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## Influence of the West on Basic Education

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In the year 1937 Mahatma Gandhi said: "The present system of education does not fulfil the demand of the country in any manner". In fact this conviction has been upheld by Dr. Ruth Strang also. She writes, "The Father of the Nation strongly felt that the education sponsored by an alien vested interest could not meet the challenge of the times and there was a need to build up a national system of education which could meet such challenges for the uplift of society". It is no doubt an earnest feeling of every Indian that the way in which he and his children are educated is defective in spite of the best effort of evolving a national plan in the name of the Basic system of education. What is the reason? The reason to my mind is very simple that it cannot pattern itself according to the Indian needs and ideals, and that it is merely a deduction from the theories and practices prevalent in the West.

It brings therefore a problem for discussion whether there is any influence of the West on the Basic system of education, and if it is so, in what fields. The philosophy of education, the aim, the content and method and the various philosophers and educators of the West have no doubt cast their reflection. The claim of the Basic system of education for being original and purely Indian can best be

tested on the above points, and one can find the truth. The originality may be found in its use in respect of time, place and exploitation of the different theories, practices and techniques in a new way.

### The Philosophy :

It is not easy to speak of only one philosophy that works behind the Basic system of education. Its root is grounded in materialism. Speaking of Basic Education, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru stressed: "I want that each individual should produce something. If each individual does not even produce as much as he takes for food, he wears for clothes, he becomes an encumbrance on society. We want such a society where every person should produce something." The same idea was reiterated by Shri Dhiren Mazumdar. "This was the reason," writes Dhiren Mazumdar, "that Gandhi has recommended the productive activity as the medium of education. For this, it is necessary that since very childhood there should be a habit of working for bread and the instruction should have the efficiency of combining labour for the bread with the scientific knowledge." This makes it clear that the materialistic view of life is the first and foremost thing in the Basic system. How far it is compatible, we have not to discuss here. But

this materialistic philosophy, though not unknown to us, is a Western importation.

Materialism first, and next to it is no doubt idealism, the old Indian philosophy. Gandhiji replaced the 3 R's with the 3 H's—Hand, Head and Heart. This is not exact replacement. The 3 R's have an idealistic import, emphasising the cult of the brain—in reading, writing and reckoning. Still, the training of head and heart implies idealism. The Basic system of education aims at cultivation of intellectual power only secondarily and social efficiency based on cooperation, truth, non-violence etc., The other two philosophies viz., Naturalism and Pragmatism, have also been in the mind of the originator of Basic system of Education. Giving due emphasis to the child's instincts and tendencies for creative activity and freedom to choose the craft he likes and to work in a free atmosphere although in a social setting so as to increase social efficiency as well, all these show the effect of Naturalism and Pragmatism. Working through the medium of the craft is a replica of the Project Method adopted by Pragmatism. To create in the child a sense of dignity for manual labour is the essence of Pragmatism. It is therefore concluded that the Basic system of Education is a spectrum of all the Western philosophies—materialism, utilitarianism, naturalism, pragmatism and idealism. It could not have only one philosophy of idealism to which India resorted from the very beginning.

### The aim

The philosophy of life and its application in education always determine the aim of education. For Basic education, the main stay is the philosophy of materialism and utilitarianism. Therefore its aim is also materialistic. "Towards the fulfilment of the basic needs of the human being—the needs of food, clothing and residence, it (the Basic Education) has full attention," writes Milap Chandra Dube,

"Although this aim seems to be materialistic, yet it has to be accepted that, for the physical, moral, mental and spiritual development, this aim is necessary. This makes quite clear that the prime aim of the basic system of education is the "bread and butter aim" which is alien to this land and an influence of the West.

Shri Salamat Ullah writes; "The main objective of this education is to train children for citizenship in a democratic society that India has adopted for herself as an ideal". But this aim was not really sought about when the initiation of Basic education was made in the year 1937, as then India was not a democracy but under the suzerainty of the British. Even this citizenship aim is an American innovation which we are following.

The other aims that we find are those of physical, intellectual, moral and cultural development. This completes the orbit of "the harmonious development aim" first acclaimed by the Western educationist, Pestalozzi, and other naturalists later. The Indian heritage is only spiritual and moral, laying much emphasis on the culture of mind. A true cultured man is one who has good physique, good intellect, and high morality knowing the right and the wrong, the duties and the responsibilities, and a good heart that has no sign of imbalance. The emphasis has been shifted from culture that incorporates all the phases of life to the earning aspect alone.

We all know that Mahatma Gandhi was a firm believer in spirituality and morality, but yet he could not include this aim in the Basic system of education. He merely accepted that this will imperceptibly come into the children, which cannot prove true. Like John Dewey, he also believed that higher values of life will spring up themselves by working together. This is why the American pragmatistic view of education coloured our Basic system, and the aim could not fulfil the needs of the

country, as the circumstances of the two countries are quite different. Like T. P. Nunn, Gandhiji believed in the "self-realization" aim, and like Froebel he tried to bring about "unity among diversity", but not openly.

### The Content

The content of Basic education is really Indian. The subjects taught need not be touched. The real thing that is to be discussed is the basis of the curriculum, and in its construction where actually we find the Western influence. While planning the syllabus of the Basic curriculum, most emphasis is given to the craft. And this craft should be one which is attached to the life of the individual in society. "Basic education as conceived and explained by Mahatma Gandhi," writes Sri C. L. Kapur, "is essentially an education for life, and what is more education through life. It aims at creating eventually a social order free from exploitation and violence". This preconceives Dewey's statement that "education is a process of social reconstruction," and "education is not only a preparation for future life but a process of life itself". Gandhiji was quite in agreement with Dewey as far as 'craft for life' is concerned. Dewey introduced woodcraft and housecraft in his programme of education. Mahatma Gandhi introduced at first spinning and weaving and later on other useful and productive crafts. Agriculture and gardening as crafts for educating the children was introduced by Pestalozzi, who took children into the field and sang songs and worked there. The same idea was incorporated in Basic education, also.

Another thing in this is the contribution of Herbart in the shape of concentration and correlation. He was the first educator responsible for the introduction of these principles in the curriculum. He claimed history to be the centre of all other subjects, and that is why he gave

much weightage to this subject. Likewise did Mahatma Gandhi, who wanted that only craft should be the core-subject and other subjects should be taught in reference to the craft. Here is also the Western influence quite evident. In selecting other subjects, no other thing was considered, and almost the old scheme as it already existed was 'dittoed', except that the mother tongue should be used as the medium of instruction.

### The Method

The method employed in this scheme of education is based on the Activity principle. Learning by doing, education through hand work and selection of craft in view of the local needs and demands, all have been accepted due to the Western influence. From Rousseau onward to Dewey, this activity principle was emphasized. No idle and inactive listener the child ought to be. He should be free "to do and learn". Another principle was that of "dignity for manual work." This is a sort of emotional training also. Mahatma Gandhi has admitted; "In my days of legal practice also, I used to engage myself in some sort of industry and give training in wood work etc. to my children also. The work of shoe-making I learnt from Mr. Clen Back, who himself learnt it in a Trappist Monastery because they did not teach it to the Indians.....In the Tolstoy Farm also this method of education was adopted". This has been quoted by Guru Saran Bhai. It is therefore perfectly clear that Gandhiji was influenced by the 'know-how' of the West. Another method of sense-training has been incorporated in the education of those infants who are unable to handle tools necessary for the craft work. Herein the first man who emphasized such sense training was Froebel and later it was more emphasized by Maria Montessori who worked out this Froebelian scheme to a larger extent and made sense training the basis of her education. It makes therefore one say that the pre-Basic method is very much the method enunciated by the Western

educationists. In following the method, it seems Gandhiji wanted to make the Indian realize and wake up to work for prosperity. He says; "Take for example this spinning wheel which has spread all over India. The Englishmen took it to England and there they made so much improvement that huge mills have been built up. This is not my view of what they have done, they have done very good. But there is no doubt in it that when they have progressed so much, then we shall not lose what was once ours". He realized that the West has done exceedingly very well but in a different manner.

