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## Academic holidays, home work and students' bias in India

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Holidays are necessary no doubt, both for students and teachers; for students for the assimilation of studies, and for teachers to recoup their lost energy and to save them from nervous breakdown. It is a well-known fact that an hour of intensive teaching work involves more fatigue and strain on nerves than any other kind of intellectual work for the same period. Still there should be a limit to holidays. But what do we see in India, specially in West Bengal? Here the average length of school work in the year is round about 125 days, which is the lowest in the world. In comparison with other States, West Bengal has a larger number of religious festivals, and as such, it is quite natural that there should be more holidays than in other States; but justice should, at the same time, be done to students.

We said that the average length of days of the school term was more or less 125 days. We did not say this dogmatically. Our calculation of the actual school work is as follows:—

	Days.
Holidays, including Summer Vacation (in unaided schools)	100
Sundays	52
Saturdays (half)—52 which should be equal to	26
Test Examination	7

Annual Examination	11
Half Yearly Examination	12
School Final Examination	13
Holidays for unforeseen circumstances, including rainy days	4
Half holidays, at least 24 days in the year, which should be equal to	12
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These half holidays are given for various reasons, such as for minor festivals, for winning a trophy, for arrangement of seats for the terminal examinations and the S.F. Examination, for preparation for sports, for coaching in recitations for the prize day etc, etc. Besides, classes are often dismissed two or three periods before the scheduled time for various reasons. If we take all these into account, the number of working days will never exceed 125 days.

We do not blame any one, nor do we mean to say that teachers are shirkers and have excessive fondness for holidays. But it is a fact, which we should face boldly and should never connive at in the interest of the pupils in general. Of the numerous factors for failure in examination and deterioration in the standard of education, numerous holidays is one.

With academic holidays, attendance of pupils may also be considered. The attendance as a percentage of enrolment never exceeds 60% in our country. Of course, reliable figures in this respect are not available. Similarly, in other fields of school work, the same desideratum is marked. Let us probe into an important branch of school work, viz., home task. Here we will also see that home work only on mathematics is given to pupils in many schools, but they are in most cases blindly signed by the teacher without going through them. If any naughty boy writes the right answer without going through the correct process, it remains undetected. The poor teacher cannot be blamed, for he will have to go through 40 to 50 books and begin his new lesson for the day in a period of 40 to 45 minutes, and he will have to go through the same process continually for 5 to 6 periods, every day, often without respite.

Is the condition in other independent countries, for example in Europe and America, the same? We think we shall be able to understand our position in its true perspective, if we compare the holidays, attendance and pupils' work at home and school in our country with the same in the three most progressive countries, USSR, USA, and UK.

### Holidays in Russia

In USSR, a Soviet child works harder than any average European child. In the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 10th forms the number of school weeks in the year is 34; in the 4th to 9th forms, 35; of which one week of 6 days are set aside for excursions. In 1951, in the last 6 years (classes V to X) of the primary classes, pupils had to work 1,045 to 1,260 hours per school year, and in the timetable it is seen that 30.1% of the periods were allotted for Russian language and literature, 21.9% of periods for mathematics, and 8.9% for physics and chemistry. The periods of work have been increased since then, and now a pupil has to work six hours a day for 213 days.

In a comparison of the Soviet ten years of school and twelve years in the U.S.A., Medinsky finds that pupils in the former have 330 school days or 1,650 school hours more than pupils in the latter. "The course in physics, chemistry, literature, natural science, history and geography", he says, "is a more profound one in the Soviet school and gives the pupil a much broader and systematic knowledge than do the schools of the United States." (See Medinsky, *Public Education in the USSR*, Moscow, 1957.) Every child in Soviet Russia must study a foreign language for five years. The main emphasis is on science and technology for both boys and girls. In addition to ten solid years of mathematics, every child is obliged to take four years of chemistry, five years of physics and six years of biology. A Soviet child graduating from the tenth grade (American 12th) aged about 17, has a better scientific education than most American college graduates.

The Government wages a continuous fight to ensure one hundred percent school attendance for the last three years of the junior secondary schools and senior secondary schools. Attendance is checked, and absenteeism for no good reason will call forth a reprimand, and if persisted in, will lead to being sent down either for a period or permanently.

Holidays follow the general continental European pattern. In addition to summer vacation, there are two short holiday periods of two weeks each, in spring and winter. The summer holidays are three months—June to August for all, except the tenth class in the senior secondary schools.

### Working days in America

In the United States, we find that the average length of days of the school term in southern public schools has been increasing. In 1939-40, the average length of the school term for white pupil was 169 days, as compared with the 15

days for the Negro-pupils. But by 1951-52, the gap had narrowed to only one day—177 for white pupils and 176 for Negro children. In a number of States, school terms of 179 or 180 days for both Negro and white pupils were mandatory. The upward trend has been maintained in rural countries as well as in metropolitan areas. During the dozen years intervening between the 1940 censuses and the year 1952, attendance as a percentage of the enrolment advanced somewhat more in the metropolitan counties than it did in the rural and rural-urban counties. In 1940, the Negro and white attendance to enrolment percentage were 85.5 and 82.6 respectively. But in 1952 the position is reversed and the white percentage of 85.6 lies below the Negro percentage of 87.7.

Students in U.S.A. work roughly 180 days in the year. Only 10 per cent of all American high schools have any physics courses; 14 per cent have chemistry. There is a decline in the percentage, since 1934, of pupils studying mathematics and foreign languages. Enrolments in general courses have grown at the expense of special courses—in biology at the expense of algebra and geometry, and in general science in place of specific subjects in science.

In addition to summer vacation, there are two short term holidays. No particular stress is laid on attendance.

### School year in England

In the United Kingdom, students generally work from 180 to 185 days in the year. There is clamour for more science seats. Holidays follow the general European pattern. Particular insistence is not made on attendance; but it is held desirable that pupils attend school every day.

A serious attempt was, however, made in the beginning of the present century for the improvement of attendance of children in schools, and an inquiry

committee was set up to find out causes of non-attendance.

According to Dr. Sir Cyril Burt, "The first and most obvious cause of failure in school progress is non-attendance." In the London Inquiry, Sir Cyril Burt found; "Among as many as 11 per cent of the backward cases the chief cause of the child's lack of progress was inadequate or irregular attendance." In the survey carried out by him it is said: "In the survey I carried out at Birmingham, frequent or prolonged absence from school was noted in well over a quarter of the backward cases: no other single factor was encountered so often."

Again Dr Burt says: "Roughly speaking, serious non-attendance is about three times as common among the backward, as it is among the normal. But it is evident that backwardness produces non-attendance almost as much as non-attendance produces backwardness."

But conditions now in England have changed for the better. The problem has been very successfully tackled. During the last few decades, non-attendance has steadily diminished. In the first ten years of the present century, the number of summonses for non-attendance amounted to nearly 3 per cent. By 1939, it had dropped to well under 0.5 per cent. There are, of course, various reasons for this decline, with which we are not concerned here.

### Home work

Next let us consider the question of home work imposed on children in U. S. S. R., U. S. A. and U. K. Here also we see that the Soviet children have to work harder than the children of America and England. And if we compare the homework of the children of India with the homework of the children of England and America we will see that the work here is most unsatisfactory and there

is considerable scope for improvement in this respect.

