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Home Truths about English

By

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English studies in our country to-day are in an awful pickle for various reasons, and those of us who have a stake in the matter must put the question in our pipes and smoke it. In the midst of provocative impertinences, uttered everyday by the detractors of English in our country, who shake their heads and say that the retention of English is slavery, one finds it difficult not to bristle up for a mortal combat. Yet, more battles have been won with the pen than with the sword. It is wise to love English amidst hot disputants, as Colonel Michael O'Dowd loves his pipe in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* when he faces the battery of his vixenish wife's tongue. One should love something queerly in order to get over the immediate vexations which come to his door to spoil that thing. Colonel Michael O'Dowd's devotion to his pipe is that queer kind of love. It must be remembered that to love wisely is not to love at all, and to love too well is the flaw of all real lovers. It is indeed strange that, when we love too well, we are very likely sometimes to commit a few murders in the company of Othello or Porphyria's lover to glorify that divine passion. Take, for example, Dickens. I love him as squirrels love nuts, not wisely but too well. The result is that when I read him and get fully into his grip, I feel like shooting down a few fellows under the

immediate spell of *Oliver Twist* or *Pickwick Papers*. The fellows may be quite innocent, but I don't care because the devil is in me. This may look a little bloodthirsty, and certainly queer. But if Dickens could not make you a trifle queer with an occasional itching for murder, you are a numskull and deserve to be shot. And in fact I have been assiduously searching for that queer kind of English teacher, who will shoot a few fellows around his college in order to show his pupils not the art of murder but the power of Dickens, and when I find him, I will hang on to his coat-tails, absolutely worship him, sit at his feet and will be delighted to be kicked by him. Conversely, I would shun the silly goose who teaches Dickens always by peaceful means.

These homicidal suggestions are likely to bring the hearts of some of my fellow teachers of Dickens into their mouths, and what is more embarrassing, they are likely to set the police after me. Let me tell the police that my object is only to say that English literature is such a jolly good show that although

The gatling is jammed, and the Colonel dead,
England is far, and honour a name,

I will not give up the battle against the hooters of English in our country, and, like the unknown schoolboy rallying the ranks amidst the red ruin in the desert,

will cry to all the erect-headed men in our country:

"Play up! Play up! and play the game."

But let us look for a moment at the reverse of the medal. Dr. Johnson once declared that the cow is a very good animal in the field, but we drive her out of the garden. This argument comes pat to my mind when I think of the question, what we should do about English to-day in India. It seems to me extremely wholesome that English should go out of our Government offices, and stay only in our Universities. A pernicious weed that has grown rank in our public cutcheries, as everyone knows, is Bumbledom, and Mr. Bumble who rules there is an offshoot of the English language. He was installed there under the Anglo-Indian name of 'Sahib' or 'Burra Sahib.' Known by this title, he has been brought up on similar pampering words like "Bungalow," "Chaprasi," "Mem Sahib," "Chota Hazri," etc. These words were mere words to the Englishman who governed us, and he made no fuss about them. But the average Indian official even to-day—there are a great many honourable exceptions whom I do not mean at all—clings fondly to these Anglo-Indian vestiges of an alien ascendancy and struts about in the twilight of these words. If our humanity is outraged by words like "Coolie" (a labourer), "Pariah" (a person of low caste in South India), "ghetto," etc., and if we used to be shocked sometime ago by words like "Native" and "Untouchable", I wonder how our democratic sensitiveness swallows names set afloat by a class-conscious foreign bureaucracy. One has to be a little frank in these matters. Without mincing matters, let us be manly enough to admit that these words of an English overlordship and class-superiority, though undoubtedly of a Hindi origin, have associations with a psychology which should be speedily liquidated. While the whole of mankind in India is content with living in dwellings humbly called houses, the Indian Jack-in-office still itches to be

distinguished as a bungalow-dweller, obviously because the word "bungalow" is an aristocratic word with its English association. We all know very well that there are to-day many English-speaking Indians who talk of their office *chaprasi* as an English country squire of the eighteenth century would have talked of his footmen.

If the tradition of Bumbledom is to be ousted and a true spirit of public service and dedication has to be fostered through the growth of healthy ideas, if old values are to be rung out and new values to be rung in, it is very necessary that Mr. Bumble should lose the invisible diadem which he now wears with such Anglo-Indian words writ large upon it. The best way to denude his head is to disabuse his mind of the idea that he is a special brand of Indian, manufactured for a special mission in Indian cutcheries, and tell him plainly that he is mere Swadeshi. Now if English is taken away from the Indian cutcheries and Hindi is substituted, that fine gentleman, Mr. Bumble, will be reduced to a less fashionable Hindi-speaking and Hindi-writing Swadeshi official. I look forward to a miraculous change, when the Hindi-writing official comes and the English-writing official goes, and when English will be written in our country, not by the official in the cutchery, but by the student of that noble language in the University. English can then be rightly taught in our Universities as a part of an Indian gentleman's liberal education.

To drive home into the head of the fussy Indian the important truths that his dwelling is not a "bungalow," but just a house, that he is not a "Sahib," but just a public servant like his own office *chaprasi*, and that footmen are obsolete to-day, the best disciplining method is to cut him off from English and make him earn his bread in the cutchery through Hindi, a language which his *chaprasi* speaks in common with him. There is all the difference in the world

between using the word "Saab" in the homely Hindi way and using the same word in the swell English way in cutcherries. A linguistic fellowship through an Indian language between the Saheb and the chaprasi in the cutchery and between the Saheb and the citizen outside will establish a spirit of joint endeavour in carrying out the day-to-day work of the country; and will bring the Saheb a step down the ladder and take the chaprasi a step up the ladder of human relations. The brotherhood which English destroyed for some years between the privileged and the under-privileged in our society will be surely restored on the very day, when the big and the small are linguistically united in the process of bread-winning. A common medium of expression between the fortunate and the unfortunate in the ordinary intercourse of life will make the former a little less ostentatious and will enable the latter to feel a little less lost. Differences will be equitable and not merely traditional. When Hindi flows from the mouth and the pen of the Indian official, I expect that he will be a more unassuming comrade in the cutchery, just plain homespun stuff, speaking and writing the language of millions with no airs and capers. Perhaps he has already

started coming down from the clouds, as some people tell me, but I don't believe that the process will ever consummate, unless Hindi or any other Indian language replaces English in the cutchery. It is then that a real transformation will set in, and eventually outlandish words like 'Saheb' and 'Bungalow' will sound pseudo-aristocratic and shabby-genteel in India. The use of an Indian language in the public business of the country, particularly in the lower levels of administration in which the average villager ought to be able to make himself an intelligent and significant factor, will put an end to the tragedy that the public administration in our country is a dark mystery understood by the greatest section of the public themselves.

But Dr. Johnson admitted that the cow is a lovable animal in the field, although we drive her out of our gardens. I should like to ask. Is there anything in our Universities as lovable as English literature from the standpoint of a liberal education? The greatest excellences the human spirit has disclosed shine through it, and the vision of greatness which it puts into us is our best education. As "belles lettres," English should continue to educate us and mellow our lives.

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See article in the *Educational Review* (Nov., 1958) pp. 204-206. For the name and address of the representative of the GOOD PARENTS GROUP nearest to you, please write for the free Brochure of the Population Essay Contest.

The Indian Heritage*

By

The Rt. HON'BLE MALCOLM MACDONALD
High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in India, New Delhi

It is a pleasure and honour to leave the steaming plains round Delhi to-day to climb into the cool hills and join in the Speech Day celebrations at this famous school. It is a particular privilege to present the prizes to those who won them, and to say words of encouragement to those who almost won them—which is all the rest of you.

