6. Balai women must attend all cases of confinement of Hindu women;

7. The Balais must render services without demanding remuneration, and must accept whatever a Hindu is pleased to give;

8. If the Balais do not agree to abide by these terms, they must clear out of the villages.

The Balais refused to comply; and the Hindu element proceeded against them. Balais were not allowed to get water from the village wells; they were not allowed to let their cattle to graze. Balais were prohibited from passing through land owned by a Hindu; so that if the field of a Balai was surrounded by fields owned by Hindus, the Balai could have no access to his own field. The Hindus also let their cattle graze down the fields of Balais.

The Balais submitted petitions to the Darbar of Indore against these persecutions, but as they could get no timely relief, and the oppression continued, hundreds of Balais with their wives and children, were obliged to abandon their homes in which their ancestors lived for generations, and to migrate to adjoining states, viz. to villages in Dhar, Dewas, Bagli, Bhopal, Gwalipr and other states.

Only a few days ago the Hindus of Reoti village barely 8 miles to the North of Indore city ordered the Balais to sign a stamped agreement in accordance with the rules framed against the Balais by the Hindus of other villages. The Balais refused to comply. It is alleged that some of them were beaten by the Hindus; and one Balai was fastened to a post, and was told that he would be let go, on agreeing to sign the agreement. He signed the agreement, and was released".

The next is from the '*Arya Gazette*' dated 21st January 1928:

"Up till now the tales of woe that were usually related of the persecution of the Harijans were mostly from the Madras province, but now thanks to the treatment of the Maharana of the Simla Hills, one has not to go so far to search for these stories. In the Simla district, there dwells a caste called '*Collie*' whose members are very handsome and hard working. The Hindus of that area consider them to be Untouchables although they do not engage in any such work which should render them objectionable in the eyes of the Hindu religion. The members of this caste are not only powerful and well-built but intelligent also. Almost all the songs that the dwellers of the Simla Hills sing are composed by the '*Collies*'. These people labour all day long and venerate the Brahmins excessively but still they cannot so much as pass near the house of a Brahmin. Their children cannot read in schools and

'Pathashalas' (religious monastic schools). Their women folk cannot wear gold ornaments. It has even been reported that some Collies have gone to the Punjab and earned some money with which they have bought gold rings and ear-rings. When however they have brought these back to their homes, they have been cast into the jail and not freed until the ornaments had passed into the pockets of the State Officers."

The following letter appeared in the '*Pratap*' of 23rd June 1926:

"Swami Ramanandji Sanyasi writes:

On the 23rd of March 1926, in the evening a Chamar came to me who had recently managed to escape from the clutches of the Jats. He related to me a moving tale of the sufferings that his caste had to put up with in the village of Kheri near Faridabad in the District of Gurgaon. On the morning of 24th March I reached Faridabad in the District of Gurgaon, so as to investigate the state of affairs myself. The result of my enquiries is briefly as follows:

"On the 5th of March the marriage took place of the daughter of a Chamar called Gorkhi. The financial condition of the Chamar was comparatively good and he entertained his guests in the same way as people of the high castes do. Moreover, before handing away his daughter, he gave her three gold ornaments. This news spread amongst the Jats and was widely discussed. It was decided finally that the high castes had been insulted by the fact that the lower castes have started vieing with them. Till the 20th of March nothing untoward happened but on the morning of the 21st the Jats called a meeting of the Panchayat (village council) to consider the matter. Just at that moment a party of the Chamars of which the greater portion was composed of boys, girls and women was setting out for Faridabad on its daily duty. The party had just gone out of the village as far as the Dharmashala when the Jats attacked it. All the men of the party were belaboured and the women were thrashed with shoes. The backs of some were broken and of some the arms. Not only this, even their implements were robbed. A Muslim happened to pass along that way and the Jats took hold of him also and robbed him of his big gold ear-rings as well as of twenty-eight rupees. On the 22nd of March some groups of the Jats went into the fields of the Chamar and played havoc with them. The crop thus destroyed was estimated at about a thousand rupees. At that time, Nanwa, the son of Kori, was working in the fields. The Jats gave him also a thorough beating. On the 22nd of March again a party of the Jats sallied forth armed with flaming torches dipped in Kerosene oil, with the intention of setting fire to the houses of the Chamars

but later came away. On the 23rd of March at midnight a house was set on fire belonging to the grandfather of that married girl who has been mentioned above. The house is now a heap of ashes. It contained sixteen skins ready to be made into shoes and worth 90 rupees. They also got burnt up together with the other household goods. The general situation now is that the Jats have surrounded the town and no Chamar is allowed to go out. The Baniyas also, out of fear of the Jats, have refused to sell anything to the Chamars. For three days the Chamars as well as their cattle have been starving."