### The influence of Educationists

The idea of the free development of the child's personality was first spoken by Rousseau. Rousseau accepted that the child should be quite free from social corruptions. Rousseau says in the opening sentence of *Emile*: "Every thing is good because it has been made by the good hands of Nature. But everything becomes vicious while it comes in the hands of men". Therefore, he recommends return to Nature. "Whatever you do, do in a natural way, in natural setting and with natural means. Leave the child in the lap of Nature.....and let him learn". Similar was the attitude of Locke, the believer in individual experience who says; "There is no importance in what is learnt or read. The importance lies in how it is read or learnt". "Basic education does not only depend", writes Shri Dube, "on bookish knowledge but on direct experience and practical knowledge.....'Do and earn' is the watchword of Basic education. So the reflection of all acceptable principles enunciated by Rousseau is found in Basic education".

Pestalozzi emphasized Nature and natural resources for the work of education. He said that through agriculture and gardening, mathematics, geography, language, art and music could very well be

taught. He was the innovator, so to say, of imparting education through most solid substances. The maximum use of "from concrete to abstract" was actually seen in Pestalozzi who taught geometry through gardening. The technique of Pestalozzi is followed in Basic education also. Music was a means for spiritual and moral enlightenment to Pestalozzi. This has been well realized by Mahatma Gandhi also.

Froebel left much impress on Gandhiji. Froebel, like a true Hindu, realised the divine spark in every child. Forth is reason, he wanted to make the child feel and find out the unity with the infinite by way of play and constructive activities. His spiritual idealism did not go down to the materialistic level to make the constructive activities productive also. But no doubt Froebel had in mind this productive element of education. This has been made more materialistic in Basic education. The spiritual is less than the material, because of the fact that we are deeply engrossed in poverty. "I want to begin the child's education by teaching him useful handicraft; that is, the moment his education starts, he is to be taught to produce something." These words were written by Mahatma Gandhi in July 1937, in the *Harijan*.

The contribution of Montessori is found in two ways. Firstly, the idea of training hand and heart was a direct reflection of the Montessori method. So far Indian education lacked this aspect of "hand and heart" training. This brought two good things in education—the idea of self-sufficiency and the development of the social personality of the child. These are the two main principles of the Basic scheme of education. The second thing is the individuality of the child. This is to be realized from the very beginning and no consideration is to be given to caste, community and creed. Besides Basic

education is not only to be started at the age of seven. Prior to this age one ought to think of infants' education also. This was the personal effect of Maria Montessori, who loved children very much.

Dewey, no less than others, has had some influence on Basic Education. Education should be the harmonious unification between craft, natural setting and social environment. This was first thought out by Dewey, who maintained that education is life itself and not a preparation for it. The other aspect is that of social efficiency. Education in a democracy does not produce social parasites, but socially efficient citizens. Hence education should be a means to satisfy all the social needs of the individuals. The 'project' is a problem of life; so is the case with 'crafts' which are real vocations of life. Both mean ultimately the same, but have different names.

Herbart and Spencer have also had some influence. The moral tone is to the credit of Herbart, who over-emphasized the religious and moral aim of education. The utility of education for the preservation of life is a side-reflection of Spencer. The influence of Industrial Revolution is also found in Basic education. Education for industry is the aftermath of this revolution. The craft education has this idea, although in the form of an under current. The main idea is found in the statement that, when a child leaves school, he shall be able to utilize the knowledge of industry already acquired. Basic and Post-Basic education should be correlated, so as to give a complete knowledge of the industry or craft one learns and thus give a mastery over it. This trend indeed is a gift of the Industrial Revolution.

Karl Marx fought against capitalism and tried to bring equality between the poor and the rich. This was done by giving to the ruled the control over administration and production. This is

possible only when there is decentralisation. Gandhiji thought that "there must be formed such a society which shall be founded on justice and law. There may be no difference between the rich and the poor in such a society; everyone should have the right of freedom and belief and a way to get his livelihood". In fact this is utopian scheme of education, for at least Indians. India cannot follow the foot-steps of Russia. Anyhow, Mahatma Gandhi thought of a classless and casteless society based on equality, social justice and freedom. This could be achieved by education. The decentralisation of education was in the mind of Mahatma Gandhi, and that is why the idea of self-sufficiency was stressed. It can, therefore, be said that he was affected by the views of Marx even. Love for the dignity of manual work is inevitably the gift of Marxist philosophy.

#### Gandhiji's own Contribution

It cannot be denied that, in spite of the influences of the West, the Basic system of education was the contribution of Gandhiji. The philosophies, the aim, the method and the contents may have a Western tinge, but the newness lies in the manipulation and orientation. "At one time, Basic Education was held out as a new system providing a practical alternative to the atrocious system foisted on us by a foreign Government". This is quite true, and that is why we pay respect to it and regard it as a national system. It is a matter of time.

Although craft-centred education is not new to the Western world, to India it is a revolutionary measure, not known in the history of Indian education so far. That is why it was thought in our own time that "Gandhiji revolutionised the educational thought and practice in this country by making productive craft work the basis of the entire educative process", and it was rather a violent attempt to remove "the artificial distinction between literary

and vocational education, work and leisure, and culture and service". This really is a remarkable admixture and innovation at the same time, the fusion of head, heart and hand.

"This educational reconstruction as embodied in the theory and practice of Basic education, often known as the Wardha scheme," writes Shri J.K. Shukla, "developed a curriculum with a definite social orientation, emphasis on practical and manual work and development of national consciousness". This remark reminds us of the fact that in the days of the British Government, Basic education was made an instrument to rouse nationalism and call for national solidarity in order to throw away the foreign yoke. No educators of the West have this idea behind their different theories and practices of Education, except Marx who wanted to throw away the capitalistic rule and emancipate the oppressed labourers. Herein also we find Gandhiji's ingenuity.

The uniqueness of Gandhiji is found in employing the different philosophies of education. As someone has said, "The real greatness of Gandhiji as an educational philosopher consists in the fact that the dominant tendencies of Idealism, naturalism and pragmatism are not separate and independent in his philosophy but fuse into a unity, giving rise to a theory of education which would suit the needs of the day and satisfy the loftiest aspirations of the human soul". What

name shall we give to this fused philosophy, is a problem, but it brings into Basic education a newness.

Mahatma Gandhi was a staunch moralist and a firm believer in Truth and Non-violence. These were his instruments to win political struggles. These were really the very essence of his life. If education and life are both collateral, these two virtues should be the basis of education also. But he did not preach them. He opined that they would come automatically as education is a self-evolutionary process. Working together will bring about love in the hearts, and aspirations for knowing the Truth will lead to the path of non-violence. If a child is cleansed of all vices and has a heart full of love for the country and for the Almighty, his education is complete. But this is the most subtle path to follow. Anyhow, Gandhiji had this spiritual idea behind his Basic education, although he could not explicitly speak it out, like Froebel. Perhaps he apprehended that the appalling ignorance of the masses would obstruct its grasp properly and fully.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that Basic Education and its technique have been largely influenced by Western thought and educators, but the innovator at the same time successfully made it his own, as the above discussion shows.