When I was a schoolboy in England, Speech Day orators used to lecture us about the glories of our country, Britain. They used to wrap themselves, so to speak, in the Union Jack and in patriotic harangues tell us young whippersnappers to make sure that, so long as we remained alive, Britannia should continue to rule the waves.

Well, things have changed a bit since those days. Nevertheless, I would have been happy to follow their examples to-day, and to tell you about the continuing, though changed and in some ways, I think, finer, greatness of my homeland, Britain. But I should like, instead, to say a few things to you about your homeland—India. It also is a country of which one can be very glad and proud to be a citizen. And you can feel particularly glad to be young citizens of India—schoolboys with almost your whole lives before you—for during your lifetimes India's sons will have great work to do in her service.

I am not an Indian, but a stranger in India. I have lived here for only three years; so I can observe India with a somewhat detached mind and more or less objective eyes. There are many things that I have learned to like about India.

A BEAUTIFUL LAND

First, India is a vastly beautiful land. On this subcontinent natural beauty takes many varied forms in different regions. Here, at Bishop Cotton School, you live on a spur of the Himalayas, perhaps the grandest, most majestic cluster of mountain ranges in the world. Elsewhere in India, on an equally large scale, are fertile plains where bullocks are harnessed to till the soil, arid deserts where camels are the beasts of burden, wild forests where tigers roam at will, wide rivers filled with teeming multitudes of fish, tropical strands where padi-birds wing through the landscapes, ice-capped peaks where perhaps the Abominable Snowman occasionally wanders, and sweeping shores visited by ships from all round the Earth. Yes, on the face of Mother India we can see many beautiful moods.

India is also a land which has been drenched and constantly refreshed and reinvigorated by a long, eventful history. For several thousand years, communities of men and women have lived here, cultivating their fields, fostering industries, practising arts and crafts, creating indigenous cultures. Sometimes they quarrelled and fought amongst themselves, and at other times they were overrun by foreign invaders. Always the stronger groups strove to impose themselves and their customs on weaker groups, and so there was a perpetual mixing and changing and fermenting of ideas.

Through dozens of centuries empires rose and fell, a succession of heroes left their personal marks on the country's progress, and a variety of civilizations

*Speech at the Bishop Cotton School, Simla, on September 6.

flourished. As a result of all those processes India has become the home of people of many different races speaking numerous, diverse tongues and following several distinct religions. There is no uniformity, no monotony about India. Like its great variety of landscapes, its variety of peoples is one of the riches of the nation.

WORKS OF ART

There is another thing that I admire about India. As I have mentioned, in the course of their development the Indian peoples produced a series of cultures, and those cultures have left the Indians of to-day a heritage of splendid works of art. The Buddhist frescoes painted on the walls of the caves at Ajanta, the sculptures on Hindu temples at Mahabalipuram, Elephanta, Konarak and countless other places, the architecture of Moghul palaces and forts in cities like Delhi and Agra, the ancient bronzes of Southern India, the court paintings of princely States in Rajasthan and elsewhere, the fine schools of dancing represented by Bharata Natyam, Kathakali, Kathak and Manipuri, and the traditional music from all over India—these and other of India's arts are manifestations of the lively, glowing genius of a highly civilized people. They are gifts from India's past generations to India's present generation, which should be a profound inspiration to you.

But the finest gift that your ancestors bequeathed to modern India—your India—is not that magnificent collection of artistic works in paint or stone or marble, but certain human qualities that they have passed down by heredity to their descendants—qualities that flow in the blood of most Indians.

I have mentioned some of India's cultural wealth, and it is true that this land possesses an immense amount of rich artistic treasure. Yet another feature of India is the distressing material poverty of many people in it. Economically India is

underdeveloped, is poor, and large numbers of its 400,000,000 citizens have a very low standard of living. That is a fact that friends of India can never ignore; and it is a tremendous challenge to you, young educated Indians. I hope that already some of you feel a compassionate desire to help to uplift the standard of living of the mass of your compatriots.

PEOPLE'S CHARACTER

But if the Indian *kisans*, the Indian artisans, the Indian masses are materially poor, and if most of them are devoid of book learning, nevertheless they have something else which is a possession of priceless worth. They are men and women with strong, enduring, reliable characters.

The virtues of India's hundreds of millions of humble villagers and townsfolk are the country's fundamental wealth. You can see their character in their faces. I remember watching it, and then marvelling at it, and afterwards feeling great confidence in it one morning in a certain state capital when I inspected a huge new official building in process of construction there. About four thousand ordinary Indian men and women were working on the job as busily as swarms of bees, carrying bricks, raising scaffoldings, mixing cement, carving stones and performing a score of other manual tasks. I gazed at their faces. Some were very good-looking, some were plain and others were rather ugly; but all of them were full of character.

Written on those faces I saw simplicity, modesty, good humour, self-respect, an infinite capacity for endurance, innate intelligence, and a power of affection which were very moving. No doubt there were traits of foolishness in them too, as there are in all of us—but those faces of several thousand typical Indians portrayed some of the qualities of a race naturally endowed with human greatness.

Since then I have often watched the faces of India's workers in many parts of the country, and always been similarly impressed by them. Those faces are what I like best of all about India; and they are an element which makes me, for one, feel hopeful and confident when I speculate as to whether the future destiny of the Indian nation is to be great or small.

LEAD TO ASIA

Today India is at another turning point in her long story. Indeed, History with a capital "H" is now being made on a grand scale in your country. Only 11 years ago, after several generations of British rule, the Indian people gained their national independence. And at the same time they did a great deal more than that. By winning their own freedom they set an example to other Asian peoples who had lived for long under foreign administrations. During those years I was in Malaya, Indonesia, Burma, Indo-China and other lands in Southern Asia, and I saw the infectious, liberating effects that India's successful national crusade for independence had on them. As a result many of their peoples, too, won independence.

In the last dozen years 10 new nations have been created in Southern Asia; 10 old colonial governments have disappeared and in their places 10 national Asian governments occupy the seats of power. It is a political revolution on a continental scale—and in the vanguard, at the head of that wide-sweeping movement of Asian peoples striving for freedom, marched India.

Many factors enabled the Indian people to make that powerful contribution to human affairs during the early years of your lives. One was that—as so often in her history—India was led by great men. There was Mahatma Gandhi; there was Rabindranath Tagore; there was Sardar Patel; there were others; there is still Jawaharlal Nehru. By any standard they are giants.

But few men see the work that they begin completed in their own lifetimes; it has to be continued by others. And the work that those great Indians started is still far from fulfilled; their purposes must be pursued unceasingly through many years, if the dream that they dreamt of a renewed great India is to come entirely true. That is work for you, and for other of India's present-day school boys, to do when you go out into the world as men.

TOLERANCE AND BROTHERHOOD

As I have said, vast numbers of your fellow countrymen have had little or no chance of education. They are fine men and women, but they need leadership if the splendid qualities innate in them are to be mobilized to maintain a united, harmonious and great Indian nation. You—who come from various places and circumstances—have one advantage over most of them; you are at a good school, you are receiving an enviable education. One day, if you take proper advantage of that education, and prove worthy, you will be in positions of leadership in India.

You will not necessarily be in the posts of top leadership in the government—although I seem to recognize one or two budding Prime Ministers here!—but you will be in places of high authority in your professions, in the world of arts, in the realms of science, in business, in politics, or in whatever other spheres you choose for your careers. You are fortunate to be educated young Indians in these times, when there will be so many important opportunities to serve your country and your fellow-men.

