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University Education and Private Study*

BY SRI A. N. PARASURAM, M. A., Madras.

ALL the efforts of our University in affiliating more colleges have not sufficed to meet the needs of thousands of students, who year after year find themselves denied admission into University courses. Besides causing head ache to Principals of Colleges and heart-ache to disappointed students, this breakdown in our educational organisation might lead to immediate frustration in youths and permanent impoverishment in national life. Both economic needs and our political beliefs will increase many times the number of students seeking higher education for longer periods and in many other departments of study. To put up before students fresh obstacles year after year in a vain effort to reduce the number seeking admission or to attempt to minimise the value of University education is no remedy. The full magnitude of the problem can be perceived only if we remember that political necessities and the social convictions of our time will lead to the demand of University education for all. Prof. M. L. Jacks points out in his *Modern Trends in Education* that egalitarianism today is one of the most generalized of contemporary drifts affecting education, but having its origin in a sphere alien to education.

The task of providing for the full educational needs of our nation, according

to modern educational philosophy, has to be faced differently. We are one with Sir Richard Livingstone when he writes in his *The Future in Education* that to stop education at the age of fourteen is as unnatural as to die at fourteen. Another factor which has added to the strain on our Universities is the growing realisation that Dr. Curtis speaks of in his *History of Education in Great Britain* that many of the studies which are essential to the making of an educated nation—literature, history, philosophy, economics, and politics—cannot be understood by school boys with little experience of life.

Our Universities can say that no country in the world, not even the U.S.A. or Soviet Russia, has succeeded in providing University education for all those who seek it. But then it is instructive to note that while the communities are seeking to go to the Universities, the latter in turn have been going to the communities. If only our Universities can learn to give up their superior exclusiveness and unresponsiveness to popular aspirations, the result clearly of having been created primarily to produce a small exclusive class of semi-westernised Indians to help to run a foreign police state, they will find how much private study can help to solve the problem.

* A talk broadcast recently by the A. I. R., Madras, on 'Private Study' in a series on University Education for "All"; published here by kind permission.

Even now our Universities are permitting adults to take up their Matriculation examination after private study. Bonafide trained teachers are allowed to take their examinations privately. Graduates can sit for a Master's degree in some subjects by studying privately. Some Universities permit women candidates to most of their examinations through private study. While the principle of private study has been accepted by the educational authorities, the situation in our country demands faster and further developments. Private study may therefore be regarded as that sort of educational effort other than the normal teaching done in the usual way by University Colleges. The task of private study may therefore be carried on (1) by the Universities themselves enlarging their functions, (2) by the State, (3) by semi-public bodies, and finally (4) by private agencies.

While our present educational set up is unable to face even its normal task, how can it provide for the educational needs of exceptional people or in unusual subjects? There are many eminent people who develop only late in life. Mr. Winston Churchill was not a successful student. Even our own admittedly eminent Chief Minister has repeatedly remarked that he won no prizes as a student. Gene Tunney, the boxing champion, went to the University after making millions in his profession. Even now there are many, who get the time and money needed for University education only in middle age. Their numbers must go on increasing because of the changes in our economic structure. Organised and well directed private study alone can meet the educational needs of those who live as small, scattered, rural communities far away from centres of University education. Again, there are many physically handicapped persons for whom the normal hours and usual subjects are unsuited. If culture and learning have to be widely diffused without being vulgarised, ideals, methods and techniques of successful private study have to be consciously adopted.

Surprisingly enough, the first attempt to give the benefits of University education to

those not on rolls was made in conservative Britain. In 1873 University professors at Derby and Leicester and Nottingham began teaching those not on their rolls and thus began the University extension movement, which is now world-wide. Distinguished outsiders not connected with the Universities were also asked to help. Even the Oxford University, the home of lost causes, has begun to educate those not on its rolls in subjects outside its curriculum. The tutorial assistance given by the Universities of London and Oxford to an outside body like the Workers' Educational Association, originally started in 1904 to give political and cultural education to Labour, may be advantageously copied.

The University of Paris has deviated from tradition by admitting at unusual hours, a number of 'irregular' students going through courses radically different from those normally offered.

Australia has undertaken an extensive educational service in broadcasting to small, remote, rural communities. Similar expedients have been tried to meet the educational needs of the dispersed population in the hills of Nebraska in the United States. Recently, some American Universities have started experiments in broadcast courses in select subjects.

The University of Michigan has begun to use television for a new type of students. Based on the sound educational principle that what is seen is more impressive than what is heard, courses of the standard academic type mixed with those of general interest have been televised. Mr. Thomas E. Corbett regards television as the last word "as a mass medium of communication". Nearly a thousand students joined these fourteen-week courses, while the 'viewdents' exceeded a lakh. In 1951 over 69 American educational institutions were sponsoring television courses.

Correspondence schools are also playing a notable part in the new technique of education now being developed. When a number of schools at Michigan found a few of their own pupils asking for instruction in

subjects not taught by them, they got a leading correspondence school to supply a course of lessons. Students were helped by their school teacher to master these lessons. This scheme called the Benton Harbour Plan, is said to combine the benefits of both oral teaching and correspondence courses.

The state too has not been idle in the matter. Many modern countries have done extensive educational work in connection with their armies. The regular training in the army itself has important educational benefits. The United States army conducted hundreds of correspondence courses designed not merely to make them better soldiers, but also to fit them for civilian occupations after the war.

Civil servants are permitted to take examinations qualifying them for higher appointments after private study. Several Governments also conduct examinations in arts, crafts and commerce for which private students appear in large numbers. These examinations try to provide for many things not found in the regular educational system of the state.

Many semi-private and private organisations supplement the work of the state and the University. There are professional guilds conducting examinations for private students. For instance, the City and Guilds of London Institute examines students in Radio, Chemical Engineering, Dyeing, Weaving, etc. Further, we have examinations conducted by Bar Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Institutes of Bankers, Chartered Accountants, Engineers, and so on. Here we have something like regulation by various professions of admission to their ranks.

In America, important commercial corporations like the National Commercial Gas Association are running at great cost correspondence courses for the benefit of their employees. Last year, there were some 15,000 American firms paying for correspondence courses. Some manufacturers (like those of library equipment) offer excellent educational courses merely to create goodwill and promote sales.

Two American institutions—the Lyceum and the Chautauqua—deserve attention as instruments of popularising higher education. The Lyceum used to arrange lecture courses by eminent men, and many great names in American literature, like Emerson and Thoreau, first became popular through it. They could even engage Mark Twain at 300 dollars a lecture. The Chautauqua, starting as a Methodist camp, encouraged summer courses in classics, literature, science, etc.

The difficulties enumerated and the various educational experiments listed seem to mark a new deal in education. There is some attempt to get away from the excessive formalism which has marked educational systems so far. We must deal with our acute shortage in doctors, engineers and teachers as if it were a war-time emergency. And we have to go much further than granting exemption from attendance to ladies and students who have failed or those who are already graduates or teachers in service. As we cannot wait indefinitely for educational expansion, there is no point in insisting on provision for grand buildings and elaborate equipment, which is inadequately used.

The story of the rise of the University of London affords some valuable lessons. It provides for three types of learners: (1) regular students from University Colleges; (2) students undergoing day or evening courses at technical colleges and institutes of higher education; and (3) private students who prepare through individual study. The London University has been severely criticised for allowing private students to appear, but, as Dr. Curtis points out, "the external system made it possible for thousands of individuals to obtain a University qualification which would otherwise have been for ever beyond their reach".