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I am greatly obliged to Sri S. K. De for information he has supplied regarding the main features of the G.C.E. (General Certificate of \*Education) that is issued to successful candidates in England. Here are its main features.

“ In England, the idea of subjects, which had to be taken together at one and the same time, has been abandoned since 1951 in favour of the G.C.E. which will bear details of the subjects in which passes at ordinary and advanced levels have been attained. The G.C.E. is designed as an all-purpose examination. There is a wide range of subjects from modern and classical languages to embroidery and engineering drawing; most of these can be taken at three levels, viz., Ordinary, Advanced, or scholarship. A candidate need not take all these subjects at a time, he can add to them or improve his level of achievement in any of them in subsequent years .....Universities, professions, trades, civil and army services are to determine the composition of the G.C.E. necessary to qualify a candidate for entry, and students may select subjects with a definite career in their mind.”

It is this kind of educational reform that I have been advocating in the columns of the *Educational Review* and the *Progress of Education* for the last five years and more, without, however, knowing that this principle of free choice of subjects has been in vogue in England since 1951! When such is the case, there can be no harm in introducing a G.C.E. system in India as well, and save millions of our talented students from avoidable frustration. I would therefore appeal to the Union Ministry of Education to lose no time in introducing the system in India.

The advantages of the G.C.E. system are too obvious. Here they are :—

- (1) Students can study at home in their leisure hours, even while in employment, and increase their mental efficiency.
- (2) Students who have talents in any particular subject can give vent to them.
- (3) Employees need not be bothered about degree and eligibility, as they can look to the boy's attainments in the subject in which he is expected to show proficiency.
- (4) It would be a boon to poor students, who have talents but who cannot afford the luxury of a regular school education.
- (5) It will give employment to many educationists, general and technical, who can prepare students for the G.C.E. examinations in various subjects.
- (6) Women's education will receive a great fillip, as it will enable them to appear without sacrificing their domestic duties.
- (7) It will bring down the cost of education, which is out of the reach of even the middle class in India?
- (8) The rush for College admissions will automatically collapse.

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\*Vide his article on "Wastage in Secondary Education" in *Educational Review*, April 1960.

*N.B.—(1)* There should, however, be no age-limit fixed for appearing for these examinations. It ought to be possible for anybody at any age to appear for these examinations, stage by stage. Unfortunately, it seems to be a peculiar feature of the educational system in India.

For example, a private candidate who has passed the Intermediate can appear for the B.A. only after the lapse of two years, because otherwise he might be stealing a march over the regular student. Again, a student should have completed 15 years before he can appear for the Matriculation Examination, though the Banaras University removed this restriction.

All these restrictions seem to be indefensible, except on extra-educational considerations. At least, the G.C.E. examination should not be hedged in by all these frustrating and meaningless and other restrictions.

*N.B.—(2)* The State Government may also undertake this task, as education is a State subject and entrust this to the Commissioner of Examinations, who will hold these examinations periodically and issue certificates of success in various subjects just as in the case of Technical Examinations.

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# School Reform in Yugoslavia :

## How Unesco Helped

ALAN J. A. ELLIOTT.

In 1955 Unesco began the operation, in Yugoslavia, of one of the largest programmes of Technical Assistance directed towards a single objective in any of its Member States. Two years later, towards the end of 1957, a survey was made to discover how effective the assistance given by Unesco had been.

In 1953 the Government of Yugoslavia had decided to undertake complete reform of the country's school system. For that purpose, it made arrangements for a thorough examination of the problems involved. A School Reform Commission was set up, together with eight sub-commissions dealing with special educational problems. A Federal Institute for Educational Research was established in Belgrade, and in each of the six republics constituting the Federal Republic similar institutes were created to help in finding ways of improving teaching and education.

Much of the problem lay in the terrible damage which the educational system, in common with most other things in the country, had suffered during the second World War. A great deal had been done to make good that damage through the training of teachers and the building of schools. But even so it was found that an educational system which was derived to a great extent from that of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before the First World War was in itself defective. Total reform was considered necessary in order to fit the educational system to the needs of Yugoslavia as a modern state.

Many of the problems faced, such as finance and legislation for reform, were of a type which could only be solved by the Yugoslavs themselves without recourse to

outside help. But there were many others, relating chiefly to educational techniques, in which a knowledge of practices in other countries could help greatly in finding solutions. One of the troubles lay in the fact that Yugoslav educators had been cut off from most countries abroad by world events since 1939. This was the direction in which Unesco's help was asked.

During 1955 and 1956 Unesco awarded fellowships to 85 Yugoslavs for the study of educational systems abroad. Each of them spent three months abroad, covering between them eleven countries of Western Europe and the United States of America. Arrangements were also made for ten educational experts from abroad to visit Yugoslavia to hold meetings, seminars and study groups with Yugoslav teachers and administrators. In addition, over £ 20,000 worth of foreign equipment, mostly science teaching apparatus and audio-visual aids, was delivered to seven educational establishments in Yugoslavia.

This programme of Unesco's aroused considerable interest in other countries, particularly in those which the Yugoslav fellows had visited. In 1957 it was agreed that a special report should be written, giving an account of the programme and attempting an assessment of its results.

As a first step the Yugoslav Government arranged for a 90-page report to be written setting out its reasons for requesting Unesco's assistance and giving an assessment of the effectiveness of that assistance. Next, a staff member from the Unesco headquarters in Paris spent a month in Yugoslavia, in which he visited five out of the six federal republics and interviewed 63 out of the 85 educators

who had held fellowships. He also visited five out of the seven establishments which had received equipment from Unesco, and was able to talk to many of the persons who had been concerned with the missions of the ten experts from abroad. Finally a report was written which had the approval of both Unesco and the Government of Yugoslavia.

The most important conclusions reached in the report concerned the maximum possible use which was made of the facilities made available by Unesco. Even though this was one of the largest programmes undertaken by Unesco in any of its Member States, in financial terms it represented only a very small proportion of the effort being made in the same direction by the country itself. It could be shown, however, that the imaginative use by the Government of Yugoslavia of resources offered by Unesco could lead to results out of all keeping with the actual financial expenditure.

The fellowship programme offered the most interesting example of how such a result was achieved. All the persons chosen were well-qualified and mature teachers and educational administrators. Their average age on taking up their fellowships was forty-four. Relatively few of them had been abroad before for study purposes. Selection was carried out so as to ensure a balanced representation from each of the six federal republics and in each of the branches of education in which reform was undertaken. Some of them were to travel in teams, and some of them individually. Each had a carefully assigned task which involved the study of the educational systems of specific countries, or of particular types of educational problems, such as teacher training or science teaching.

So that the maximum number of fellowships could be provided within the budget allocated by Unesco, the Yugoslav Government undertook to pay all travel

costs. Unesco funds could then be used exclusively for the maintenance and tuition of fellows in the countries they were visiting. The Yugoslav Government also sent one of its leading educational administrators to Paris to help in the planning of the programme at Unesco headquarters. The twelve countries which the 85 fellows visited were France, United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and the United States of America. As a result of careful planning in the Unesco Secretariat and in each of the countries involved, all the visits were carried out as intended. It was found two years later that the worst the fellows had to complain of was that their visits were often too crowded and too hurried. They certainly agreed that they had seen and learnt a great deal that was of use to them in their subsequent jobs.