The following is a more recent occurrence. It has happened in Malabar. The facts of the case are revealed by the following resolution passed at the first Chirakal Taluka Harijan Conference held at Cherukunn in Malabar on 5th June 1945 with Shri K. Kannan, M.L.A., presiding:

"This Conference invites the urgent attention of the Government and the public to the increasing cases of inhuman oppressions of the Scheduled Castes of Malabar by Hindus, Muslims and Christians, particularly to the severest type of oppression now going on, almost with impunity, in the Nattika Firka, Ponnani Taluk, where something like a regular Harijan hunting is taking place every day as a result of the Harijans trying to wear gold ornaments and use clean clothes and umbrellas. In addition to numerous cases of assaults a Harijan marriage party was way-laid and assaulted and the shirts of men and the sarees of women removed by force and a Harijan student mercilessly beaten in Vadanpilly on 27th May 1945. This Conference while congratulating the progressive Thiya youths of the place under the enlightened leadership of Messrs. C. S. Gopalan, M. S. Sankaranarayan and P. C. Ramakrishna Vydier for their magnificient efforts to help the Harijans, most emphatically protests against the callous indifference of the local authorities, particularly of the Police Department in that the ill-treated Harijans did not get any timely protection from them.

This conference desires to state that almost in all cases of the above-said oppressions, the aggrieved Harijans have received neither protection nor justice from the police. There are instances where poor Harijans were even beaten by the Police for their coming forward to give evidence in such cases. In so far as these events have reduced the Harijans of Malabar to a very miserable plight and the situation, if left alone, is likely to develop into a crisis endangering the lives of all progressive Harijans who are trying to break the shackles of caste and economic exploitation of the vested interests in Malbar. This Conference most earnestly appeals to the

Government of India, the Hon'ble Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and all the enlightened people in the country to see that the Harijans are allowed to live in this land as free citizens of a democratic country unmolested by any people and promptly protected by the administration whenever they are oppressed by others."

X

The Untouchables must not eat rich food even if they can afford it. It is an offence for the Untouchables to live above their station in life. The '*Pratap*' of 26th February 1928. relates the following occurrence:

"In the State of Jodhpur at a place Chandayal, you will still see men who do not think that the Harijans have even the right to eat Halva. One of the Untouchable castes is that of Sargaroes. Sometime back on the occasion of the Marriage ceremony of two or three girls, Halva was prepared for the members of the marriage party. For this purpose, maida (white flour) was brought from the Thakur Sahib. At mealtime, the marriage party came for meals but just at that time the Kanwar Sahib of Chandawala sent orders to the Saragaroes that they could not eat Halva. Some cringing sycophants negotiated a compromise in this way that the Kanwar Sahib be presented with Rs. 200 and then permission will be given to eat Halva. At this the Sargaroes got infuriated and refused to pay the money."

XI

To lead a marriage procession through the main streets of the village is the right of every caste Hindu. It is also in evidence that the community which enjoys this right is accepted as a respectable community. The Untouchables have no such right. But they have been seeking to establish such a right by taking their marriage procession through the main streets of the village with the object of establishing their social status. The following incidents show how the Hindus have dealt with this claim.

From the '*Adi-Hindu*' dated July 1927:

"Bangalore, 27th May 1927: Seven Brahmins were sentenced to pay a fine of hundred rupees each, by the First Class Magistrate. These men had wantonly attacked a procession of the well-known Pariah Untouchable caste when it was passing along the Mallkot Road where only Brahmins live."

From the '*Pratap*' dated 25th October 1931:

"In the village of Hargaon, district Garhwal when the high caste Hindus heard that a marriage party of the Untouchables was coming and the bridegroom was sitting in a palanquin they sallied forth in great numbers and surrounded the party and gave it a severe beating. In intense cold they held up the marriage party and kept it without food for 24 hours. The members of the party were inhumanly treated and were only rescued from this difficult situation by the coming of the Police."

