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A VILLAGE IN GUJARAT—A STUDY*

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INTRODUCTION TO THE VILLAGE

During the long tenure of my service in Baroda State, I had many opportunities of studying the conditions of life in the rural areas from very close quarters. Thus, I was well acquainted with the general conditions of the villagers and the cultivators. In the year 1911-12, during the course of an enquiry into the indebtedness among cultivators, I gathered a good deal of information about their economic and social conditions. Soon after this enquiry was completed I was placed in charge of the Co-operative Department, which provided an opportunity to me for spending considerable time in the villages. Thereafter, in my capacity as an Officer, Suba and Sar-suba I had innumerable occasions of visiting villages and observing the general economic conditions and the mode of living of farmers. During these visits there was no more any intention of collecting statistical data relating to villages which I already possessed in ample measure. Therefore, I thought I should acquire some practical experience of the types of difficulties encountered in ameliorating the conditions of farmers. With this object in mind, I set out one day towards the end of January 1933 from Baroda and halted at a village situated on the road to Padra. The village presented a desolate appearance. In the previous year in this village the crops were completely damaged by frost. There was a recurrence again of the same catastrophe during the year. Cotton which was the main crop of the village, was mostly damaged by frost. From the few farmers whom I met that day I could gather that their plight was extremely pitiable. The state of helplessness of poor cultivators when crops in their fields nursed with great toils and expense over a period of months and ready for harvest were smitten to dust overnight by frost had to be seen to be believed. I naturally asked them what they intended to do to face the situation. They could not suggest any satisfactory course of action. There was a firm conviction among them that the real facts or truth should never be disclosed to a government official lest they be deprived of the relief that they would normally get. That evening I again visited the fields and observed the state of crops. Then I talked to the villagers for some time about their conditions in general, gathered some necessary information about the village and returned home. It appeared to me that the villagers were in sad conditions. Even if the Government provided some relief and waived the land revenue entirely, they would not be able to carry on for the rest of the year. There were no cottage industries as a standby. There appeared to be no other immediate alternative to them but to go to the nearby city of Baroda and seek some employment as wage earners; but it was not so easy to find employment for all. Prospects of even getting credit to tide over the difficulties were remote as the villagers were already steeply indebted. At the same time consideration had to be given to the dire necessities pointed out by the villagers. The only solution which occurred to me was to find some employment in the village itself which at the same time would lead to the development of the village. I found this idea so absorbing that I began to visit that village every evening. I decided as a

* This was originally published in Gujarati in the *Journal of Gujarat Research Society*. Its English rendering was prepared by my friend Shri V. M. Jakhade of the Reserve Bank of India with the help of his colleagues.

matter of policy to encourage the ideas sponsored by the villagers themselves and to assist them in their efforts to help themselves rather than force my own ideas on them.

INITIAL PROGRAMME

Programme for the First Month : As the village tank was silted up water was not available throughout the year, resulting in scarcity of water for the village people as well as cattle during some months of the year. It was found that the Village Panchayat had a balance of Rs. 700—800 in the local fund account from local cess collections at the rate of two pies per rupee of land revenue accumulated over several years. The cost of repairs of tank was estimated at Rs. 1,000 to 1,200. They were waiting, therefore for the balance to reach that figure before any repairs were undertaken. In order to get the tank desilted with the available funds, I suggested that if each family could dig the squares at half the prevalent wage rate the work could be completed with the available amount. They liked the idea and agreed to carry it out accordingly. Assistance was secured of an overseer of the Panchayat who chalked out the details of the work to be done as well as prepared the estimate of expenses. After the necessary resolutions, etc., were passed, the work started within a month and a half. At the same time a channel to drain off the water-logging at the village periphery and extending it to the outskirts of the nearby village was dug and improved so as to remove the hardships experienced by the villagers for three to four months after monsoon. In this manner, the whole work was finished before the onset of the monsoon.

