for ploughing and transplanting. Yet it is hard to believe that an acre in either Mayanoor or the Amritsar villages actually requires three times as much labor as an acre in the Shahpur canal colonies. The fact that the buffaloes in the three places perform roughly equal amounts of work is a clue showing the excess of manpower. As for average yields, in wheat at any rate, the Shahpur colony produces 18 maunds per acre, while the Amritsar acre only yields 12. The difference is obvious in the standard of life. Existence in Mayanoor and Amritsar for the poorest is confined to small crowded homes and the barest essentials of food, clothing, oil, etc. In the Shahpur colonies, the yards are spacious, the houses strong and dry,

the supply of lamps, pots, pans, beds and bedding indicate that even guests can be comfortably accommodated. Incidentally, a great many more Shahpur housewives have their own charkas (hand spinning wheels) and spin their own yarn than in the other areas.

I have really gone to unwieldy length in describing these individual cases. Again, I have no statistics for India as a whole, yet it appears clear that far too many millions, over wide regions, are struggling with meager plots of land. (I have not even observed the more densely populated provinces of Bengal and the United Provinces). These maladjustments, which add up to a very serious disequilibrium in the Indian economy as a while, must be corrected. Where men work a fairly efficient quantity of land but have spare time in the off seasons, they must be given further means of support (opportunities for productive work) in situ: in other words, in decentralized crafts or industries. Where they are absolutely in surplus on the land from the standpoint of efficient production, they must be absorbed into new full-time employment, whether in centralized or decentralized industries.

It is quite apparent how much more comfortable and integrated life is in villages where ancient craft skills have been preserved for local employment and consumption despite outside machine competition, or because the crafts produce goods not manufacturable by machine. I have mentioned the noteworthy case of Vyahad, where crafts rest on good forest resources. In at least some villages in each region, als ways in conformity with the available raw materials, I found men and women actively engaged in work of the following types: hand spinning and weaving with cotton; making of rope, baskets and mats from fibrous shrubs, grass, or vines; carpentry of carts, wheels, furniture, homes, looms, charkas, toys, ploughs, and even of Japanese handlooms; brick makers; leather workers; potters, smiths, cobblers; metal workers. In each region I found some villages which grind or pound their own wheat, jowar, rice and sugar, thus preserving more of the food value than does the mill; groundnuts, linseed, gingerly are still processed locally in some places. In addition, modern contrivances like the sewing machine have found a place in the more fortunate villages, while bicycles provide work for local repair men.

But in many regions I visited the resources around the people provide no materials for craft work. Only where the present development of resources and the present economic factors warrant home crafts do they exist. In many villages there are really no distinctive crafts and even the processing of food and similar household work have given way to the mills. I have yet to study modern Indian economic history, to learn exactly how this process of "technological unemployment" has crept over the Indian countryside in the last century, disrupting home production and adding to the force of population pressure in weakening village self-sufficiency. But in one place I did see a striking example of the clash between man and machine still going on today. In the village of Tanur, Malabar District, there is a big colony of 300 hand-loom weavers, each with his own pit loom within his house or yard. Half of these men are weaving with yarn from the big spinning mills at Coimbatore, 90 miles away; but since mill-yarn has been rationed during the war and post-war shortage, they receive only their prescribed quota, which keeps their looms busy for only ten days in the month. Both men and looms are idle for the rest of the time. The rest of the colony obtains handspun yarn from the local distributing agency of the All India Spinning Association, the Gandhian organization which is spreading the use of the charka and tacli (hand spinning instruments) and trying to popularize khadi cloth (hand spun and hand woven). These users of khaddar yarn, which is not

subject to Government ration, receive a regular supply which suffices for the full month's work. Temporarily they are therefore better off than their neighbors, and their existence helps to relieve the cloth shortage. Yet, should millyarn become plentiful again, it would hardly be economical for them to continue using handspun yarn. Firstly, it costs them more per yard than the millyarn, even at wartime prices, costs their neighbors. Secondly, the handspun yarn is on the average weaker than millyarn and breaks more often; their production of cloth from it per day is therefore lower than that of the user of millyarn. Thirdly, khadi cloth is of less durability and quality than average hand woven cloth produced from millyarn, and must therefore sell cheaper. Higher costs of materials, lower productive speed, lower selling price: this is the story for the weaver of handspun yarn. And so, in the background, the spinning mills and the hand spinner at home are competing to sell their yarn to these 150 weavers. All the economic factors favor the mills, and if mill production were to increase to meet the demand, as might normally be expected, it would seem apparent that many hand spinners will lose a market. It is true that some people will continue to buy khadi cloth, and some of the weavers may continue to meet that market; the stickiness of the economy might further retard the weakening of homespun yarn; but the tendency seems inevitable. The question of competition of mill woven cloth with all these hand-looms is yet another story. Since many of them, throughout this region, have been strengthened or have sprung up to meet the wartime demand, the tendency in an expanding industrial economy would also be unfavorable to them. Later, in Section IV, I shall briefly relate the program of the Congress Madras Government to meet this situation.

Other villages demonstrate the failure to the villagers themselves to utilize their resources to the fullest. In Mayanoor, a hand-loom mill has been constructed during the war by an owner who resides in town. Throughout this rural area such mills have sprung up to meet war's demand because: a) labor is readily available; b) the region is right on road and rail lines from large cotton spinning mills to large markets. Similarly, to take advantage of locational advantages, a large city dairy has bought up land in Mayanoor, plans to import several hundred good milch animals from North India, and will have a thriving concern. These geographical and locational assets belonged to Mayanoor itself as a community. Because they lacked capital, knowhow, initiative, and even the spirit and technique of cooperation, its people have allowed their assets to be developed by outsiders; they must now be content to labor for the new concerns for wages, while profits and salaries go to the cities.

This above example is purely a problem of distribution. From the standpoint of production its present setup is properly efficient. In other villages, lack of capital and the ability to cooperate result in practices which are really uneconomic from the point of view of productive efficiency. In the Central Provinces, cottonseeds and linseeds are taken to mills in the town, as no villager can individually afford a mill in the village. The town mill-owners purchase, extract and sell the oil, and sell the by-product oil cakes (concentrates for animals). These concentrates must eventually get back to the villager, but the merchants in town who deal in them constitute a speculative market on which the small villager is dependent. Such multiplication of middlemen is obviously a costly proposition to him, and really an uneconomic situation for the society as a whole. It could be avoided if the village would join to build their own small mill, or if groups of villages could so do.

In referring to overpopulation of land, and one means of alleviating it, the improvement of village industries, I have been discussing the combination of the four

agents of production. Though I have omitted specific reference to the agent management, the major duty of that agent, namely to organize properly the other three agents in the most suitable productive team, has been revealed in every paragraph. It has been revealed by its absence: for the fact is that the agents are at present in very improper combination. In some cases this is due to lack of organization on the part of the individual or the village: but in the larger sense one could say that lack of organization and rationale in the whole economy is the fundamental cause. India's productive resources are out of balance: the thorough reallocation of her resources is one of the most difficult and urgent tasks which she faces. Whether she can count on the organizing capacities of individuals, villages, or even provinces, working separately and without mutual aid, is seriously open to question. One of the major parts of the reorganization will be the placing of excess manpower in new enterprises: few villages are capable of achieving this for themselves. National effort would seem to be required; but I shall refer to this subject again in Section IV, where I shall also again mention cottage industries and the Gandhian village program.