From the '*Satya Samwad*' Lahore dated 3rd November 1931:

"A marriage party was passing near Delhi, carrying the bridegroom in a palanquin. The high caste Hindus took offence at this for they thought it to be an insult to them. They held up the party for two days and gave it nothing either to eat or drink. At last the police came and chased away these tyrants and rescued the marriage party."

The '*Jivan*', a Hindu journal for June 1938 reports:

1. "In village Sevra, the Golas (Purva Thakurs) who boast of being Congressites, have so mercilessly beaten with spears and lathis the unarmed Jatavs of that village that five of them were lying wounded in the hospital with arms and ribs broken. Bansi has sustained fracture of the skull bone and is still unconscious in the hospital. All this happened because when a marriage party came to the village the bridegroom was wearing a glittering crown (Pukka Mohar) which offended the Thakurs, who wanted to attack the marriage party; but desisted because of the party's superior strength and were therefore content with only insulting the marriage party within the Zamindari at that time."

2. "In village Dorra, Tehsil Fatechand, District Agra, a marriage party came to the house of Moti Ram Jatav from village Rampur. The bridegroom was wearing a glittering crown and the party also brought a band music and fireworks. The Caste Hindus objected to the party proceeding with the music band playing and displaying fireworks. Moti Ram protested against this and said that they were also as good human beings as any others. On this, the caste Hindus caught hold of Moti Ram and gave him a severe beating and also attacked the marriage party. A sum of Rs. 15-1-0 tied in Moti Ram's turban was also removed."

3. "While a marriage party was on its way to the house of Prem Singh and Girvar Singh, Jatavs of village Khurva, Police post

Sakini, District Aligarh, it was prevented by the caste Hindus from proceeding further unless the music band stopped playing, and the procession was threatened to be killed and looted if the music was not stopped. Caste Hindus were also enraged for refusal by the Jatavs to do 'Begar' and for the audacity to have music band playing with a marriage party. On the marriage party's refusal to stop music, the caste Hindus were so much enraged that they threw brick-bats and stones at the party."

The '*Hindustan Times*' of the 24th of March 1945 reports the following incident relating to the same subject:

"A Shilpakar marriage party of the village of Dhanuri in Lands down sub-division carrying the bridegroom in a 'palki' was proceeding to the bride's house in the village of Mall Dhangu. A man introducing himself as an agent of the Patwari of Mall Dhangu advised the party to go through an out of the way route to avoid 'disturbance by caste Hindus.

The party, accordingly, took a forest path and when they were at a lonely spot a whistle brought out about 200 caste Hindus who, it is alleged, attacked the party and carried away the 'palki'.

The Shilpakar party reached the bride's house two days later and the marriage was, it is reported, performed in the presence of the Sub-divisional Magistrate and a police party brought by him.

The Patwari has been suspended in this connection."

The *Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore* in its issue of 24th June 1945 reports:

"A party of Rajputs, armed with axes, lathis and daggers, attacked yesterday Harijans of a village in Gwalior State, killing one and inflicting serious injuries on four.

The Rajputs and the Harijans of the village were on hostile terms for some time past ever since the Harijans took out a procession to celebrate the birth of an heir apparent to the Gwalior Darbar. The Rajputs strongly protested against it, as according to them, Harijans were not entitled to the privileges of such celebrations.

Last month, a proclamation was issued by the Maharaja giving equal rights to the Harijans."

Here are a few cases to show how the Hindus treat with violence any attempt on the part of the Untouchables to imitate the ways and manners of the Hindus and to have a little pride in themselves. The following is from the '*Bombay Samachar*' of 4th November 1936:

"At Uttapalam (in Malabar) an Ezhava by caste named Sivaraman, aged 17, went to the shop of a caste Hindu to buy salt and asked in the Malayalam language for 'uppu'. In Malabar,

according to custom, caste Hindus alone can use the word 'uppu' for salt; being only a Harijan he ought to have used the word 'pulichatan'. Consequently, the high caste grocer was very angry and is alleged to have thrashed Sivaraman so severely that the latter died."