Private study for University examinations by individual effort at home or through personal tuition by a teacher or with the help of correspondence courses will have to be encouraged on a large scale if we are to enlarge in the foreseeable future the number of educated people. Our failure to realise the

importance of private study arose from (1) official disapproval; (2) our national habit of overvaluing the teacher-pupil contact which is indispensable when confined to the imparting of religious 'deekshas'; and (3) the inexplicable failure of the Ekalavya tradition to take root. It is little realised that some of the best lessons in literature and popular sciences are obtained in the United States of America only in correspondence courses. The presentation is clear, concise, vivid and the entire course prepared at immense cost by the greatest experts in the line. In such courses, the pace of progress is set by the student's own ability. And he can get his friends or parents to guide him. When Goldsmith ridiculed Beau Tibbs' resolution to learn Greek to teach his daughter Greek, he could have little dreamt that the twentieth century Australia would sponsor a Dependent's Course to help parents to educate their children systematically and competently. This seems to provide an ideal means of achieving the desire of our Chief Minister expressed the other day, that each parent should try to educate three or four of his children.

Another direction in which the Universities can encourage private initiative is

through recognition of many subjects of cultural value which have not yet been included in the curricula of their courses. It is only recently that Music won a place in our University. The art of dancing is still waiting for academic recognition. While Indian philosophy has been given grudgingly some place in our Universities, theology, popular religion and critical appreciation of most of our literary classics have been left in the hands of those traditionally trained for their exposition. But we are now reaching a stage where institutions or teachers capable of imparting such training are fast dying out. This is a duty which our Universities ought not to neglect any longer. They can make a beginning by sponsoring courses of cultural value in the All India Radio or making use of such courses already run by All India Radio.

I have merely thrown out suggestions about some directions in which private study can help to solve our stupendous educational problem. Conventional methods may not suit an age when, as H. G. Wells has pointed out in a telling manner, there is a race between education and catastrophe.

Educational Experiments in Bombay State IV:

Shri Mouni Vidyapitha, Gargoti, an Experiment in Rural Education

BY PROFESSOR C. N. PATWARDHAN, *Head of the Department of Educational Administration, Indian Institute of Education, Bombay.*

IT is particularly after independence that more and more attention is being paid to rural education in India. The Government of India have appointed a committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Husain to study and report on the existing and prospective facilities for the spread of higher education in rural India. Many experiments will be noticed by this Committee, but as is usual with Governmental Committees and Commissions they cannot keep pace with the rapid growth of volun-

tary educational agencies which do fortunately multiply in Free India, mainly due to the ardent desire of a few personalities in education who cannot rest without doing something, to the best of their abilities, for the uplift of the masses. Such an experiment has been undertaken by Shri J. P. Naik, the celebrated author of "History of Education in India". Shri J. P. Naik has succeeded in bringing together in one compact enthusiastic agency three existing educational societies in a common cause i. e.,

education of the masses around the centre of the experiment the village Gargoti in the Kolhapur District of the Bombay State. The three societies working together in a brilliant co-operative educational effort are: The Prince Shivaji Education Society, Kolhapur; The Indian Institute of Education, Bymbay; and the Shri Govindrao Koregaonkar Dharmadaya Samstha, Kolhapur. With this experiment are associated almost all the leading educationists of the Bombay State and they come from all parts of Karnatak, Gujarat and Maharashtra. A team of five well-qualified young men, led by Dr. A. S. Gavade, Ph.D. (Leeds) has been placed in direct charge of the experiment on the spot.

Locality: In selecting Gargoti—a modern version of the ancient name Gargya-Kuti (the hermitage of the famous Sage Gargya)—the organizers have determined the choice of the spot on the first essential principle that the field of rural education should be really a rural area, not likely to be contaminated by the city environments in any distant future. Gargoti satisfies this condition. "Gargoti," the organizers describe in their brochure, "is situated right in the heart of a rural area and lies far out of any suburban belts... Not only is this so at present, but there is not even a remote possibility of any large industry being developed in it. Gargoti, therefore, will always remain a village and the predominantly agricultural character of this region is not likely to be altered at any time." Within a radius of 5 to 7 miles there are 34 villages with a total population of about 30,000.

Historical Antecedents of Gargoti: Shri Mouni Maharaj, after whom the Vidyapitha is named, was a saint who had observed the vow of silence. This saint was known to have blessed the famous Shivaji, the Founder of the Marhatta Empire. In ancient times on the beautiful banks of the Veda-Ganga River, several sages had built their Ashrams. It is on a hill-top on the banks of the Veda-Ganga that the modern Vidyapitha is situated. Sacred, ancient and rich in educational tradition is the site selected

for one of the most potent experiments in rural education in India.

Scope of the Experiment: The brochure says, "It is too early at this stage to describe the detailed organization and working of each of the ten institutions that are proposed to be located on the site of the Vidyapitha". The scope of this experiment is, however, well stated as: experiment, therefore makes it possible to launch a comprehensive attack on the problems of rural education and promises to be a laboratory through which the newer and more efficient techniques of educating the rural public can be evolved and broadcast." This is indeed a worthy and a very necessary ambition for any educational experiment in India.

Basic Principles: On five basic principles this Vidyapitha will be organized. (i) The experiment should be all comprehensive, providing a continuous process of education for the masses in all spheres of life—development of body, spirit and mind—and through all stages from pre-primary to post-graduate; (ii) the ten institutions working together as one project should cost less and thus set an example in economy to other institutions which running singly and in isolation do ordinarily require a tremendous amount of money; (iii) concentrated experimentation by a band of trained educational scientists at one spot possibly under all favourable conditions, of peace, congenial environment, a determined experimental area and a mass of people with whom the scientists are in daily contact; (iv) integration of education with life in as much as not only the people will come to the Vidyapitha, but the Vidyapitha will also go to the people; (v) when fully developed the Vidyapitha would be a single faculty Rural University and will have served the purpose as a pioneer experiment in re-construction of rural education in India.

Modest Beginnings: Out of the existing few institutions—a Primary School and a High School, a small Library and an agricultural farm,—will gradually be developed ten full-grown institutions embracing

all educational activities for the benefit of the rural population. The ten institutions as will ultimately be established at Gargoti are:—(1) A Pre-Primary Section; (2) A full-grade Primary School for Boys and Girls; (3) A High School teaching agriculture and some cottage industries; (4) A Primary Teachers' Training College with Agriculture as the main craft; (5) A Model Agricultural Farm which will serve as a Taluk Demonstration Centre and as a Practising Farm for the Primary School, High School and Training College; (6) A Centre for Training Rural Social Workers; (7) A Good Library on Rural Education and Rural Re-construction; (8) A Publication Department for the issue of books, pamphlets, journals, etc., on rural reconstruction in general and rural education in particular; (9) A Post-Graduate Research Centre; and (10) A Janata College.

When the ten institutions will be fully developed and the Gargoti experiment will work in all its projected entirety, the word 'University' will have meaning in India different from what University is today to the ordinary mass of people.

It will not be, however, correct to assume that the organizers have commenced this experiment in an ancient deserted place on the top of a hill somewhere in the ranges of the Sahyadri. The area selected has the minimum basis of a modern life; Gargoti is the headquarters of a Taluka. It has a Medical Dispensary, a Veterinary Dispen-

sary, a good Public Library (whose history goes back to 75 years), a fine temple constructed by the Devasthan Mandal and large enough to be used as an Assembly Hall or a theatre for the Janata College, a large farmland within the bounds of the Vidyapitha, and last but not the least in importance, a noble band of local workers who have offered complete co-operation in all details to the city-educationists who have made this rural education experiment the business of their lives.