Now, if we come to home work, we will see that Soviet children do not escape it in any class. It begins with class I where children are expected to give 20 to 30 minutes a day. The time increases as the pupil goes up in the school, until in class X, it may take three hours or more. Students are to make accurate notes of the teacher's assignment for the next lesson, to show these notes to the parents, and to do all home work without assistance. Just before the last war, there were complaints that too much work was demanded of children. So a Soviet medical commission, investigating the health of students, their predisposition to worry, eye-strain and the like, has urgently recommended that homework requirements be cut down, and this has been done. At present, the children in the 15 to 17 age-group are expected to do from ten to twelve hours of work a day, roughly half of this at home. The routine of a Soviet student's work in a typical trade school is roughly as follows

Rising	at 6.30 a. m.
Making beds, physical exercise etc.,	„ 6.30 to 7.30 a.m.
Breakfast and free time	„ 7.30 to 8.30 „
Lessons (I to IV) including twenty minutes' rest	„ 8.30 to 12.30 p.m.
Lunch and free time	„ 12.30 to 2 p.m.
Lessons (V to VI)	„ 2 p.m. to 3.50 p.m.
General or group roll call and free time	„ 3.50 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.
Cultural activities	„ 4.30 to 6 p.m.
Home work	„ 6 to 7.30 p.m.
Supper and free time	„ 7.30 to 8.30 p.m.
Evening toilet, personal needs	„ 8.30 to 10 p.m.
Bed	„ 10 p.m.

In the United States, homework is not very taxing. The life or work of the child is not regimented as in U.S.S.R. Parents or guardians have not to certify

that the homework has been done without assistance.

In the United Kingdom, there seems to be general dissatisfaction with the secondary schools for over-burdening the pupils with curricular contents and homework, although the latter is never so taxing as in U.S.S.R.

### Students' Bias

The students' bias cannot be known in our country as very few students get the chance of taking science or technological courses. Elementary scientific knowledge (an apology for science) has been made compulsory in X-class schools; but very few students take optional mathematics, physics and chemistry. The bulk of the students join humanity courses, as seats for science courses are very limited; so the students' bias cannot be known.

### More Working Days for India

Reforms in matters like inducing pupils to take science or technological subjects will founder on the economic rock—funds necessary for these reforms will not be available in the foreseeable future; but measures like curtailment of holidays and raising the percentage of attendance of pupils are possible.

Holidays are necessary, but it is poppy-cock to argue that in a tropical country like ours it is not possible to work longer days. Climatic inconvenience is felt everywhere. Here we suffer from the blazing heat of the sun; in Europe and America people suffer from cold weather, snow, fog and sleet. Even pupils and teachers in schools beyond the Arctic circle in USSR have to work the same number of days as in other parts of USSR. The number of working days in our country ought to be between 180 and 185 days, and that will cause no inconvenience either to students or to teachers.

The Mudaliar Commission recommends: "The total number of working days in a

school should be not less than 200, the working hours per week be at least 35 periods of 45 minutes each, inclusive of the time spent for some of the co-curricular activities of the school. The school should work regularly for 6 days in the week, one of the days being a half day when the teacher and the taught may devote special attention to the pursuit of extra-curricular activities..... A teacher should not be given more than 30 periods a week!

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## THE BIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL

Miss. S. L. Aiyar, M.A. Ph. D, Bombay

(Continued from page Oct. 235)

The biographical novel in the early decades of the twentieth century was gradually disengaging itself from the historical novel and was coming to its own rights. Before this century, novelists were themselves not sure what it was they wanted to emphasize, the background or the man. "The historical novel" is so vague a term that any novel ranging from the late 17th century novels like *Madame de la Fayette's Princesse de Cleves*, to *Gone with the Wind* can be called historical. Many biographical novels which were often the produce of mere accident, also came under the general title. It would not be far from the truth to say that novels like *Merezkosky's The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci* and *George Moore's Heloise and Abelard* turned out to be biographical novels, without the novelists' being aware of their changed orientation. They can now be looked upon as eminent examples of the biographical novel. It is however significant that even among the earlier novelists there were a few who consciously set themselves to write biographical novels: viz., *Gertrude Atherton*, *Emma Marshall* and *Anne Manning*.

But the novel where the hero is an actual historical figure goes back to the early eighteenth century. We have such a novel in *Abbe Prevost's Histoire de M. Cleveland (1732)*. This work belongs to a very questionable type, for the hero of

the story is a supposed natural son of Cromwell and has no basis in reality. The heroine of *Sophia Lee's Recess (1785)* is again equally unreal. There is an attempt in these novels to deceive the reader by trying to make the fictitious hero appear a historical figure. We have innumerable such examples right up to the end of the nineteenth century. This was because many novelists, particularly before Scott, did not distinguish between history, pseudo-history and legends. In the eighteenth century, novels masquerading as real biographies made their appearance now and then, within the field of historical fiction. These were not standards for even historical fiction, let alone biographical.

If Scott is all but a pioneer in the historical novel, *Bulwer Lytton* may be looked upon as the initiator of the biographical novel. *Lytton* was the first novelist of note to make a departure from Scott and make a historical figure the hero of a novel. In his laborious research, in his elaborate preparation to the writing of a novel, *Lytton* differed from Scott, who made no bones about anachronisms and historical inaccuracies, so long as the general picture of the age was drawn aright. He reveals a marked leaning to characterisation as against incidents. This is seen in *Eugene Aram* and *Rienzi*. *Kingsley's Hypatia* and *Charles Reade's Peg Woffington* are early examples of the biographical novel in England.

Before 1900, this type of the novel is unstable and vague. Now and then, there appears a notable work like Anna Manning's *The Household of Sir Thomas Moore* (1869) and Mark Twain's *Personal Recollections of Sieurle Conte* (on Joan of Arc-1896). At the turn of the century the biographical novel finds its champion in Gertrude Atherton who calls her novels "character novels", i. e., a dramatized biography. Dramatized biography cannot be equated with biographical fiction. But Atherton being the first eminent biographical novelist, what she says is significant; for it recognises the existence of a novel which, branching off from the historical novel of the nineteenth century, has a distinct individuality of its own. In Atherton's novels, namely, *The Immortal Marriage* and *The Conqueror*, the historical material is carefully camouflaged, though it is authentic.

The twentieth century can rightly be regarded as the vintage time of the biographical novel not only in England and America, but also on the Continent. Merezkovsky's *The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci* deserves praise as a novel of the early years; so also his *Peter and Alexis and Death of the Gods*. In Germany the earliest biographical novel is Heinrich Haring's *Cabanis on Frederick the Great*, and Berthold Auerbach's novel *Spinoza* (1832).

The biographical novel of today lays great stress on fidelity to biographical facts; that means, a novelist is compelled to make a thorough study of the man and his times, to unearth tangled undergrowth of biographical facts, and finally to choose his method of treating his subject. This love for authentic facts is noticeable in Mme Yourcenar who has delved deep into historical records in order to write her novel on Hadrian. The same fervour is seen in Helen Waddell's *Peter Abelard*, in Robert Pick's *The Escape of Socrates* and in many others.

Both in technique and in the choice of heroes the biographical novel has

undergone a change. The novelist of today does not lay over-emphasis upon the external facts of the hero's life. He is concerned more with the complex feelings that prompted certain kinds of behaviour. It is the mind of man which has become the focus of interest. It is only the modern novelist who dreams of writing about a Toulouse Lautrec or a Van Gogh. A biographical novel becomes a "psychological" study, when, instead of the presentation of the actual life of the hero, the author aims at a new interpretation of character. The novelist penetrates into the motives of conduct. Leonid Andrej has attempted this type of fiction in *Judas Iscariot* (1907). Mme Yourcenar has tried the psychological method in *The Memoirs of Hadrian*. Psychology is combined with a dramatic treatment in Helen Waddell's *Peter Abelard* and Robert Pick's *The Escape of Socrates*. During the last ten years, novels on painters, musicians and thinkers have multiplied greatly. No novelist before Nerina Shute thought of Shelley as the hero of a novel, though Burns, Byron and Sir Philip Sidney had many votaries. James Barke's tetralogy on Burns is well known. Of late, there have been novels on Dumas, Mendelssohn, Stendhal, Pushkin, Queen Christina, Walter Raleigh, Mme de Maintenon and many another.