The following instances are collected from the '*Samata*':

(1) "At Kathi (District Poona) the people have begun to persecute the Untouchables because the latter have begun saying 'Ram, Ram and Namaskar'. Be it known to the unintimated that these are salutations which only the higher castes have the right to employ; the Mahars, etc. must say 'Johar' or 'Paya Lagu' (I touch your feet) to the people.

(2) The Untouchables of Tanoo (District Poona) tried to behave 'like Touchable Hindu people'; the result of this impudent encroachment is that many of them have had to leave the village and some have migrated to Bavda.

(3) At Valapur (District of Sholapur) the Mahars are persecuted because they have dared to refuse to address Touchables as 'Saheb' and to say 'Paya Lagu' ('I touch your feet') in salutation.

(4) At Jambad (District Sholapur) the Untouchables refused to make 'Nautch' and 'Tamasha' for the diversion of their Touchable lords. Therefore these Untouchables were thrashed, their huts were burnt down or pulled down, and they were driven out of the village, limits.

(5) At Bavda (District Poona) some Untouchables exhorted their fellow-outcastes to give up eating the leavings of higher caste people, dead animals, etc., and to refuse to do the dirty work of the people. The elders of the village have told these Mahars with new fanglad notions that it is their 'Dharma' to eat what they have always been eating and do what they have been doing. Those Mahars who do not follow their ancient and eternal 'Dharma' have been thrashed by the people and threatened with expulsion from the village."

XII

The Hindu treats the Untouchables as being born to serve the Hindu community. It being his duty to serve, the Untouchables cannot refuse to serve the Hindu whenever the latter call upon to do so. The Hindus of the village hold the belief that they can commandeer the labour of the Untouchables. The system is known as '*Begar*', or forced labour. A few instances will show that dire consequences follow from the refusal of the Untouchables to submit to the system.

The '*Jivan*' of December 1938 reports the following incidents:

"On 29th November 1938, the Jatavs of village Kohana, district Muttra were seriously tortured by the Jats and Brahmins for refusing Begar.

The Thakkurs and the Brahmins of this village used to extract Begar from the Jatavs and to harass them. The latter decided not to do Begar and do only that work for which wages were paid. Recently, a bullock died in the village and the Thakkurs and other caste Hindus tried to force the Jatavs to lift it, but they said that they could do that only if they were paid. This enraged the caste Hindus so much that they asked a sweeper to fill the Jatavs' well with excreta and make them not to go to their fields for ablutions and decided to tease them in every way. When the Jatavs prevented the Sweeper from putting excreta in their well, he called the Jats, Thakkurs and Brahmins who were all ready for an attack. They attacked the Jatavs with lathis and seriously belaboured them and also set fire to their houses as a result of which six houses were burnt to ashes and 18 Jatavs were wounded seriously and a lot of their household property was taken away by the rowdies."

"The same *Journal* in its issue of February 1939 reports:

"The Jats of village Abhaipura, tehsil Kirvali, district Agra, are used to extract Begar (Forced labour) from the poor Scheduled Caste people and beat them on demanding wages. Some three months back Sukhi Jat forced Sukh Ram, Ghanshyam and Humka, Jatavs to do work for them and did not pay any wages. These persons are so much fed up with such high-handedness that they have left the villages and lived with their relatives in other villages, while their untensils and other household goods have been taken away by the Jats and concealed in some barn."

The '*Savadhan*' in its issue of 3rd June 1945 reports the following incident:

"Mehraji Kori, a Scheduled Caste woman has filed a complaint in the court of Mr. Mahboob Alam, City Magistrate under Sections 376, 341 and 354-A against Brahma Singh, Suleman and Aftab, constables of Jubi Police post. It is alleged that at about 10-30 p.m. on 2nd May 1945 these three constables, Sumar, Kahar, Kallu Bibis son and some others came and searched her house and then took her to the police station and kept her there for the whole night. In the early hours of the morning these constables took her to a small room bolted it and then all three of them violated her modesty one by one. Then she was removed to another small room where charcoal and pieces of paper were filled in her private part and they

put their private organs in her mouth. Her clothes were torn and saturated with blood. The following day her mother was forced to do begar work for the whole day and then both of them were left off at 10 p.m.