It is no business of mine to tell you what ideals you should try to uphold when you play your parts as leaders in India. That will be for you to decide when the time comes. But let me just mention one matter. India's population is a mixture of peoples speaking many different languages, belonging to numerous distinct castes, and following various

religions. In some ways India is a model of a land where those different communities live in tolerance, peace and brotherhood together. In your India of the future, uphold that precious harmony. It is not only essential to the continued unity of India, but it also makes India a valuable example to other nations of that friendly co-operation between men of different races, creeds and cultures on which alone a peaceful and progressive human civilization can be built on this Earth.

Child — The Humanitarian

By

“GAURANGA”

It is often quoted children are gifts from God; and so true it is too! It is not always that a mother can expect a safe and happy childbirth.

The birth of a child, especially the first one, is of great significance in the life of his parents.

A famous psychologist once expressed his theory that after a marriage takes place, it requires three years for the husband and wife to understand each other thoroughly and mutually. Even in cases of love-marriages, which others suppose to be happy ones, one cannot be too prematurely sure that the marriage would last long and happily.

It is a common trait in man inherited from his forefathers to have a suspicious tendency which does not always make any concessions even towards his wife. Similarly, the wife too nourishes secretly certain misgivings about her marriage.

After all, it is but natural and human on the part of each sex to have some misgivings because a marriage requires one's lifetime to live out.

It is sadly noted that often marriages do not prove to have the desired effect. Misunderstandings between the husband and wife, petty as they are, nevertheless have caused disruption in their happy wedlock, resulting in separation, at times,

which is both heartbreaking and humiliating to both the persons concerned, especially when to-day one has to watch society with a wary eye, lest one's actions should be subject to free criticism and uninvited comments, bluntly known as “gossip”.

Is it not a fact, as is evident from the everyday lives of many people we know and see around us, that childless couples undergo more ordeals and tortures of the married life than those with children do?

Children play the most important part on earth and a primary role in the lives of their parents.

The birth of a child denotes prosperity and insures lifetime happiness to the parents. Both the father and the mother have an equal share of the gigantic responsibility in the upbringing of the child.

A child in the family brings his parents closer and simultaneously gives birth to a mutual bond of lifelong love and a sense of security to the parents concerned. The parents realise that each of them requires the assistance of the other in bringing up their child happily.

It has always been a supreme bliss to the parents to watch their child grow up, learn to utter syllables, crawl on his stomach, and later, as he advances in months and years, learn to lisp, walk, sing and perform tricks,

In these preliminary stages, the child, untrained and untutored as he is at birth, picks up the language and actions observed by him.

Since the parents are often the only persons concerned in a child's conception of his tiny world, he grasps and later imitates the words and actions uttered or performed by his parents.

Similarly, as he grows up, he picks up hereditary traits, some of them good and some, sadly enough, bad.

Good habits that parents can inculcate in a child are, undoubtedly, (i) belief in God—to give him a sense of security to guide him when he grows up and cannot always look upon his parents for refuge; (ii) cleanliness, which associates with a perfect health to ensure a concrete future; and (iii) good manners, which bring him in return good friends who may stand by him when he needs them.

Seriatim: (i) Belief in God is always advisable in every family. God stands for goodness and truth and non-violence. Belief in God is always accompanied by conscience which makes the individual repent for any wrong committed or inflicted upon another, and warns him not to repeat it again.

(ii) Cleanliness pertains not only to one's body, but also to one's mind. Purity in thought, word and deed can

always bring the child dividends a hundredfold.

The advisability of cleanliness of the body should also be emphasized to a young tender mind, explaining in detail and with diligent patience why one should always be clean, more because of its hygienic background. Compulsion used gently can produce better results than force does.

(iii) Good manners consist of many aspects, each of a different nature, that stand by him more when he is an adult than when he is a child when his mistakes are overlooked. Politeness, unselfishness, control of temper, an accommodating nature, regular habits regarding food and sleep, and kindness are some of those aspects that constitute good manners in an individual.

It all depends on the parents to incorporate the above exemplaries in their own actions in the child's presence, so that he may imitate and adopt them in his own life.

Children always bring with them an everlasting security to the parents. Children, in their own little mite, do ever so much for the parents. Surely, when parents are so immensely obligated to them, is it not the child's birthright to claim in return an equal or greater portion of the parent's endeavours to assure the child's happiness for a lifetime?

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Educational Films for India

By

Dr S R RANGANATHAN

[The evolution of seeing—technique in formal education is traced. The dangers of foreign educational films are stressed. The competence of Indian teachers to write production scripts for educational films is demonstrated by the description of three simple scripts. Traces the poor output of the teaching profession in the pre-Gandhian period to the make-up of classes almost solely by highly intellectual pupils. Stresses the throw-forth of competent creative teachers in the Gandhian period which has universal education as the objective. Deplores the present neglect of Indian talents in the production of educational films. Looks forward to the throw-forth at the helm of affairs of a statesman who will harness India's talents.]

1. Seeing - Technique in Teaching

Education has to be transmissive as well as creative. The personality of the teacher and the general organisation of school-work go a long way in creative education. Transmissive education and its efficiency depend largely on the teaching technique employed and the aids used for transmitting information to the pupils. Reaching the memory and the intellect via spoken or written words is the oldest known technique in formal education. Enrichment of memory and intellect by seeing and doing has been all along informal. About a century ago, an attempt was made by Birckbeck to use the technique of doing in formal teaching. Laboratory and field methods have now come to be widely practised, as a result of this pioneering attempt of Birckbeck. Visits to museums and art-galleries and excursions were the forms taken by the seeing-technique in formal education, a short time after the laboratory technique established itself. But these two seeing-techniques are costly, consume much time, and disturb the normal rhythm of school-work. Still pictures had therefore been used as a poor substitute. Recently, the advancement in the technology of moving pictures has made seeing-technique possible even in the daily and hourly work of the class-room.

2. Dangers of Foreign Educational Films

But India depends on foreign educational films. This means a drain on our foreign exchange resources, which we can

ill afford. Further, the setting of the foreign films is naturally foreign to our pupils. This foreign setting runs the risk of producing in the minds of our children a sense of unreality—not unlike a mythological setting. Thus, both from the economical and the educational points of view, it is a necessity for India to produce her own educational films. The production of these films in India requires technicians and the producers of scripts. The cinema industry has resulted in the diversion of some of our own countrymen to the technique of producing moving pictures. The only handicap is for the producer of educational films to compete with the cinema-producers in attracting the services of technicians, by the offer of competitive emoluments.

3. Writers of Production-Scripts

With regard to the producers of scripts and the selection and the atomising of the information to be transmitted to the pupils, so as to conform at the same time to the psychology of teaching and to the needs of the shooting of pictures, the producers of the scripts for cinemas may not be suitable. It is the members of the teaching profession—and there, too, teachers of long experience—that should come forward and learn the technique of producing scripts. It is not wise for our Ministries of Education to depend on foreign films. They should exert themselves in spotting out proper script-writers among those actively engaged in teaching and among those who have just been

superannuated from active teaching work. The Indian genius has sufficient resilience to throw forth competent script-writers for educational films, with effective Indian background, so as to make the films real and natural to our pupils.

4. Examples of Production-Scripts

It has been a matter of delight to find two such veteran teachers. A perusal of the scripts written out by Sri H. S. Raghavendra Rao and T. S. Seetharama Rao of the Mysore Educational Service ought to convince the Educational Ministers in the Centre and in the Mysore State that they can freely draw upon indigenous talents for the production of educational cinema-scripts. I do hope that they will not lose sight of this fact.