The novelist who has contributed the most to this type of fiction and deserves to bear the palm is undoubtedly Irving Stone. He finds in this form a greater "freedom to interpret" than in any other. He is a wizard of his art and enthral the reader by his story-telling genius and kindles admiration by maintaining a strict loyalty to authentic facts. He possesses in a great measure the requisites of a biographical novelist—a flair for choosing the right sort of hero, a deft handling of the material, a skill for dramatization, an eye for details, a proper sense of perspective and above all a sympathetic insight into character. His heroes and heroines are mastered by a dominant ambition or an

ideallistic fervour which forms the recurrent theme and determines the tone and colour of the novel. Thus, Van Gogh, his only non-American hero, owes his inspiration for painting to his love of humanity. HESSIE FREMONT, the heroine of *The Immortal Wife*, finds life's fulfilment in making her husband's life a success. JOHN NOBLE, the wild westerner, is truly alive only when he is inspired to paint. EUGENE DEBBS, the hero of *Adversary in the House*, sacrifices his all and even lands himself in jail, in order to ameliorate the conditions of labour. IRVING STONE'S aim is not the fleeting impermanent trifles in a man's life, but the emotions and feelings that place the hero on the level of common humanity. The hero's

ambitions, his weaknesses, his failures, his loves and hates and his success belong to the ages. IRVING STONE'S most interesting hero is of course VINCENT VAN GOGH in *Lust for Life*.

What forms this type of novel would take in the future is hard to say. THOMAS MANN has already made a new approach in *Lotte In Weimar*. An historical personality, when treated in fiction, lends itself to any form of treatment, and the possibilities are still to be explored. One can never be sure it has reached its goal, though it is true it has attained at present a standard of excellence.

## Basic Education at the Crossroads

Amarnath Kaul Adalati, Principal, Govt. Basic Teachers' Training College, Tikamgarh, M.P.

For the last about a quarter of a century we have been having Basic Education at work in our country. In fact, it was amidst educational turmoil and chaos that this scheme was envisaged as a remedy to do away with the traditional type of education. From its very dawn, it dismayed some educationists by its introduction of craft-work in education and integrated teaching through crafts. At the same time, a team of educationists came forward to defend the ideology and wipe out the looming apprehensions. Ultimately, the Central and State Governments recognised it as the national pattern of education. In fact, this recognition alone cannot take this scheme ahead, unless, in this democratic age, it is found suitable by those for whom it is meant.

At the present juncture, the Central and State Governments are keen to launch this scheme, and educationists try their best to dispel doubts about its success. These efforts are likely to prove in vain,

in case the masses do not find the scheme practically suitable. On the one hand, principles of Basic Education are considered quite sound and in line with the modern trends of education. On the other hand, the field-worker finds himself quite in dismay in implementing it.

To say that the system is sound but difficult to implement is to speak in contradictions. How can a system be sound, when it cannot be implemented? If it is really a sound system, then those in charge of it must not find it beyond their intelligence and capacity to make it work also. If they fail to do so, they are either not sincere in their efforts, or are incompetent.

Once an able Principal of one of the Basic Training Colleges complained that the Basic School of his town attracted the children of *chaprasis* and low-paid clerks. In fact, it is an open challenge to the fundamentals of Basic Education, coming

from an authority responsible for working it. Here we are again taken aback, and are to consider the principles of Basic Education in their true perspective. Are the principles so unsound as to prove quite unsuitable for the children of all ranks? This very idea took me once to visit the said capital town. I do not want to go into the details of the working of the Training College or of the said Basic School. But it will not be either controversial or unpleasant to mention here that the said school is running in the very premises of the Basic Training College. In the absence of the main features of Basic Education, it presented a look of a school of the traditional type. Of course, some clay models and card-board work done by the boys of the school were there, but this alone is not enough for a full-fledged Basic School running under the guidance of the Training College. Above all, to my mind, it is a challenge to the ability of the Training College staff to find it beyond their ability and capability to have even one school of a model type to serve as a source of inspiration to the student-teachers during their training and to other teachers of the locality also. We, in Training Colleges, are to train teachers, who are to work in the field. The success of the Training Colleges depends on the quality of the teachers, who are to work in the schools. Training Colleges should have at least a number of schools to serve as a model in the said area. The said Training College could not be an exception. According to the Gurudev: 'A lamp can never light another lamp, unless it continues to burn its own flame.' Unless Training Colleges are having good schools around them, we should not expect much from them. If Basic Education is really at work, we have every right to draw conclusions about its merits. Otherwise, to present Basic Education in the garb of traditional education does not seem fair.

Day by day, Basic Education is fading away and is yielding place to the traditional one. There is a school of thought even today that does not stand for it.

There is an echo of wholesale conversion of schools into 'Basic'. The true teacher of Basic Education has automatically to be in line with his co-workers, who outnumber him in every respect. 'Basic' is the slogan of the day, but the same century-old education is presented in its name. In such odd circumstances, the teacher of Basic Education finds himself in a fix to make a choice between the two.

After all, we have to ponder a bit and consider what is wrong with Basic Education. Here we are again taken back to reiterate some of the fundamentals of Basic Education.

Basic Education aims at the development of the personality of the individual, which means a harmonious development of all the inherent faculties in him of head, hand and heart, i.e., physical, mental, moral, aesthetic and so on. Side by side and more emphatically does it aim, through such individual development, at the new social order, in which there will be no distinction between man and man either on the basis of birth or fortune. In such a society there is to be opportunity for all to get a minimum of education and to have free, fair and equal control over the means and the instruments of production and the enjoyment of the fruits of such production. If those that produce have the right first to consume, not of course exclusively alone; but co-operatively with society as a whole and in proportion to the labour put in and the legitimate right of maintenance, the acceptance of the principle postulates also the acceptance of the principle of decentralization in administration and control.

The above-mentioned fundamentals reveal that Basic Education stands for its own ideology. Some fundamentals are acceptable, but some provoke discussion and controversy. One or two controversial principles deserve clarification.



Once a politician pedagogue decried the idea of making rural education self-sufficient and self-supporting through agriculture or any other craft. Further, he considered it criminal for any society or Government to throw the entire expenses of education on the delicate muscles of children. These sentimental words coming from the politician challenge the educationist, who has no alternative but to defend the same by sound reasoning and modern thought. The educationist stands for orientation and considers craft-work to be more than a mere hobby or part-time job. It aims at inculcating thoroughness, efficiency, the economic use of time and the other habits and qualities associated with true craftsmanship. He stands for production of good quality of articles to be saleable. He is of opinion that the child in no way is averse to work, but in fact his active spirit is always craving for it and protesting against purposeless book-learning. Here modern thought, on the one side, and the high-sounding words of the politician on the other, perturb the mind of the teacher, who ultimately has to make the choice between the two. And always there are chances for him to surrender and take up the routine course.

An eminent educationist is of the view that in this age of industrilization, the village crafts like weaving and carpentry, have no place. He feels that there is need of technicians and scientists these days and not of weavers and carpenters. This idea also creates a delusion, and the teacher has no alternative but to feel dismayed and diffident about this scheme. Anyway, the other educationist pleads in favour of crafts having purpose and educational possibilities. Basic Education stands for 'work', and crafts like carpentry and weaving are means and not an end in itself. They inculcate love for work and prove the way for accuracy and skill. Anyway different views would always be there and need not perturb the 'field-worker', who ultimately has to launch this programme on this virgin soil of experimentation.

Again, the common notion prevailing about Basic Education is of its being expensive and beyond the reach of our finance. This fallacy retards its progress. In fact, the situation is otherwise, and the figures given out now and then are exaggerated. Once, an eminent educationist, Dr. P. D. Shukla, Dy. Educational Adviser, Union Ministry of Education, gave out a comparative study of expenditure between the Basic and non-Basic schools in various States of the country. The statement is as follows :—  
Cost per student per annum in 1956-57.