Before any such reallocation can properly start, whether on a village, a regional, or a national basis, full understanding of the present quality and quantity of the four agents in the given situation is necessary. Fundamentally, everything must be worked out with reference to the resources and their future possibilities. Once knowledge is sound, economic planners (if planning is accepted) can go ahead with their reorganization of resources. In the meantime, the technical planners and builders have been going ahead for several decades to improve the intrinsic quality of resources. Study of their success and their hopes for the future - in short, of resources present and future - should really be preliminary to a paper even of this scanty scope, and I haven't done it yet. Therefore I have merely included some elementary remarks on the subject, and some of the many questions on which I need further knowledge, in a short appendix. Since I believe the technical planners have made more efforts to improve the material agents (by developing new land and adding capital improvements to it), than to develop the most important resources, the people of India (whom the economist labels labor and management), I shall devote most of the remaining discussion in this paper to that topic: human beings.

III. The Village Society

There are two fundamental tests which may be applied in evaluating any society of men. One is its success in preserving man's individuality while yet utilizing to the fullest his nobler instincts of sympathy and self-denial, constantly increasing his willingness to cooperate with his neighbor. The second is its ability to adapt itself to change, whether technological, social or political: to go ahead with initiative in accepting the best features of change, while rejecting the worst. These tests are giving our world society a stiff challenge today. They may also be applied to nations, which are meeting them in varying measure, or they may be applied to the Indian village. Burdened by centuries of poverty, of rule entirely from above, and of rigid custom, the Indian village at the present moment is far removed from success on both counts.

This I say not in spirit of criticism, but in an effort to look at the situation with open eyes. Yet my standards of comparison may be unfair, for I am unable to forget the society in which I have grown up, and instinctively react on the basis of that New

England orientation. The question of self-government is an example. In my home town this March, as every March, the adult citizens will go to the Town Hall to sit in Town Meeting. In effect they will exercise control over the local tax rate, the town administration, the local police, budget, schools, roads, health, property boundaries, etc. Local government is in the people's hands. Many of them, it is of course true, fail to take an active part, but if something important needs action or decision every one will join in with interest and vigor.

In no Indian village do the people have any of the above powers or abilities. The basic land tax has been fixed by Government, and the revenue goes directly to the Province and Centre, from which some of it filters back to the village through services from above, in which they have no initiative or power of control. There is no true self-government or self-development, nor any funds on which real self-government and development could function in a village. The village headman and clerk of land records are appointed by Government, the former usually being a hereditary post. The local police centered in a nearby village have neither ties nor responsibility to the people; they sometimes abuse their authority, and are looked upon by the people as opponents, just as my local cop is feared by the children until they learn he is there for service to them: but many villagers never have demonstrations of such service. If there is a school, the school teacher is appointed by Government. Village sanitation and health are checked by travelling District health officers; cooperative credit societies, small local judiciary bodies (panchayats), improvement of agricultural technique - all these arise only on the initiative of the District officials, who often have difficulty in securing the villagers' acceptance of such schemes designed for their own improvement. The effective horizon of the villagers' world is the District in which their village is located, for the one man who heads the District, combining the functions of Collector, Commissioner, and Magistrate is to them the source of all service, justice, or injustice. (Or, in villages of big zemindars, the latter or his manager takes this supreme place in the villagers' minds).

Under such conditions, similar to those which have obtained for generations and centuries, what is the result? As I say, my reaction is undoubtedly conditioned by my background, and I want to live among villagers before coming to final judgments. It may be that my first impressions overemphasize the black side of the picture. To me, the initiative of the village and villager seem deadened. Their self-respect and confidence are crippled: indeed one can have little reason for self-respect when his measure of self-will is small. Even their neighborliness and instinct to cooperate have been sorely strained by the pressures of poverty: when each has had to scratch for the meager livelihood of himself and his own family, how can he have learned to cooperate with his own neighbor, who must also look out for himself? Yet this lack of initiative and cooperation further adds to their poverty. I have already mentioned failure, caused partially by lack of funds and knowhow, to join for economic undertakings. In other examples, lack of cooperation seems solely responsible, as in cases of land consolidation. Consolidation is the reapportionment of the village lands so that each man's holding of land will be in a single piece, rather than in several scattered plots as is at present the usual condition. To insure justice, the actual apportionment and calculation (which is immensely laborious, because each man must receive land equalling his original pieces in both quantity and quality) is supervised by District officials. In most cases, these officials have to exercise considerable persuasion even to convince a majority of the villagers that the move is to their interest. Yet it is at present necessary to secure unanimous consent from all the land holders; and it is common for a minority to veto the program because they are satisfied with

their own position; sometimes because they have illegally usurped others' land rights (perhaps by bribing the village land accountant, who is poorly paid and forced to accept such additional income) and fear that their sins will be found out. The whole village suffers from such individuality. (An exception to this balkiness is Amritsar District, where the Cooperative Department has thirty more village applications for consolidation than it can handle. Here the example of neighboring villages, and their success, has taken hold of public opinion to a sufficiently strong degree to achieve unanimity).

The village of Ruti, Poona District, is almost dry. On top of a range of hills, it receives showers only at scattered intervals. Everyone in the village agrees that if they are to get on their feet a new irrigation reservoir must be constructed to replace the ancient one, which has silted up through the centuries and is now beyond repair. Some years ago they had the land surveyed and plans drawn by Government engineers. One individual, however, who owns part of the land which the reservoir would occupy, has refused to contribute this piece to the project. It is apparently not a question of price with him, but the fear that he may receive poorer land in the new irrigated area. Nevertheless, even the idea of pooling resources to buy him out has not occurred to the villagers, nor is there any guarantee that an offer would persuade him. No one in the village can compel him, and the reservoir will be delayed for some years more by his unneighborly stubbornness.

I asked these villagers whether they had sought the assistance of the District Commissioner or his junior officials. No, they hadn't. They apparently had little faith that officials would help them. Their attitude resembled that which I found in villages in every region. Having depended on outside Government for so long, yet having been refused in so many cases, villagers have curiously different and pathetic attitudes toward that Government: some go to it with complaints and requests of the most minute character; others look upon it with cynicism, even fear and hate, having no faith in its motives and deeds; others seem completely indifferent. It will take time to create any sort of a new outlook toward the Government even when it becomes fully responsible. Even now that many villagers vote for their representatives in the Provincial Legislatures, they have little hope that the elected men will do anything for them. I asked the Ruti villagers whether, if they didn't think the non-responsible District Commissioner would help them, they had gone to the man for whom they voted for the Legislature. He, I told them, was there for their service. "No", they replied, "He will only come to help us immediately before election time, and won't carry out his promises". I had heard those identical words from villagers in the Punjab, and felt the same outlook in many other villages. They have not grasped the fact that changes are theoretically in the air, are not aware that they as individuals and communities have the power to change their government.