4-1. Production-Script on Rule of the Road

One of the scripts of the above-mentioned two authors is on the Rules of the Road, as a part of civics. It is likely to lend itself to an effective cinema-reel to make the teaching of the subject realistic.

4-2. Production-Script on History of Mysore

The second script is on the history of Mysore during the periods of Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan. If the script can be translated into a film, the teaching of certain topics in history can be lifted from the range of rote memory. The script will facilitate the teaching of most of the successes and reversals of the two heroes in a graphic way. The scripts even bring out, in a clever way, the impact of world affairs and of the intrigues within India, which shaped Indian history in the eighteenth century. After seeing the films, the pupils can very well be helped to describe the flow of events in their own language. This will incidentally make the lessons in composition also realistic. These lessons often involve abstract topics, far beyond the comprehension of the average pupil. On the other hand, describing what they have seen should come more naturally to such pupils. Thus, at one stroke, history as well as composition can be taught with the aid of the

seeing-technique of the post-cinema days. It is likely that many such multi-purpose cinema-scripts can be produced by our teachers.

4-3. Production-Script on Black-Board Technique

The third script is turned on the teachers themselves, at the stage at which they train themselves for the teaching profession. It is on the black-board technique in class-work. It is a matter of experience that pupil-teachers find it difficult to carry in their memory the different kinds of black-boards to make a realistic comparison of their efficiency in different situations in teaching technique. Perhaps, many of our training colleges and schools do not find it possible to have an exhaustive collection of different kinds of black-boards. In either case, the cinema reel based on the script by these two teachers will go a long way in giving a realistic picture of all the problems connected with black-board technique in class-room work.

5. Handicap of the Teachers of Pre-Gandhian Period

This note of appreciation of the local efforts towards the widespread introduction of the new cinema-form of the seeing-technique in teaching should emphasise the appropriateness — nay, even the necessity — of the educational business concerns turning their attention to harness the creative ability now becoming visible in our own teachers in order to prepare the teaching profession to receive the children belonging to the lower intellectual strata and to teach them effectively. In the pre-Gandhian period, it was only the top ten per cent in the intellectual scale that came to the formal school. Those pupils would have sprouted, whatever be the teaching technique used. They had sprouted, even in spite of bad teaching-methods. It was the presence of such top-children almost, to the exclusion of those of lower intellectual order, that had crippled the teaching profession and disabled it from

doing anything original in teaching technique. In such children, senses, memory, intellect, imagination, and creative impulse—all work in unison in their native state of intimate correlation. Their education is largely self-education. The teacher's part is not much.

6. Opportunity to Teachers in the Gandhian period

But to-day we have already begun to draw pupils from the lower intellectual strata. Their learning has to be largely *via* doing and seeing of doing. Our constitution contemplates the bringing into school of all the children—even the lowest in the intellectual scale. Education is as much their fundamental right as it is of the brilliant pupils. The implementation of this constitutional directive of our Constituent Assembly implies an enormous amount of research output in matters educational. It also implies ever-new methods for giving play to the technique of learning by seeing. To give but one example, the extraordinary methods being evolved and the organisation being set up by the County Authorities of Oxford to give the maximum opportunity possible to the handicapped children should be taken as an indicator of all the new things that the educational profession in India should do in order to serve a democratic community with literally universal education as its objective. There is indeed a splendid opportunity, for the teachers in the Gandhian period.

7. Appearance of Statesman as Corrective

One can be sure that this challenge of education in free India will attract to the teaching profession many creative persons.

A possible danger is an unavoidable corollary of the increasing nationalisation of services of all kinds. In this context, it happens that the people in power to-day are those that had seldom any opportunity to have initiative in their younger days, on account of our political status. They have been brought up in a cramping atmosphere, which was charged with a low brand of careerism. It is so both among the elected representatives of the people put into positions of power and among those who have been pushed higher up in the protected bureaucracy, either by the vacuum created by the withdrawal of aliens or by the hasty creation of new posts according to Perkinson's Law on bureaucracy, which gives a splendid opportunity to the soul-killing spoils system in a young democracy like ours. A corrective to this danger may be a revolution which can come only after the acuteness of the abuse of power becomes intolerable, or the appearance of a statesman who is not only good and devoid of selfishness of any kind, even of the brand of selfishness which seeks flattery and yes-men all around, but who is also possessed of administrative acumen and the vision to see the consequences of even the tenth remove flowing from every policy-decision and administrative action.

8. Purification of Educational Bureaucracy

There is no doubt that every Indian will long for the latter form of corrective. Our hope lies in the coming to power of such a statesman in matters educational, his purifying our educational bureaucracy, and his giving free play for the indigenous creative educationists to do their best for our nation. May that happen!

Studies in Kingship—Prussia.

By

Prof. T. K. VENKATARAMAN, M.A., L.T., Madras.

Frederick William I of Prussia (r. 1713-40) has been aptly described as "a compound of Rhadamanthus, Nero, Caliban, Judge Jeffreys, Squeers and Mr. Fang." He maintained an enormous army for which he collected every able-bodied man in the country. One regiment in this was composed of the tallest men, all over seven feet. For these, he searched all over Europe, even going to the length of kidnapping some. His anger was ferocious. Once, a Jew fled seeing him. The King pursued him and caught him. To his angry question why he fled, the Jew stammered out that he was afraid of the King. "You are not to fear me. You are to love me," roared the irate King, raining blows on the Jew with his walking stick, till the unfortunate Jew was at the brink of death. He always pried into the private lives of the people. He used to walk about the streets with his cane, venting his fury on all in curses and blows. Another time, he held a military review. For an alleged fault, he caused all the men to be bled, even though the weather was then bitterly cold with icy blasts. The King used to lay down meticulous details about the life of his son, Frederick—at what hour he should bathe, how many times he was to be allowed soap and water, how many times he should be allowed only water, what he should eat and how much, etc. The prince once resented this life of constant drill, and his angry father, as a punishment for this impertinence, forced him to ride an unbroken horse. The unfortunate boy was thrown by the steed and seriously injured. Yet he was compelled to do sentry-duty at the palace gate next day. At another time, when the son and the daughter of the King were reluctant to eat a particular dish during dinner, the King forced them to eat the whole of it, till they vomitted in his

presence. The King was furious at this. He knocked his daughter senseless to the ground and, as she lay there, attempted to kick her and was restrained with great difficulty. The noise was terrible. The King strutted about, indulging in horrible and obscene language. The Queen went into hysterics, and a crowd collected.

Prince Frederick, unable to put up with such treatment, once tried to flee from the country. He engaged a friend to help him in this. But his father caught the prince and imprisoned him. The King now spoke with savage delight of the prospect of his son's execution, and seems to have been bent upon it at first, though he was later on dissuaded. Still, a rumour of the King's murderous intentions spread in the city, and the King had to issue an order that every offending tongue which spoke about this would be cut out. The prince was kept in close confinement. The friend, who had helped him, was put to death with every refinement of cruelty, just under the prince's prison window, and the order of execution was shown to the prince: "We decree that, though of right and justice, he should be torn with hot pincers and then hanged, out of clemency, he shall be put to death with the sword."

Frederick William went into fits of insane rage. The sister of the prince records an event in her diary. "When the young prince went into the King's room one morning, the King seized him by his hair, flung him down, and after he had spent the strength of his arm on the poor boy's body, he dragged him to the window, took the curtain-rope, and twisted it round his neck. The prince had presence of mind and strength enough to grasp his father's hands and scream for help. A chamberlain came in and plucked the boy away from the King."