The Gargoti Vidyapitha does certainly possess all the elements necessary for a successful educational experiment. It must be recognised that this is one of the many experiments launched in India by private agencies, of their own volition and on their own resources, but it differs from many others in its basic comprehensive scheme of 'total education' without seeking any easy midway to success. Shantiniketan had the towering personality and weighty heritage of the Tagores, the Women's University had Dr. Karve's indefatigable labours of half a century, Wardha has the intimate association with one of the world's best human souls, Gargoti does not glow in the brilliance of any one personality, but it can be called truly a People's University conceived and projected as it is by the will of the common people in respectful and hearty co-operation with each other. We wish the organizers of this Vidyapitha all the best of success.

Co-Education and Present Indian Opinion

BY SRI WAMAN RAO, B.A., B.T., I.E.S. *Director of Academy of Educational Sociology, Indore (M. B.)*

CO-EDUCATION means that boys and girls should study together in one class room. The majority of educated men are in favour of this system, while others without giving due thought and reason throw mud against it in season and out of season. Modern India is acting like a Shakespeare's Hamlet, simply thinking good and evil of it. No sincere efforts have been made nor

definite steps have been taken to introduce this system of education. We thought with the transfer of power in 1947 that our popular ministers would do much, but they have retarded the progress of education in general.

We were expecting a fillip from the learned members of the University Education Commission (1949) in support of

co-education; but we regret to note that they have recommended co-education only for colleges. This is a 'Himalayan blunder' to quote the words of the Father of Nation—both from an educational and psychological point of view. They have minimised the totality of human nature. They have looked at life not as a whole but in parts; to them life appears to be cut into thousand pieces. Is this the way of presenting to the younger generation a coherent picture of the universe and an integrated way of life? They have rendered a great disservice to the nation. We wonder in the absence of co-educational institutions how could they jump to this conclusion. How could they dare to give a unanimous verdict in the absence of proper evidence? Had the witnesses any experience of co-education? No. "We are engaged in a quest for democracy through the realisation of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity"; but my dear venerable Sirs, your quest for democracy is incomplete without "Equality of Status"? Are you going to achieve "Equality of Status" by separating men and women for purposes of education. Modern scientific civilisation and the World Wars I and II have vastly modified the vision of the world and new educational systems are being introduced in consequence of this. Therefore, either modify the Constitution or respect its clauses. This is a direct insult to the Indian womanhood both ancient and modern. They have thrown to the winds our Fundamental Rights by discriminating separation of sexes in matters of education. The system of co-education is in operation all over the civilised globe.

How India imbibed the system of the separation of the sexes in Education? Nor is there any convincing testimony that it existed in ancient India. Among Hindus, the female is considered as the other sweet-half of the male. Nay, even in some cases she enjoys a higher status than the male. She is linked and her presence is necessary in all the religious functions. This separation of the sexes, we think, is due most probably to the Muhammadan and Mughal conquests in the middle ages. Those rulers

introduced the barbarous system of Purdah and hence by and by the females were separated much more even in every day affairs.

WOMEN AND TEACHING

Mothers educate while teachers only teach. Teachers are a store-house of knowledge. Except the class-room they know nothing of the practical world. Such is not the case with a woman-teacher. Her sympathetic outlook on life and practical bent of mind tell much upon the early environments of childhood. In most of the countries of the world infant and elementary education is entrusted to lady-teachers while in India the case is contrary. The sooner we get the woman-teacher, the better it would be for our children. There can not be two opinions, that a woman being a mother is the best teacher in the world of both character and intelligence. Children in her presence, learn unconsciously, as second nature by living in her company. Mothers only know to develop the faculties of the children. A single glance of a mother can teach more than a thousand teachers. Society is not made of males only. It is females, who nourish the background of information and understanding and culture in the children of the society. Children go to the schools not as raw products, but with the influence of home; so in contact with a woman-teacher they are likely to be benefited more from the school than otherwise would be possible.

PAST HERITAGE

In all ages and in all climes mothers have played a prominent part in nation-building. In the Indian heritages the breeze of joyful dawn of education blew freely with the tinkling of rosy ankles with tiny golden bells and Satis went to heaven singing at each step. Nalanda, the centre of world's desire, was a glorious thoroughfare of learning for both the sexes. From Buddhist monasteries went forth bands of monks and nuns to preach the gospel of truth. Avanti, the cultural sanctuary, over which flew the messenger of cloud—a phantom of delight—over the hills and dales of

our motherland was a rendezvous of educators where the devotees of Goddess Saraswati brought their offerings forgetting their differences of sex and temperament and technique. Even to this day, the silver line of the sacred Narbudda, is visible to the naked eye form the fort of Mandu, which is proclaiming to the whole world at large, the old, old vision of Bharata's beauty. This is our physical make-up and we are conditioned by it. This is our basic foundation of education for both the sexes. This is not an illusion.

INDIAN OPINION AND CO-EDUCATION

It is always claimed that India is against co-education. Is it true? What are the chief grounds on which prominent Indian educationists oppose it? Let us examine these crucial phases of co-education. There are no disadvantages at all in the system of co-education and a little understanding of the subject matter will make it clear.

Co-education does not mean that boys and girls should be taught exactly in the same way. Some part in the teaching process must be common to both. It also does not mean that the methods suitable for boys should be imposed unaltered upon the girls. The interests of the two should not be subordinated at the cost of each other; for this same part of the curriculum may be on separate lines. A co-educational school must have competent teachers of both the sexes. Now, it is not very difficult for India as there are lots of educated ladies. Undoubtedly, there are certain subjects which women can teach better than men; while there are certain subjects which men can teach better than women. The atmosphere in such a school is of perfect equality. The women-teachers should be paid the same salaries as men teachers for equal work. They are fixed to carry the same academic work as men, with no less thoroughness and quality. The distribution of general ability is equally distributed by God.

It has been noted by educators in our country, "that a pleasing feature of colleges

for women has been the intimate relations of students and teachers". Let us try to bring this 'pleasing feature' for our boys by establishing co-educational institutions all over the country. 'Intimate relations' is the crying need of the hour lacking in male schools.

Let us remember that independence of India was not won alone by men, but in the struggle for freedom many a gold bangle has been besmeared with blood. Our women have exhibited their ability to think and work alongside of men in the glorious struggle of liberation. They have proved that Indian ladies are far superior in status and discipline and they can share the burden of harder toil along with men.

Advocates of the separation of the sexes claim:

(1) That by mixing the two the progress is retarded. Our experience is far otherwise. When the two study together the natural aptitudes get a full scope for automatic development. It is quite necessary that women should share with men the life and thought and interests of the time.