Such reaction to outside political change is fully understandable (the same cynical statements are made in the USA, but on a minority scale), and it may take years to build a rural electorate which is able to take effective initiative beyond their own immediate horizon. Even within the village, initiative for self-rule is slow in appearing. In recent years, efforts have been made by Government to re-establish the ancient panchayat system in a modified form. A panchayat is a local judiciary body, elected by the villagers, having authority to hear civil suits, debt cases, and to pass property decrees, usually where the sum involved does not exceed Rs. 200; to try minor theft cases and levy minor fines. It is responsible for the cleanliness of the village, the upkeep of lanes and drains, and can levy small local octroi fees or excise

taxes for such purposes. In the Punjab, panchayats have been established in perhaps fifty percent of the villages I visited. Within each District there is an official of the Panchayat Department who prods the present panchayats to effective action and who tries to persuade other villages to accept this opportunity for some measure of local control. In some cases, these local bodies seem to have taken hold in improving village conditions: in one instance a panchayat had even raised money to purchase a registered service bull for the village. In others, they have accomplished little in such village uplift. Further, the fact that they are elected by open show of hands has often created factional feeling within the village where none existed before: the elected members, knowing who voted for them (and perhaps they put pressure on some of their supporters), can always be accused of partiality in judicial decisions, whether or not they are guilty of it. Viewing this deteriorating situation in neighboring villages, those who have not accepted the idea prefer to depend on the District Magistrate and his assistants as they always have. Consequently, it is perhaps fairer to ascribe the slow development of this petty self-rule to the unimaginative nature of the program as instituted by Government, instead of to the incapacity of the villagers themselves.

Nevertheless, having attended a session of a circuit court in the Punjab, where the procedure was translated to me, I must admit a discouraging inability on the part of the villagers to settle their own disputes by mutual discussion and compromise. Aside from the administrative decisions which the Assistant Magistrate made, acting in his capacity as assistant to the District Commissioner (these were mostly concerned with rationing and grain procurement, showing how the war has increased the contacts of the peasant with the government machinery, increasing also his dependence on that machinery), I was surprised by the character of the pleas brought to him in his judicial capacity by folks from the nearby villages. Four separate people apprehended breach of peace by enemies whom they wished to have bound down by police order; two others had been beaten by an enemy ; the land of one had been appropriated by someone who threatened to beat him if he resisted; one woman complained that some people had blocked her way to her house; and an ex-Army Jemadar stated that his neighbors had been diverting canal water from his land to theirs. The court's action in all these cases was to send police or junior magistrates to investigate and take proper preventive or corrective action. I could not remember in my own community any such inability to protect oneself or much dependence on the authority of Government for protection and arbitration. But in my community, it must be remembered, people have a tradition of settling their own quarrels, and, more important, a disputed half acre or less is not a matter of life and death. Here such petty disputes and litigation are perhaps the most glaring examples of failure to live together harmoniously. Not the least damage to the peasant is the cost of hiring legal aid in cases of any complexity. I do not propose to judge a whole society only by the cases who come to court, for mankind would appear all black on that basis. I met an Indian municipal administrator, who has spent his lifetime studying the relations of man and man in society, and who gave me the most blunt and direct statement that I have ever heard any man make about his own countrymen: "The Indian is the most individual character in the world, bereft of the ability to reach an understanding with his neighbor, much less to love him". I do not propose to accept this strong remark without much closer contacts with villagers than I have yet had. Yet his words obviously have a degree of truth in them today. People just don't seem to pull together. When they have not been encouraged to, when others think and decide for them, how can they have learned self-rule?

Carrying the discussion over into serious crimes, there again seems to be much connection between the system of Government (this time the system of justice again) and the present social condition (this time the rate of serious crimes). A society which has developed without outside imposition of law always forms its own law; however crude it may be it meets the requirement of providing a legal standard of justice known to all, so that when a man is punished it is in accordance with the prevailing public ethic among his equals and peers; both they and he therefore understand the punishment and the procedure. Hindu and Muslim Law are examples: derived originally from religious sources, having the sanction of religion, age, and tradition, they form an integral part of the society. To what extent these two clashed in practice before the British came I do not know at the moment; but disregarding the argument about whether or not British Justice should have been imposed, which at this stage is rather fruitless, the immediate point is that after several generations neither the system nor the people appear to have adjusted to each other: there is no mutual understanding. Instead of quickly examining evidence and pronouncing verdict when a crime is committed, before truth and witnesses can be purchased, and while the villagers are still conscious of the crime and will note the punishment, Justice removes the trial from the scene of the crime both in time and place, allowing ample opportunity for the police or interested parties to provide their own 'witnesses'. Unappreciative of novel rules of procedure, lacking moral hesitancy to lie under an oath which has no meaning to them, the police do not enthuse over the system. As for the District Magistrate, he often knows what the truth of the case is from the gossip and information that have come to him in his capacity as District Commissioner, but he must pronounce a verdict on the basis of the evidence provided in his court, even though he knows it to be largely false, as it sometimes is. His position in such cases is also known to the people, occasionally, which gives them even less respect for such 'Law'. Having discussed this system with district officials in the Punjab, I read the relevant chapters of Penderel Moon's fine book, "Strangers in India"; his words were almost those of the officials with whom I had talked.

The lack of effective law to suit the people's temperament and habit is at least one cause of the high crime rate which was cited to me throughout the Punjab. (I do not know whether the Punjab's rate is unusually high or not). In one Punjab village an honorable elderly citizen put the whole thing very succinctly, when I asked whether crime and civic conscience had remained about the same during his lifetime. He expressed the belief that crime and disorderliness had markedly increased, especially in the last ten or twelve years; that the common practice of lying in court has grown ever worse as people realize they can get away with it; and that the amount of gang banditry (some ex-soldiers have become 'bad characters'), cold-blooded murder, abduction of women, has reached serious proportions; thinking of these and the communal riots in other provinces which he has heard about, he questions whether we are living in a civilized age.

I told him his question had application to the world as a whole, not only to India as a society. He agreed.

Apart from poverty and a type of government not calculated to advance men's independence, further barriers to progress have been the religious and social institutions of the prople, as well as the natural conservatism of rural dwellers in any land. In several letters I have mentioned one aspect of the former hindrance: the caste system. Among the regions I visited, Madras Province has the most serious

problem of caste, at least as far as untouchables are concerned. In their jobs as agricultural laborers, sweepers, and leather workers, the untouchables obviously suffer economic disabilities; in addition they are not only prohibited entry to temples (a wide campaign to remove this restriction is being carried on by the Madras Government), but also receive discrimination in benefits from village improvement and in participation in village activities. Living apart amidst muddy lanes and in tumbled shacks, they still seem neglected by the society around them. Of all groups they are naturally the least able to advance their own interests, both because of discrimination, their poverty, and their weak capacity. Yet as I visited their quarters in the villages, I found them looking me in the eye with a clear glance. Themselves the lowest in society, dressed in rags and unable to help themselves, they at least have not sinned against man: they are guiltless of the assumption of superiority which some men display in all lands. Perhaps it was this innocence that caused their steady glance: perhaps their eyes were silently indicting the privileged society represented by me and my Brahmin companion. I felt that their potential strength as living men is enormous, if they are given the long guidance and help needed.

Even among Mohammedans and Sikhs in the Punjab, as I have written, these economic groups are still underprivileged, and the whole society is somewhat stratified. On seeing endogamous groups of this type (for marriage within the group is still required or practiced both in tribes in the Punjab and in Hindu sub-castes), my first question has always been: is not this ingrowth biologically bad? A scientist will have to answer this question for me; but I believe it is at least culturally harmful, as it restricts mobility and the introduction and acceptance of new ideas. Among the Sikhs, on the other hand, the sub-castes are exogamous. Though one isolated instance proves nothing, it was interesting that in one Sikh village all the wives had learned the weaving of carpets and blankets in the last three years, for this skill had been brought into the village by a young bride who came from a different sub-cast some distance away.