To make cereals, foodstuffs and other necessities available at wholesale prices a small godown-cum-shop was opened and sales were conducted on cash basis. In a few cases, an exception was made and goods were sold on credit to persons against the amount of wages that would accrue to them for work on the tank or against their likely receipts from sale of milk.

Apart from agriculture, sale of milk also yielded some income to the village people. Milk was sold to a merchant at the extremely low rate of Rs. 1 as. 4 per maund; because of this low rate it was adulterated openly with water. Thus, both parties were cheating each other. In order to put a stop to this malpractice an unregistered co-operative society was formed and it was arranged to sell unadulterated milk directly in Baroda at Rs. 2 as. 8 to Rs. 3 per maund. This had a salutary effect on the income of villagers; further, the sale proceeds of milk began to flow in regularly and in good time.

To improve both the quality and quantity of milk production an arrangement was made to supply cotton seed kernels and crushed pulses instead of whole cotton seeds. As a result the production of milk improved both in quantity and quality. The income from milk increased by about 15 to 20 per cent.

I managed to appoint a trained lady social worker to teach cleanliness to womenfolk who were directly connected with the milk business. She visited them daily twice, once in the morning and again in the evening and demonstrated to

them how to wash milk utensils and keep them clean. For a number of years, I had experienced many difficulties in organizing milk co-operatives as milk production was mainly in the hands of women. But the marketing of milk was mainly in the hands of village leaders. As sale of milk through co-operatives would adversely affect their interests, they were not in favour of it. There was no other alternative except to contact the women who maintained milch cattle directly and to convince them of the benefits of co-operation. The need to have a lady organizer for establishing such contacts was felt since long but because of non-availability of a suitable worker no action could be taken. Now when such a worker became available the idea was put in practice.

I arranged for the supply of good quality cotton seeds from Baroda agricultural farm for the ensuing season before the onset of the monsoon. A new co-operative credit society was organised in the village. Through this society I also managed to provide them adequate credit for this purpose from the Baroda Central Co-operative Bank. An old society existed in the village but it was defunct as it had not repaid its dues to the Central Co-operative Bank and, therefore, found it difficult to raise fresh loans. However, as the membership of the new society was drawn from relatively more reliable and creditworthy cultivators and it was decided that the loans should be repaid in a single instalment by selling the entire crop of the coming season at a time, the Bank was reassured.

People of this village were very much addicted to liquor. Illicit distillation of liquor was quite common and as a result at night rowdy scenes were witnessed in the village. My visits to the village in the evening had perhaps made them to postpone drinking of liquor to late hours in the night. After a fortnight of my arrival people started talking among themselves that they had passed a resolution to the effect that no one should drink liquor and the offender would be fined and the informant rewarded. After another fortnight, officials of the Customs Department raided the village and found illicit liquor in six suspected houses which were searched. Next morning somebody quietly deposited a bag of *Mahudas* (a kind of berries used in fermentation of liquor) in the house of the village Patel. Of the six persons whose houses were searched two were village leaders. All the six were tried and heavily fined. Thereafter drunkards were not to be seen for quite a long time in the village. But the very next year, the leaders who were punished were seen drunk during the *Holi* festival.

The villagers had some other common difficulties. The aqueduct of the railway line which passed through the outskirts of the village was very narrow. As a result, the rain water got accumulated and seeped down to the adjoining fields, causing damage to crops. There were similar other difficulties also which were removed by contacting the railway authorities. All these problems were by no means easy to tackle as each one of them posed one difficulty or another. On the one hand, there was lack of unity among people, while on the other, considerable difficulties were experienced in dealing with *Mahals* (talukas) and Panchayats. It was learnt later that some expenses had to be incurred in bringing money belonging to the Panchayat from the *Mahal*. As these had to be recovered from the people they could not be debited in the account books. Thus, a tacit understanding to recover this amount from the wages paid for digging the squares appeared to have been arrived at among the village leaders. However, as everyone could not

understand this it led to misgivings and quarrels. These were inevitable so long as complete trust in the leaders did not develop.