State.	Junior Basic Schools.	Non-Basic Primary Schools.
Andhra	28.8	24.7
Assam	20.0	19.2
Bihar	18.3	16.2
Bombay	30.8	30.3
Kerala	17.0	13.4
Madhya Pradesh	26.7	30.3
Madras	25.9	26.4
Mysore	27.9	25.7
Punjab	27.4	29.0
Rajasthan	57.0	31.0
West Bengal	26.1	23.6

On a State-wise basis, it is clear that in some States Basic education is comparatively more expensive than non-Basic education. Here it is to be noted that Basic education represents an improved form of elementary education. There is no justification for comparing a primary school with a Basic school. The former is the worst provided, staffed and equipped, while the latter aims at improvement and is having trained better paid staff, equipment etc. Whenever we go for quality, it naturally would be a bit expensive. An ordinary elementary school has been, in the same way, more expensive than a 'maqtab' or 'waqfas'. In spite of this clarification, the common fallacy of costliness is disturbing the mind of those held responsible for launching this scheme.

Again, the concept of 'correlation' is proving a bugbear and agitates the minds

of those, who crave to have it at work. Educationists recognize the suitability of 'unified knowledge' at the elementary stage and consider the same as the best approach to education. But, on the other hand, the teacher finds it difficult and beyond his capacity to implement it. Half-baked attainments during the training period and absence of proper guidance in the field are solely responsible for reducing the same to a concept only. The revision of the curriculum on the same pattern will not help much, unless the ideology of Basic education finds place in our everyday working. The curriculum, as usual, is holding a superior position, and the teacher finds it beyond his reach to make the proper choice.

At present, Basic education is not at work, but at war. It is either to perish or to survive. The 'orthodox' school of thought is quite indifferent to this orientation, and popular support is also missing. Most of our difficulty would automatically be solved, in case every school or training school is not labelled as 'Basic' without having any of the characteristics of Basic education. The present problems are not due to the demerits of Basic education, but the presentation of traditional education under the name of 'Basic education'. The Assessment Committee Report and other reports in this behalf are decorating the shelves of fine libraries.

Basic education is fading away because of this label. Besides, it does not make any headway also for want of personnel having faith and vision in this education. It would be really unfortunate to do away with the scheme without having any other alternative to be a substitute for it. This education cannot make headway, because there is not a proper atmosphere to give it a fair trial. Merely the nomenclature of 'Basic' cannot work magic, and has surely told upon true Basic education. If the State Governments take courage to use the label 'Basic' carefully, then most of the difficulties of the field-worker are solved.

Wherever there have been teachers of vision and faith, the results of this education have been quite satisfactory. Basic education, if presented in its proper form, is sure to get popular acceptance, popular approval and popular co-operation. The present chaos is not due to this education, but to the presentation of the traditional type under the name of 'Basic'. This put the true teacher of Basic Education in a dilemma. He has to make the choice at this fateful moment. If this sorry state of affairs continues for some time more, the fate and form of this education will remain uncertain. It is likely to tread the traditional route and most of what is best in it will be lost automatically.



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# HIGHER SCHOOLS AT A NEW STAGE

Vyacheslav Yelyutin, Minister of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education of the USSR.

In the years of Soviet power the country's higher educational institutions have turned out more than four million specialists for all branches of economy and culture. Functioning in the USSR are over 750 higher schools or colleges with the total enrolment of 2,260,000 students, which is four times as many as the number of students in Britain, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy put together.

The tasks facing the construction of communist society have called for the reorganization of secondary and higher education. Now the higher educational institutions are working successfully according to new syllabuses and curricula, worked out on the principle of combining study with work.

Barely one year has passed since measures for reorganization of education were adopted, but their beneficial results have already been felt.

Now that the process of studying has been brought closer to production with its strict schedule and discipline and the student himself participates in this production, his attitude to studies in the higher schools has become more serious, purposeful and responsible.

Professors and instructors visit enterprises more often, as a result of which teaching has become more concrete and more practical.

## Two Basic Forms

Two basic forms of education have developed in the Soviet higher educational institutions. The first includes correspondence and evening studies, when the student is trained without discontinuing his work. Under the same category come college-enterprises in which fundamental

studies are combined directly with the work in the shops or factories and plants, which become something like laboratories of higher schools. Under these conditions the student acts as an operative, a team leader, a foreman, a technologist and an engineer in consecutive stages.

This year over 300,000 persons matriculated from the evening and correspondence higher schools, as compared to 570,000 last year. At present 1,115,000 people are receiving higher education without discontinuing work.

Correspondence and evening school education becomes an important form of training higher-school specialists.

The second form of education provides for day-time studies integrated with practical activities. Specific forms of this integration depend on the scope of a higher school or a course and the students' specialization. Thus, at higher technological, engineering and industrial educational institutions, day-time studies are combined with correspondence and evening studies for one or two years in the junior courses and for six months in the senior courses. At higher schools training specialists in agriculture, geology, road construction and in other branches connected with the seasonal nature of production, day-time studies alternate with work at an industrial enterprise, on an experimental farm, state farm collective farm or an office. The process of day-time studies in medical and pedagogical higher schools have also peculiarities of their own.

## Changing Occupations

During the two years a student of a technical higher school is required to spend at an enterprise, he changes several occupations. This is very useful. The

engineer should acquire adequate working habits. There is no doubt that under this system of training, the young specialist obtains a thorough grounding, experience and organizational habits. At the same time he acquires information which facilitates his theoretical studies. The organization of higher-school studies presupposes not only combining study with work, but also improving the specialists' theoretical knowledge on this basis.

The new system of training is of great educational importance; it makes it possible to enlist the co-operation of the collective of an enterprise for moulding the spiritual make-up of students, since the latter become full-fledged members of this collective.

Even today it is possible to refer to the broad scope and durability of ties between most of our higher schools and enterprises.

Thus many students of the Siberian Metallurgical Institute are working on diploma designs dealing with themes suggested by the Kemerovo Economic Council. Many students of the Arkhangel'sk Timber Institute have taken the assignments of industrial enterprises for their diplomas. At the Khabarovsk Institute of Railway Transport Engineers, 22 diploma designs concern the assignments of the Far-East Railway. All these projects have been accepted for introduction in practice.

#### Students' Initiative

It is highly encouraging to know that students themselves show great initiative.

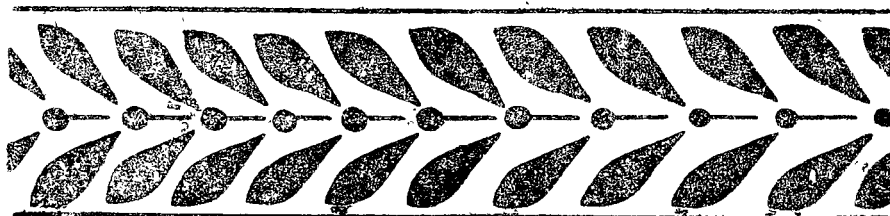
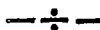
On the proposal of the students of the Kazan Aviation Institute, the country's first Student Designing Office was set up. Such offices now exist in many higher schools. Under the guidance of professors and instructors, students fulfil orders for industry and construction.

The designing office of the Lvov Polytechnical Institute has already won popularity, because from the outset it has associated its activities with the vital needs of the city and region. The activities of the students' designing office are essentially connected with course papers and diploma design and are an inalienable part of the educational process.

Ever more complex and topical problems are being tackled by students' scientific societies. Conferences and discussions dealing with different questions of science and engineering have become an extensive practice, the themes for them being selected by the students themselves. In many higher schools the students publish their own symposiums, incorporating the best scientific investigations and papers of practical interest to the national economy.

The reorganization of higher schools is having a beneficial effect on the scientific activities of Soviet higher schools.

The Soviet higher schools foster extensive scientific and cultural co-operation with the higher schools of many foreign countries, and this co-operation is growing with every passing year.