It is difficult for me to decide whether the continuation of hereditary and caste occupations in the last century has benefitted or harmed the Indian economy. In the old days, when each village was a more or less self-sufficient unit, they probably performed the old guild function of preserving balance in the economy. Today it is true that they help to preserve the much-needed craft skills and agricultural technique, but I wonder if they do not impose a rigidity which aggravates the increasing overpopulation within the village. Even when living at bare subsistence, individuals and groups often refuse to seek new occupations; both caste restrictions, the assurance given by familiar work and habits, and fear or ignorance of the unknown outside world combine to maintain the pressure on the land or in the crowded village. Perhaps such conservatism of movement has not been harmful, for alternative sources of employment have also been poor; ifthe economy as a whole becomes more prosperous and dynamic, its increased mobility and opportunities will probably break down occupational crafts. Perhaps in principle the Gandhian economists have validity in deploring the tendency of the modern economy to weaken life's stability. Yet, also in principle and with no reference to economic soundness, I personally believe that such hereditary barriers are no longer the proper basis on which a man's life endeavors should be based, if indeed they ever were proper; the latter is a question which I'll puzzle over in my study of ancient Indian history.

Before closing my discussion of this topic I must record the remarks made to me by Arthur Mosher, of the Higginbotham Agricultural Institute at Allahabad.

Mosher, who worked for his doctorate under the guidance of Prof. Schultz at the University of Chicago during the war, has been in India for a total of some eight years, and spent one full year in a village in the United Provinces. He has come to feel that progress in village work, introduction of change or new technique, will be retarded as long as the sanction of religion, in its present form, is the basis on which all village action or rejection of action takes place. He has no intention of attacking the religion: such an idea is out of his mind. He does feel that either, a) the whole foundation of village activity must change from the sanction of religion to some other sanction - nationalism, class struggle, etc. -; or, b) perhaps more thorough and permanent in its effect in view of religion's historical predominance in India, the new ideas must gain religious sanction, through persuasion that they are really in line with the history of the religion's development and with its major tenets. Although we didn't have time to discuss the details of this matter, I was very impressed by his serious and deep thinking on this and other topics; though I myself had not observed the full force which religion plays in the social life of the village, I am sure his judgment has much validity, which it gains both from his experience with villagers and his sympathy for the problems of human beings. If I have the opportunity to live among villagers, I shall endeavor to study this force.

In a sense, all the above remarks reflect the type of adaptability which Indian villagers have shown to change. In effect, it has been a neutral rather than a positive adaptation. Incapable of resisting the advent of ruler after ruler throughout centuries, receiving in recent decades the relentless impact of modern economic and social forces, their reaction has been to exercise unprecedented patience and courage, revealing their inheritance of generations of selflessness and grit. One can only marvel at this steadfastness and endurance before suffering. Yet in our modern world we expect more from men: we look for a positive reaction, in which self confidence and constructive ability enable men to advance, rather than retreat, in face of change. Perhaps we expect too much. Perhaps when men learn to take initiative they become aggressive and too possessive, traits evidenced in India only by individuals, not by its society as a whole. Perhaps that is the condemnation of the West, which needs more selflessness: but the West is on trial and the verdict may be in within a generation. Meanwhile, the East must step out of its old paths to a large degree if it is to survive physically. While people in the West grow a bit more humble, people here must grow strong. The two characteristics well complement each other, and both are essential for a world civilization.

IV. The Liberation of Men.

This vast country, this vast poverty of men and matter, present a sharp challenge. The economic status of the poorest villager is a vicious cycle, grinding ever downward. Centuries of oppression have bred in him an accumulating inadequacy to master his own destiny, an insufficiency as a creative and cooperative human being. Religious custom has barred change and condemned millions as outcastes. But none of these handicaps is pre-ordained as a permanent characteristic of Indians or any other people. In truth, for each enfeebled human whom we see in the field or on the footpath, we see many sturdy ones on all sides, walking with upright body and proud countenance. And so, full of faith in the true strength of their people, inspired by the ideals of freedom and the high purpose of their task, many men in India have accepted the challenge. All over the land, social workers, students, scholars are concentrat-

ing on village problems, as individuals or in groups. Political workers of the Congress, Muslim League, and Communist Party are getting into the villages, stirring up people who have slept for generations. New and expanded Government policies are being tried out in all Provinces. I have had the chance to see some of these movements, and must now consider the question: Will these efforts lead to success?

Mahatma Gandhi was the first man to accept India's village challenge in full courage and vision, and with a fundamental principle: that the rebuilding of people is India's first need. In Bengal, the old man is still accepting the hard struggle; in the meantime, his village program is being pushed forward by the group of village uplift organizations which have grown up under his inspiration and aegis. The objective of the program is well-known: to re-integrate the life of the villager, how so torn apart, by making the village itself a living unit. A description of Gandhi's ashram village, Sevagram, near Wardha in the center of India, will perhaps convey something of the spirit and ideal which stimulates the entire movement. Sevagram (meaning "village of servants") is both community and school, for it is the central training ground of the Wardha scheme for Basic Education. Since this education is planned to lay the foundations for the entire life of the child, the whole village lives as one common teacher to all. The village has been built from raw materials found in the surrounding country, and provides its own food and other necessities of life. Child and adult together keep the village vegetable gardens and crops, learning sound agricultural techniques. All activities are on full cooperative lines, each adult and child performing his full share in the preparation of food and all other work. Teaching for both is built around a craft skill, the aim being to draw on man's creative instinct, his desire to build in beauty and perfection, as well as to give him a practical ability which will increase his independence and self-confidence. Spinning is the craft emphasized at Sevagram, and I attended for a few minutes the daily half hour community spin, wherein all the members gather with their charkas or taclis and work side by side without speech, concentrating on their thread, meditating in the silence, which is only broken by the muted hum of the spinning wheels. Each member also spins outside in his free time, depending on his skill, for he is to meet a daily quota designed to provide him with sufficient yarn for his annual cloth requirements: between a half-hour and an hour daily is necessary to fill this quota. The children are taught the proper sanitation of the village; the care of one's own body and health are instilled as habits. In the early years, the reading and writing, the calculating that are taught are each related to some useful and present activity so that they will have meaning to the child. Later on, literature and language of poetry and song combine with religious instruction and the daily prayer meeting in building spiritual strength and the communion of love and truth. The essence of the whole community is true civics: both individuals and society are complete, living organisms. I suppose that this is as wonderful and ideal community as can be found in the world, reminiscent of the harmony societies of Robert Owen, the cooperative work camps suggested by William James, or the best modern progressive schools. And Sevagram has a full role to play in the Indian soil, even if only stimulus and ideal example. In other regional centers similar communities have grown up, also to prepare teachers who will then go back into their villages to start their own community uplift. In my letters I have described the encouraging picture of happy and healthy children receiving loving instruction in Calicut and Theroor, in South India, under this same program. Having seen such sincere and devoted workers, I feel that this ideal is blessed with the spirit of growth.

Like those other model societies mentioned above, the Gandhi example visualizes a simple but full life, and is designed to approach self-sufficiency for the village unit. It is to further self-sufficiency that the other organizations at Sevagram and Wardha devote their efforts. The mainspring of these efforts is the attempt to revive cottage industries and crafts, thus to utilize the spare time of the agriculturist, to lessen or eliminate his dependence on outside sources for food, shelter, and clothing, incidentally reducing the costs of middlemen and transport and equating production and distribution. At Wardha I was shown about the interesting workshop of the All India Village Industries Association, the central unit in this revival. Here the natural resources of India's villages - soils, plants, rocks, minerals - are subjected to scrutiny and experimentation for the purpose of finding new and improved uses, in making such products as soap, paper, fuel oil, potter's wheels, etc. The village waste is also examined for such uses. At this workshop, age-old implements such as oil-pressers and grain-grinders are redesigned and the new models tested; the varied types of implement in use throughout India for such processes have been gathered here for tests of their comparative efficiency. Men are trained, and a campaign through regional centers diffuses the new knowledge of tools and materials, tries to strengthen craft skills.