It was also found that all of them, without exception, were still employed in the field of education. Many filled key posts throughout Yugoslavia. For instance, five of them were Secretaries of the Councils for Education which run all educational matters in each of the six republics. The staff of the Federal Institute for Educational Research were mostly former Unesco fellows, as also were those of the corresponding institutes in each republic. Many others were the directors of schools, teacher training colleges, technical schools and other institutions.

It cannot be doubted that impact of ideas from abroad, derived largely from Unesco fellowships, was out of all proportion to the actual numbers of persons involved in the programme. Here, of course, the efforts of the former fellows were greatly reinforced by the visits, each of three months' duration, of the ten experts from abroad. Five of these were experts in vocational education, four in general education, and one in school

architecture. Two of them came from France, two from the United Kingdom, one from Germany, one from Denmark, one from Belgium, one from Switzerland, one from the Netherlands and one from Sweden. Each of them organized study groups and meetings in the main centres of Yugoslavia, to which were brought teachers from all parts of the various republics.

Another source of ideas from abroad was found in the equipment provided by Unesco. Here again the usefulness of this foreign equipment was greatly increased by the fact that it had been supplemented by the Yugoslav Government at considerable expense, with locally produced school equipment, so that the institutions possessing it could be developed as model or experimental schools. It was found, at the end of 1957, that all the Unesco equipment had been correctly delivered, and that it was all being well cared for and in varying degrees put to good use.

The total reform of an educational system is, of course, a long process. As a first step towards legislation, the School Reform Commission issued a report on its proposals which was debated in the Federal People's Assembly early in

1958. Although Unesco was in no way directly concerned with the drafting of this report, four out of the seventeen members of the Commission had held Unesco fellowships in 1955. A fifth had held a Unesco fellowship in an earlier programme. Likewise, about 30 out of the hundred members of the Sub-Commissions were former Unesco fellows. Here again the indirect effect of Unesco upon School Reform is likely to be a profound one.

The system of education to be evolved in Yugoslavia must depend ultimately upon choices made by the Government and the people. But through Unesco they have been given the chance of learning, by first-hand experience, that the problems of educational reform are not unique to Yugoslavia, and that there is much in this as well as all other respects that one nation can learn from another. Unesco can provide such an opportunity, but the extent to which advantage is taken of that opportunity must depend on the use that a Government makes of assistance offered by Unesco. Although no other country is necessarily faced by the same educational problems as Yugoslavia, there is still much they can learn from the imaginative use which Yugoslavia has made of Unesco's Technical Assistance.

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## Teacher and Pupil—A Psychological Approach

PROF. T. K. VENKATARAMAN, M.A., L.T., MADRAS;

Advance in modern psychology has had its impact on the relations of the teacher to his pupils. Miss Pitt, in her books on Natural History, shows that what is important in the animal is instinct. Even animals, domesticated or captive, may sufficiently reveal their latent instincts. But they lack the higher power of reasoning. A cow may be going on licking a straw-filled calf. Though some animals

of prey educate their young by teaching them to kill the wounded creatures they brought, animals rely mainly on self-education. Apes show greater inquisitiveness and imitation, and greater aptitudes, e.g., aiming stones to obtain fruit from trees. But, they lack concentration, and they have no capacity for association of ideas. Man has smaller innate instincts than other organisms.

In civilised humanity, most instincts are so overlaid with habit, tradition and the needs of social life that they are not easily distinguishable. Trotter (*Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*) shows that the herd instinct is one of the most important. It has made man a social animal and finds expression nowadays in parties, sects, cliques and clubs. The vanity of "belonging to something" develops snobbery. Fear of standing alone leads to hypocrisy. Even cranks have their associations. This herd mentality places a new emphasis on the importance of uniformity. A teacher has to hold up to admiration what society considers to be admirable and condemn what is held evil, like atheism, free love, etc. Statesmen, whose private life is disapproved of, have to leave public life. As Joad points out (*Thrasymachus or The Future of Morals*), truth may not be gratifying to human conceit. Hence, the State of Tennessee forbade the teaching of Evolution. Further, the instinctive human reaction to anything new is hostile, e.g., opposition to birth-control.

Hysterical tendencies, found in children and primitive peoples, occasionally manifest themselves in modern men under severe emotional shocks. Some regress to outgrown forms of response. Some develop hysteria. As Dr. Morton Price (*The Dissociation of a Personality*) shows, the mechanism of hysteria is a splitting of the personality. There may be two or more systems working in one mind, as in hypnosis. Where the mental conflict does not lead to the suppression of one, as in hysteria, the fight goes on and leads to neurasthenia. All men have complexes which differ only in degree from a secondary personality. Repression may lead to dissociation.

Midway between a secondary personality and a simple repressed impulse is the complex. The repressed complexes often reveal themselves, disguised and symbolised in dreams. Repressed ideas may

re-enter the conscious mind, disguised and distorted. They may be projected to new objects. The mind may manufacture reasons to justify and rationalise wishes and impulses, which have thus entered the conscious field. Lady Macbeth washing her hands is an instance of a compulsive expression of a repressed impulse. When repressed noble ideals get loose, there develop saints. Even mediumship has been explained as the working of a secondary system in the mind of the medium.

Our normal moods of depression and elation, when exaggerated, lead to some forms of mania. In the same way, our normal daydreaming may be exaggerated in *dementia praecox* where the self is practically isolated from outer reality. The taboo of primitive society has been explained as an object or person that rouses ambivalence (attraction and repulsion) at the same time, e.g., God is loved and feared. The World Wars illustrated how in introverts (who, unlike the extroverts, are less interested in the outer world) repressed impulses later found expression in neurasthenia, while mental conflicts in the extroverts led to dissociation of discordant ideas, finding later expression in hysteria. The essential aim of education must be to sublimate instincts so that they could serve desirable ends.

What about corporal punishment in class and the general problem of juvenile delinquency? Cesare Lombroso bequeathed to anthropology the myth of the "criminal man" whom he regarded as an atavistic phenomenon, and he suggested that he could be recognised by certain physical characteristics—a prognathous skull, a receding forehead, an abnormal ear and uneven teeth. Investigations by Goring and others disproved this myth. Grimberg's explanation of criminology as due to endocrinal disturbances is in conclusive. Nor have other explanations like prenatal causes (Lange), subnormal intelligence (Goddard), or abnormalities in the ear (Bertillon) been satisfactory. Psycho-

analysis has tried to explain crime as due to unconscious fear, hatred and guilt, and psychopathological factors like *dementia praecox*, schizophrenia, paranoia etc. Addiction to drink and drugs is listed among the causative factors. The criminal mind has been studied by psychoanalysts and much crime can be explained as unconscious "defence" reaction. Von Hentig, the great modern authority on criminology, in his *The Criminal and his Victim* shows that 80% of various crimes like gambling, racketeering & gangsterism proceed from social causes. Addiction to alcohol and various psychoses contribute to crime. He points out that many sex-offenders are devout churchmen. The theory of subnormal intelligence is disproved by the fact that some convicts may have a higher I.Q. than their guards. Thus, most of the crimes are due to the social environment.