# Have Indian Teachers Failed?

Report of a Symposium.

(Continued from page 240)

Shri Sovani, agreeing with the view that teachers were surrounded with great difficulties, said that they had done their best under the circumstances. The conditions in society today were horrifying and the teacher was struggling hard. Even then the public, parents and Government expected much from the teachers. They should first announce the conditions suitable for the efficient working of teachers. Shri Sovani, further, pointed out that life in the past was simple, but now had become complex. Today we were living in a mechanical age. Our values of life had changed. We were too busy in our life and had no time to look to other things. There were parents who did not even know in which standard their sons were studying. The students and teachers were using short cuts, 'notes' and 'keys', as they had no time to study more. Today the student thought that he was equal to teachers and some times even superior to him. So, such was the sad lot of teachers in the present time. Under the circumstances, what the teachers had done was more than enough. They were exercising all their might to fulfil the demands of society and the public and have not failed in their duty.

In the opinion of Shri R. P. Shrivastava, teachers in the present circumstances had failed in their duty. In ancient times, teachers were respected even by kings, due to their high qualities of head and heart. The teacher should realise his high position and must put an ideal before his students. History placed the excellent record of teachers before us. Shivaji was made by his teacher. Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave owed their greatness to their teachers. Shri Shrivastava further said that teachers were going away from their high moral ideals. There was no moral touch in the education of today.

The students were more after modern fashions. The teachers of the past had the ideal of 'simple living and high thinking' before them. They possessed great spiritual power and commanded respect everywhere. Today, for every trifling work, teachers were exploited. They were facing great financial difficulties. Even then, great responsibilities were thrust on their shoulders. There was great discrimination in education. Some were given freeships, others were required to pay fees. Concluding his talk, Shri Shrivastava said that under the present circumstances teachers had failed in their duty.

Principal Ramachandran said it was a happy sign that teachers had started self-criticism, which was very good. If they criticised themselves, there was greater possibility of their improvement. Teaching had been a different thing in different times. If we accepted that we had failed, we could still say that we had not totally failed. We must consider the reasons behind it, and after removing them, should try to achieve the objectives before us. There were many schools and many students these days. Also there were a number of objectives before us. It was our duty to try to achieve those objectives. Shri Ramachandran further went on to point out that teachers had shown improvement. With the changes in society, the teachers were trying to keep pace with them. They were trying to build up a democratic society. Teachers had love for higher humanity and democratic ways of life, and accordingly they were preparing the younger generation. Thus the teachers were progressing and had not failed in their duty.

Shri B. Singh in his talk said that statistics of schools and teachers spoke about the rapid growth of schools. The progress had been rapid in quantity but not in quality. Education was essentially a

slow process. It was not the work of a day. To achieve higher standards of education today, we had to reorientate the teachers first. The schools had to do the great task of preparing future citizens, which was possible only with the help of efficient teachers. In the rapid progress of opening schools, we could not expect good teachers. Moreover, who joined the teaching profession today? No judge or politician wanted his son to become a teacher. It was only the lowest class who joined this profession. Such persons did the work not with any high motive or ideal, but merely to earn their living. Shri Singh further said that the teacher had a position in every scheme. In fact, no scheme could be successful without the active cooperation and help of teachers. Today, we found people emphasizing furniture, books, syllabuses, buildings etc., but no emphasis was laid on teachers. The teachers were working in great difficulties. We were responsible for the type of production we were producing from our schools. The shortcomings must be removed by our united efforts. Unfortunately the teachers today were not united, and therefore they had failed in their duty.

Shri M. L. Pande said that before 1947 we had been slaves of foreign rule, and hence all our defects were the defects of foreign rule. The work done after the achievement of freedom could only be said to be our real work. The standard of our work could be judged by the type of students that came out of our schools. Today we had produced engineers, doctors, teachers etc., but unfortunately they were unable to compete with persons of foreign countries. There was always a mission before the teachers. They should go on making honest efforts to achieve it.

Mr. Pande said that the teachers might not have been fully successful in their mission, but we could not say that they had failed.

Prof. B. K. Dixit also stressed the point that teachers had played their part successfully in independent India. They had done their duties well and had helped a lot in creating a favourable atmosphere in schools. 'Social service' was one of the important duties of the present day youth of the country, and teachers had helped in preparing the ground for this. The teachers' work could not be judged merely from school results. It was seen both in and out of the school. Shri Dixit further said that, if other countries had gone ahead in the field of education, it did not mean that we were not doing our duties. We had successfully faced difficulties in the past, and were still making our way through the difficulties. We had tried our best. In the present circumstances the teachers had done their duty well and had successfully carried on their responsibilities.

At the end, Principal Yoganandam summed up the whole discussion and said that we must find out as to what was the duty of a teacher. Whatever the circumstances might be, if he had failed, it must be admitted that he had failed in his mission. He further said that the role of the teacher in society and in the peculiar circumstances of the country, could be judged from his competency. Experience showed that teachers were poor in quality and had badly failed in their duty and mission towards the country and the younger generation.

The Symposium came to an end after thanksgiving by Prof. Shamsuddin.

# Our Educational Diary

“ PEPYS ”

13-10-60. The State Government have revised the scale of pay for teachers in Local Boards and under private managements with retrospective effect from June 1.

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An S.I.T.U. Conference is to be held in December at Tanjore to press the demands of teachers regarding pay, dearness allowance, medical aid, house rent allowance and increase in pensions.

[I wish they would press for free education for the children of teachers till the highest level and the building of quarters for them in rural areas. Education takes the lion's share of the middle class man's income. And it is idle to expect a good educational standard in the villages, if the teachers are left to shift for themselves as regards their residence in the villages.]

o o o

Jagjivan Ram, the Railway Minister, speaking at Gandhigram, said that there was a great need for reorientation of University education, because it lacked intimate contact with life in rural India.

16-10-60. Sri Y. B. Chavan pleaded that English should be studied in the University along with Hindi; as English opened for us a gate to a vast wealth of knowledge and it was an international language.

20-10-60. The Sub-Committee of the National Service Committee has submitted a final report regarding the detailed programme of National Service on the lines of the recommendations of the latter committee. According to the report, the States' Secondary Education Boards may withhold certificates, if the

students do not undergo a nine-month course of National Service.

23-10-60. At a meeting of the Senate of the S. V. University, a resolution has been moved for raising the pay of college teachers and requesting the State Government to consider the resolution favourably.

26-10-60. Dr. Shrimali has appealed to the UNESCO to give priority to spreading universal primary education in the countries of Asia and Africa.

27-10-60. The Chief Minister of Kerala proposes to amend the controversial sections of the Education Act.

31-10-60. The Ceylon Government has taken over all denominational schools in the State in terms of the bill passed in that State. The Roman Catholic hierarchy has protested against this measure.

[This kind of omnibus State control over educational institutions can spell only disaster to the future of education in the States which pursue this policy. Anyday, privately managed schools do better than State schools.]

4-11-60. Speaking at New Delhi at the State Education Ministers' Conference, Dr. Shrimali made a fervent plea for the successful implementation of the Third Plan by making education free, compulsory and universal. He requested the State Governments to enact laws to achieve this end on the lines of the Delhi Act passed by the parliament. He pleaded that the basic salaries of primary untrained and trained teachers should be Rs. 40 and 50 respectively. In addition to dearness and house-rent allowances, their children

must be given *free tuition and special scholarships for higher education*. All this would make the teachers' profession a little more attractive. He laid special stress on science teaching in the secondary school as an urgent necessity. He also referred to the fact that in some cases teachers sought promotion as peons, as the latter were better paid. He admitted that the dearness allowances of teachers were the lowest, compared to those of all the classes of Government employees in all the States.

[This is the worst exposure that can be made of the educational policy of the Government from within and it demonstrates unmistakably in what regard members of the teaching profession have been held so far by the administration.]