AN ABSURD SUGGESTION

(a) That a woman can not develop her personality in a men's college. This is as absurd as it could be. A girl while studying in a women's institution can develop only a one-sided personality. She will be unable to understand men. After all, what is this personality? By personality we mean the sum total of our ways of behaving toward other persons. It is a relative term. It results from a combination of physiological and social forces. One's home, family, friends, society, community, nation and the world, all these affect us indelibly. Briefly, personality means the extent to which one is able to interest and serve other people. The ability is made up of habits and skills acquired by practice. It is to have a touch with man as man: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself". For the development of personality self-sacrifice is a necessary condition. It is an attribute of the inner existence. It is a self-merit. Whether a woman is charming, beautiful, noble is

always determined and felt by others and not by her own self. What others say about us has a deep meaning. By our self we are non-entity. Later in life a girl has to contact males and she has to play the different roles of a wife, mother and nation-builder. It is therefore, quite necessary for her to understand the sentiments of the other sex or else she will develop a self-centered complex. She will fall miserably to adjust herself to social environment. This is a general complaint of women students coming out from women's colleges. This is the chief cause of unhappiness in homes of educated women. She will get ample opportunities to exhibit her talents and test them in a mixed college; consequently she will be able to develop her personality on the right lines. All her notions about her own self will be corrected.

(3) They say that there is no need for women to undergo the nervous strain of examinations. Should our boys put up with the same strain? Let us alter the system of examinations so that it will not cause any nervous strain on both boys and girls. It is harmful to both. It is not the fault of co-education; but it is the fault of the present examination system prevalent in our country.

SOME ARGUMENTS REPUDIATED

(4) That women's education should be more in keeping with the temperament and needs of women as wives and mothers. We agree. A woman's work is far different from that of man. Let us recognise the ways in which the education of women can well be differentiated from that of men. We admit that in all things men's and women's education should not be identical. Interests of women diverge in some respects from those of men. There is need that the theory of equality of opportunity, but not necessarily identity of opportunity, shall find increasing expression in practice. Some callings are chiefly in the hands of men; some chiefly in the hands of women; while others about equally shared. This is as it should be. In co-education we have to bring both sexes together for doing different work. Let us realise that "the finest family

relations result from the association of a man and woman who have had much of their education in common; but each of whom has developed according to his or her own nature, and not in imitation of the other." All boys do not become pleaders or doctors or clerks, so let every one choose the subjects according to one's liking. This is a part of the curriculum of studies. Let us arrange it in such a way that it will mean a preparation for home and family life.

(5) They say that the same sort of discipline is not suitable for both. Let there be two-fold discipline according to the sex. We think in co-education discipline is more easily obtained. This is a question of school administration and sound organisation. It is quite necessary that the standard of courtesy and social responsibility should be emphasised on the parts of both boys and girls in mixed institutions.

(6) They say that it causes dislocation or break in the work, when girls are separated in the hours of Home Economics, Nursing, Needle-work, Cookery etc. In boys' schools too it causes dislocation, when the students go for optional subjects. There ought to be a break in the work, for all the boys do not take the same subjects. So girls ought to go; never mind, if it causes a break. This is in arranging the time-table.

(7) That overcrowding is more serious for women than men. This is no argument. The world is crowded and complicated. One can not escape from this. If there are girls who shun overcrowding, a better place for them is the CLOISTER or NUNNERY.

(8) Lastly, they say that in the transitional period of life, when the newborn consciousness comes, the two sexes should not intrude upon each other. This period of life falls in the domain of our Secondary Education. They think it a sacrilege.

It is on this ground that the members of the University Commission have recommended the segregation of boys and girls prior to College Education. It is here that the shoe of co-education pinches in India.

If the boys and girls are brought up from childhood in a co-educational school, it becomes a matter of course, and it naturally diverts the attention from the sexual aspects of life. Proper education of sex-problems will mitigate this evil. It is only by this method that the two sexes will learn much more about each other and both will be able to acquire truthful views about life. Male egotism and female sentimentality will vanish away. It will go to solve the matrimonial mistake in life.

THE ADVANTAGES

Decidedly co-education has many advantages. It will put a stop to the duplicating of staff in schools and colleges. It is more economical. It is very beneficial for a poor country like India. The principle being democratic, is based on the idea of equality of sexes. Now when our constitution is democratic, we must have a democratic way of life in our educational system. The mixed schools and colleges are the proper places to train the younger generation for the values of democracy, justice and liberty, equality and fraternity. It is the duty of all educators of our country to strive relentlessly towards this ideal. We must drive away the

present disparity between what our country needs and what our education offers.

Ultimately, then, co-education exerts a wholesome influence on boys and girls and both develop a spirit of comradeship soon. Each will be benefitted by the moral standard of the other. Neither will the boys think that they are supermen nor will the girls think that they are superwomen. In such an atmosphere, brightness and demeanour of life will never fade away. It will stimulate the sporting spirit and life will be cheerful. It will easily go in forming the association of ideas and thus the two sexes will be benefitted intellectually. The student life instead of being dull would be lanked with happy memories and unforgettable dreams. Co-education is not a new theory for us. We can not help being of opinion that it is NATURE'S OWN PLAN. It is the most natural way of teaching both boys and girls. For a secular and welfare State, segregation of sexes in educational institutions is unthinkable. Modern India is in urgent need of co-education. Will the Indian educators, particularly, we appeal to the Ministry of Education, try this way in education, satisfactorily?—*The National Guardian*.

An Interesting School

REV. FR. T. N. SIKKIA, S. J., *Tiruchirappalli*

AN inconspicuous door in the inconspicuous Rue de Madrid in Paris opens into the most interesting, and perhaps the best, school I have seen in Europe¹.

Inside it looked like a mansion fit for offices or apartments rather than a modern school; it had been adapted to the needs of a small school, with black-boards fixed on the walls and glass windows giving on the central corridor. The lowest floor—almost

underground—contained the kitchen and dining halls for the different age-groups of boys. The other three floors were classrooms, teachers' rooms, library, and lavatories².

This school is entirely private, i. e., independent of the state, in its curricula, its methods of teaching, the choice and qualifications of its teachers, its very conception and execution. It is one of those interest-

¹ During a lecture tour in April-June 1952 I visited many educational institutions in Western Europe.

² I use the past tense because though this school still exists (and I hope will always exist), it has recently been shifted to another building in Paris.

ing experiments which flourish in the climate of free European countries like France and Belgium, where there is not that simple faith in Government or that admiration for Government employment which we Indians have.

The Ecole Notre Dame is meant for boys between the ages of six and ten, corresponding to what in France is called 'la dixieme a la sixieme'. They are divided into five classes, each under a class teacher specially trained in the same institution. The whole secret and uniqueness of this school lies in the special private training of its teachers in the school for the school. Fr. P. Faure, S. J., the founder and director, gives a course of theoretical and practical initiation into his method which takes three years of strenuous work on both sides. The teachers so trained become part of the school and carry on its spirit no less than its method.

It would be difficult to compress this method into a neat formula, for it has been evolved by personal experiment and observation. It may be described as a combination of the Montessori method with the Jesuit system laid down in the *Ratio Studiorum*. The pupils of the Ecole Notre Dame have the freshness and initiative of the Montessori school, the same charming spontaneity, the same elderliness, if I may so call that behaviour of children as if they were grown up, which I consider the greatest triumph of Madame Montessori and the most lasting contribution she has made to educational psychology. The day begins with the Exercise of Silence, when every boy keeps perfect silence of speech and of movement and even of gesture—not only not speaking, but not moving any part of his body, not looking about, and for a while even holding his breath—from a given signal to another given signal. One finds it hard to believe that such self-control is possible to children of six until one has seen this Silence Exercise for oneself.