The popular view of punishment lays emphasis on retribution as the end, a state of mind come down from the old passion

of revenge. Really, according to Sidgwick, the pain caused to a person by punishment is to be regarded as an evil, only admissible in order to prevent more evil. Bentham long ago urged that punishment ought to be sufficient to deter and not more than sufficient. Besides deterring, we may usefully adopt other steps to check or forestall wrong. T. H. Green and Bosanquet, while holding that a sound view of punishment should include all the three elements of retribution, deterrence and reformation, stressed the second as more important. It is noteworthy that human ideas of punishment have perceptibly changed. In the 17th century, it was quite usual in England to strip a woman thief to the waist and flog her. Now, in that every same country, there is a powerful movement calling for the abolition of capital punishment. This modern tendency has affected also educational methods of class discipline, which relegate corporal punishment to the background and lay stress on psychological and other methods of approach.

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## Compulsory National Service by Students

T. R. VENKATASUBRAHMANYAN, B.A., M.ED., Tirupparaiturai.

"Those who regard it as one of the purposes of male education to produce men willing to kill and be killed for frivolous reasons are clearly deficient in diffused parental feeling."

—BERTRAND RUSSELL.

'National feeling arises and becomes intensified as a result of a twofold process of isolation and contrast with respect to the outside world and cohesion and drawing together within', says the *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* about Nationalism. Today, because of a clash of interests with an alien nation outside, the nationalist feeling in India is gradually mounting up, and the task of responsible national leaders is more to restrain this upsurge in the collective mind of the population than

to kindle it. A scheme of compulsory national service by students is being evolved to develop nationalism in them after they complete their secondary education. Generally, nationalist propaganda commences with children, and it will be most potent only when it enlists the support of several social institutions like the family, the school and general society. Ordinarily, developing nationalism is an uphill task even with the co-operation of these diverse agencies that organically

affect the life of the student. It is an accepted fact that modern schools are at the disposal of able propagandists, but the support of the family and the approval of the community are equally essential to build up nationalism. To ignore the family and society is to erect strong barricades in the path of progress towards any objective, whatever it may be. And now, the need for such a concentration programme, as to compel every adolescent to do some sort of national service at a specific period of his life, is not urgent.

However, a peep into the historical development of modern nationalism will enable us to view the present scheme in the proper perspective. J.G. Fichte was the most ardent advocate of nationalism, and he did not actually preach a narrow and exclusive interpretation of nationalism. Rousseau, in his famous *Social Contract*, advised State-sponsored indoctrination to develop nationalism in the people. Subsequent Utopian socialists like Robert Owen and Cabet emphasised the need for some sort of national service in education. Marx and Engels advocated physical labour for children to make them nationalists. Pestalozzi was a great prophet of nationalism and socialism, and he insisted upon a scheme of manual labour for educating children. Gandhiji followed his principles, perhaps not aware of either Pestalozzi or his views on education. Though all such great men agree in a scheme of national service by school children, the motives behind each appear controversial and conflicting, because of what we experienced of the growth of nationalism in several countries of the West. The description and elaboration of Nationalism by several peoples have raised controversies between Nationalism on the one hand and Internationalism, Socialism, Communism and Humanism on the other hand, each taken one by one. Our task now is not to reconcile the one to the other, but to indicate that the development of nationalism should not

disintegrate the personality of the individual. Several foreign countries have experimented with National Service by students who have completed their secondary education and have abandoned them. American Civilian Conservation Corps and National Youth Administration are examples to forewarn us, since we are not the pioneers in such a movement. The present version of the scheme is fraught with unwelcome consequences, and it needs summary modification to avoid pitfalls.

The purpose of the present article is not to find fault with and condemn the scheme, but to point out some of the genuine objections that will appear sound and sensible to all who have no axe to grind. To begin with, the scheme presupposes incapacity on the part of educational institutions to build up nationalism in children. To earmark one year after schooling for the purpose of developing the trait in the future citizens of the land is to subvert the whole philosophy of education and to dub all educational institutions as mere literacy centres and nothing more. The scheme leads one to think that its formulators have closed their eyes to one of the fundamental functions of education, i.e., developing good citizenship in children. There can be no greater insult to the whole order of educational structure and no greater self-abasement than to minimise the importance of our national schools in such a task. Secondly, the scheme, as is planned, envisages a gap in the continuity of education of students who intend to pursue their studies further, and a no-man's land in the life of those who are forced to earn their livelihood soon after leaving school. In either case, the reaction during the stand-still may not be very much, but in after-years, on retrospection, they may view the interruption with discontent, and some may curse it for all that it did to disrupt their progress, at least imaginarily. The after-effect of such an interference in the settled and

accustomed manner of moving into adult life may not, on all occasions, be promoting the cause for which the gap has been created. Anything that swells up the flood should move with the current. If otherwise, well, we know what will happen.

Thirdly, the scheme must appear goal-less to those who are actually affected by it. We condemn our present pattern of general education as goal-less. The students in schools are indifferent to their studies because they prepare them only for higher education and not for life. The lack of an immediate, tangible goal is the cause of antipathy towards education itself. Any interference may enrage students to set at naught the whole purpose of the programme and may add further to student indiscipline. Fourthly, we should take into consideration the psychology of adolescence. Even though the adolescent feels the romantic urge to do social service and to reform the whole world, we must find out whether the years under consideration form the peak period or not. Even if it is the most favourable time, we should remember that the task of education is both to push and to check. Education should, however, sober down the vehement enthusiasm of the adolescent who desires to plunge headlong, and also activate other useful social and individual urges, that lie dormant, to function. The task of education is to guide the child at times of crises and needed adjustment, and not add fuel to his frenzy. Perhaps in later years, the adult may feel that he has not been guided properly in his rash and immature years. Education should see that the child gains a balanced development only by a course of balanced studies and activities, and not by fits and starts.

Fifthly, the interests and aptitudes of students at a particular period of their growth may act at variance with the interests arbitrarily imposed upon them.

Such concentration on a particular aspect of the development of tastes and sentiments may even contrasuggest to students to do the opposite. Institutions are not wanting that, by over-emphasising obedience, subservience and religion, have made children retch at the very thought of such terms in their after-school life, since the training has been carried out to a nauseating degree, sacrificing other relevant and essential character traits that go in to shape the individual into a well-rounded personality. Instances also are not wanting where individuals abhor certain routines and rituals to the core, because they have been overfed with them during school years. Students may heave a sigh of relief after completing the one year of compulsory national service, and some may even bid good-bye to anything connected with such a service in after life.

Sixthly, parents may resent interruption in the smooth course of the education of their children. The State, the family and other institutions have claim to the services of the individual, and a Welfare State is one where they all work in a co-ordinated manner and do not pull apart. The parent has equal claims—even more in India with its peculiar social structure—with the State and the community upon the services, earnings etc., of the child, and his desire that his offspring must earn as early as possible to protect him is quite legitimate. To postpone the possibility of serving the parents is to disappoint them, anyhow. Further, the one year of national service may touch the pocket of the parents, if not properly planned and executed. Finally, in general, many of our politicians proceed on arbitrary assumptions, because certain suggestions ring well in their ears. One should look to the past to clarify the present, wherever guidance is available. Such schemes, even with maintenance allowances for the participants, have never been quite successful, and many a modern country, excluding totalitarian

states, has given them up after some time. When students are maintained in national service by State funds, it ceases to be social service, but becomes paid service, and the spirit of the project is totally lost.

The above defects, we should bear in mind, are never attributed to national service as such, but only to the scheme of imposing it on students at a particular period of their growth and progress. If nationalist propaganda is very essential, the following suggestions may prove useful in developing worthy sentiments in students.