The year passed in this manner and the people could also tide it over with relative ease. One day in the month *Vaishakh* (Summer) the village Patel told me that if I could reform him and his village, I would be able to reform the whole world. I replied that my work was finished. When you were convinced of your shortcomings, the work of reform was your own. The course of future action was clear and smooth and all he needed from me was some advice from time to time. But they did not like the suggestion. Due to internal factions they were not in a position to carry on on their own.

DIVERSIFIED PROGRAMME

During the year 1933-34 the rainfall was satisfactory and a good harvest was expected. I was constantly pondering over how best to proceed further. My first thought was to take full advantage of facilities provided by the Baroda State. So I commenced the work as stated below.

There was a school upto the sixth standard in the village with three teachers and equipped with a library. An attempt was made to appoint teachers who would be useful to the village. One of these teachers who was a matriculate and was found helpful was continued. Another who was untrained was sent to the Teachers' Training College for training. The third one was transferred. In the place of these two, a married couple was appointed. Both the husband and the wife were trained. The lady teacher was provided with facilities for teaching sewing, embroidery and handicrafts to the womenfolk in the morning. There were many women in the village who did not know sewing. Within two to three months this lady was able to teach many of them sewing, knitting and embroidery, by putting in very hard work.

The husband, who was appointed as the headmaster of the school was assigned the job of spreading literacy among the illiterates. It was suggested to him that he should read out good books to them and enable them to take full advantage of the school library. He did the work in a satisfactory manner. But because of his bad temper he was not popular with the village people. In spite of frequent persuasions, the dislike of the people for him increased day by day. Thus, in the interest of the smooth progress of the work, the only alternative left was to transfer him, though it involved giving up the services of his wife who was doing good work. Another such couple could not be found.

The school building was good and a small garden was maintained by the teachers with the help of students. But as there was no fence to the building, stray cattle were causing damage to the garden. With the help of the P.W.D., a steel-wire fence was put up. As the villagers agreed to work without any remuneration, a pucca well was constructed after obtaining hume pipes on donation and a hand pump was installed with external aid. This improved the condition of the garden. Some good mango saplings and other useful plants were planted near the fence so that some income could be derived which would pay for the accessories required in connection with the physical training. The students cleared up the

school ground for drill and games, after the fence was put up. At the same time, arrangements were also made for boys to visit some institutions like museum, library, etc., in Baroda City. Some boys in the school were very intelligent and bright and their parents were keen on teaching them English. The rules of the State Education Department, however, did not allow English to be taught in Gujarati Schools. Private arrangements were, therefore, made for teaching English to four or five boys with the help of a teacher.

There was a refuse pit very near the school where dead cattle were dumped and allowed to decompose. This pit was removed from there. The school boys were eager to work for the betterment of the village. They worked hard to keep clean the surrounding area of the school. They showed commendable enthusiasm in filling a pit on the main road of the village and in levelling it. Whenever necessary, they worked with enthusiasm. Some boys became adept in weaving cotton straps also.

The village and the surrounding areas were filthy. Deep pits had formed at many places due to age old custom of dumping refuse and foul smell emanated from them with the accumulation of rain water. The old trench constructed for the defence of the village was about 30-40 feet wide and 10-15 feet deep and surrounded the village on three sides. On account of the growth of wild vegetation in it a lot of rubbish settled down at the bottom. Ordinarily, it was difficult to cross it. This waste land belonged to the government but it had never realised any income from it. Village people were asked whether they would clear the ditch if they were allowed to acquire the land so reclaimed, free of cost. They immediately agreed to the suggestion and I took it upon myself to obtain the necessary State sanction. Within a fortnight the trench was cleared by them and the land was joined to their backyards. The increase in the size of backyards facilitated better use of land, while the removal of a drain was an added benefit. Government gave land free but decided to charge rent. The amount was very small and ultimately the recipient being Gram Panchayat, its remission was not pressed for. Levelling of the refuse pits was a somewhat difficult job. A better remedy was to provide land for such pits outside the village and to use the land occupied by the existing pits for some other purpose. But the people were not willing to shift the pits although some *khatedars* could have got the land so released. Under these circumstances, all the pits could not be cleared up. However, wherever possible they were filled up and new land allotted for dumping refuse outside the village.