Then the classes begin. The room has been prepared beforehand by the teacher selecting the material on which the boys are to work. But they choose whether to do word-building with the letters provided

or geography with the maps and charts and pictures on the wall or arithmetic with the shells and beads or geometry with the balls and cubes and triangles or natural science with the plants and grasses and the little sparrows and doves in the cages hanging around them in the room. In this respect the school remains one of Montessori by free activity and spontaneous choice of work in an atmosphere of seriousness and silence without any visible outside control. But here the resemblance ends; for while in the Montessori school the child may occupy himself with anything he likes the whole day long, here the programme for the day is fixed by the teacher beforehand and only the order in which each child does the various items or subjects on it is left to his choice. Thus there is the freedom and spontaneity of the Montessori school as well as the discipline and order of the Jesuit method in this original school in Paris.

I was struck with the way the boys were induced to develop their initiative. In one class they were told to write an essay on Frost, collecting all that French poets had said about this natural phenomenon; then they were all sent to the Library and allowed to rummage among the books of French Poetry and gather whatever they could find about frost, quoting author, date, poem, and line. They might take a day or two over this task, coming back to it whenever the time-table allowed it as well as in their free time; but they had to finish it and show their work to the teacher, who would give them marks for their essay... and perhaps read it out to the class! Such training in personal work in the line of research at such an early stage of education is sure to give these children a taste for originality and an encouragement of initiative. We in India would be afraid to give such an exercise to honour students in our universities.

The social side of the children's character is developed by meals, games, and theatricals. The Ecole Notre Dame is a day school; but all the boys take their midday lunch together in the school canteen. Each group of six or eight sit round a table; one

of them leads the prayer before and after the meal: another serves the soup; a third brings round the meat and the vegetable and the dessert. They all help one another to pass the dishes round, to pour out the wine to one another, to take away to the scullery the used dishes and forks and spoons. And all this is done in solemn silence until the presiding teacher gives the signal for conversation—which again is done with the restraint and seriousness of grownups. The presiding, or rather standing-near, teacher corrects their manners if they need correction. I found there was hardly anything to be corrected, for the school had already been working six months when I visited it. Still, it was a great achievement for the teachers and a lasting service to the pupils.

The same spirit governs the games in the little school-yard. The teacher is always by, not to prescribe the game or appoint the players or captains, but to answer questions or suggest solutions of doubts. The boys choose the game they like and the leaders among them naturally and unobtrusively take the captaincy. The teacher steps in when there is a remark to make about a selfish player or help to be given to one who has fallen and hurt himself.

These games are played for short periods during the course of the school-day, not for long spells before or after school as is

generally done elsewhere. Thus the boys are not tired but refreshed, and all are found to take part in what is perhaps the most educative cooperative activity in the timetable. Singing and acting are also done in the same cooperative and spontaneous spirit, not in the dull mechanical way in which *Jangnamana* and other national songs are yelled in our schools: 'tis no matter how it be in tune, so it make noise enough.

I saw the school end one day and the boys go to their homes. Each class prepared themselves by going to the cloak-room and put on their overcoats and hats and, since it was raining, their raincoats; then they returned to the classroom in silence and stood in a line till the bell rang for the end of the day. By that time all the classes had queued up with their teachers by their side. They marched down the wooden stairs noiselessly and out into the Rue de Madrid with the same seriousness and freshness as had struck me in them throughout the days I had visited their school. They were not tired at the end of a long school day.

The details of the working of the Ecole Notre Dame may not be within our reach in India. But the method, and above all the spirit, deserves to be studied and adapted to our needs and conditions. But all depends, here more than in any other kind of school, on the personality of the teachers and their training and guidance by an eminent headmaster.

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THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW,

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The Future Ideals of Our Education

BY SRI R. M. THAKUR, *Gurukula University, Kangri.*

THE IDEAL OF MODERNISATION— FALSE AND TRUE.

THE object of Educational Reform in India (as in other countries) has ever been to "adapt" the institutions and life of the people to the new condition of the universe. But advocates of the so-called doctrine of adaptation do not seem to recognise sufficiently the truth that adaptation does not necessarily mean the sacrifice and extinction of national individuality, or the reckless introduction of anything that is new merely to gratify the ideal of 'modernisation.' And yet the main trend of educational society in modern India, whether pioneered by the State or the people, has been towards an imitation, conscious or unconscious, of the methods and means devised by the thinkers of the West. It has yet to be dinned into our ears, that modernisation of India scientifically interpreted, should mean the proper utilisation of modern world-forces and assimilation of world-culture in the interest of the development of Indian national ideals along the lines of natural evolution.

During the last century, however, Indian education has been led so far away from the traditional and historic paths of progressive national culture that the attempt to restore the lines of natural evolution at the present day would appear, to all intents and purposes, to be a total revolution. Not simply the methods of mastering the various branches of learning that have to be introduced, but the whole pedagogic system would look like a revolutionary departure from the beaten track. It is only the educational idealists, generally branded as enthusiasts or faddists, whose visions go beyond the existing condition of things and whose notions are not trammelled by the circumstances of the times, that can conceive the picture of an educational system that is really adjusted to the traditions,

instincts and needs of the people as well as calculated to meet their pressing wants.

We must acknowledge that the existing educational institutions are not suited to the temperament of the people for whom they are meant and are not helpful in meeting their requirements and supplying their pressing needs. It should be our desire to see education subserve the purposes of Indian life and conduce to the interests of the people of this country. We should no longer be blind to the fact that a system may be very well adapted to one people so as to be of greatest good to it, but quite unsuited to another people and may even be productive of evil consequences. This is the rationale of all national systems of education in the world. It is because sufficient attention has not been paid to the "local circumstances" and methods have not been "adapted to suit the local habits and temper", in the matter of education as in problems of administration that, according to Sir Thomas Holland, "the progress has not been of a kind and amount entirely satisfactory." The real apology for the establishment of new Universities lies in this inadequacy of the present institutions.

THE DEATH AND EXTENT OF MODERNISM IN INDIA.

The first defect of the present system is, therefore, the one-sided application of the theory of adaptation and modernisation to Indian educational problems. India will undoubtedly have to be modernised, but along right natural channels, the path of continuous growth chalked out by her historic past.

In the second place, it is difficult to believe, if the modernists, the so-called advocates of modern culture, are really the apostles of modernisation they profess to be. For they do not seem to be in living touch with the modern world-forces; that

have to be utilised by India, and the world-civilisation that has to be assimilated by her people. India cannot grow into a modern cultural organism, unless the environment of her life and work is adequately enriched by the incorporation of the best assimilable treasures flowing from the perennial springs of universal culture. But science and democracy, the two great forces of modern civilisation, scientific and democratic institutions and movements, the spirit of independent inquiry and criticism, the attitude of self-assertion, the ideals of free life and thought—all these characteristics, which association with Europe has been imparting to India in modern times have not been able to strike their roots deep in the minds of even the so-called educated classes. These 'natural leaders' of society have been created as the first fruits of the rapprochement between the East and the West. Public life in India is, however, not yet sufficiently inspiring, elevating and all absorbing. The ideals of industrial and economic amelioration, social regeneration, political advancement and educational reforms with which the higher classes profess to be identified, are still very superficial, and though they bid fair to be permanent factors of Indian life and consciousness in the no distant future, are yet only exotic, not naturalised in the soil. The result is a condition of moral and intellectual muddle in which the two classes of society do not find the common meeting ground, in which the old institutions mould the character of the majority of the population in a way which perhaps is not at all alive to the modern requirements, and the new institutions which are adapted to the present needs, influence, however, only the superficial life of an infinitesimal section of the entire community. The people cannot necessarily imbibe the ideals of life and character from the so-called leaders of society. They do not derive any help whatever in the building up of the life and character from the slight educative influences of institutions and movements.