Murala, wife of Maharaji's husband's younger brother has also filed a similar complaint. She has alleged that the same constables took her to the police post the same night and returned her to her house. On the way she was caught by Madari Teli, near Kumar Tola, to the ruins of a house and her modesty violated. Messrs. Munna Lal, Bhushan and Ram Bharose, advocates are appearing for the complainant."

In the '*Hindustan Times*' of 15th April 1945 Occurs the following news item:

"For refusal to do forced labour, it is alleged, a large number of Harijans in the village of Dukheri in Ambala District were recently assaulted by a party of Rajputs. A man and a woman, both Harijans, were killed. It is also alleged that a large number of houses belonging to Harijans were set on fire. Telegrams have been sent to the Commissioner and the Deputy Inspector General of Police to inquire into the matter."

From these instances, it will be clear to anyone that the Hindus do not hesitate to use violence to hold down the Untouchables and maintain the established order and even to commit murder.

Mr. Lajpat Rai in his book 'Unhappy India' in which he tried to reply to and refute the charges levelled by Miss Mayo in her 'Mother India' gives a lengthy and lucid description of the lynchings of the Negroes in the United States and the atrocities committed upon them by the members of the Ku Klux Klan and asks:

"What however is very relevant to her to ask is: is the unjustifiable and cruel attitude of the Brahmins towards the *Pariah* more unjustifiable and more cruel than that of the Klansmen of America towards the Negroes?"

"What are the caste cruelties of India put by the side of what the whiteman has done to the non-white people?"

Lala Lajpatrai, if he had cared to investigate could have found that the cruelties and atrocities practised by the Hindus against the Untouchables were no less than those practised by the Americans upon the Negroes. If these atrocities are not so well known to the world as are those practised upon the Negro, it is not because they do not exist. They are not known because there is no Hindu who will not do his best to conceal truth in order to hide his shame.

Some might think that this description of the Established Order and the rules made thereunder are matters of ancient past. This is a complete mistake. The Established Order subsists even today and the rules are as operative today as they were when they were made. This will be evident from the two following statements on the condition of the Untouchables which have appeared in the '*Hindustan Times*'. The first appeared in the issue of 8th March 1945. The first one is written by one Kesarilalji Bordia, Headmaster of a school called Vidya Bhuwan in Udaipur. It reads as follows:

> "Many are the disabilities under which the Harijans in Mewar live. They cannot enter temples, nor can they draw water from public wells. They cannot join the caste Hindus in festivals and processions. They have to take out their Rath Yatra or Doll procession through a different route and on a different day. And they cannot ride through the village.
>
> Even silver ornaments, let alone gold ones on their person are resented by the caste Hindus. The result is, they have to content themselves with tin and brass articles. Age-old usage prevents them from using butter or gur in wedding feasts.
>
> In Schools and other public places, Harijan boys cannot sit with the children of caste Hindus. They are asked to absent themselves on the inspection day in order to save the Inspector from embarrassment.
>
> A memorandum has been submitted to the State Government. If the Government chooses to declare in unequivocal terms the disapproval of these disabilities, the hands of non-official bodies which are fighting untouchability will be strengthened."

The second is in the form of a statement issued by the President of the *Harijan Sevak Sangh* and refers to the condition of the Untouchables in the State of Mewar. It reads as under:

> "The Mewar Harijan Sevak Sangh has sent a Memorandum to the Mewar Government drawing their attention to the various disabilities of Harijans in the State and their consequent hardships. The Memorandum brings out how civil liberties of Harijans are curtailed in several ways by the orthodoxy and prejudices of caste Hindus.

I enumerate below some of the unjust practices which still persist in the State and for the rectification of which the State has taken no effective measures. They are as follows:

1. Harijans have no liberty in the selection of clothes to wear. The form of dress must follow the age-long pattern; personal tastes and desires have no place in the choice of the dress.

2. At wedding feasts they have no choice in the selection of food materials. Even on payment they cannot use costly articles.

3. They cannot ride the village on a horse.

4. They are not allowed accommodation in public vehicles.

5. On religious festivals they cannot take out procession of their idols except through specified routes.

6. They have no access to wells and temples."

The writer adds:

"Three years ago in company with Thakkur Bapa, I travelled all over the State and placed before the Government and public my impressions of the conditions obtaining there and pleaded for reform. On perusal of the abovementioned memorandum and other reports sent to me, I find that the past few years have hardly brought any change and conditions are more or less static.