In Sevagram, the headquarters of the All India Spinning Association is located. In a similar way, the AISA workshop is devoted to study and improvement of hand spinning instruments and to training of first-class spinning instructors. The AISA also serves as the executive and coordinating body of the entire khadi movement, propagating the production and use of khadi through its branches in the districts, which serve as distributing agencies for the home producer (purchasing yarn from the spinner and selling to the weaver, if the two are in different places; and maintaining shops for the sale of khadi cloth).

And this brings us back to the weaving village of Tanur, in Malabar. In discussing Tanur, I stated that in an expanding industrial economy, as the cloth shortage was relieved, mill yarn and mill cloth would tend to drive hand production out of the market, on economic grounds. I mentioned the loss of spare time income this would mean for the hand spinner, and the loss of full time income for many handloom weavers. To counteract this tendency throughout the province, the Madras Government have: a) prohibited the expansion of textile mills and the increase in the number of spindles in the province; b) undertaken to boost and encourage the production and use of khadi. At Sevagram, in early December, I asked Mr. Jaju, the Secretary of the All India Spinning Association and one of the leading figures in the khadi movement, one or two questions about the Madras situation. He freely admitted that, in what is commonly called a 'free market', khadi could not compete with mill yarn and cloth. Mill and khadi, he said, can not flourish side by side. He therefore expressed his personal opinion that as time goes on the Madras Government, in logical pursuance of the program started, will be forced not only to exclude new mills but also gradually to shut down existing mills so that khadi production may grow. Mr. Jaju and the Madras Government fully represent the Gandhi hope for the charka and its future contribution to village strength. In a sense, devoted as they all are to the village, they epitomize what I have learned thus far about the ideas of the Gandhian economists; sacrifice overall productive efficiency in the effort to rebuild India's fundamental social unit, the village. I have not yet found a complete statement of their overall program, therefore I can hardly evaluate it. I wonder, however, if the same social ends can not be more fully achieved by other means.

Numerous other groups and individuals are grappling with various aspects of the village problem, and I must describe some of those which I have encountered. First, some of their efforts on the problem of personnel and method may be recorded. It is obvious that the recruiting and training of men and women village workers is a key need in India's whole village program. To rejuvenate an aged and tired people is a task requiring endless patience and perseverance, really demanding a missionary spirit. The Sevagram school is clearly full of such qualities, and moving ahead, but to obtain enough people of such nature for the vast number of Indian villages is in itself a huge job. Both governmental and private agencies will be forced to utilize many workers, probably a majority, who will not possess the strong spirit of the Sevagram people. When such workers are recruited they must be guided and instructed so that their work will realize its fullest possibilities. In Allahabad, where the Higginbotham Agricultural Institute plans to build up an extension program of agricultural and village uplift in the surrounding area, Arthur Mosher stressed to me the necessity of working out a proper technique for village work. He emphasized, as many others have, the initial difficulty of breaking down the villagers' suspicion and conservatism; the subsequent stage is equally important, for the program started by the village worker must evolve into something in which the villager himself plays the active part. In the past, Mosher said, individuals working in villages have achieved marked isolated successes due to their unique genius and personality, but no pattern has been found, no tried technique which the average or mediocre uplift worker can apply with success. In tackling village conservatism, the average worker may quickly be discouraged if his initial overtures fail; but if he meets with success and feels that progress is good, he will roll ahead on his own with awakened spirit and enthusiasm, thinking out new ideas and making efforts which he never would do if resigned to failure. I have seen one or two workers in villages who have completely bogged down at the magnitude of the task and the slow advance. This will be a common occurrence, leading also to further disillusionment on the part of the villagers themselves, unless some techniques that prove frequently successful are developed, each suitable for its own type of village problem. And so, in the Institute's extension work, Mosher hopes to try out several different approaches: he is looking for the pattern, the framework, which will really suit on a wide scale.

Other private organizations are similarly preparing workers, methods, studies. In Lucknow, the India Village Service, headed up by Dr. W.H. Wiser, with the backing of American Missions, is starting in a small way to experiment and seek for a similar technique, and now has workers in two villages. In Bombay, the Tata School of Social Studies, India's premier social service school, trains both men and women for residence and work in rural areas as well as urban slums; and in Lucknow a new Social Service School with the same purpose is about to open under American Missionary support. The Gokhale School of Politics and Economics and the Servants of India Society undertake research in field and library, to work out pioneer methods for rural surveys as well as to produce such surveys. Mr. K. G. Sivaswamy of the latter organization, for example, has expended immense efforts and time on numerous studies: a review, with a cogent critique, of the Madras khadi program; a fairly exhaustive comparison of the major Land Alienation Acts and Tenancy Acts in the various provinces, in the attempt to draw the best principles from each; an analysis of the position of the agricultural laborer and recommendations for wage and debt legislation: the latter two are indispensable preliminary research of the sort that must be done before sweeping government legislation can be properly drawn. In addition, these groups publicize the plight and problems of the villager, and engage

in wide social work. It is good to see such basic preparations being undertaken, but at the same time one can but note the early stage at which men are still working.

Provincial Governments are still at an equally early stage. Fortunately, I feel, many of them have definitely accepted the necessity of having their village workers actually live in villages, rather than maintaining only travelling inspectors, 'visiting firemen' whose influence on the villager is fleeting and spasmodic. Like the private organizations I have just described, they are going ahead with the preliminary phases: training personnel and trying to think out sound techniques. The approach of the Central Provinces Government, as outlined to me by the Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry, is one such example. During the next five years, 1500 new men in the Agricultural Department are to be given a year's training, centering around animal husbandry and basic veterinary work, but also including instruction in proper village sanitation and health measures, in craft skills suitable for the region in which they will work, and in all aspects of the village economy. As their course is completed, the men will be established in key villages throughout the Province, from which they will also work out into surrounding villages. They will be provided by the Government with registered service bulls of good breed, and their first function will be to maintain these bulls for the use of the villagers. In thus attacking a vital defect in the agricultural sphere, the low quality of cattle, they will also be doing a practical service which the villager will appreciate: his confidence and interest will be gained, or at the least his suspicion weakened. In the meantime, the worker will study local problems, and gradually start suggesting changes and new methods. Since most villagers in the Central Provinces now send their scanty production of whole milk to the town for sale, drinking none themselves, one of the early objectives will be to form cooperative milk societies among small groups of villages, so that milk can be processed in the village, saving the skim milk for the consumption of villagers and selling the butter and ghee to towns. Coupled with such a move, schools will be required to distribute skim milk to all children. Gradually, it is hoped, the cooperatives will become multi-purpose: combining marketing, purchasing, processing, credit extension, consolidation of holdings, and perhaps eventually the final goal of full cooperative farming. Such a program certainly has the seeds of progress in it.

