

Oct. 9th.

Broadcast over AR, Madras
in 1939.

Bread and Stone.

Would you give thy son a piece of stone when he ask for bread? In these days even if you do not beg for bread and starve, stones are hurled at you. The charitable give bread made of stone. The result is not deudenol ulcer but great contempt for the so-called charitable. That is the lot of the unemployed in this country.

Unemployment is of two kinds. It might be either of the educated or the uneducated. The former is that of skilled labour and the latter of unskilled labour. The latter is solved easily. The former presents difficulties because the educated unemployed are judged by the same standards as the uneducated unemployed. The educated should be employed in such spheres of work where their best could be harnessed. But they are shepherded away by any opportunist as dumb-driven cattle.

Colonization is urged as a solution for unemployment. An educated unemployed does not look for hope in this direction. He finds that his education and "going back to the land" are quite incongruous. The modern educated youth believes in large scale industries, where he can use his intelligence more than in the monotonous tilling of the soil. That is why there has been little response to this scheme in the Annamalai University. They would rather serve in the Army, for which they are strong enough, than to "go back to the land". Our only hope is that the state will not pursue this policy. This policy is merely a mirage.

Alas, the pathos of human suffering is not in

the survival of the fittest nor the survival of the needy but the survival of the influential. In many walks of life, influence counts in the securing of employment in this country. Better we eliminate this social virus as early as possible. Honesty and merit should play a greater part. The only remedy for this is that the state should close its gates to employment of the rich. The jobs in the state should go to the lower middle class and the poorer classes. The rich could enrichen themselves more by taking to trade and business. They have got a security in their patrimony and why should the state give them greater security by giving them comfortable berths. That is an ancient Indian Dharma, the rich resorting to trade. I believe that the National Planning Committee will not ignore this serious problem. The State owes a great responsibility to them. For the unemployed it is semi-starvation, starvation of food, mind and body and for the State is is human energy unharnessed and so a costly waste.

To some, the prevention of unemployment lies in reducing the production of graduates. That will only stifle progress. Nor should the state give stipends to enemployed. That is bound to make them less energetic and increase their sloth. On the other hand, the Stae could bifurcate jobs above Rs.500. That will feed the mouth of two instead of one. It is curious that the old Indian system, though out of ~~time~~^{time} in modern times, did not admit of this problem at all.

The modern Indian youth dreams of great ambitions. Till he faces the actual circumstances, he sticks to them. He finds it a rude shock that he has to grab at anything

that comes his way. He finds that the ^{comfortable} ~~wealthy~~ jobs are not for him but for the wealthier. Then he is weighed down by his ancestral theory of Fatalism. He believes in Karma and that is his lot in the world. Finally, he ebbs away from life like a gem of purest ray serene that the oceans bear. If given the opportunities, he would have risen to Everest heights. Who is responsible for it. Certainly not his Fate but his own fellow-beings ! If so much is wasted, then where is progress ?

Recently there has been a very genuine ~~suggestion~~ made but it is dangerous advice. It will lead the weary unemployed to worse misery. That is the conscription for village-work. More of such work is done on platforms than in the villages. The modern youth is fully conscious that the panacea for all village-ills is only education. For that teachers are required and every unemployed cannot pretend to be a teacher. It will only result in subjecting individual freedom, not to the common-will of the State but to the will and fancy of one who has achieved a position in the affairs of the State. The suggestion, though very genuine will only camouflage right perspective in the matter. Conscription for village-work, should be for those who ~~are~~ are fifty and tired with city and town-life. The State should force them to live in villages, for reasons of their health as well. Their mature minds and greater experience might be of much larger value to the villages than the untested emotional ebullitions of the youth. If these over fifty who occupy any position of gain in the State, like a true Hindu, vacate their positions and take to Vana-prastha Ashrama, there will be much room for the unemployed to get employed. It is not as if they are indispensable. Even the highly indispensable person in this country has taken to the village. They can do their "dispensing" even

from villages. They must take courage to curb their selfish ambitions at fifty because in doing so they will be fulfilling the ambitions, of millions of their own countrymen. Instead they want the fertile minds and industrial genius of future India to be wasted in the village air. It is a sad fate that there are too many leaders in this country and few practical followers. The linking of the Ganges to the Cauvery might be a wild dream but its possibility is all the more real when we think it would easily banish the problem of ~~an~~employment.