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Dr. P. D. Shukla, the head of the Higher Education and Unesco Division of the Union Ministry of Education, had nothing but praise for higher education

by mail, and cited the examples of the Queensland and New South Wales Universities both of which maintain an External Studies Department. He said that there was no difference in standards as between internal and external students. He was impressed by the controls introduced to ensure that external students did not fall below the standard of the internal students. In fact, the experience at Australian Universities was that the external students were often more mature with a wider experience of life. They were more responsible, worked harder, and had a very clear objective in view.

[I wish Dr. Shukla had told about the controls he refers to, to maintain equality in standards. We often hear in India, that the standards are low in the case of external students. We could introduce the same methods here and establish External Study Departments in all the Universities of India. I have every hope that Dr. Shukla would help in spreading higher education by correspondence in India as in Australia.]

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## Educational in West Germany

M. S. V. CHARI, Tindivanam.

Here are the main features of the educational system prevailing in West Germany.<sup>o</sup>

The entire education extends over a thirteen-year period, consisting either of a four-year elementary schooling plus a nine-year secondary education or of a six-year elementary schooling plus a seven-year secondary education. Education is compulsory from 6 plus to 18 plus, and within this period, a full time school has to be attended for at least eight or nine years.

All-round education is a characteristic of the German school-system. From the first class to the last class in the high

school, instruction is given in all branches of knowledge. In the high school, science subjects are added to the curriculum. There is no specialisation in schools; each teacher is expected to teach three subjects, not one.

There are however two types of high schools. One type lays emphasis on the study of ancient languages, history, literature, and fine arts, though science subjects are not totally neglected. The other type lays emphasis on science subjects, although the humanities are not neglected. In the final examination, which is held after a four-year study in the elementary school and a nine-year study at the high school, a good standard



of efficiency is expected of the student in all these branches of knowledge, subject to a minimum of nine subjects. The student goes through a written test and a comparatively hard oral examination. The subjects in which a pupil is tested orally are not announced in advance. Those who pass the final examination are alone eligible for admission to the University. No fees are levied in the secondary schools.

The important points of the system are:

- (i) The span of education is thirteen years, and not 10 or 11, as it obtains in our country. (ii) The school-leaving age is 18 plus, which means that the student has attained

sufficient maturity of understanding and can therefore benefit from higher education. (iii) A final examination held after a four-year course of elementary education (iv) The high standard expected of the student, (iv) The oral test in unannounced subjects ensures a good study of all the subjects, and eleventh-hour cramming is rendered useless. (v) There is a choice given to the student in the number of subjects he has to prepare for, with a minimum of subjects to be chosen. This system approximates to the G.C.E. system in vogue in England. (vi) Free and compulsory education till the 18th year.

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## Culture, Discipline and Education

L. N. Gupta, M.A., B.Ed., Allahabad.

'We do not live only in order to survive and do not educate only in order to further survival; the essence of man lies in his desire for his life, not only as a mere biological datum, but as something which is worth having and which provides a reality that he can love for its inherent values'. These words of Robert R. Ulich indirectly indicate man's effort to develop his inherent values. Man in fact has a sum total of all his inherent qualities which we term as personality. Our prime aim of life is to evolve an all-round growth of personality. But we never think of those factors that help its growth. In reality, personality is a dynamic outcome of three factors—culture, discipline and education. Personality is an integrated whole, and on these factors depends the harmonious development of the integrated whole. Hence the individual has to adjust himself to his environmental situation, so as to achieve the proper growth and development of his personality. Needless to say,

the three factors—culture, discipline and education—help in this adjustment. If these three factors work together in good and proper harmony, there is every possibility of a balanced personality. The present chaotic situation is perhaps due to the misunderstanding of these three and their disunion. Hence society has thrown a challenge before the individual, and he has to accept that challenge and boldly come out successful. This is the need of the hour. It is, therefore, necessary to know these three and understand their mutual relationship and their share in the growth and development of personality.

### Culture

'Culture' is a word that has an extensive connotation. The *New English Dictionary* defines 'culture' as 'cultivation, tending, cultivating or development of mind, faculties, manners etc.' Tylor, the great authority on primitive culture, says,

"culture.....includes knowledge and habits acquired by man as a member of society". Actually, culture has two aspects, the material and the social. The social includes the individual also. In the material sense, culture represents simply biological growth. In the social sense, culture comprises of those customs, institutions, behaviour and conduct which, as instruments for satisfying human needs, help in the growth and development of man's personality in a refined manner. But these ingredients of culture are well organised, and that is why 'culture is a well organized unity', although divided into many factors. Looked at from an individual angle of vision: "Culture is the organization and maintenance of an abiding scale of sentiment values with a dominant master sentiment, which is never dethroned from its place of sovereignty. Culture is therefore the cultivation of the mind, of its fundamental innate inherited structure; in such a way as to evolve a permanent scale of values." These words of Prof. P. S. Naidu give a hint about the harmonious organisation of the inner and outer aspects of the organism, which in his opinion is essential to demarcate culture from civilisation. Such is the view of T. Linton, who said; "Cultures are, in the last analysis, nothing more than the organised repetitive responses of a society's members..... The real culture of any society consists of the actual behaviour and so on of its members." But all the behaviour of the individuals does not come under the purview of culture. In this regard, W. J. H. Sprott says: "Culture is nothing but such of their conduct as has social approval, as is recognized as the 'done thing'..... Culture is a fixed system of accepted behaviour to which the newcomer has to adjust himself....."

According to the above definitions, it can be said that culture has a very wide meaning. It comprises the physical, mental and even spiritual aspects of life, which go to make it a reality. That is the reason why we find in the *Encyclo-*

*paedia of Social Sciences*: "Culture is thus essentially an instrumental reality which has come into existence to satisfy the needs of man....." We can further add to it that culture is found in the harmonious growth of man, biologically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually; and in the synthesis of all these which is made explicit in socially accepted behaviour. In other words, we can say that culture is a growth of man's personality. It is a standard by which we judge worth and refinement.

### Discipline

If culture is a matter that concerns the refinement and improvement of both the individual and society, it must presuppose a discipline or an order, without which we can never call ourselves cultured. The dictionary meanings of 'discipline' are 'self-control, orderliness and efficiency, orderly conduct, a system of rules or methods, submissiveness to control, correction, branch of knowledge', etc. These meanings have been given in Webster's *20th Century Dictionary*. The root word comes from Latin, indicating learning for the sake of correction. We can therefore infer that discipline is not only an adherence to or following of orders or instructions, but consists in the way in which an individual expresses self-restraint and thereby, makes an effort to improve himself. This is the reason that idealism has laid the greatest emphasis on discipline, both internal and external. In disciplining the exterior, idealism stressed a rigorous and chaste life. This is best exemplified in *brahmacharya* and the *brahmacharya-ashram*. The internal discipline is the result of the chaste behaviour and conduct of the individual. The realization of truth, goodness and beauty is possible only through internal discipline. This being the *summum bonum* of life was the goal of idealism. It can therefore be said that the highest good of life can be achieved through discipline.

The aim of discipline is to make the individual and society also achieve refine-

ment. This can be very easily proved, if the question, why should an individual be disciplined or submissive to control is answered. The individual in society has to set right his conduct. Otherwise, it will not be socially acceptable. It makes it therefore necessary for the individual to behave in a disciplined manner. Another example can be put forth when some disciplinary action is taken against some individual on account of his behaving against the set system of rules or methods. Herein also the purpose is to correct the individual's behaviour so as to make him improved and refined. What about "a branch of knowledge" as one of the meanings of "discipline"? In fact, the set rules if applied to a specific field of knowledge, are known as discipline. Here also the same purpose is served and betterment results thereafter.

The above explanation shows that discipline is a sort of instrument to bring about refinement for growth and development. In other words, it can be said that discipline as a prerequisite for culture is nothing but growth to betterment. Nonetheless it has a definite shape or idealised form. It can therefore be concluded that discipline is a means to better adjustment as discipline entails the spirit to learn.