In the United Provinces, a plan for a similar approach has been drawn up by Albert Mayer, an American planning consultant to the Provincial Government. The draft plan which I examined, having as objective, "the social and physical reconstruction of the village", proposes three stages: the first a concrete demonstration of friendliness and economic service by the resident worker; second, gradual introduction of new ideas; third, having carried the villagers into the spirit of change, the final wholesale reorganization deemed necessary in each particular village. Mayer proposes that this scheme be tried in about three hundred villages in each of three districts, thus concentrating the initial effort with the hope that village after village in those areas, seeing their neighbors' progress, will join the movement. His plan includes coordination of the work of all government departments: at departmental level to avoid duplication and insure thorough preparation of programs; and at field level to funnel all programs through the resident village development worker to the villagers, gradually reducing the need for touring Departmental inspectors. It is a broad scheme, suggesting further administrative reorganization, estimating costs and savings, advocating new statistical surveys and the preparation of physical plans for reorganized villages. It also looks to the morale and pro-

gress of the field personnel, recommending refresher courses, annual meetings of all the workers to compare experiences, and even a small newspaper for the same dissemination of ideas. To stimulate Government to continual action, it proposes that a private outside agency such as the Tata School of Social Studies be called in after three years, and at regular intervals thereafter, to evaluate progress, criticize and suggest. The plan is constructive and forward-looking: whether the United Provinces Government will accept it has yet to be seen.

The emphasis on preparation of personnel and technique in the above programs appeals to me. Another Provincial Government, Madras, has gone directly into villages in some districts, apparently with less preparation but forced to action by the food situation, trying to bring the people into some sort of cooperative structure right at the start. One innovation has been the establishment of village 'vigilante' committees to 'police' the procurement and rationing of grains within the village, to make for efficiency, honesty, and fair distribution. The committee members in each village have been named by the District Magistrates, and are, as is understandable, citizens who are already of some standing in the village, the larger owners, agents of landlords, merchants, etc.; it is in such individuals that much of the present knowhow and initiative of the village rests. If the committees prove successful in their original function, it is planned that they will evolve into self-development, self-government bodies on an elected basis. It will be instructive to watch their progress. In one village, a citizen told me that the setup thus far looks rather unsatisfactory. Most of the committee members themselves have considerable interests in grain: if hoarding or black marketing is taking place, they are perhaps the very parties guilty, so will hardly be in a position to scrutinize others carefully, or desirous of starting a very active 'police' movement. Further, this individual was afraid that Harijans might suffer discrimination in distribution from a committee made up of high caste persons. The committees have only been in existence for a few months, so it is too early to judge.

A more hopeful Madras scheme seems to be underway: the formation of village cooperatives for procurement and distribution of food grains. This was first instituted in Malabar District, one of those most deficit in rice. In each village or group of villages all producers and consumers must join the cooperative, which has the duty of procuring from the cultivator any of his grain production in excess of his annual family quota. Within the cooperative itself, grain from surplus families will be distributed directly to deficit families; any surplus in the coop as a whole will be delivered to Government; and any deficit will be met by Government. Since it is to the interest of A, a small producer, to see that his neighbor B, a surplus producer, delivers his excess, it is reasonable to assume that this type of a self-governing body may succeed in its purpose. During this year's kharif crop, as reported by Mr. Subha Rao, Food Secretary, and by local citizens of Calicut, the units have been at least as successful as the former procurement officials in drawing in the surplus where this is existant. This appears to be a case of individual genius: one man, an I.C.S. officer, apparently had proper understanding of the villagers to make the coops going concerns. He had now been transferred to another District to install similar units there. Apparently one individual can accomplish a lot if he moves fast: the question then becomes one of 'carry-through': will they continue to grow under the guidance of present District officials without his stimulus?

The Punjab was the only province in which I travelled widely with Government to see exactly what they are doing. Less experimentation seems to be in the air

there. Each Department is going solidly ahead along traditional lines: Agriculture establishing new demonstration farms and distributing more seeds, fertilizer, and bulls; Panchayat inspecting the existing village units and trying to spread their popularity; Cooperative slowly expanding the number and lending strength of its village credit societies, gradually consolidating lands, trying to build 'Better Living Societies' among the villagers; Canal rapidly extending its water systems in the West, at the same time struggling to drain off land that has become waterlogged and to prevent further waterlogging; Education inspecting its schools, but failing to introduce into the curriculum in a big way two topics which I believe must be widely stressed as basic: civic consciousness, and agricultural and craft techniques. I felt that the impetus of the work, to the extent that I saw it, was not very strong, and was more encouraged by the other Provincial moves which I have described above: but they, after all, are still mostly on paper, with the Madras exception. In the Punjab, one non-official enterprise starting by an I.C.S. officer, known as 'Young Farmers' Clubs', similar to the American 4-H Club, had aroused considerable enthusiasm in one canal village which I visited. This seems to be a case of individual success on the part of both the program's organizer and, in this particular village, the field worker, a college graduate who has come back to his own village to live and farm; this is a somewhat rare event in itself. It raises the suggestion, which I heard once or twice: should not the Government carefully select one or two young volunteers from every village (conscientious school graduates, or alert young adults in villages where there are no schools), secure from them the assurance that they will go back to the village for several years at least, give them a year or two of training in economic and civic subjects, and then return them to their homes? If the goal is to reach every village in India, such a scheme might hasten the process. I have heard no mention of it by any government officials. In this connection, it may also be remarked that girls and mothers are fully as important as men in this whole village movement; in the United Provinces I talked with one able and determined lady in the Government's women's program who has been organizing the instruction of women in the villages: they become not only better mothers but also respected examples for the community.

Individually, it has been a stimulating experience to meet and talk with people engaged in such worthwhile missions and efforts as described above. For each of them that I have seen, there must be many more throughout India. Yet, if I have seen a representative sample, in the aggregate it must be said that prospects are a bit discouraging. The immensity of the task looms awesome in face of all their efforts. And none of them appear to have struck for the true heartroot of the problem, none appear to have solutions for the deep economic malaise of rural India. Yet it is clear that people are not going to be rejuvenated while poverty is still heavy: the fundamental economic defects should therefore be the priority targets. To learn of attacks on these basic faults we apparently have to turn away from programs being carried out or widely planned by Provincial Governments or private agencies, and to consider a sweeping and imaginative proposal which evidently has not been taken up and translated into actual action.

In his book, "Poverty and Social Change", Tarlok Singh has started with the basic premise that the land cultivated by each family should be an economic holding: enough to support the labors of that family and its draft animals. This key conception strikes directly at the present low productive efficiency of men and villages working too little land, which means the author has put first things first. He has gone ahead with suggestions for the reorganization and rationalization of agri-

cultural production on that initial premise. He feels that a reorganization program will only be truly successful if based on the villagers' understanding and cooperation; he looks for an evolutionary growth which will not rudely break the thread of Indian tradition. A fundamental principle of that tradition has been individual ownership of land. He therefore proposes to preserve the individual owner's right to receive income from his land, but to modify his prerogatives as manager of his land by subjecting actual management of all land to joint village control, thus insuring its proper use and development for the benefit of the whole village society. The first task of joint management, in which all families would share responsibility through elected committees, and would have the help and guidance of Government, would be to reallot the land for cultivation purposes to the actual cultivating families, on the above premise. Some cultivators would actually own the piece they cultivate, others not, depending on the amount each originally contributes to the village 'farm'. At first, the non-paying cultivator would pay rent in kind to the joint farm; this rent would be divided among the owners in proportion to the value of land which each contributed. Very probably much of this income would be available for capital improvements; joint management would permit all the usual advantages of joint cooperative marketing, processing, etc.