1. The plan should operate in such a way as to influence the child throughout his educational career. No special period should be set apart exclusively for the purpose. Whenever altruistic tendencies show up prominently, they should be utilised wisely and adequately for developing patriotism in children.

2. School-work and curriculum must be reorganised to provide a definite and prominent place for such activities through voluntary associations like the N.C.C., Scouts and Guides, Junior Red Cross, Social Service Leagues, etc. Nobody should be compelled to participate in such extra-curricular activities, but students may be persuaded by teachers to join them of their own accord. Teachers must see that every child takes part willingly in some sort of national service.

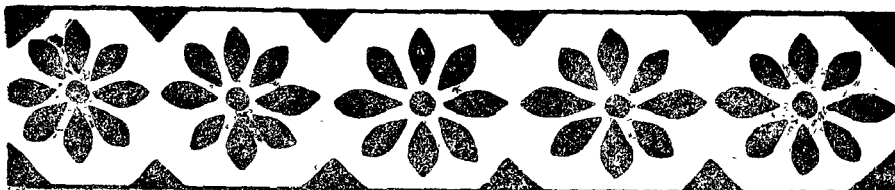
3. Credit may be given, occasionally, to commendable national service by

recognising student out-turn in estimating his or her worth in significant educational events like promotion, prizes, scholarships etc.

4. If the aim of education is to develop children into patriotic citizens, methods other than national service are equally helpful. Creating love of the homeland, developing a common language, cultural programmes, etc., must be utilised, as these are also potent factors that help to reach the goal. Essential specific and general habits and sentiments should be developed by a comprehensive programme.

5. Parents and the general community must be assured that such programmes will not postpone the results they normally expect from the younger members of society. These schemes, even when spread out over the complete educational career, must not touch the pockets of individuals frequently and heavily.

To make children national-minded, those who are directly responsible must be directed to keep their task in clear consciousness. The enthusiasm must be caught by the adolescent and not by the administration. It is the adolescents who should hitch their wagons to the stars, and not we. Any idea of creating utilitarian robots will not work successfully, as the typical Indian mind is much different from other ethnical groups that desire change by revolution. In a word, everyone will extol the purpose to the skies, but surely vote against the present project.





# The Educational System in Ancient India

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Bharat has a hoary and glorious past. It has traditions and a culture deep-rooted in pre-historic times. With the attainment of freedom, it is but natural that the typical Indian outlook on life should re-assert itself in an increasing measure. That it should aspire to guide, influence and mould all our national activity expressed in and through institutions, social and political, is no matter for surprise. It is a natural process. To learn from others is not derogatory, but it is folly, pure, simple and undiluted, to imitate others blindly; it is intellectual bankruptcy. In fact, imitation is the sign of decadence, and it has never helped any nation.

Of all the institutions of a country, its educational system is the most fundamental and basic. Was there such a thing as the Indian educational system before the advent of the Muslim or the Christian powers? Did ancient India possess such a thing as an educational system worth the name? The answer to these questions is positively "Yes". She did possess an educational system, and it was the *Gurukula* system of education.

## A. Chief Feature

One of the features of ancient Indian education lay in the students living under the roof of their preceptor. This accounts for the student being called *antevāsin* meaning thereby that he is one who stays close to his teacher, i.e., under his roof. The *Chhāndogya Upanishad* describes the student as "*āchārya-kula-vāsin*" i.e., one who dwells in the house of the *āchārya*. Thus the usual system of education in Ancient India, was for the student to live in the house of his *guru*, under the latter's personal supervision. A few centuries later, one comes across

Brahmans having formed themselves into *parishads*. We also find organised public institutions for education, such as those in Takshasila, Mithila, Kunj, Conjeevaram etc. But for a long time the obligation to impart education rested with individual teachers, in whose houses bodies of students assembled and resided. This *gurukula* tradition is reflected in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to a certain extent, and the residential system in the University Colleges of our country is an imperfect imitation thereof.

The aim of this brief article is to discuss whether the *gurukula* system of education had any advantages to its credit and whether its revival, at least to the extent possible under the present altered environments and circumstances, will be desirable.

## Spencer and Mill Agreed

The object of education has been postulated by various thinkers. Herbert Spencer expressed his view thus: Education has for its chief object the formation of character. To curb restive propensities, to awaken dormant sentiments, to strengthen the perception and to cultivate the tastes, to encourage this feeling and repress that, so as finally to develop a child into a man of well-proportioned and harmonious nature - this is the aim of the parent. In the words of John Stuart Mill, "the object of Universities is not to teach the knowledge required to fit them for some special mode of gaining their livelihood, but to make capable and cultivated human beings, and the common end of all departments of education is the strengthening, exalting, purifying and beautifying of our common nature and the fitting out of mankind with the necessary mental implements for the work they have to perform through life."

### Not Merely Materialistic

One of the distinctive features of the ancient Aryan education was that it gave importance both to material and spiritual values. It stood for a well balanced view of life and laid emphasis on *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha*. The fundamental Vedic conception of the soul was not an airy one, but was broad-based, attaching due significance to man's rights and privileges, freedom of thought, tolerance and humane laws of life. The goal of education in ancient Bharat was not utilitarian; but assuredly cultural. The Smriti writers deprecated the idea that the value of education should be judged by its pecuniary result. Vishnu says: Who ekes out his livelihood with his *Vidyā*, that *Vidyā* does not serve him right.

Kalidasa declares that he who uses his learning merely for his livelihood is called a trader in knowledge. Manu's injunction is as follows: "Having taken the pupil, in order to lead him to the highest, the teacher shall first of all teach him the ways of cleanliness, purity of body and mind, good manners and morals." The *Taittiriya Upanishad* gives one of the exhortations to be made by the teacher to the pupil as:—"Follow *dharma*." *Dharma* stands for law and custom, religion and charity, justice, righteousness, duty, discipline and culture. According to Rabindranath Tagore, *dharma* is that principle which holds us firm together and leads us to our best welfare. In the words of a Professor, *Dharma* means "the development of the inner spirit, adherence to the eternal virtues and disciplining of the body and soul in a way suitable to that end."

*Dharma* is so called because of its quality of *dhāraṇa* i.e., giving support or being the basis. *Dharma* supports the people, and it is also the foundation of the moveable as well as immovable universe.

### Meaning of Education

Education, as I have come to understand it, is the expansion of the soul, and if it does not fulfil that purpose, it is the negation of knowledge. It implies an attempt on the part of the adult members of a human society to shape the development of the coming generation in accordance with its own ideals. Used in a wide sense, education means every thing which helps to mould the human being; and with some poetic licence, we sometimes speak of the education of a people or even of the whole human race. According to Plato, education aims at developing in the body and the soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable. What then is the ideal of human life? Or what is the nature and form of the beauty and perfection for a human being, especially in our times? Though the essential aims of human life should perhaps be the same in every place or generation, perfection of human life in the Athens of Plato would be different in certain aspects from what it would obtain in London, Paris, Moscow, New York or New Delhi to-day.