### Education

Having discussed the two factors of the individual's adjustment, we come to the third, viz., education. Education is a term which really has as many definitions as there are thinkers, but all the views conspire to one point at least; and that is that education is a dynamic process of development. Education, like the above two factors, is very essential for human beings. Man is a superior animal, and for maintaining this superiority, he is required to be highly educated. And education fulfills his ends. In the words of H. H. Horne, "The unfulfilled ends of his being are the increasing knowledge

of the truth, increasing wisdom in the application of his knowledge to the problems of living, increasing enjoyment of persons and things worthy of love and appreciation, increasing realisation of a proper organisation of mankind on the earth, increasing fulfilment of an unconditional obligation to know and to do the right, the increasing reverence for the spiritual realities of existence". This statement makes it clear that education fulfills all the ends of life, and all these ends lead to improvement.

Education really is a process of drawing out all that is in the individual, and this process ever goes on till the individual exists. It is also clear that man does not exist by himself, but in society. Education is then a life-long process of adjustment in society. "If we take education in this large sense," says Robert R. Ulich, "all life is education and nothing is exempt from it. It is the constant interaction among people and between people and the objective world." Education is therefore very important to social life. Without education, social life ceases to be. That is the reason why John Dewey says: "What nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life." Why is this education so vital to life in society? Because education really helps the individual to make efforts to adjust himself in order to have the personality qualities well expressed, developed and fashioned.

Education, being a process concerned with the growth and development of the individual, must not be thought of in terms of acquiring skill or knowledge of certain limited subjects alone, and its programme must have a very wide scope. Kilpatrick in this connection writes: "Any educational programme will thus be concerned to help each individual child grow up from his state of initial dependence into full participation in the richest available group life, including, in a democratic country, a full share in the active management of group affairs.

Such an adequate programme will, besides, go on further to an active effort to improve the group culture." These words suggest that "education should be thought of as the process of man's reciprocal adjustment to nature, to his fellows, and to the ultimate nature of the cosmos". (H. H. Horne). Similarly, another educationist opines that education is a process of development and adaptation in various ways to the physical, social and spiritual environment.

What is the purpose of this adjustment? In the words of Plato: "Education consists in giving body and soul all the perfection of which they are susceptible". According to Froebel: "The object of education is the realisation of a faithful, pure, inviolable and hence a holy life."

Nathaniel Butler says: "The purpose of a college education is to sharpen the axe to its keenest edge". The view of John Dewey is that education prepares the

individual for social participation and thereby moulds society and is affected by the social culture. By social participation, "the individual appropriates the purpose which actuates it, becomes familiar with its methods and subject matters, acquires needed skills, and is saturated with its emotional spirit". Again, in the opinion of Ashley Montagu, the purpose of education coincides with the functions of life. He stresses this in these words: "The function of human life is to live it in realisation and in harmony with the potentialities for being a good human being. And the only true education, in my opinion, consists in enabling each person to realise those potentialities to the fullest, as the unique person that he is, and as a member of the ever extending fellowship of persons". This statement verifies the idea that education aims at development of emotional and sentimental values or the effective side of human personality.

(To be continued)

## All India Educational Conference, Kanpur

### PLEASE NOTE :

Delegate fee is Rs. 5/-.

Please send it to a person nearest to your place. Refer to list below.

Every intending delegate must state in the delegate application form, whether he is a direct member or an indirect member. If he is an indirect member, he must state the name of the association through which he is an indirect member.

### DIRECT MEMBER

A Direct-Member is one who is an individual member or becomes one by paying Rs. 5/- as annual individual membership subscription.

### INDIRECT MEMBER

An indirect member of the AIFEA is one who is a member of an Association which is affiliated to the AIFEA.

### PERSONS APPOINTED FOR ENROLMENT OF DELEGATES

(1) Shri C. K. Sankholkar, 20-K, Hansrajwall, Kennedy Bridge, Bombay-4.

(2) Shri M. K. Banerjee, Rector, J. A. High School, Bally, (Distt. Howrah).

Shri S. P. Roy, Secretary, All Bengal Teachers' Association, 15 Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-12.

(4) Shri S. C. Sarkar 97/1, Madhusudan Biswas Lane, Howrah.

(5) Shri V. I. Joseph, GPST Office, Kottayam (Kerala).

(6) Shri A. P. Khattry 16/8 A, Civil Lines, Kanpur (U. P.)

(7) Shrimathi Minati Sen 18.B, Landsdown Terrace, Calcutta-26.

(8) Shri Jagadish Mishra, Secretary, Bihar Shikshak Sangh, Exhibition Road, Patna-1.

(9) Shri Mahendra Prasad, 23, Burdwan Compound, Ranchi.

(10) Shri A. K. Sen, Principal, Vidyasagar College, Suri (West Bengal).

(11) Shri B. N. Kulkarni, Superintendent, Bharat High School, 116, Raviwar Peth, Poona-2.

(12) Shri Ranganath Ayanagar S.I.T.U. Office, Raja Annamalaipuram, Madras-28.

(13) Rev. Fr. C. P. Saldhana, St. X'avers, Delhi-6.

(14) Shri D. H. Sahasrabuddhe, Dahake Plots, Dharampeth, Nagpur.

(15) Shri K. L. Pande, Naveen Vidya Bhawan.

Enrolment of delegates will begin from 15th November, 1960.

Kanpur Reception Committee Official Address

Shri Thakur Das Vaidya, President, District Madhyamik Shikshak Sangh, 17/11 Kusawan, Kanpur.

Subjects of Symposia  
General Sessions

### Education For Responsibility

Primary Education Section

Primary & Basic Education under the 3rd Five Year Plan.

OR

Necessity of uniform Basic pattern of Primary Education.

Teachers' Training Section

Means of ensuring greater cooperation between Training Institutions (Schools and Colleges) and Practising Schools.

Childhood and Home Education Section

Pre-Primary Education under the Third Five Year Plan.

Vocational & Technical Education Section

The necessity of providing for part-time Technical Education.

Public and Residential Secondary Schools Section

Public and Residential Schools and better human relationship.

Moral and Religious Education Section

Report of the Moral and Religious Education Committee.

Women's Education Section

Education of women in changing India.

Education for Peace Section

Promotion of better relationship and understanding between India and her immediate neighbours through education.

Sanskrit Education Section

(a) Methods for making Sanskrit liked by students.

(b) Is compulsion necessary for the study of Sanskrit?

Adult Education Section

Role of Secondary Schools in Adult Education.

Teacher Welfare Section

Teacher Welfare schemes in different States.

### CHAIRMEN ELECT AT SECTIONAL CONFERENCES.

Primary & Rural Education Section

Shri J. P. Naik, Adviser (Basic Education) to the Govt. of India Ministry of Education, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

Secondary Education Section

Shri Mumtazuddin, Secretary, M. P. Board of Secondary Education, Bhopal.

University Education Section

Shri G. D. Parikh, Rector, Bombay University, Bombay-1.

Teachers' Training Section

Dr. A. Mishra, Principal, Prantliya Shiksha Mahavidyalaya, Jabalpur.

Childhood and Home Education Section

Shri S. N. Namle, Principal, Shishu Vihar, 118, Hindu Colony, Dadar, Bombay-14.

Aboriginals Education Section

(Adimjati Education Section) Shri N. V. alias Nana Bapat, Vanavasi Sewa Mandal, Mandla (M. P.)

Adult Education Section

Shri S. S. Aiyar, Zavar Vihar Brahmanwada Rd., Matunga, Bombay-19.

*Library Section*

Shri S. Bashiruddin, Aligarh University,  
Aligarh.

*Jha Memorial Lecture*

Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, Director, Institute

of Economic Growth, University of  
Delhi, Delhi.