After considering many of the human and technical problems involved in such wholescale reorganization, and some of the advantages which recommend 'joint management' as preferable to 'nationalization', or 'collective farms', or undefined 'cooperative farming', in the Indian rural sphere, the author goes on to analyze the fundamental corollary of land rationalization: the creation of excess manpower for whom jobs must be found. On the basis of available census figures, he roughly calculates that 15-1/2 million male agriculturists, with their families representing 28% of British India's rural population, would have to be provided with new employment if such rationalization were achieved at this point. This emphasizes the magnitude, yet the urgency of the problem. In effect, he then surveys the whole broad range of social and economic change, from the village out to the city and back, which such rationalization could lead to. He suggests general principles which society might use in deciding which industries should be decentralized, which centralized; which should be left to individual private enterprise, which to full State control; which to broad-based public ownership wherein the villager and the laborer will share ownership and managerial supervision, with the initial aid of State supervision and guidance.

In short, Tarlok Singh starts out with a clear view of the bedrock problem: the problem is so deep and required such vast correction that the whole social structure will be affected, as in the gradual shocks of an earthquake: this provides society itself with the opportunity - indeed the necessity - to correct and reshape its entire living structure. "It must be realized", says the author, "that the planner's outlook has to be as large as society itself". Indeed, one must really read his book to grasp the close attention to detail which he combines with this comprehensive outlook of the planner. He coolly analyzes immediate problems, fully recognizes that trial and error must inevitably produce the final forms of things, and talks practical sensible language: yet the entire conception rests on a profound social and economic ideal. In its full reach it is perhaps a higher ideal than society can realize. Though it preserves the profit system and much private enterprise for the present, it in essence demands nationwide subordination of men's desires for private gain to their will to cooperate for mutual gain. Though it envisages developing growth and change of the State, it fully bases such growth on the voluntary parti-

cipation and cooperation of individuals and groups working together to create a broad-based social organizm in which farmer will be manager, laborer will be investor, State and public will be working interchangeably, and cities will be relatively decentralized. In short, the separate identities of such groups will be of less importance to society than we are accustomed to in the U.S. "It is true of course that a great deal of courage, imagination, sheer hard work and public spirit are needed for creating and running the immense organization implicit in the very idea of public management. But are not these attributes the sine qua non or any attempt to plan against mass poverty? . . . A community which sets out to shape its destiny with its own hands must make a supreme and urgent effort to rise above its limitations" . . Whether expressed or not, this challenge to his people is there in every page of his book, "Can we work together to these high ends?"

Tarlok Singh builds his conception on his faith in India's villagers, with whom he has carefully discussed his basic village ideas, and who he believes will respond to sound ideas properly introduced. But his challenge can not yet be directly to the villagers. His challenge must be, and is, to that stratum of the society which is already awake, educated, conscious: to those very groups mentioned above, privately and officially seeking to reform and rebuild the village. Only through this stratum can his message and his proposals reach the villagers on a wide scale. And, it must be said, the reform groups have apparently not taken up the challenge in large measure. They have not sought the bedrock problem. On January 1st, the press carried a report on the annual session of the All India Agricultural Economics Conference: this body was evidently accepted Tarlok Singh's fundamental approach, but I have seen no mention of any other response. Sir Manilal Nanavati, President of the A.I.A.E.C., summed up the views of the Conference, and I quote excerpts from his statement: " 'The fundamental problem . . is the removal of the pressure of population which has been increasing since the last hundred years. . . . The immediate task of Indian administration is to remove the pressure and raise the status of agriculture as a paying industry. There are two ways in which this can be done: By finding other sources of steady employment at remunerative rates under healthy conditions for uneconomic holders and landless laborers; and secondly, the readjustment of agriculture within itself. . . . .The measures under the latter must be through comprehensive agrarian reforms under which the (cultivator) must have enough land, the produce from which should go to him alone and nobody else. . .All developments should center round the land reform and man reform. .' Sir Manilal maintained that the planning in India had not started from this point of view."

Meanwhile, as he says, "isolated measures like debt legislation, abolition of Zemindari, tenancy reforms, and financial reorganization, would not bear fruit". Such measures, and such individual attempts as I have described, are still absorbing the majority of men's efforts. I quote once more from Tarlok Singh: "It is a mistake to wait upon small and inconsequential experiments in the hope that they will yield fundamental conclusions. We must make our minds up on principles and know clearly what it is that we seek. Social experiments are useful if they represent a stage in the implementation of a policy decision which has already been taken . . . . .Experiments can not yield a new outlook or a new philosophy of social action".

It would seem that the time has come when all social reform groups in India must put heart and minds together, really to come to grips with the situation. Whether there is any tendency among the above groups and Provincial Governments in

that direction I can not say; and therefore I can not judge how far the prospects of success go. I believe that such deep social principles must be agreed to before real success will come; after that can come the practical cooperation on ideas and techniques among the various agencies that will lead to the implementation of those principles. What is basically needed is a meeting of minds on the essentials, so that all groups can together launch a frontal attack on the whole problem, in a comprehensive program which will organically grow until 700,000 villages and 361,200,000 rural people *feel its stirring impact and begin to take active parts in it.

For the goal must be village communities wherein each citizen has a new social spirit and is able to hold his head high, confident that with their own sturdy efforts he and his neighbor can build their own new life. As I look back on all the helpless villagers I have seen, physically and spiritually defeated by life, I realize that this goal of self-government and self-reliance may seem a distant one for the Indian peasant. And yet it can be achieved in a generation if the hearts and minds of the reformers work together, starting now.

In the villages, a spark of life among the school children was often the only bright sign. In Ramdas, Amritsar District, their young enthusiasm and energy, evident in their questions and songs, have been captured by the spriit of a new freedom, explained to them by their teacher, summed up in the magic word, "Pakistan". And the school Inspector described to me the concept of Pakistan that was being emphasized: "a sort of socialism based on the Islamic doctrine of man's equality". In Patas, Poona District, school children wearing Congress caps sang me their Marathi and National anthems, and as I left they of their own volition and inspiration gave me the nationalist salutation, "Jai Hind" - "Victory to India". Their spontaneity was refreshing, though obviously their teacher was also teaching politics. In Malabar, as my train slowly drew away from the town, pass the school, the boys in the yard shouted vigorously in Malayalee, "White man go back" - at which I was equally cheered. Spirit is awakening. In Tanur, In Malabar, the young school children showered me with intelligent questions about my own country. Curiosity is peeping out. And in Theroor, near Cape Comorin, a new joy and love of life was shown in the children's songs: some of them were chanting the battle anthem of Subhas Bose's Indian National Army, which almost compares to the Red Army Song in its heroic and stirring spirit.

It may seem naive to judge future progress from songs. It may be that youthful enthusiasm created for communalism or nationalism or militarism will never be translated into village uplife. But I look upon such enthusiasm as a fresh wind, a new light, an indication that this new generation of Indians may demand something more than the drudgery of their fathers. If they demand it, maybe they will learn to work for it. To me it's hopeful.