The prince, in due course, succeeded his father. He was the famous Frederick the Great (1712-86). The harsh treatment he had received in his youth had made him a cynic and hate all restraints—moral or religious. His scepticism is illustrated in the following story. Once, a clergyman of a particular place was expelled by his congregation, because he questioned the doctrine of eternal punishment. When the priest petitioned to the King, Frederick coolly replied: "If my loving subjects in your place choose to be eternally damned, it is not for me to interfere with their wishes." Frederick had been forced to marry a woman he never loved and who was represented to him as exhaling an insufferable odour. The marriage was childless, and the Queen, who outlived her husband, became more and more unattractive. There is a hint of unnatural vice about Frederick; but this charge is perhaps without foundation.

His unscrupulousness is best illustrated in the Partition of Poland which he promoted. Polish affairs had already become the concern of her neighbours, during 1733 to 1735 when the Polish Succession War broke out. This was due to the death of Augustus of Saxony who was then the King. This Augustus,

incidentally, was the father of numerous bastards, among whom was the famous Marshal Saxe. His son, Augustus, who claimed the throne, was supported by Russia and Austria, while France upheld another claimant, Stanislas. Ultimately, the latter lost. Stanislas, who had entered Poland disguised as a coachman, had to escape out of it, disguised as a peasant. The way was now clear for the final fall of Poland. Frederick arranged the deal with Austria and Russia. Maria Theresa of Austria seems to have been the only ruler out of the three who had any scruples. But, as Frederick the Great cynically remarked: "She wept, it is true, but all the same, she reached out her hand for her share."

Frederick the Great, it has been remarked, "had stooping shoulders, wore a three-cornered lace hat on his head, and a long pigtail. His uniform was old and threadbare." The people of Potsdam made a caricature of the King, representing him with a coffee mill in his lap. The King, who had a good sense of humour, told them: "Put it lower that it may be better seen." He was also hard at work, rising in summer at three o'clock in the morning and in winter at 4 o'clock. When not engaged in his wars, he was to be found at his desk.

Totalitarianism in Education

By

SHAMSUDDIN, M.A., M. Ed, RAIPUR (M.P.)

Totalitarianism is one among innumerable concepts of education. It is another form of Socialism, having at its root, the doctrines of naturalism and materialism. It has its own ideas of the formation of society and its systems of education. The broad principles, on which totalitarianism is based, are like this.

First of all, totalitarianism believes that there is all matter and no spirit in the

universe. Even man is matter. This whole universe of matter undergoes constant change. So also man changes as per laws of nature.

Secondly, it gives prominence to society and State over and above the individual. Its aim is the progress and upliftment of the State as a whole. It has no other value or standard of morality except the sense of utility. Totalitarianism aims at

a society or State in which there is no difference between man and man and all are regarded as equals. All efforts are done for the common good, and hence there is no competition. Instead, there is complete co-operation among all. The ultimate aim is the production of wealth, which is not an individual possession, but the property of the community. Thus, there is the upper hand of joint production on private enterprise.

Thirdly, in the totalitarian State, there is no place for the individual will or existence. The State represents the common will of all to which the individual has to submit. In it, every one works for the common good of all. There is no place for personal or individual claims and rights in such a State. On the other hand, every one without question has to submit to the ultimate authority of the State.

EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS OF TOTALITARIANISM

Totalitarianism in education means compulsory education to all without any difference of individual abilities. In it all the members of society get the same type of education, and thus a common culture is promoted among the masses. Also, there is equal opportunity for all without any distinction of class, creed or sex. No difference is made between the mentally intelligent and the physically strong.

In a totalitarian set-up of education, learning starts in the early stage. In the early age, children's minds are more impressionable, and the educational ideals infused become part and parcel of their selves. Thus, totalitarianism gives more importance to the pre-school stage of learning. As education is compulsory, it is also free. It gives opportunities to all to get either general or technical education. The State provides all facilities, such as food, clothing and other miscellaneous expenses of education to the pupils.

In the totalitarian State, all education is managed and controlled by the State.

It binds the whole society into a common culture leading to social unity or social integration. All other disturbing elements are curbed in it. The social unity results in complete co-operation among all. The different institutions of the State such as the factory, farm, industry etc. are very closely related to schools and help them in enhancing their interests.

In the totalitarian ideal of education, learning is not based on high empty ideals only. On the other hand, it is connected with the economic production. It gives importance to manual work and the productive ability of the taught. As the children are developed both manually and intellectually, they are best fitted in their life situations in the future life of the State. The schools in it impart instruction with special reference to the local industry or trade, and thus it leads to the emphasis on the practical side of education in workshops. In short, education is based on utility and economic production, leading to the increased material wealth of the State.

The totalitarian concept of education gives so much importance to materialism that it neglects spiritualism. It does not give any importance to religion or the moral values of life. Emphasis is laid on Nature and present life.

The curriculum and methods of education are prescribed and controlled by the State. There is no freedom for the teacher or the taught. Every one has to act as desired by the State. Thus, there is complete uniformity in education.

ADVANTAGES

Its first good point is that it establishes a society in which there is no distinction of class and creed and equal justice is done to all. There is equal distribution of money in such a society and all are equally happy and satisfied.

Secondly, it provides for free and compulsory education providing equal opportunities for all. This also leads to better mutual relations between individuals in society and makes their life happy.

Thirdly, education here is related to life, as there is close contact between the educational institutions and other organizations such as trade and industry. This education fits people for the life situations in the State.

Fourthly, it lays stress on the practical side of learning, which is the essence of real education. It helps the individuals not only to become intellectually great, but also makes them useful and productive members of society leading to the development of their all-round growth of personality.

DISADVANTAGES

However, this concept of education is not without faults. First of all, the fact that it does not believe in religion and moral values of life, leads to the downfall of man, making his education incomplete. Also, it is wrong to believe that the whole universe including man is all matter and there is no spirit. There is equal place for the physical as well as spiritual nature in man's life. In fact, man's spirit is much higher than his physical being, and its denial will mean altogether a wrong reasoning about life.

Similarly, totalitarianism undermines the place of individual life in society. It aims at giving equal opportunities to all without taking into consideration the natural individual differences, and hence

both the dull and the brilliant suffer in it. In fact, due importance should be given to individuals who, by contributing their best, ultimately form the best society.

Totalitarianism also imposes authority from above, which is opposed to human nature and gives rise to a great reaction in the human mind. This conflict of human mind ultimately leads to quarrels between man and man, encroaching upon non violence and disturbing the peace of humanity.

In the end, too much of stress on the materialistic view of life leads to the loss of humanity. Man starts thinking that money is everything for him, and he lives only to acquire money and amass wealth. He becomes self-centred, and does not care for others. This may give temporary happiness to man, but never can he get lasting peace of mind. The best qualities of man, such as love, sympathy, sacrifice etc. disappear, and the worst part of his nature comes out, bringing about the rule of Satan on humanity. There are greater ideals of life such as Truth, Beauty, Goodness—*satyam, sivam, sundaram*—for which man should hanker after !

To conclude, the demerits of totalitarianism have the upper hand on its merits, and hence a better and nobler concept of education than this would be desirable in the conditions of to-day.

ALL INDIA EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE.

The XXXIII All India Educational Conference will be held from the 26th to the 30th of December, 1958, at the Basic Training College, Chandigarh, East Punjab, instead of at Trivandrum as originally proposed.

Raising The Standard of English In the High Schools.