It is heart-breaking to find that passage of time cuts no ice with us. The result is that there is hardly any change in our age-long practices and prejudices. This perversity which blinds us to the tyranny and injustices of our ways also makes us impervious to the incalculable harm we have already suffered as a result of it. Even if the ignorant prejudice of the common man is unshaken the enlightened Governments of the twentieth century ought to be more alive to their responsibilities."

The dates of these communications are important. They are of the year 1945. None can say that this Hindu Established Order is a thing of the ancient past. The fact that these latest accounts refer to the Indian States should not be understood to mean that the established Order has vanished from British India. The chapters to follow will present enough evidence to show that the same Established Order is very much alive in British India.

In the '*Times of India*' of 31st August 1950 occurs the following news item:

"The following facts of a case revealed in the hearing of an appeal in the Allahabad High Court, are illustrative of the socio-economic conditions of lower castes in the rural areas:

Chiranji, a dhobi of the village of Sarras in the District of Etah, went out as a military employee in the last war and remained out of his village for four or five years. When he was discharged, he returned to his home. He stopped washing clothes and used to go about in the village in his military uniform. This coupled with the fact that he refused to wash clothes even for the men of the Raja of Sarras the sole zamindar in the village, was resented by the villagers.

On December 31, 1947, when the dhobi was washing his clothes, four villagers, including the Raja's servants, approached him and asked him to wash their clothes which he refused. The villagers took Chiranji to the Raja's house and gave him a beating. His mother and mother's sister went there to intercede on his behalf but they too were assaulted.

The attackers then went away leaving Chiranji in the custody of one Ram Singh; finding him alone, Chiranji was alleged to have slapped him and run away. Ram Singh and other servants of the Raja chased him to his house where he had taken shelter. The villagers insisted upon his opening the door but when there was no response, his house was set on fire. A number of other huts were also reduced to ashes.

The dhobi lodged a complaint with the Police who disbelieved his story and wanted to prosecute him for a false report. He then filed a complaint in a Magistrate's Court. The accused were convicted and sentenced to three years' imprisonment each. The High Court upheld the sentences imposed by the Magistrate.

The following news item has appeared in the *'Indian News Chronicle'* dated 31st August 1950.

Inhuman Treatment towards Harijans in Pepsu: Depressed Classes League's Memorandum to Government.

Patiala, August 1950: "The unprovoked thrashing of the Backward Class people, inhuman insults heaped upon their women folk, indiscriminate ejectment of the Harijans from the lands, the virtual confinement of the Harijans and their cattle in their mud houses for days together without any fault is a long tale of suffering whose echoes are rising in proportion to the diminishing echoes of crime in general," says a memorandum presented by the PEPSU Provincial Depressed Classes League to the State Government.

"While crime in PEPSU is on the decrease due to the vigorous efforts of the police," the memorandum adds, "it is a pity that the sector of the Backward Class should be deprived of the protection from the un-social elements". The Backward Classes economically handicapped as they are, find it very difficult to ventilate their day-to-day grievances to the authorities concerned who could immediately come to their rescue, and are perforce, compelled to submit to their lot, to the encouragement of the aggressor, and thus the wail of disgust against the present state of affairs grows still louder which in its turn is made stock of by the interested parties."

The Provincial Depressed Classes League further quoted an instance to show how much inhuman treatment was being meted out

to Harijans in PEPSU. Chand Singh a Harijan of village Katu, district Bernala, was made to go round the village on the back of donkey with face blackened for the fault of having drunk water at the well of a high caste zamindar. " In the changed atmosphere of free India, the members of the Scheduled Castes in the PEPSU are daily finding themselves put in a tight corner as a result of the unprecedented repression let loose upon them by the members of high castes."

The Provincial Depressed Classes League has further suggested formation of district and central special commissions in the State with wide powers to deal with the complaints on Harijans on the spot and afford them other facilities.

Concluding, the League has urged upon the State Government that pending an all-India enactment in this connection, it may, temporarily be provided that the Harijans have equal rights in the village common, to ease the situation from further deterioration.

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