I arranged for a medical examination of villagers by the Health Department, as their health was found to be poor. Out of a population of 832, 586 persons were examined; 314 of them were found to be physically fit whereas the remaining 272 were suffering from various diseases as described in the following accounts.

“62 persons were suffering from anaemia which was probably due to hook-worms. I believed that it would be better if all the Bhil population was examined for worms as it was generally found to be anaemic. 36 persons had enlarged spleen and 48 were suffering from malaria. Of the five tuberculosis patients, two were in an advanced stage. Scabies was the main skin disease. About 21 persons suffered from eczema and 17 from other skin diseases. Cataract, sty, etc., were noticed among eye diseases.”

After getting the above report patients requiring hospital treatment were sent there and the rest were asked to take medicine from the hospital. Besides, a dispensary was opened with the help of the State and village people and its administration was entrusted to the school teacher so that the villagers could get indigenous medicine readily. New stock of medicines was purchased as those received originally were exhausted. Bad health of the people was explained by the doctor as under :

“Ordinarily people took three meals a day. But the food lacked proteins and vitamins. The consumption of milk, ghee, vegetables and fruits did seem to have been low due to economic factors.”

One of the reasons for skin diseases was the inadequate facilities for bathing and washing. Water in the village well was clean and adequate but facilities for bathing in the homes were rarely found. It was a common practice to take bath in an open yard attached to the house. Hence, the women had to take bath with all the clothes on. For those who did not have this facility had even greater difficulties. To solve the problem the Prant Panchayat was instructed to construct two bathrooms, one for men and another for women, so that people could bathe with adequate water while observing the customary modesty. The bathrooms were ready after I left Baroda but on inquiries I learnt that these were not used at all as the men did not like the idea of their womenfolk taking bath outside the village. That the bathrooms for men and women were very near each other was also not liked. Of course, both the rooms could have been allotted to women but they were not used because of the above-mentioned attitude. The money spent by the Panchayat was thus gone waste though, no doubt, the bathrooms might have been used if enough propaganda was done.

The architecture of houses and their general conditions were not conducive to health. Pucca houses were few—about 5-7 which belonged to Patidars, one to a Brahmin and 2-3 to Lohanas. The remaining houses were of mud, generally occupied by Dharalas, Kolis and Harijans. Among untouchables, Dheds had somewhat better houses whereas those of Bhangis were somewhat inferior and too close to each other. Among Dheds, some had new and good houses. A majority of the population of this village was of Barias. Their houses housed men and cattle together. Ordinarily, the whole family lived in one small room; the kitchen was set apart by big earthen jars, used for storing grains. To have a window on the rear side of the house was not customary, due to fear of fire and the need to protect cattle from the wind. The whole family, including married sons and their wives, slept in one room. It was clear that no cleanliness and modesty could be observed in such a state. Some houses were so dark that a lamp was required to see things even in day time. It was not possible to carry out any major changes in the houses as these were not acceptable to the people. I visited personally some houses and suggested some changes in the existing arrangements. In some houses some compartments were made so that the family could sleep in different compartments at night and the smoke from the kitchen might not spread to the whole house. In about fifty houses new windows were made in the walls for allowing enough light and air. The people, however, did not seem to have appreciated these improvements.