D. N. KRISHNAYYA, M.A., B. Ed., Napoklu, Coorg.

The Education Secretary, Government of India, New Delhi, has sent a circular letter to the State Government deploring the going down of the standard of English and requesting them to take necessary steps to raise the standard in English. I am giving below the relevant letter and offering some suggestions for improving the standard of English in schools:

“Apart from other problems, the standard of English in schools has gone down considerably—partly because of the shorter duration of English teaching—and this has made it difficult for students to switch over to the English medium at College level. It is necessary that this problem is cooperatively tackled, and instead of students being left to fend for themselves, as is the case at present, care should be taken to see that the standards and methods of teaching as well as the syllabuses at the secondary and collegiate stage are properly adjusted. I hope your Board of Secondary Education and the concerned University authorities will take necessary steps to examine this problem carefully.”

The lowering of the standards in English in the Middle Schools and the High Schools is an undeniable fact. This lowering of the standards in the Elementary and Secondary stages has adversely affected the attainments of the students in the University stage. When the students reach the university stage, they will be poorly equipped with knowledge of the English language, and hence they find it difficult to understand the contents of their text-books in the College classes. When such poorly equipped students form the large majority, they inevitably bring down the standards in the Universities also. That is how the standards in the Universities in all the subjects, and particularly in English, have gone down, and how the present-day graduates cut a sorry figure in learned societies.

What is the remedy for such a state of affairs? How can we make the teaching of English more intensive and effective? Can we have more periods for teaching the English language?

Under the present educational set-up, when each subject of the curriculum claims to be as important as any other, it is not possible to take away any period from any one subject and give it to any other subject. In all the educational seminars the writer of this article has participated, the committees which were constituted to examine the syllabuses and the adequacy of periods to teach the contents of those syllabuses, asked for more periods for every subject. When such is the case, we have to be content with the existing number of periods allowed for the teaching of English in the Middle and High Schools.

At present there are six periods of 45 minutes each for English work in the Middle School classes. In these periods, detailed and non-detailed text-books, grammar and composition have to be taught to the students. These periods will suffice for the effective teaching of English, if the teaching of that language is intensive from the very beginning of its introduction in the lower classes. Learning a new language is a matter of forming new habits, and in forming habits, the most important things are a good start and then repetition and then practice. English is a foreign language for the Indian children, and therefore there is no possibility of the pupils learning that language by hearing it spoken anywhere else except in their classroom. Therefore, the classroom work in English should be very effective in all the classes, but particularly in the lower classes.

But it is feared that when the educational pattern is switched on to the

basic pattern in the lower stages and to the Higher Secondary pattern in the Secondary stages, the periods allotted for the teaching of English will be reduced from 6 to 4 and 7 to 5 respectively. This reduction of periods allotted to English will adversely affect the teaching of English. This reduction should be avoided and the existing number of periods for English should be kept.

To make the teaching of English effective in schools the following suggestions are offered.

1. English should be introduced in the V Standard in all the States.

2. Teachers who have scored more than 50% of marks in English in the pre-University course alone should be appointed as English teachers for the V and VI Standards. They should also be trained in the methods of teaching English. They should undergo refresher courses in the English language, literature, and teaching methods, once in every two years for a period of fifteen days. Nowadays we find any and every teacher who has managed to reach the secondary stage, teaching English. They themselves do not know sentence structure or the rudiments of grammar in English. This practice must stop.

3. Graduate teachers who have taken the Arts course for their degree course and who have been trained in the English teaching methods should be entrusted with the teaching of English in the Standards VII to IX. In the Madras state, science graduates are not given English work in the High Schools. M.A., or B.A. (Honours) men in English literature should be preferred for handling English in the X and XI Standards.

4. English being a foreign language should be learnt in the earlier stages by constant repetition and drilling of sentence structure, idioms and phrases etc. This requires individual attention to each pupil by the English teachers. Therefore

the strength of each class should be restricted to not more than thirty pupils in each class upto the VIII Standard.

5. A children's library containing short stories in English of not more than ten pages each with coloured illustrations and printed in bold type should be kept in every school and every pupil of VI to VIII Standards should be made to read ten stories at least in the course of the year. These library books should be of graded series from class to class.

6. Functional grammar should be taught in schools from the VI Standard onwards according to a graded scheme. Though the pupils need not learn the definitions of the different parts of speech, they should know the functions of the parts of speech, the conjugation of verbs and the agreement of the verb with the number and person of the subject from the time they begin to read and write sentences. Grammar exercises should be taught by constant repetition and drilling.

7. Question-papers in English should contain essay-type questions, fifteen lines paragraph questions and the transformation of sentences in the first paper in the proportion of 40,30 and 30 out of 100 marks. In the second paper, there should be questions on comprehension of easy paragraphs, memorization of poetry lines of not less than eight lines of each poetry piece, letter-writing and translation of a small paragraph from the original language into English. Questions requiring one word or one sentence answer or 'yes' or 'no' type should not be given. In the earlier Standards, filling in the blanks with suitable verbs, adjectives and prepositions should be given instead of transformation of sentences.

8. Non-language subjects like Social Studies, Science, Mathematics etc. should be taught through the English medium from the IX Standard or the present VI Form. This may seem to be a regressive step in our educational system in the High School stage when there is a move to introduce the regional language as a

medium of instruction even in the University classes. But the writer of this article has had the good fortune of being taught the non-language subjects in English from the IV Form onwards, of having the experience of himself teaching the non-language subjects in English for the first fifteen years of his service as a teacher and later in the regional language of his district, Kannada, for another fifteen years nearly of his service; and he has found progressive deterioration in the standards of attainment of the pupils in both English and in the regional language and in the other subjects of the curriculum by the introduction of the vernacular medium in High Schools.

We learn any language, even our mother-tongue, by hearing it being spoken by others, and the more opportunities there are to hear it being spoken by others, the easier will be the process of acquisition of that language. English being a foreign language, there are few opportunities to hear it being spoken at present, except in the class room. Our experience after the introduction of the vernacular medium in teaching the non-language subjects has been that the opportunities to the students to hear English is reduced and confined to only the English class, where too the regional language has to be used in explaining English. Therefore, the

ability of the pupils to comprehend any matter in English is decreased.

I find that, if English is made the medium of instruction in the High School classes, students will not be put to any undue strain. That is the best age to acquire proficiency in a new language, and the students will pick up proficiency in about three to four months. This was being done by the students of the previous generation, and there is no reason, why the same thing cannot be done now. The grasp of the non-language subjects also will not suffer on that account. The standard of the regional language also will improve, if it is taught correctly only by the language teacher.

I have offered the above suggestions for raising the standard of attainments in English in the light of my experience as a teacher of some experience of High School and Middle School work. I believe these suggestions may well be given a trial. It is really a pity that the present-day students cannot read, write or speak one sentence in English correctly. English is a language which we cannot afford to neglect in the interests of the higher learning and in the interests of the unity of India and the international relations of India with the other countries of the world.

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Our Educational Diary

By
'PEPYS'

13—9—58. Minister R. Venkataraman told the Council that the State Government were considering a proposal for grant of educational concessions to all poor children irrespective of their caste or religion.

14—9—58. Addressing a press conference, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar gave his impressions of the Commonwealth Universities Conference held at Montreal. He said that the following subjects were discussed: broad questions of policy relating to administrative problems, University finance, autonomy in Universities, the place of engineering and medical studies in the scheme of University education, the enrolment of properly trained teachers etc.

15—9—58. Minister C. Subramaniam speaking in the Assembly said that the Government realised the need for an adequate knowledge of English for acquiring scientific, technical and professional knowledge. He also told the house that the University Grants Commission had accepted the Madras formula that English should continue to be taught for atleast another seven years.