### How a Gurukula Worked

The *Gurukula* system was in every way adapted to achieve the end of education as conceived in the manner above described. It was best fitted to contribute to formation of character, the building of the personality, the preservation of the ancient culture and the training of the rising generation in the performance of religious and social duties. The daily association between the teacher and the taught was fraught with great beneficial results. The teacher had the advantage of daily watching the intellectual progress and the moral behaviour of his pupil. The constant presence of the teacher contributed in a great measure to enabling the pupils not only to do away with insolence and pride, but engendered in them that feeling of reverence

for elders, so lacking at the present day. The *Taittirīya* exhortation to the pupil makes reference to this as well. "Whatever Brahmans are better than ourselves, in their sitting it will not do for these to breathe". During the whole time of the pupilage, a deep and solid foundation was laid for a well-ordered and disciplined life. The foibles to which youth is likely to fall a prey in town life, were avoided by residence with the teacher. The daily routine of a pupil which was enjoyed by his teacher in the latter's abode, was marked by simplicity, endurance, ban on luxuries, a rigid adherence to rules of hygiene and *brahmacharya*, in pure surroundings free from all unhealthy influences, and thus assured a healthy and robust manhood. The Hindu law-givers condemned the practice of stipulating that admission would be made only on payment of certain fees. When the period of education was over, an honorarium was paid to the teacher by those who could afford it. The close contact between the teacher and the taught which was the feature of the *Gurukula* system made the relationship between them cordial, even after the relationship of *sisya* and *guru* had come to an end.

### Striking Similarity

Sir Walter Moberly, in a recent book he has written, *The Crisis in the University*, commented thus on the corporate life in the Oxford and Cambridge Universities. "The student, who came in order to acquire learning or a professional qualification found that he had entered into the life-membership of a society possessing a remarkable power to enlist his affection and loyalty. To it, he was attached by silken cords and singular tenacity. So then came into existence a new type of community, having many of the qualities of a family; its members regarded themselves as sons of an *Alma Mater*. This has two consequences. First, the teacher's is a pastoral job; to the student, he has a personal and not merely a business

relation. He has not only contracted to give a certain amount of instruction but is to be the guide, philosopher and friend of his pupils..... Their (students') University years have been to them a vivid and compelling experience, making an exceptionally deep impression, indeed going far to mould their minds; and it is in the light of that experience that later interpreted... They, in Newman's words, experiences are regard their University as a second home, not so tender but more noble and majestic and authoritative."

The *Gurukula* ideal was in every way suited for instilling all the attributes of what is considered a Liberal Education. If, as is justly claimed by the Oxford and Cambridge Universities, they sought to turn out each graduate a scholar and a gentleman, that was what was achieved by the ancient *Gurukula* system. There can therefore be no doubt that the system is a valuable contribution to any educational scheme. As an old student of Cambridge and now in the *Gurukula* University at the fag-end of my official career, I find a striking similarity between these two universities with the exception of a little change in the environment and atmosphere i.e., pure Indian and pure British. What I found over there I missed here, and what I missed there, I find over here.

### Education And Religion

The strongest point of the system of education in ancient India, particularly Vedic times, was that it was religious or spiritual through and through. Education should not be sectarian. Doctrinal inoculation may be objectionable. But education is not worth the name, if it is not religious. We cannot do better than support this point of view with a quotation from the great philosopher and eminent educationist, A. N. Whitehead. He says: "The essence of education is that it is religious. Pray, what is religious education? A religious education is an education which inculcates duty and

reverence. Duty arises from our potential control over the course of events. Where attainable knowledge could have changed the issue, ignorance has the guilt of vice. And the foundation of reverence is this perception, that the present holds within itself the complete sum of existence, backwards and forwards, that whole amplitude of time which is eternity."

### Present System

The present educational system in Bharat is defective in certain vital respects. In the formative period of the lives of our men, we can conceive of nothing better for the development of character, adoption of high moral standards and the expansion of the mind and intellect than daily contact and association with a proper teacher. Our educational system does not afford any such opportunity. The teacher and the taught are thrown together at certain stated periods of the school or college hours, but this hardly enables the teacher to mould the minds of his pupils. Intellectual attainments are of no value, and often dangerous, without character.

As Carlyle put it, "Without hands, a man might eat and could still walk, but consider it—without morality, intellect were impossible for him." Many of the students who undergo their studies in colleges are living away from their parents. They are thus neither under parental authority, nor under proper control of their teachers or professors. The result is that the rising generation is falling an easy prey to all sorts of unhealthy influences. The school or college curriculum has not been devised so as to give adequate attention to the glorious Bharata

culture, with the result that our young men are fast developing a feeling of scant respect, if not of scorn, towards the same. The education imparted being secular, there is no scope for our young men to imbibe a passion for religion in its comprehensive sense and all that it stands for. These defects in our present educational system can be, to a great extent, remedied, if the *gurukula* system is introduced for a few years at least in the educational scheme; care being taken in the selection of proper teachers. It is only then that it will be possible to restore the ancient Aryan culture to its former status and to carry to mankind its message of simple living and high thinking as exemplified by the *rishis* of old.

### Free Education.

India of the Vedic times was a prosperous and happy country. People lived in the midst of plenty. Society voluntarily maintained educational institutions and made education free from the lowest to the highest standard. Education by fees is of European growth. But all prosperous European countries are fast outgrowing this pernicious system. It undermines respect for the teachers, and he moves about carrying the last vestige of respectability under his armpit. In America we are told 90% of the higher education is free. The annual report of Great Britain for 1953-54 tells us that about 70% of higher education in United Kingdom is free. We are a poor country. But we should strive after the ideal of free education in free India. We shall be reverting to our own glorious traditions in this respect. It is a difficult task but it is worthy achieving.

# EDITORIAL

## A Neglected Purpose

Since Independence, there has been quite a spate of talk on our students being educated to fit them into a democratic society. The prevailing social ideals certainly ought to be placed before them. The older generation has the duty to pass on to posterity its social wisdom and technique as well as its accumulated knowledge. And if India is to be built up into a strong and enduring democracy, her children should be taught, generation after generation, the basic faith underlying her political system.

But till now only one aspect of the democratic ideal has been stressed—equality. There is another equally important aspect—the sacredness of the individual and his right to develop his potentialities. This has been almost completely neglected. As we are trying to do many things in a hurry, temporary lopsided stresses perhaps cannot be avoided. However, when the call comes to mend our way, we must heed it.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-president of India, when opening the new building of Stella Mari's College in the city, asked colleges to cultivate among their pupils a love of solitude. He pointed out: "Democracy does not mean mediocrity, corruption, nepotism, favouritism, abuse of power and privilege." He drew attention to the fact that, as was declared by the President of the Royal Society, the greatest works of art and literature, science and technology were not due to committees, syndicates or corporations, but were due to rare individuals who were able to sit alone, concentrate their minds on some aspects of truths, some glimpses of beauty, bring them down to earth, charge them with emotion and do thereby some service to humanity. It was those uncommon men who ushered in the era of the common man.

Dr. Radhakrishnan also stressed the need for tolerance in any democracy worth the name. The tyranny of the majority should be avoided. Opposite points of view should be treated with consideration, and the possibility should always be borne in mind that the majority of to day may become the minority of tomorrow.

From this it follows that our educational system should not merely make opportunities available on the widest scale. It should also guard itself against denying facilities to those qualified. And it should encourage talent whenever it is found, not only in order that the talented individuals may escape frustration, but also in order that the community at large may benefit.

## Threat to Academic Freedom

Recently the Tamil Development Council passed a resolution calling on the Government of Madras to pass legislation compelling the University of Madras to accept Tamil as the medium of instruction in degree classes. Full details of the resolution could not be obtained from the brief press reports. The purport can only be surmised.