Milk production had improved in quality and quantity in the previous year as a result of the introduction of cotton seed kernels and crushed pulses in the feed given to buffaloes. Villagers had not informed me of this development because of the superstition that the buffaloes would go dry if it was told to others that they were giving more milk. Subsequently, when the fact became generally known the people appreciated the new feed for the buffaloes. Two reasons were advanced for the reluctance of leaders when the matter of ordering the third instalment of feed came up. The merchant who was purchasing the milk produced in the village was losing on account of its sale on a co-operative basis. He contrived a scheme to put a stop to all these activities by bribing some leaders. Consequently, the leaders said that although there was a gain in the beginning, it did not continue. Others raised the objection that their cattle became emaciated because of this change of feed although it gave an immediate gain. They cited the example of Bombay cattle owners who by over-feeding and over-milking rendered the animals useless in one lactation. So they contended that the new feed was not advantageous to them from any angle. At that time difficulties were also experienced in getting cotton seed kernels from Navsari. Reluctantly, therefore, the project had to be given up. The leaders seemed to lack interest in making the necessary arrangements. During this period a cattle disease spread in the village. Two buffaloes were the first casualties. When I came to know of it, I sent a Veterinary Doctor with vaccines to the village. But the people did not allow vaccination of their cattle. As I was not able to go to the village, I sent a responsible person to persuade the Patel whose cattle were vaccinated. Some others also took the advantage. But a majority of the villagers flatly refused. On investigation, it was found that they had sent some men for bringing "sacred thread" from the adjoining village where there was a temple of the goddess. They believed, though irrationally, that if the thread was brought within one or two days and if the animals were vaccinated within that period the goddess might get offended and cause more harm to the cattle. Under these circumstances it was not prudent to force them. But some of the villagers who were rational got their livestock vaccinated. The disease lasted for about ten to fifteen days during which period twenty buffaloes died. One of these belonged to a widow who became utterly helpless as she and her minor son were solely dependent on the income derived from sale of milk. Many such superstitions were prevalent in the village. The reaction of a neighbouring village to this entire episode was just the opposite. The Patel of that village, fearing the spread of infection in the village called the doctor and got 300 animals vaccinated and thus saved them.

After the appointment of the lady worker an awakening among the women was discernible. The first visible change was in respect of the care of cattle and the mode of milking. The utensils were cleaned well. The practice of adulterating milk with water also gradually declined. Almost all the village women were taken to the State Dairy Farm at Makarpura with a view to showing them how the cattle should be taken care of and how milking should be done. Two lorries were provided by a friend without any charge for taking them to Makarpura. They were taken round the Government maternity hospital so that in case of need the facility could be utilised by them. It was their belief that these hospitals were meant only for the rich from the city and not for the poor. Moreover, slides relating to child care were also shown with the help of a magic lantern by a lady doctor. The lady worker visited every house and taught what

improvements could be made. Some progress was noticed at the end of two years. A small savings society for women was organized and an amount of Rs. 150 was collected. It was observed that women belonging to one community did not mix with those of the other. By organizing social programmes like *Garbas*, etc., they began to mix freely. Some improvement in cleanliness of clothes and houses was noticed but these could not be sustained. Many efforts for the sale of milk on co-operative basis were made. But they started mixing water with the milk at a later stage. Hence, the sales dwindled day by day. At last, we had to wind up the co-operative society. We did not receive the complete co-operation of the village leaders in this matter.

We made some attempts to improve agriculture of the village. Many times the leaders were sent to visit the model farm at Baroda and were provided with the information relating to the experiments conducted on it. The farm manager was often invited to visit the village with a view to investigating into crop diseases and the withering of cotton crop. The village was also getting sapplings or grafts of fruit trees from him. Experiments were also conducted on the mode of using chemical fertilizers.