So far, therefore, as the development of the national character, according to new ideals, and the promotion of the people's

culture on modern lines are concerned, the real cause of the progress being slow and unsatisfactory is the inadequate assimilation of the new civilising agencies—the scientific spirit and democratic temperament by the University-educated classes themselves. When the higher strata of society would be more sincere and earnest in realising the fruits of the Renaissance and pursuing the ideals engendered by the new spirit, when the new institutions would become really and essentially formative elements in the character of these 'natural leaders', when science and democracy would come to stay permanently among the upper ten thousand, the atmosphere of Indian life would be an actively inspiring school of modern culture and the new ideals would filter through society as a matter of course. To help forward these natural and spontaneous educative agencies, it behoves the educated classes to be more 'modern', more scientific, more assimilative, and above all, more sincere in the assumption of their leadership.

IGNORANCE OF PAST ACHIEVEMENTS.

Both these defects, viz., the tendency to imitate blindly the institutions and ideals of the modern Western world, and the very inconsiderably shallow appreciation and assimilation of the new ideas, have to be attributed to another more fundamental defect of the present situation. Educated India of to-day lives in more or less complete ignorance of the achievements of Indian civilisation. Reverence for the past has ceased to be an element in the character of University alumni owing, among other reasons, to the total divorce from ancient Hindu culture promoted by current educational theories and institutions.

Educated India has in fact been taught to think lightly of the past. The few "botanists over the mother's grave," and academic researches in Indian antiquities have had no appreciable effect on University studies. Two generations of Indian youths, in spite of their high class diplomas, have contributed to the cumulative darkness about the cultural achievements of ancient

and mediæval India. Hence for anything that is good, elegant and useful, the tendency has been to copy or quote or follow the West.

The proper corrective for the present evils so that modernisation of India may proceed along right biological channels, and modern world-culture may be adequately utilised and assimilated by both the masses and the classes is a due appreciation of India's past, its pedagogic ideals, ends and methods.

OUR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE PAST.

It is not generally known that up to the end of the 18th or beginning of the 19th century, i.e., the then epoch of Industrial Revolution which ushers in the modern age in Europe, the achievements of the Hindus were almost on a par with those of the Western world in every department of thought and activity even in the most secular matters. The great diversity and immensity of Hindu Literature bear ample testimony to the comprehensive and many-sided character of Hindu culture. It is the educational institutions of the Hindus that certainly supplied the conditions for the growth and development of this varied culture and this varied literature. A genuine estimate of the past achievements of the Hindus would enable us to think out the exact lines of future work and the proper methods of utilising the modern world-culture.

EDUCATIONAL CONSCRIPTION.

The greatest need of the hour is a band of educational missionaries imbued with correct ideas about the ends and means of modernisation. Schemes for the spread of education, elementary or advanced, as those that have come prominently before the public in connection with Gokhale's Compulsory Education Bill required for their success along with, or rather above other things, a supply of educated men who may take to the diffusion of education as the sole work and all absorbing mission of their lives. In order that such educational missionaries may be available, the passing

of a self-denying ordinance by the graduates and other University-educated classes is an absolute necessity. This would really be the first step in bringing about that consummation which is conceived in Gokhale's Bill. It is absolutely necessary that something like the system of conscription should be introduced in the field of Indian education and that educated men should be compelled to come forward to spend a year or two of their lives after the completion of their education in disseminating among the poorer classes those ideas of life that they themselves have fortunately acquired. All social workers and moralists should co-operate with educationists by preparing the way and creating facilities for this scheme of educational conscription.

Every degree, diploma or certificate should be conferred after the student successfully puts in a fixed period of service to the country. This may be called Compulsory National Service. The period of service may be say, a year. A Board may be constituted to organise and manage this portion of the work of the Education Department and University. The work should be real and solid, and not a mere token effort to satisfy the requirements of rules and routine.

'LAISSEZ FAIRE' EDUCATION.

One of the ideals with which educational missionaries and organisers should have to be identified is the promotion of the varied types of educational institutions throughout the length and breadth of the country. It is only under conditions of freedom for the establishment and maintenance of new systems that educational reformers can find proper room for the application of their ideas of modernisation along natural historic lines.

Throughout India there is practically speaking only one system of education devised by the Government, and yet India is an epitome of the world. One and the same university can not meet the requirements of different peoples or of the same people in a different age. Hence statesmen in the field of education have to recog-

nise the possibility of different "types" of educational systems and the 'relativity' of the educational policies.

Education cannot be concrete and hence real, so long as the pedagogic interests of vast numbers of the people are administered by one centralised system. What is wanted in a vast country like India is diversity and decentralisation. To construct a uniform scheme for a land of varying creeds, sects and languages as well as diverse natural phenomena in the interests of nationalism and unification, would be to ignore the thousand and one "historic ideals and traditions that make up the real and concrete universe of thought and action" and neglect the varying actual needs and surroundings of the people living in the different parts of the country.

It is this love of individuality and distinctiveness that is the mainspring of the people's support of the Hindu and Moslem universities. "We are concerned not merely with the number of students receiving education or the subjects in the curriculum of students, but an altogether new viewpoint from which to administer the problems of Education and the lines of instruction: The Hindu University, and its sister institution, the Moslem University, are thus to be new contributors to the culture and civilisation of mankind." For "every association of human beings, which is big enough to be called a people and which is old enough to have traditions which its members cherish and feel glory in, must, therefore, have a university of its own to direct and control its educational interests."

These principles of educational separateness and independence have to be applied in determining what should be the scope and character of the Primary and the Secondary Schools of India. If the evils of ignorance and poverty are to be removed, mass education is to be organised on such a vast scale as to leave no individual without the knowledge of a little arithmetic, a little practical science, a little literature and a little national history, while education in technology and the applied sciences should

be so planned as to utilise the local resources and to meet the local needs. On this plan, the problem of the people's education assumes huge proportions and necessitates such a vast and comprehensive scheme of constructive organisation that it is absolutely impossible for a single University or a single Education Department to manage and govern effectively all the educational interests of a Province. What is, therefore, urgently, required is a district with its own model College of Education, its Inspector and Directors and its own type of rural and industrial education.

Educational missionaries must never be tired of preaching the cause of autonomy in the matter of educational administration and advocating the freedom of schools and colleges in the districts from the control of the central authorities. We must strongly uphold the view that men actually engaged in moulding the life and character of the pupils should be allowed complete freedom in the work they have to do, i.e., the selection of studies, method of teaching, framing of daily routine and time-tables, discipline, management, examinations, certificates, etc., and that until and unless the teachers and managers of schools get free scope for the display of their ability, there can grow no genuine educational enthusiasm in the country. In order, therefore, that education may be really fruitful, that the schools of India may send forth honest men and thoughtful citizens into the world and the Indian Universities may be fountains of character and learning and produce original thinkers and investigators, the prerequisite is the adoption of the principles of *laissez faire* in the educational adjustment from the highest to the lowest stage. Schools and Colleges must be allowed to grow and develop each on its lines and to assume types that would gradually adjust themselves to the physical and social surroundings.