Answering another question by Mr. Vinayagam, the Minister said that an *ad hoc* committee was now examining the questions relating to the reformation of managements of elementary schools and the revision of the present system of grants-in-aid payable to them. He added that a policy of 'go slow' was being followed in the matter of granting permission for the opening of new private elementary schools.

16—9—58. The D. P. I. speaking at Coimbatore said that the Government were considering the revision of the pay scales of the elementary teachers. He regretted that Central Library grants were not properly utilised.

19—9—58. Mr. Anna Rao Ganamukhi Education Minister of Mysore, told a press conference that Mysore would introduce free universal education for children of the age-group 6 to 11 by the end of the second plan period. The case of children with age-group 11 to 13 would be taken up in the third plan period, he said. In the State, it is proposed to have one school for every village with a population of 200 to 300 and within a radius of one mile.

20—9—58. Prime Minister Nehru has offered a directive to all the Chief Ministers of States to provide free and compulsory education to all children in the age group 6 to 11 during the third plan period.

Mr. C. D. Deshmukh, speaking in Bhopal, protested vehemently against reduction of the plan allotment for education from 27 to 17 crores.

21—9—58. Declaring open the Kerala Basic Education Conference at Ernakulam, the Kerala Education Minister said that slight changes introduced by the State in the post-primary classes would not interfere with the schemes of Basic Education as contended by Sri G. Ramachandran. The Government only laid emphasis on the employment of useful crafts and production of socially useful things through the craft. These were provided in the upper primary stages, while in the lower primary stage, children would be made familiar with the tools which would produce useful things. But he had no objection to discussing the changes.

[It is somewhat disconcerting to find that outhodox basic educationists like Sri G. Ramachandran should object to any changes made in their pet ideas of basic education by others and spare no effort about denouncing them, as if they are the sole repositories of wisdom in the field. I, for

one, would like to congratulate the Kerala Education Minister, on his efforts to make basic education more realistic, purposeful and concrete, instead of the elusive and amorphous thing described in the abstract and intangible platitudes to which we are treated by the experts of basic education.]

25—9—58. The Education Minister told the Madras Assembly that by the end of 1965, compulsory free education up to the fifth standard would be provided to all children in the State.

29—9—58. The Madras Legislative Council passed a rule enabling District Boards to contribute towards the expenses of the establishment of a medical college or school.

30—9—58. Minister Subramaniam told the Madras Legislative Council that the object of the nationalisation of text books

was to put an end to the "fraud" that existed in prescribing the text books for various schools in various regions.

2—10—58. Minister Subramanyam assured the members of the Legislative Council that the object of the publishing of text books by the Government was to improve the standard of the textbooks and to remove the various "frauds" that existed in prescribing text books for schools.

7—10—58. The Government have approved of the D. P. I.'s proposal to improve the libraries of multipurpose and bifurcated schools and to introduce crafts in secondary schools. The grants range from 2500 to 5000/-

Speaking at Salem, of the Chief Minister declared that the Government proposed to extend free education till the tenth Standard, even if it should mean additional taxation.

"Personal Lessons at Personal Speed"

BY

SUMNER C. POWELL,

Professor of American Civilization and History, Choate School, Wallingford, Connecticut, U. S. A.

From THE SATURDAY REVIEW, (Feb. 1958).

[Imaginative use of tape recordings, a new concept in teaching adopted by the St. Scholastica Convent School in Covington, Louisiana, allows each student to receive personal lessons at his own rate of learning.]

One of the remarkable examples of the utilization of modern communication theory in the United States is the establishment of "tape teaching." The first "electronic school" in the world is the St. Scholastica Convent School in Covington, Louisiana, which originated the concept and then later received assistance from the Fund for the Advancement of Education (established in 1951 by the Ford Foundation).

As the project developed, it was apparent that the school had three significant assets: a dynamic and creative principal; a group of devoted teachers; and students

and parents who respected the quality of leadership in the school.

The term "electronics" reminds some educators of systems that are as complex as they are frightening. This is unfortunate. For St. Scholastica, by an imaginative use of electronics and audio-visual devices, is actually reintroducing to its classrooms that essential ingredient: individual attention to each student, with the demand that the student develop the capacity to think for himself.

The steps which the principal, Sister Mary Theresa, took to reach this goal

were these: first, the entire school body was divided into three learning levels, according to aptitude tests—slow, average, and gifted students; second, the classrooms were redesigned so that each teacher's desk became a console and some special rooms had listening booths, similar to telephone booths complete with desk, chair, headphones, an intercommunication system, and soundproof tiling in the walls of the booth; third, about two months of the summer were spent replanning the curriculum and recording all the courses, on three aptitude levels, on tape recordings.

At present, then, the school operates in the following manner. At the teacher's desk there are four tape recorders and as many switches as there are student desks. The teacher conducts the class as she would ordinarily. But she may, at her discretion, announce that the class will switch to specially prepared tape recordings, which perhaps she herself has made the previous summer or at any previous time. At this point each student picks up his earphone and microphone headset and listens. A tape may instruct the student to work in a text or a work book, or it may be a dramatic lecture or discussion. If at any time a student has a question, he puts his hand up until he gains the teacher's attention. The teacher flips the appropriate switch, and the two talk via microphone and headphone without disturbing the others. Each student thus gets almost a personal lesson, at his own rate of learning, which he cannot shut off unless he removes the headphone.

For testing and recitation purposes, and in the higher grades for study periods, a different type of classroom is used. In a series of soundproof booths, all the students can talk into the intercommunication microphones simultaneously without disturbing the others. They can also ask questions of the teacher without fear of ridicule from the rest of the class. In the teaching of reading, figures from St. Scholastica School show an immense advance over any other system. Because in the booths they have ample time to

practise reading out loud, without having to wait their turn in a large class, all the children are able to read at their own speed, and not at the speed of the slowest members of the group. The teacher can listen to any pupil she wants, one at a time, to check faults and to answer questions.

Two suggested classroom designs, using the standard public school room size of 36 by 24 feet, have been drawn up. The cost of the equipment as used at St. Scholastica, excluding costs for wiring and carpentry, seems reasonable: 1,200 dollars per room. Tape recordings for one grade, all courses, recorded on three aptitude levels for one entire year, have cost the school 1,200 dollars. The advantages have fully outweighed the costs, so far.

In mathematics and the sciences, tape recordings have been of especial use as a supplement to the normal visual aids. Mathematics lessons, combined with good work books, are like personal tutorial sessions with the teacher behind the child. There is an added advantage. While a slow learner can request that a tape be played several times, a gifted student can keep asking for advanced tapes, learning as rapidly as his talents allow.

In the social studies the improvements over the traditional methods are also huge. It is possible in history and geography to bring to bear all the resources of radio: dramatizations, commentaries by outside speakers, discussions with leaders of the community, special lectures, and sound effects—all can be employed to bring to life the realities of history, geography, and civics.

What have the results been? Briefly, great enthusiasm on the part of teachers, students, and parents; impressive student achievement, measured by standard tests and teacher evaluation, and an opportunity for many teachers to rethink their entire curriculum. The students do not spend all their time with tape recordings, but the system has definite advantages:

having the courses on tape has helped to train inexperienced teachers until they could make their own tapes; teacher aides can direct listening groups while the teacher conducts small discussion groups; and many of the disciplinary problems have been resolved, particularly as the slow students have found that they were receiving personal, repeated attention, and as the gifted students have found that they could ask for advanced tapes, regardless of what the two other sections of the class were doing at the time.

The "tape teaching" classroom, as designed at St. Scholastica, has impressed many educators. We are placing such a room, as a "language laboratory" in the new Choate (preparatory school for boys, Wallingford, Connecticut) classroom hall now under construction.