Hardly any work was done in cleaning the village by the village sweepers as they were serving the palace gardens at Baroda. So they used to clean some parts of the village once in a week. Full day's work could not be taken from them as the remuneration and the land they received from the village were meagre. The job could be done better by reducing their number and employing one or two good workers with adequate pay but this was a question of State policy. A retired Subedar Major¹ was appointed for 20 villages surrounding the city of Baroda on the occasion of Diamond Jubilee of Maharaja by the Government to get more work from village servants and to improve cleanliness and sanitation. Under his able guidance, considerable progress was achieved. The problem of village watchmen was similar. The village had to pay Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 to Pathans or such other persons guarding the fields during cotton season. This amount was relatively very high. The village watchmen were not useful for the job. Quarrels were rampant in the allocation and distribution of this amount. The village suffered much on account of lack of unity among and selfishness of the people. The problem of organizing the duties of the watchmen rationally so that the village may get the full benefit of their services, like the question of sweepers, was kept in abeyance as it would not be solved individually for each village. Arrangement was made by persuading village leaders to get the work done at the minimum expense and to keep accurate accounts. The village servants, I was convinced, were not performing their duties conscientiously. With any amount of strictness, it was difficult to get the minimum work out of them. Talati was next to Patel among village servants in order of importance. He was rarely seen in the village although it was obligatory on his part to stay in the village. He was dismissed for that reason and a new one was appointed. He remained present in

1. The name of this Officer was Subedar Major Abdulla. He was my musketry tutor when I was sent to the army for training in riding and shooting. As Collector of Navsari, I had invited him for the anti-malaria work in the city and he had rendered magnificent services in cleaning the city. He had rendered very good services to the Baroda city in 1925 when the city was affected by heavy floods when its sanitation was greatly affected.

Advantage is not being taken of this class of deserving persons to the extent possible in this country. They can perform very useful services in school in imparting physical education and in maintaining discipline among the boys and in maintaining urban sanitation.

the village but took no interest whatsoever in his work and, therefore, was not of much help. His idea of service was very much different. Other persons of revenue department were also not enthusiastic. The minimum work could be got done by compulsion but it lacked genuine interest.

The village was situated on the banks of the river Vishwamitri which were eroded at many places, leaving large *kotars*. I had seen elsewhere that bamboos could be easily grown in such cavities which would also prevent erosion. Besides, bamboo is a useful tree, which can be easily planted. Hence, bamboo "buds" were obtained from the Forest Department, Ratnagiri through a friend and from one or two other places and were planted on the outskirts of the village and in the backyards of the houses. I had seen some of them having grown well. It was necessary to give special attention to the important aspect of afforestation of the village waste lands.

The lady worker was posed with various social problems. Village women freely exchanged their confidences with her. Requests for secret help were also received by her and complaints were made by the wives of the village leaders against their husbands' conduct. Harmony prevailed in some houses by her advice. Village life was not as happy and contented as was generally believed. Uplift of village women was difficult and for that a lady social worker was indispensable.

Efforts were made to develop other industries. A class for weaving and spinning was conducted for one year by deputing a teacher from the Commerce and Industries Department. On account of the condition of the houses, taking up of weaving by farmers was an impossibility. Spinning and weaving of cotton straps for cots was feasible. Village boys availed of the opportunity during the school hours. I was, however, convinced that when the main object was to earn money, the first improvement should relate to the business of farming and the cultivators should be made to work with zeal in their principal occupation. The first step in village development should be to improve the method of cultivation and quality of livestock. The work should start with the distribution of better seeds, proper preparation of manures and use of chemical fertilizers when required. I rendered all possible assistance in these directions. At this time the Alembic Chemical Works Company Ltd. had a scheme of sending milk to Bombay by setting up a pasturizing plant at Baroda. With the collaboration of the Company milk was sent to Bombay from this village on two occasions. Villagers showed interest when it was explained to them that the venture might prove profitable. They were eager to increase milk production by raising the number of livestock. This required provision for adequate water. Some years back sugarcane was grown in the village and there were a number of old wells in fields not in use. These were surveyed. Wells in one part of the village were shallow, while those in others the water supply was good. Four leaders decided to grow fodder for buffaloes with the use of electric pumps fitted on these wells and they applied to the Government for boring wells. For this purpose arrangements were made to bring electricity to the village in collaboration with the concerned department. Electric pumps were installed on three wells with financial assistance from the State, according to reports received subsequently. Electric wires were extended at the cost of State, while the pumps and motors were provided on a nominal