Such a state of emancipation in matters educational is certainly a far cry from the condition that exists now, in which the story of one school is the story of all in a province, the same routine and drudgery work being forced upon every teacher, the

same subject upon every pupil, and the same pattern, upon every institution. This implies (1) that the administration of schools is to be kept entirely out of the sway of Universities and Education Departments and left wholly to the local teachers and guardians of pupils and (2) that the Colleges themselves are to be converted into people's Universities (i.e., the vast Federal Examining Universities are to be replaced by smaller Teaching Universities).

PRECEPTORS' HOMES OR GURUKULAS.

It has been remarked above that the ancient Hindu educational institutions promoted not only transcendental, but also secular and material culture, and fostered literary, scientific as well as technical learning. There is no reason why the "domestic" residential institutions of India should not be found effective in modern times also as adequate instruments for the utilisation of world-forces and producing the right sort of young men for modern India. These are all the more necessary because real spiritual training, the culture of the soul, is not possible under any other conditions of life, e.g., those obtaining in Boarding Houses, Hostels, Day Schools, Residential Universities, etc.

Let no education defeat its ends by its methods, but make the whole process as easy and natural as possible and also the least painful. And so every member of the school is deliberately left open to the influences of Nature, her sights and sounds, responsible to sunshine and shadow, silence and storm, and the procession of the seasons, enjoying an opportunity for sense training that is absent in our city schools.

The most sincere attempt is here made at a revival, so far as it is possible under the changed conditions of modern life, of the indigenous system and method of education which gave to India all that has made her famous—the essence of which was the separating of the pupil from his home and natural parents and placing him in a more suitable environment, the elevating spiritual atmosphere of his preceptors' *ashrama*.

Here is to be seen at work Swadeshism at its best, the aim of which is not to produce more commodities, but to revive ideals and institutions, which are infinitely more important and to which India owes her greatness and individuality.

The pupils must spend one or two hours every day in the performance of such duties as do not concern their personal interests. The authorities have to suggest and prescribe such lines of work as can test and promote the students' tendencies of self-sacrifice and capacities for organised self-help and co-operation, as can evoke in them a desire of work for work's sake and a desire to serve the people even at a loss. Among such positive services to be rendered to the community by the pupils may be mentioned the following:—spread of literature and education among the poorer and lower classes; cultivation of familiarity and intercourse with the masses by starting and working for night schools, girls' schools, reading rooms, travelling libraries; organising lantern-lectures and exhibitions on economic, sanitary, geographical and archaeological topics; administration of relief to the sick, disabled, and other classes of needy and helpless people; self-denial in the matter of personal comforts and enjoyments; helping the authorities in promoting the discipline, reorganisation and financial resources of the schools, etc.; and all this according to the age and capacity of the students.

PROMOTION OF LITERACY.

What is wanted to-day is not so much the compulsion to go through a few written pages of text-books or attend schools and libraries, but this sort of transmission of life from life, the quickening of mental and moral powers through the natural and spontaneous influence of institutions and the development of manhood and character through the silent educative agencies in the nation's atmosphere of thought and action.

But while the personality and character of the individual are more important than mere literacy or ability to read and write, it is not to be understood that the latter

need not be promoted by the educational missionaries.

The study of books and newspapers is important in its own way. But in the matter of this promotion of literacy as one of the means of educational work, our leaders do not seem to have grasped the exact situation. Neither the authorities nor the public are alive to the enormous waste of time, energy, and money that is involved by the unscientific administration of educational affairs, especially those relating to the rural and poorer classes. The existing system is very inconvenient to the greater portion of our people and does not give equal opportunities to all classes. Thus sufficient public attention has not been drawn to the fact that the period of work from 11 to 4 suits the boys of only a microscopic minority, viz., the servants and officers of Government and other public institutions and those who owe their place in society to a connexion with these.

In the second place, there is no natural and necessary connexion between the stages in an Elementary or Upper Primary or Middle Vernacular School and those in an English or Secondary School. Thus, for example, if a village child spends 10 years at a rural primary institution, he does not receive the same amount of training as one who spends some time in a Secondary School. This is most unfortunate, illiberal and undemocratic. This inequality is due

to the fact that the schools are planned without the necessary means of inter-relation and standardisation.

In order that the chances may be equalled for all pupils throughout the country and possibilities of higher and collegiate education opened up to the poor as well as the rich, to the rural as well as urban population, the scheme of Primary Education must be framed with due attention to the system of secondary education prevalent in the locality, so that transfer and exchange of pupils may be easily possible without loss or inconvenience to both institutions and scholars. No individual should suffer simply because he happens to be a villager, and no individual should be allowed to gain simply because he happens to live at a place where there is a High School. On the other hand, every body should have the right to the same amount of intellectual training or school education during the same period, whether spent in a village or city school.

These facts have not been sufficiently noticed by our responsible guardians and promoters of mass-education. Unless due heed be paid to these, no scheme of Elementary Education will be successful in introducing facilities for progress impartially to all sections of the population. Social reformers and political workers, educationists as well as industrialists, would do well to remember this.

News and Notes

REINTRODUCTION OF SELECTION EXAMINATION IN MADRAS.

A joint statement issued on behalf of the South India Teachers' Union, the Madras Teachers' Guild and the Madras Headmasters' Conference on Dec. 9th says:

"The pupils of Secondary Schools in the State deserve congratulations for the excellent manner in which they behaved last Friday against the inducement from outsiders to strike work as a protest against

the reintroduction of the system of selections. Except for a handful of boys from a few schools who joined sets of outsiders and went round trying to get boys and girls out from schools, and behaving in disorderly ways, the overwhelming majority of pupils stuck to their work in a disciplined manner. This is due to a sense of orderliness and loyalty the pupils are developing and to the co-operation of the parents, the Education Department and the State Government in encouraging good education.

The failure of the strike should be a lesson to those misguided persons who tried to create trouble in schools. Schools are sacred institutions where the young citizens of the country are being trained. Parents entrust their children to the teachers, and irresponsible outsiders should realise that they have no right to interfere with the children. Neither the teachers nor the parents nor the children will tolerate such interference.

Fantastic explanations have been given by interested parties regarding the re-introduction of selection in the Sixth Form. It is important that the public should know why the State Advisory Board of Education, the Secondary Education Board, the South India Teachers' Union and the Headmasters' Conference asked for the re-introduction. The reasons are:—

(1) According to the present S.S.L.C. scheme, any pupil who is presented for the S.S.L.C. examination is awarded a completed Secondary School Leaving Certificate, whatever may be his marks in the S.S.L.C. Examination. If the Secondary School Leaving Certificate is to be of any value, the pupils presented for the examination should reach a minimum standard of attainment in the Sixth Form. When there is no selection, any pupil who passes the Fifth Form can get a completed certificate if he puts in 75 per cent attendance and sits for the public examination, even if he idles away the whole year without even sitting for a single class test in the Sixth Form.

(ii) All parents and teachers know that in the training of a child impetus as well as an element of restraint are necessary. The awareness that if a pupil does not do his work satisfactorily he cannot complete the S.S.L.C. is good, especially for those who dislike the reintroduction of selections. Improved methods of teaching try to stir the interest of pupils in their studies and to encourage their ambition for higher achievements, yet the element of restraint in the background, however small it might be, is

essential for educational progress. During the last three years, schools have found the truth of this in the Sixth Form, where some pupils completely neglected their studies and by their indifference adversely influenced even others who wanted to study. It is only if the interests of the pupils and from a desire to see more and more pupils do their best in schools that the system of selection has been reintroduced.