America seems to be the only country that is ahead of all other countries in solving this problem. It is probably because it is more acute there. But one fundamental difference is that various private bodies are engaged in this work. In our own country, there are big Employment Bureaus and allied institutions but the public are not ~~xxxx~~ aware of their work. Why, even some of the un^memployed themselves are not aware of such institutions. In America, a Mr. Hal Styles solved the problem of unemployment in a particular district in his own small way. He arranged with the local Broadcasting Station to allow each of the unemployed ~~want~~ to send his tale of woe on the wireless. The result was that almost all the unemployed who did this, got interviews from prospective employers. Most of them secured what they wanted. Hal Styles called this novel feature of a radio-programme "Help me to get a job". I believe he himself got a job in the B~~y~~roadcasting Station! In this country the suggestion has been made some five months ago and is awaiting consent from the authorities.

In this country it has become a fashion for business offices to put up boards of "No vacancy" on the ~~en~~trance. Many an unemployed knows that beyond the thick veil of this

board, there is no real staff at all. One man is the manager, the same is the director and he is the same person that goes to post the letters. It is cheap advertisement and should be deprecated. The unemployed calls on a prospective employer with a file of introductions and testimonials. The would be employer says "What can I do for you?" The would be employee's heart pounds with joy and the next moment he hears the other say "I am so sorry I cannot help you". Is an unemployed there to be raised to the skies and to be ^hrown down from there? This is exploitation of the down-trodden.

The Unemployment Board in Cincinnati City in U.S.A. have a four-point programme. They have various committees a committee for each class of citizen. Committee No.1 has a long-time programme for training junior apprentices and so takes care of the many young people without training. Committee No.2 has to establish short courses for workers whose skill has become obsolete. And so various committees to look after different branches of the problem. In eight years, they have brought the unemployed from 30,000 to 6000. They emphasise not on relief but on jobs. In India, whose resources are the richest in the world, the problem is multiplying a thousand-fold daily. It is because there is no personal interest in those who enquire into the problem. So the unemployed has to look to himself for his own emancipation.

There is a new danger to the unemployed. Their fairer companions are trying to compete with them. Rather they want to drive them back to the wall. Recently they expressed a wish to compete for the Indian Civil Service. Before long, it will be fulfilled. They do not agree with Ruskin that their place and power is the home. Dictator

countries are relegating women to this work.--the work of being complimentary to men. I say this, not without feelings of trepidation, as I am sure to receive volleys of abuse but the great culture of our country as to the place and honour of women should be kept up. I admit that in extraordinary circumstances, women should play the part of men in national affairs and in some particular cases, like the medical profession, there is the necessity for them. There might be in-born genius in them wanting to express itself but in no case should they leave the place they have in their homes. The great Madam Curie found time to do her great researches and to look after the home as well. Unless the women themselves realize it, it will be impossible for modern men to stem the tide of their aggression and their only way is to depart to a distant land where they cannot hear the sounds of distant gun-fire. This appeal to educated women, by their brother unemployed will not fall on deaf ears.

As unemployed, our hopes are buried in the sand, but like the fabulous bird, it is only to rise again. Fond and dear hopes for the future, the future that hials the new order, it is, that keeps us cheerful; for the modern Indian youth is a great Optimist. Only we require a humaner treatment from our fellow-beings.

The growing number of unemployed women is an aggravation to this problem of unemployment. With increasing opportunities for women's education, this problem is bound to become more acute. But, here again, the remedy does not lie in reducing the number of women graduated. In spite of some old grandpas, who would sooner commit suicide than see their grand-daughters studying at 'Varsities, the equality of men and women has been established. Women can fit any walk of life as eminently as men. Many of them might be potential Madame Curies. The Indian Civil Service should also be thrown open to them. Physical incapacity as an excuse will not hold water. The same question of physical incapacity does not arise, when women march to the front with drawn bayonets! The degree of physical capacity required in the latter is much greater than in the former. Also it should not be imagined that women are usurping men's places and are trying to deprive them of their bread. It is as much a woman's right as a man's.