rent. Out of three wells, one proved useless, so its machinery was given to another well owner. Later, I was informed that of the three wells only one was worked advantageously. My object of developing dairy business while undertaking this work, however, was not fulfilled because it required continuous guidance. I was increasingly being convinced that besides agriculture, livestock rearing and dairy industry were the best sources of income in Gujarat and their importance cannot be over-emphasized.

In December 1936 I retired from the Baroda State service to join the Reserve Bank of India as Deputy Governor. The village wanted to give me a good send off and I could not resist their wishes. They organized a great show of *Bhajans*, *Kirtans* and *Garbas*. The most interesting feature of the *Garba* was that women of all communities from the highest Brahmins to the lowest Harijans (untouchables) joined in the same performance. This was something extraordinary and was the result of the proselytizing work of Parwatibai (lady worker).

In the end they presented me with a two-inch silver emblem of a cow as a token of their appreciation of my work among them. It means protect us as one would protect a "cow." I have cherished the "cow" as a fond memory.

EXPERIENCE GAINED AFTER LEAVING THE VILLAGE

My contact with the village ended in December 1936 as said above when I had to leave Baroda. Results were not upto my expectations. I was dissatisfied in my mind but my main objective was to acquire an insight into village conditions and the nature of difficulties faced in attempting to improve them. So I was not much concerned about my achievements. With the use of authority, some temporary results could have been achieved but I had no intention of adopting this method. I wanted the people to learn to work of their own volition and, therefore, did not believe in unduly hastening the pace of reform. The work of guiding backward people who were addicted to many bad habits was difficult. This I had realised from the beginning and I had no ground for despair.

Arrangements made for continuing the work already started after I left the charge, proved ineffective. The village Patel and the lady social worker kept me posted with information frequently. It appeared that hardly any of the activities undertaken was continued. For such work constant inspiration and guidance are most indispensable.

Undoubtedly, some change in the mental outlook of the people was visible as a result of efforts at economic and social development described above. Men, women and even children felt that the development of their village was desirable. They felt ashamed when anyone of them was found to hinder the efforts at development. Absence of a leader who would guide them in throwing off the yoke of long imbibed attitudes, making them conscious of their duties, giving spurt to their activities, overcoming their fatalism, making them realise their shortcomings with sympathy and keeping alive the hope of a better life in the midst of frustration was keenly felt. Such a person could not be found in the village at present. Nevertheless, the village would gain by the all-round change in the mental outlook of the people that had taken place.

People of neighbouring villages were observing the developments taking place in this village. At the beginning of the second year some of them met me and informed that the people of this village would never show me any gratitude as their mentality was not good. So if I could go to their villages they would take up all the activities required for development with full co-operation of all villagers. I had to disappoint them as I was unable to take up the work in other villages but assured them of help for any specific project. I helped them in extending the main residential area and in repairing the channels. My advice to them was to undertake the work in which they had real interest. From the experience gained from the work of rural uplift of this and other twenty villages selected for special attention at the time of the Diamond Jubilee of the Maharaja, I am convinced that the people require proper guidance. They know their interests well but an ordinary villager, however enthusiastic he might be, gets exasperated with petty factions in the village, selfishness of leaders and the impersonal, costly and time-consuming processes of the Government machinery.

As a first step, it is necessary to improve the State organization or administration at the points at which it comes into direct contact with the village people. Then only complete advantage would be taken of the multifarious activities of the State for the welfare of the people.