A. I. F. E. A. News.

Sri C. Subramaniam, Education  
Minister, Madras, will preside over the  
Conference.

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## EDITORIAL

### Linguism and the Universities

On the 8th and 9th of this month, the Vice-Chancellors of the southern Universities (namely Andhra, Annamalai, Karnataka, Kerala, Madras, Mysore, Osmania and Sri Venkateswara) met at Madras and discussed several matters of common interest. Their weighty pronouncement on the medium of instruction at the University stage deserves widespread attention.

It is their considered view that it will be hazardous to change over to the regional language from English at this stage, without adequate safeguards. They are against any change in regard to post-graduate studies. So far as scientific, technological and professional studies are concerned, they consider it a retrograde step to change the medium of instruction, in view of the quantity and quality of the personnel required for urgent national work. Even in regard to humanities, they point out that the subjects are complex and do not allow themselves to be rendered easily into regional languages.

In this context, the Universities, being academic bodies primarily concerned with the maintenance of standards, wish to lay down clearly conditions for permitting instruction through the regional language. These include (i) the availability of good up-to-date text-books and reference-books—not mere translations from English—in the regional language; and (ii) the availability of competent teachers, qualified to teach in regional languages. A necessary corollary is that the universities must have an opportunity to view the degree courses as a whole and must have before them

text books for entire courses before allowing this 'hazardous experiment'.

The conference also deprecated the use of pressure or compulsion on colleges to adopt the regional languages as the medium of instruction: "this changeover in the medium of instruction, if attempted at all, should be purely on a voluntary basis, the college concerned being given the option for adopting the regional language as the medium of instruction in selected subjects in the humanities" Moreover, "with any change in the medium of instruction adopted, emphasis should be laid on the study of English and on the maintenance of high standards in English" so that, for a long time to come students might have "the facility to consult books in English."

Recent events in various States like Gujarat and Madras have underlined the need for the safeguards advocated by the southern Vice-Chancellors. We would urge that the question involved here is not merely that of the maintenance of standards, highly important as it is. Tinkering with the medium of instruction will also destroy what little unity India has been maintaining during these difficult years of linguistic and communal rivalries. This was forcibly brought out by Dr. Suniti Kumara Chatterjee, the chairman of the West Bengal Legislative Council, at a meeting recently held at Madras under the auspices of the Sahitya Academy. He showed how false it would be to denounce the study of English as damaging to national sentiments. It would not replace the study of the mother-tongue but would come to its help as a feeder and a complement.

### Academic Freedom

It is significant that the convocation address at three southern Universities—Annamalai, Kerala and Karnataka—lay stress on academic freedom. The time-spirit seems to be against it!

Dr. Subbaroyan at Annamalainagar (November 23) emphasised alike the need for academic freedom and a broad-national outlook. He was pained at manifestations of linguistic and communal fanaticism and exhorted the students to prepare themselves to meet the exacting demands of the next decade, which might well prove to be the most momentous in history.

Dr. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar at Dharwar (November 24th) declared: "Nothing can be more disastrous to the development of sound higher education than the ill-advised interference of political heads in purely administrative matters." He quoted Gokhale's criticism of Lord Curzon's Indian Universities Act in 1904 and suggested that it was applicable to the present deplorable trend in independent India to ride roughshod over Universities.

Sri V. V. Giri at Trivandrum (November 24th) uttered a grave warning against the intrusion of politics into Universities. "The teachers," he said, "like the *acharyas* of old, should pay their undivided attention to students and inculcate in them the scientific spirit of free thinking and should themselves shun politics totally. The politicians too should consider it their sacred duty to preserve the autonomy in the Universities and treat them as 'out of bounds' for their political game. Students should not be made pawns in their political chess-board."

Serious as these authoritative warnings are, they may not be able to stem the tide of political interference in education. The next few years will be decisive in the matter. The nationalisation of schools in Ceylon, in spite of protest from the religious and cultural minorities affected, shows which way the wind is blowing. The battle for academic freedom and for the rights of parents to educate children in schools of their choice will have to be fought over once more against the levianthan of the omnipotent and omnicompetent modern State.

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## Libraries A Dire Necessity Today

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All over the world today, libraries are playing a very vital and significant role in the building up of a healthy and progressive community. India's efforts at progress and prosperity must be backed up by an ever-widening provision of library facilities.

The old concept of the library has altogether changed, and now it is considered an important part of social education. Consequently, it has been termed as a social organisation charged with the work of providing inspiration, recreation and information through the recorded material, i.e., books. Now, a library is not merely a place where books are preserved for the sake of pride of

possession or sale, and a librarian is not a mere custodian of books. The modern concept of a library is that of a temple where people should come and seek knowledge contained in the kindred material available therein in the form of books, periodicals and newspapers.

Previously, our country was under foreign rule and we were born slaves. But now the present generation of children is treading the soil of freedom and with the banner of freedom streaming over their heads. This freedom, being the precious gift of valiant fighters and selfless martyrs, needs to be nurtured and revitalised. This can be done, only if our next generation becomes truly educated.

It is believed that better life is the ulterior motive of all education. i. e., social, religious or cultural. The inert and ignorant masses must be quickened into life and zest. All national planning has the welfare of the common man as its objective. The five-year plans in progress lay stress upon social progress through education in rural areas. The target can only be achieved by efficient and progressively organised library service.

Libraries play a distinct and dynamic role in the community, as these are educative agencies. Now it has been stressed that public libraries should collaborate with and complement the national campaign against illiteracy. That can be made practicable, if the publication of appropriate reading material is stimulated. In order to achieve this purpose, good libraries, with adequate trained staff having intimate knowledge of the community, are required. In this way, improvements in the economic field would be experienced by providing self-education to improve upon home welfare and by teaching women the art of cooking, sewing and child care, and the rural folk the latest means of more yield or production by scientific development towards agricultural mechanisation. Such a type of library movement, in right earnest, should be begun as early as possible.

In order to bring out such a perspective of rural library service, the social, physical and cultural factors are to be surveyed. India's future depends upon the uplifting of rural life, which has to be surveyed, and the librarian should be included in the team working for this contemplated survey. He would develop contacts with the community leaders, institutions and bodies used by the people for social and religious functions. Librarians can use the congregational place—social, religious, educational or administrative—to carry out their survey work. They should scrupulously avoid political contests, so that no class or community may look upon their work as prejudicial to their interests.

After the establishment of such a community centre, reading material may be provided. In the field of education,

audio-visual material is also increasing, and it may be amply used. The discussion groups should be coordinated with the work of government agencies for health, education and panchayats etc.

The central government has been taking the best possible measures to develop the library service, and Rs. 140 lakhs were provided in the second five-year plan for library development. The integrated library scheme envisages the development of a network of libraries in each state or linguistic region, with the central state library as the apex of the system and the district library as the main distributory of library service. Rs. 88,91,499/- were sanctioned during the first five-years plan period for library development.

There is even now a great paucity of suitable books for the neo-literates who are being made literate. If suitable books commensurate with the age and experience of these grown up neo-literates, are not forthcoming, they would relapse into illiteracy. So workshops for the production of such literature, and the facility to place this type of literature within the easy reach of the people are two of our urgent needs. Mobile library vans under the charge of experienced and trained librarians can keep the neo-literates in proper trim.

In short, we can say that a library, being a social institution, is charged with serving books for self-education and self-entertainment of the masses and for the conservation of social energy in the pursuit of knowledge. In India, about 8% of the people are still illiterate. Though it has managed polling without literacy, it cannot use its independence effectively without liquidating the appalling illiteracy. Adequate literature in large quantities is required to wipe out illiteracy. A wide range of reading materials is required for a population of 135 millions, of whom 80% are totally illiterate. Now, India is bubbling with new life.

In view of the above, we can posit the suggestion that Libraries are a 'must' for India's future development to enable it to claim an honourable place in the community of nations.