The statement recently issued by the Minister for Education, on this question of selections, should dispel from the minds of parents and pupils any fear of hardship as a result of selections:

(a) Promotions and selections should be based on the general progress and possible improvement of the pupils as judged from class tests and terminal examinations and not on the results of any one examination:

(b) Different kinds of tests, including oral tests, may be adopted in order to make the assessment of progress as fair and reliable as possible:

(c) Teachers from other schools may be invited to assist in conducting tests for assessing the standards of attainments, if a school considers such an arrangement desirable:

(d) If the backwardness of pupils is corrected in the day-to-day work of the class, detentions in classes can be considerably reduced:

The schools can wholeheartedly agree with these suggestions. Pupils and parents can be assured that schools will always strive to do what is best in the interests of the children entrusted to them.

The statement is signed by Messrs. S. Natarajan and T. P. Srinivasavaradan on behalf of the South India Teachers' Union, Messrs. P. Doraikannu Mudaliar and L. Mariapragasam on behalf of the Madras Teachers' Guild, and Messrs K. Kuruvila Jacob and K. Hanumantha Rao for the Madras Headmasters' Conference.

Editorial

ELSEWHERE, we publish the statement issued by the Presidents and Secretaries of the South Indian Teachers' Union, the Madras Teachers' Guild and the Headmasters' Conference on the recent decision of the Government of Madras to restore the Selection Examination. The story of the abolition and restoration of the Selection Examination is a sad comment on the attitude to education shown by the new ruling class that has taken over control from the British. Interference in education for political and other ulterior reasons has been a marked feature of our educational history during the last five years. Curricula and courses are being frequently changed for obviously non-academic reasons. The vicissitudes undergone by the language policy of our Government in recent times is sufficient testimony to this unfortunate tendency. It fell heavily on discipline in High Schools, when the Government suddenly abolished the Selection Examinations in the VI Form a few years ago. When recently the examination was restored, a proviso seemed to be added that external examiners should be associated in carrying out the selection. The restoration in the circumstances seemed worse than the abolition. It was only later that the teaching profession learnt that the association of external examiners was optional and not compulsory. Agitation both inside and outside the legislatures greeted the restoration of the Selection Examination.

Those who are fighting for academic freedom and independence feel that the politicians who interfere in school administration have not understood either their objectives or methods. If for instance a certain type of student finds the Selection Examination an obstacle to his prospects, and if it is desired to help him, the abolition of the examination is of little use. Prospects must be opened out to him as a boy who has passed the V Form and not as one who need not take the Selection Examination. After all, the boys who fail in the Selection Examination have rarely any chance of doing well in the Public Examination. Surely, there is no intention now of abolishing of the Public Examination!

It is to be hoped that educational ministers will not neglect the maintenance of high standards in their eagerness to spread education.

Prof. C. N. Patwardan of Bombay refers to a successful experiment in a new way of teaching English in India.

A New Way of carried out between 1933 Teaching English and 1940. A four-years course leading to mastery

of the language for all practical purposes was tried in these experiments. Writing in *The School World*, he observes: "The basis of the experiment was a new method of teaching English with the final objective of achievements clearly laid out in advance. Thus a passage from R. L. S., a sonnet of Shakespeare, writings of Lynd, Lucas, etc., were all fixed as objectives to be reached. The method was based on a new conception of learning languages. For example the usual method of writing, reading and speaking or the 'Direct' method of speaking, writing and reading, was reversed to reading, speaking and writing. The fund of English vocabulary, known to a student because of social factors, was tested and listed as the basis of study. Instead of the old 'cat' and 'rat' vocabulary, 'cycle', 'railway' etc., and the associated words would form the new lessons. Reading words in print and thus developing power to read any printed matter placed before the student, was achieved in the first year. A logical sequence of lessons arising out of the known vocabulary would lead to a second year's course, when 'writing' the words would be attempted. A lesson given in the class had an immediate practical application and use outside, as the students could converse in English on the subject of daily importance using their lessons in the class. 'Cricket' formed a major group of known words. The experiment claimed and proved its claim by test and demonstration that in four-years' time, students could acquire knowledge of English and power to read pieces of English literature at the end of the period."

This experiment deserves serious consideration at the hands of educationists all over India, who are at present trying to keep English in the curriculum without devoting too much time to it.

Book-Reviews

PRECIS, COMPREHENSION AND COMPOSITION BY P. R. PISHARODY, D COM. SRINIVASA VARADACHARI & CO, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS. PP. 109, PRICE Rs. 1-4.

This book meets a wide-felt need. Students in the High School classes require systematic help and guidance in preparing for their Second Paper in English. As is well known, the syllabus in this matter has undergone considerable changes in recent times. Mr. Pisharody has prepared this book in accordance with the latest syllabus not only of the Madras State, but also of Mysore, Hyderabad and Travancore-Cochin.

The book contains graded exercises in precis-writing, comprehension, expansion and completion of stories from given outlines, letter-writing and new type test questions on completion by choice.

The book is divided into three parts, one for each of three High School classes. The value of the book is enhanced by the inclusion at the end of the Madras Syllabus for the English second paper for Forms IV to VI, the specimen S.S.L.C. question paper according to the new scheme and the S.S.L.C. question papers for 1951-1952.

We commend this useful book to the attention of High School teachers and students.

GLIMPSES OF WORLD HISTORY. BY PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU. WITH FIFTY MAPS BY J. F. HERRABIN. LINDSAY DRUMMOND LTD., LONDON. Pp. 992, PRICE (INDIAN EDN.) Rs. 13-2-0.*

This is the fourth edition of this famous work, first published in India in two volumes in 1934. A postscript dated November 14th, 1938, brings this survey of history from the earliest times to the eve of the second World War. As it is well-known, the book is in the form of letters by the author to his daughter written in prison between 1930 and 1933. The book is described as "a rambling account of history for young people".

Pandit Nehru frankly confesses in his Preface that he has not attempted writing

systematic history. He wrote these letters without adequate reference books and any co-ordinated planning. Even so, they make attractive reading and present a fascinating picture of the panorama of world history. Pandit Nehru wrote at a time when our educational system concentrated on the study of English history, paying scant attention to Indian history and none at all to the rest of the world. Pandit Nehru threw open the doors which shut us in from the rest of the world and allowed us to judge independently without taking at secondhand readymade British opinion. He has shown the way to Indian historians to rise to the height of their duties and responsibilities by independently studying and assessing world history.

It may be that Pandit Nehru's facts and judgments may need correction at many places. But this does not alter the enduring value of a book which sought for the first time to study world events without ignoring India, China or indeed any part of the world. Till recently, writers on world history were interested only in Europe. The rest of the world came in merely by way of an unimportant appendage. Even H. G. Wells, for all his conscious striving to be fair, could not get rid of his European bias. Pandit Nehru's book is therefore something needed badly not merely by Indian students, but also by Indian historians.

Of course, in the last analysis, Pandit Nehru's work is more interesting as an expression of his personal opinions, his likes and dislikes, than as history. His thought is deeply influenced by the agnostic radicalism of mid-Victorian Liberals and Marxian ideology. And he is more or less a stranger to the spirit of Indian culture. Undoubtedly, his temperamental antipathy to philosophy and religion makes it difficult for him to understand or evaluate Indian culture. Nevertheless, his work is of immense value to Indian students. The book is deservedly popular not merely in India but also in all English-speaking countries. No School or College library can be complete without it.

* Copies can be had of RUPA & Co., 15, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee St., College Square, Calcutta 14.

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