Similarly, instances of adult initiative or rebellion are also encouraging to me. I have already mentioned in a letter the heartening display of economic initiative in the Thall village of Shahpur District. In Hadali, also in Shahpur District, the hereditary village leaders admitted to me that the people, with no apparent outside encouragement, are growing more rambunctious and independent, less ready to accept

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* Note: The discrepancy of 1,200,000 people between this figure and that on page 1 is roughly the normal increase in India's rural population which has taken place in the three months since I started my tour. And this shows the urgency of the task.

the leaders' decisions unquestioningly. I myself have seen few such manifestations, but Communists and other peasant organizers (as well as one or two landlords) have told me of cases where villagers have taken things into their own hands, dispossessing landlords, grain hoarders, etc. I would like to know the extent of such activities. I do not want a revolution of a series of bloody peasant revolts. But it is only when self-reliance and joint activity are really stirred up in Indian villages that they can improve themselves; and my frank feeling is that the energies of political parties, whether communal, national, or revolutionary, will be needed along with those of other agencies to arouse such spirit in 700,000 villages.

This may be a vestige of my youthful impatience cropping out. Perhaps deathly slumber is preferable to destructive wakefulness. Yet the awakening need not be destructive. I know not what will happen, although thus far conflict seems stronger than cooperation: but if it were my place to preach to these political and social reformers, I would use the following words:

"You have chosen a sacred task. Whether inspired by the vision of the Prophet, of Gandhi, or of your own conscience, you have, in the words of Lenin, dedicated all your life and your strength to 'the first cause in the world - the liberation of mankind'. Before you is a great country, whose people are tired, but patient and strong, whose children have the courage and hope that is their right. You have chosen to pass on to the downtrodden your own strength and initiative and faith. You, who have taken upon yourselves the grave responsibility of waking and teaching mankind, must search in your hearts to find the deeper truths that must guide you. Rather than working at crosspurposes, inspiring men with the partial freedom of revolution or communalism, which can only bring new fetters in the form of disunity and strife, you must sing the fullness and indivisibility of the pure freedom which can only come when men build their life in harmony with the world. The future lies in your hearts and deeds: may you preach creatively, in the spirit of peace which guides the Bengal pilgrim: may you awaken men and children into the full glory of daylight, free from the dark clouds of strife, shining with the promise of life."

These words I would say. If we are to judge from recent events, far better words than these will be needed before mass poverty, of men and matter, will be staunchly attacked and eradicated by this society.

Richard Morse
February 7, 1947

Mostly for my own later use.

Appendix. Notes and Queries on India's agricultural resources.

It is my impression that India's land is basically not first class, for the most part. Depleted by centuries of cultivation, apparently lacking in organic carboniferous matter as are many tropical soils subject to quick rot and heavy leaching by rain and heat, the soil seems to reveal its weakness in statistics of crop yields, which place India below the world average in its main crops, rice, wheat, cotton; and far below the average of the most fortunate agricultural countries. Agriculture is further hampered by the uncertainties of rainfall, for in many areas it is either absolutely too scarce or drastically irregular from year to year. The paucity of forest resources is very serious. Firstly, it becomes necessary for the peasant to use his cattle manure for fuel, rather than putting it on the land. The search for wood to burn is exhaustive. It is a common sight to see a little boy sitting in the ground alongside the road, chewing out with a simple adze what wood he can get from the roots of a fallen or cut tree. Women spend full days wandering over the nearly barren fields searching for branches and chips, which they carry home in baskets on their heads. Secondly, I believe the absence of forests must be the prime cause of the erosion which is serious in some regions. Thirdly, it makes it very difficult, in combination with the irregular and heavy rains, to secure year-round water in the rivers which one would like to control. I feel that forests should receive much attention. Adding to the scarcity of forests in causing erosion are the thousands of acres of dry, close-cropped land, overstocked to an extreme degree with cattle, sheep, or goats of poor quality, which keep the grass cover at a minimum, clip off young shoots of trees or plants, and often wander into crop fields ruining the young crop or depleting the ripe harvest. Can the numbers of poor cattle be reduced without infringing either religious sanction or the property rights of their owners? Can grazing lands be fenced? Improved?

Much work is being done on capital improvement of the above resources. Sometime I must study this subject further. In many villages much land lies idle: in canal areas much is waterlogged and saturated with the wrong chemicals; in dry areas it lacks irrigation. How much of this unused land can be reclaimed or developed? How much of land now under cultivation can be improved permanently? What are the total possibilities in the various provinces for increased irrigation, either in canals, tube wells with the aid of electricity? Who is going to develop artificial rain? Job for science. To what extent will re- or af- forestation be possible, and what plans are in the air? Has use of clays, soils, minerals for construction and other village purposes been fully investigated scientifically (on bigger, more thorough scale than possible in the small AIVIA laboratory) to see whether village techniques 2000 years old can be improved upon? (The presumption of modern man). Can not local sanitation and housing be improved cheaply merely by such improved use of local resources? (Last two questions suggested by Albert Mayer). Four other items of special interest: 1) Fertilizers. First job, of course, is to replace cow dung as fuel and intensify campaign (already strong in Punjab) to use it for land. As for artificial fertilizers, they are coming into wider use. Small peasant usually can not afford, so government or joint village must provide financial help and instruction. But this raises a question. There appears to be honest difference of opinion as to long-run effect of some artificial fertilizers on the soil. Specifically, an English soil expert has stated that long application of ammonium sulphate to calcium soils will form gypsum and eventually ruin the soil. He states that careful study must precede intensive input in different fertilizers, so that each province and region will have a balanced fertilizer schedule for its own soil types. This of course seems sound. I do not know how far soil experts have achieved this, but this expert's

statement is subject for considerable speculation on the part of some newspapers and individuals. Furthermore, the Dewan of Travancore dismissed the expert's claim with the remark to me that the individual had interests in a fertilizer concern which produces a different type. If executives and authorities haven't found scientific and accurate answers, why shouldn't the peasant be skeptical? 2) Livestock. Interesting problems are raised in improving breeds. Most important use of cattle in India is as draft animals, for ploughing, grinding grain, sugar and oilseeds, drawing water from wells, treading on straw to thresh it at harvest. Milch animals are of secondary importance in most regions. Unfortunately, the best draft animals are poor milkers, and vice versa. Breeds of both demand great improvement. Arthur Mosher found that the draft animals in the U.P. can work only half a day while a man works a full day: this limits his usefulness (assuming he has enough land to keep him busy, which is rate). In the C.P., the average milch animal produces less than a pint per day. The breeder is starting with absolute bottom. Is he to concentrate on producing high quality breeds for each purpose, draft and milch? If so, a village which wants both will have a double burden of cattle on its fodder resources. Or is he to try to develop a good mixture of the two purposes in one breed? What part will climatic factors play in the success of the breeds he developes? All these interesting technical aspects arise. 3) Electricity, for villages. First, I must examine figures showing the possibilities and plans underway. Big use for local industries, pumps for wells, etc. I have one opinion: as the government develops power grids, it must either distribute the current itself or must fix the price at which it is to be distributed by private companies. Here there is no competition among private companies to drive down rates, nor, apparently, is there a Public Utilities Commission to fix rates. Consequence: in Mayanoor, government has produced power but has sold to private companies for distribution. Price of electricity therefore prohibitive to smaller buyer. 4) Machinery. Only in big tracts will modern use be possible today. But improved implements already designed can be further advanced. Further, India should be able to manufacture for herself mowing machines, plows, harrows, fertilizer drills, sowers, which she now (prewar) buys chiefly from Canada, England, or the United States.

Coupled with these material improvements which I am anxious to learn more about, Government must improve the efficiency of agricultural labor. This of course going on in all agricultural departments: but I should think a program of improved diet should also be part of program, with emphasis on children.

Finally, with all the improvements and reorganization possible, for many years heavy attention will have to be paid to building of grain reserves in surplus years or through imports: floods, drought, storms can arise at any time to start famines. What part will FAO play here?