Now it is not as if the University has banned Tamil as a medium of instruction. Permissive regulations already exist. And the fact that the Coimbatore experiment is being made shows that the University has not withheld its consent on principle to the cause of Tamil as a medium of instruction.

But the University, we are sure, does not want to ban the use of English as an academic language, nor to hasten its replacement by Tamil at the cost of a fall in standards.

In the circumstances the reported resolution must be presumed to urge on the

Government to use Tamil as the medium of instruction exclusively. It is needless to say that to fetter the discretion of the University in any such way would be a serious violation of the well known democratic principle of academic freedom.

In this connection, the following authoritative description of the state of affairs in Great Britain needs to be pondered over. "The Education Departments have no jurisdiction over the Universities," say the pamphlet, *Education in Britain*, "and their relations are concerned mainly with the training of school teachers, the provision of adult education, and the award of State scholarships and bursaries. The universities, though self-governing institutions, receive aid from the State, mainly in the form of direct grants from the Treasury which in Great Britain are made on the advice of the University Grants Committee, a committee appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer from persons with experience of university administration and education. The proportion of university income contributed from public funds is increasing. In the year 1955-56, direct grants provided 75% of the total. The balance is derived from fees (of which a large proportion is paid by local education authorities), from endowments and from other sources."

From the foregoing it may be seen that even he who pays the piper is not allowed to call the tune. Rome was not built in a day, and Indian languages cannot become 'qualified overnight to express modern knowledge.

### An Interesting Experiment

A recent issue of the *Journal of Education and Psychology*, Baroda, reports an attempt by Dr. V. V. Kamat of the Institute of Education, Bombay, to determine from the response of High School pupils whether the new type tests or the essay type examinations are more

reliable. Certain students were set an oral test of 20 questions and a new-type short-answer test of 100 questions. The S.S.C. examination which they answered a month later was taken as their essay-type test. From the correlations worked out Dr. Kamat comes to the conclusion: "The results show that much greater objectivity is obtained by the short-answer type than by the essay-type test."

In this experiment, the oral test was used as the criterion. We feel that, in the very nature of things, an oral test is very very close to a short-answer test. Moreover, the ability to express oneself in speech is distinct from the ability to write. In the circumstances we are unable to accept the results of the experiment as in any way decisive.

Dr. Kamat has summarised the results and trends which in his opinion have emerged from discussions and experiments so far. This is given below, as indicating a dominant trend to-day in educational reforms and the probable lines of changes.

1. The number of *external examinations* in the life of a pupil should be as few as possible. Only 3 are suggested at present: (i) At the end of Std. IX (Primary school teachers may be recruited at this stage). (ii) At the end of Std. XI—S.S.C. Examination. (iii) At the end of the university course at the first degree stage.
2. Progress in *internal work* should be measured in the several institutions, preferably by *Objective tests* at the end of each term covering the studies of that term only. Such question papers may contain 50 to 75 questions to be answered in about 30 minutes.
3. The *external examination* had better be by *short-answer type* of

- questions or by a combination of short-answer and essay-type questions.
4. A comprehensive *internal record* of each pupil containing details of progress in studies and behaviour should be maintained by each school or institution and should be mentioned in certificates issued to students.
  5. 20% of the marks at each of the external examinations should be reserved for *internal work* based on school records, with proper safeguards.
  6. The short-answer type questions are more objective than essay-type questions.
  7. *Personality traits* should be recorded in school records on careful observation of each pupil.
  8. Questions in all kinds of question papers should be of such a nature as would require *thinking* or *problem-solving* on the part of candidates, wherever possible.
  9. Each written answer paper of the essay-type for school children should not exceed 2½ hours.
  10. In a question paper of 2½ hours there should be about 20 short answer questions, all compulsory.
  11. External university examinations at the degree stage should be of the essay-type, but each script should be examined by two examiners independently. This should be supplemented by some sort of objective tests."

We would express our strong dissent from a complete change-over to the so called objective tests at any stage. Their introduction even on a limited scale in the Madras High Schools failed miserably and had to be given up.

The recommendation that the external examination should be solely by short-answer type of questions will lead, we are afraid, to a catastrophic fall in standards. In regard to internal assessment, the emphasis will have to be on safeguards. For in trying to reform examinations, we should not open the floodgate for the entry of political and communal prejudices in evaluating academic work. They are already doing sufficient havoc in the matter of admissions.

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## Our Eduational Diary

" PEPYS "

10-6-60. Speaking in Coimbatore, the Education Minister said that the progress and success of the Tamil medium scheme in the Coimbatore Government College would be watched and assessed by an education and an Assesment Committee respectively. He said that the scheme would be worked in such a way that those who opposed it would support it. He appealed for public cooperation.

[The attitude of the Minister is commendable, in so far as he is desirous of enlisting public support for his scheme. It looks as though he does not want to hustle things.]

15-6-60. Dr. Shrimali said that the National Service Scheme for students would not be rushed through and that it had no political significance. The main

reason was, he said, that students who entered the University must have attained the age of maturity and the National Service scheme would prepare them for entry into University or employment.

[As for entering employment; the boy cannot do so, because he would be still a minor. As for entering the University, he would still be immature. The only solution is to scrap the present Secondary Education scheme and substitute in its place the Higher Secondary Education, making it a thirteen-year course beginning from 5 plus and ending with 18 plus. To raise artificially the age of admission to 6 plus or 7 plus and introduce the so-called National Service scheme will only have the practical effect of allowing students in the prime of life to wander about the country divorcing them from study habits and would only amount to monkeying with their educational career. To raise the age of admission to 6 or 7 plus without providing for pre-primary education would be most harmful to our boys from the educational point of view. And it is obvious that our Government have no money to spare for starting pre-primary schools. Another reason, that it would help not to swell the number of the unemployed, is frankly uneducational and need not be considered. The thirteen-year Higher Secondary Educational Scheme would solve all the problems, viz., the education imparted would be of a satisfactory standard, the students at the end of the course would be eighteen and fit for employment or University education, and it would also help not to swell the ranks of the unemployed. *But I must emphasise the fact that a full 13 year period is very essential for imparting education of a fair standard, as this alone will fit the student to enter a profession or the University.*]

17-6-60. Sri C. D. Deshmukh said at Poona that higher education in India was "sub-standard". He himself stated the reason viz., the shortness of the span of educational training. He pointed out how in the U. K. Secondary education was elaborate and the age of admission to universities was eighteen. He said that there must be screening of students who desired to enter the university. Discipline would improve if the quality and standard of education were high.

22-6-60. Sri Kamaraj, speaking at Trichinopoly, deplored that some people were against Basic education, though it was only the intention of the Government to give training to students in a trade or profession to enable them to have an avocation in life.

[The intention is laudable and nobody would oppose it. But Basic education, as it is imparted in our schools, is not likely to carry out this laudable intention of the Government, as the chief crafts imparted in these schools are only spinning, weaving and gardening. The major part of the school hours are spent only in idleness both by the boys and the teachers in conducting those craft-classes. The students thus are wasting the precious time of their lives. If the idea of Basic education is only to impart a useful education in a trade, we may start a number of junior and senior trade schools, and leave the ordinary schools to be run in the old—which is also the best way].

25-6-60. Dr. P. V. Cherian has criticised the mania of students to go abroad merely to acquire foreign degrees. On the other hand, they should attach more importance to practical knowledge of the work done there. He advised students to undertake foreign tours after taking degrees here.