Individual electronic recorders, as many have found, can be a valuable asset in teaching. At present I make periodic recordings of class discussions in my courses and, on playing them, can evaluate student improvement, measured by vocabulary, maturity of concepts, and participation in class discussion. A recording is also an excellent mirror for a teacher who wishes to know how he "sounds" to a class and who wonders whether a particular lecture or discussion has met certain standards of performance.

The Choate Senate, the debating organization, together with the Soundsciber Corporation of New Haven, Connecticut, plans to send records to various schools throughout the world to promote student discussion. All members of the humani-

ties faculty are eagerly looking forward to having discussions in English, French, German, and perhaps other languages sent on plastic discs through the mails, which may help to dissolve, or at least enlighten, student prejudice or misunderstanding about "foreign" groups.

Our Comparative Ancient Civilizations course culminates in a research cruise, in which I shall be taking a few talented students to see comparative civilizations and cultures during the spring vacation, visiting school groups on the West Indies islands of Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent, with the added excitement that we shall travel in a 70-foot ketch and do some sailing and navigating ourselves. But we shall carry four Soundscibers, as a gift for each school group, with the hope of exchanging student questions and discussions until another body of students goes there the following year. Thus, in a small way, we are indeed building a communication network, but one that may be used for creative constructive education and mutual understanding between young people of different cultures.

It seems to those of us who have been experimenting that all educators can benefit by the current revolution in teaching techniques. The shortage of experts is no new phenomenon. It is, and always will be, a constant in most civilizations. But what is new is our ability, if aroused, to use the recently developed techniques of communication to carry wisdom and inspiration to the ears of all our students, so eager to listen.

EDITORIAL

Basic Fallacies

The theory of Basic Education is now theoretically accepted by the Government. Nevertheless, progress in achieving the ideal is noticeably slow. In part, this is due to the high cost of Basic Education, which, paradoxically enough was originally suggested as an almost self-supporting system by Mahatma Gandhi. In part, again, it is due to lack of trained teachers. Over and above all this, there seems to be a vague feeling both among the people and educational authorities alike that it is somehow far from perfect.

Professor Joseph Mundassery seems to put his finger on the trouble-spot, when he declares (in the *Kerala Education Quarterly* for June, 1958): "A careful study of what is taking place in the Basic Schools of to-day has revealed that the teaching in such schools has less emphasis on the quantum of knowledge stipulated to be conveyed to the children during particular periods." Education which is confined to what is often derisively called "information-mongering", may not be the best. But the conveyance of information from the teacher to the student, from the older generation to the younger one, is an indispensable part of education. Certainly, education has other functions. It has to quicken the intelligence and stimulate the power of reasoning. It has to instil a sense of values and has to bring about coordination between the individual and society. But let us not forget that it has to do all this in addition to, and not in the place of, 'information-mongering'. Too much reliance on books may be deplored in an educational system: but too little reliance on books is even more deplorable. In this fast-moving world of ours, ignorance may prove to be even a greater handicap than slipshod thinking.

The five-point programme of the All India Basic Education Assessment Committee goes a great deal towards making Basic Education more acceptable. This

comprises activities fostering self-reliance, pupil self-government, cultural and recreational activities, association of the pupils with the life of the community and the practice of simple crafts. The goal is that formal education, as practised to-day, is to be modified according to this pattern.

The essence of Basic Education is that it is learning by doing, that it is activity-centred, that it is craft-centred. But this is a bias or a method which has its own limitations. Everything cannot be taught through crafts or practical activities. Theoretical knowledge has its own claims, and they cannot be disregarded without bringing down the standards of education and making our backward nation still more backward. Moreover, with the rapid industrialisation of India, knowledge of science and mathematics may become more desirable than skill in handicrafts.

In view of all this, it will be well to re-define the ideal of Basic Education as, to quote Mr. Paul Varghese, "the integration of theoretical learning with its practical application." The modified schemes of Basic Education in Madras and a few other states seem to be moving towards such a realisation. Even so, eccentricities have still to be weeded out. For instance, in the training of Basic teachers in Madras, cooking appears to play a more important part than learning the art of teaching! Nor should we make a fetish of extra-curricular activities to the extent of ignoring curricular activities altogether.

Physical Education :

Our contemporary, *Shiksha*, has devoted a recent issue to Physical Education, a somewhat neglected subject. There is an extensive survey of physical education in the West and in India, as well as of plans and programmes. What is most refreshing however is the light thrown on Indian ways of physical culture. Sri V. D. Jayal, Retired Director of Military Education and Social Service,

U. P., has made useful suggestions for physical education along Indian lines without costly means. "To name only a few," he writes, "the following items of 'Bharatiya Vyayam' are very suitable for the students: Mallkhamb, Kabbadi, Nal and Lathi, Kho Kho, Gada, Mugdar, Dand, Baithak, Wrestling, Rassa Kassi and Lazim. Good use can be made of Asans, Suryanamaskar and deep breathing exercises also." The gymnastic apparatus of India are described by Sri S. K. Pathak, Assistant Military Instructor, Bahraich. These include—Mallkhamb, Gada, Mugdar, Lazim, Samtola, Ekka and Jippi. The yogic *asanas* (as well as the theory behind them) and breathing exercises are dealt with by Sri U. C. Dutt, Retired P. E. S., and Sri R. P. O'Hearn, Medical Practitioner of Lucknow. Here we have a compendium of Indian features of physical education, which need to be popularised throughout the country. They have the great advantage of cheapness, as contrasted with the Western games, so popular to-day but often so unsuited to our

environment. To Englishmen cricket is a way of enjoyment of sunshine: to us in India it is a terrific penance under the sun. Cricket and other Western games may have come to stay in India, but all cannot play them. While all can take to the Indian type of physical culture.

Mobocracy in Education :

Kerala, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Banaras—they form tragic landmarks in the rake's progress of our students towards mobocracy and catastrophe. And news is to hand now that some striking students of Nellore organised a riot in the railway station, destroying valuable public property. The primary responsibility for student indiscipline is that of our leaders who seem to forget that they are no longer leading a revolution, but are engaged in creative reconstruction. Unless they give up talking in terms of cheap destructive slogans and pick up the courage to deal firmly with disorder and indiscipline, wherever found, the future is indeed bleak.

BOOK REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL YEARBOOK OF EDUCATION 1957. Paris, Unesco; Geneva, International Bureau of Education. Publication No. 190, 1958. 497 p. 25 shillings; 5 dollars; 15 Swiss francs.

Until a few years ago, it was almost impossible to discover facts and to know what had taken place throughout the world in the field of education or to discern the trends characterising the evolution of educational development. The *International Yearbook of Education* enabled that gap in knowledge to be filled. Here in a very summarised form are some of the educational characteristics of that year: (a) the average increase in education budgets amounted to 15% as compared with 14.5% the previous year; (b) in the field of free compulsory education the emphasis this year has been on the extension of free schooling rather than on the lengthening of the compulsory

period; (c) the average percentage increase in the number of secondary school pupils (9%) exceeded that of the number of primary school pupils by two and a half per cent (6.5%); (d) the proportion of changes introduced into secondary curricula or syllabuses was slightly higher than for primary education (one country in two); (e) the first signs of intensive training for technicians pointed out in the 1956 *Yearbook* have developed further; (f) although the problem of primary teacher shortage has passed the acute phase in certain countries, the discrepancy between supply and demand in secondary education, especially for mathematics and science teachers, is becoming increasingly widespread; (g) from the point of view of the status of teachers, increases in salary are recorded in rather more than a quarter of the 73 countries supplying data for the *Yearbook*.