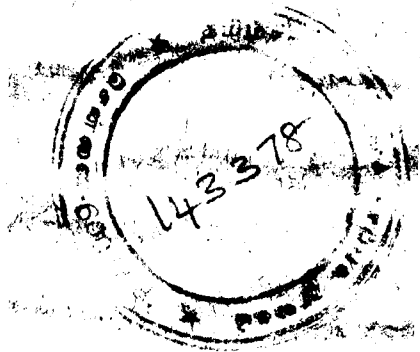


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MAY, 1939.



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CONTENTS for May, 1939.

	PAGE.
1. Adult Education By Prof. Diwan Chand Sharma, M. A.	163
2. Light-heartedness among Students By Mr. N. S. Ullal, B.A., S. F. C. D.	167
3. Japanese National Character By Hisaku Waseda.	171
4. Everyman's Library By Sri D. Krishnavya, Cert. Libr. (Madras University)	175
5. Educational Reforms Address by the Hon'ble C. J. Varkey	177
6. Educational Aims and Reorganisation Address By Prof. M. S. Sabhesan, M. A.	183
7. Presidential Address—Madras Educational Conference By Mr. V. P. Audiseshiah.	187
8. State Vocational Welfare in Japan	191
9. Notes	195
10. Reviews	197

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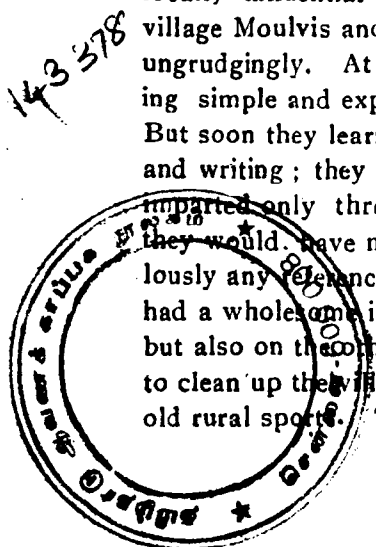
Adult Education

By PROF. DIWAN CHAND SHARMA, M.A.

Adult Education is rather a difficult subject to talk about for it has so many aspects. In the first place, it means the liquidation of illiteracy which is one of the primary needs of India to-day. Statistically speaking, only about eight per cent of our people can claim to the most rudimentary kind of literacy and this fact alone makes us look small not only in our own eyes but also in the eyes of go-ahead nations. If the spread of literacy proceeds at the usual pace, we would require perhaps a thousand years to make the entire population of India literate. This stubborn and un-plesant fact is such as gives every educated person no end of pain. It is therefore felt that heroic efforts must be made for getting our people instructed in reading and writing at least one of the vernaculars of India. But this is not merely an educational problem. With the advance in literacy are bound up our economic betterment, social progress and political development. A literate person makes a better worker, is more quick to adapt himself to changing social conditions and is better fitted to serve the cause of democracy than his illiterate compeer. As Mr. S. M. Sharif said in his talk on the same subject, "Adult Education offers one method of reducing the crushing demon of poverty, of decreasing the incidence of diseases and of creating a common bond between the educated classes and their less fortunate brethren, the illiterate masses."

Any effort made in this direction is therefore welcome and though we have no concerted nation-wide campaign, it cannot be denied that all the provinces of India are awake to this stern need of our country and in this matter officials and non-officials are all joining hands. The Bombay Government had this problem surveyed in a scientific manner and made plans for carrying into effect the recommendations of the committee specially appointed for this purpose. The U. P. Government declared only the other day that an educated person should undertake

to teach an illiterate person or pay rupees two for getting him educated. The Punjab Government is also alive to this problem as has been explained in the previous talk. It is trying to establish District Adult Education Committees which would spread the blessings of literacy. During the last summer vacation the Punjab Adult Education Committee, under the inspiring lead of its president, Mr. B. L. Rallia Ram, launched a very effective campaign against illiteracy by enlisting volunteers for the purpose from amongst the college students of this province. It had two types of workers — those who worked in their own places of residence and those who became members of a group that worked at a particular centre selected by the committee. It had about four hundred volunteers of the first type and it started ten centres for an intensive campaign. Of these the centre at Manawan, about ten miles from Lahore, was the most flourishing. It had thirty-five voluntary teachers who were drawn from all the colleges in Lahore and almost every one of them put in about six weeks' work there. How educative this work was even for these volunteers is clear from what one of them wrote in a newspaper article. In the first place, it brought these young idealists, in contact with the practical side of life. In the second place, it taught them to appreciate the culture of these villagers. "Who said that our people were backward", wrote this student, "and that they lacked culture and required some supreme Messiahs to lift them up? They have their own culture, their own sense of social values, their own interpretation of life and motives of civil polity". From all these, they concluded that "the village is still a living organism, as full of wisdom as of waste and as much illuminated by the old light as any town by the new". But it was not an easy task for these young men to approach their work. First of all, they cast off their English clothes and took to simpler Indian clothes. Then they set out to enlist the help of locally influential people and in this direction they found that the village Moulvis and Pandits counted most, and all these helped them ungrudgingly. At the same time, they had to acquire practice in speaking simple and expressive Punjabi to explain things to the villagers. But soon they learnt that it was not enough only to teach them reading and writing; they wanted information of all kinds and this could be imparted only through informal talks after the regular lessons. So they would have many a friendly chat with them, avoiding scrupulously any reference to contemporary political controversies. All this had a wholesome influence not only on those who came for their lessons but also on the villagers. This became manifest, first of all, in a desire to clean up the village and, in the second place, in the urge for reviving old rural sports. Thus these volunteers brought unconsciously, as it



were, with them the incentive to a man clean, healthy, enlightened and joyous living. I was myself present at a rural sports fair which was organized by these young men at Rampura. It was a heartening sight to see the inhabitants of the twenty-two neighbouring villages turn out in thousands and take part in Kabaddi and tug-of-war matches in a spirit of friendly rivalry. This is what Adult Education did for these people; it made them enthusiastic sharers of each other's life.

But this is only one aspect of Adult Education, that of spreading the light of knowledge to those who have somehow remained in the darkness of ignorance. It implies other things, too, and not the least of these is the desire to acquire a balanced personality by enlightening one's intelligence, by raising one's level of taste, by enriching one's appreciation of literature and life and by developing one's character. That all this is not utopian would be quite clear if one goes through the report of the enquiry which was conducted by the British Institute of Adult Education. Said one of the students, "Adult Education should endeavour to equip a man or woman for life in the modern world. It should endeavour to develop in its students character, intelligence, individuality, initiative and a social and international consciousness. The movement should seek to enrich the common life by producing free and responsible citizens, free of the fetters of ignorance and prejudice. "With William Temple, I regard education as the liberating influence". This is what several students at Institutes for Adults in countries other than India demand and this is exactly what it does for them. If we do not think of Adult Education in these terms, the fault is ours. Correlated with this, Adult Education may mean the remedying of the defects of an early education. Many students have their student careers cut short by unforeseen, yet unpleasant, circumstances and all their lives they carry with them an urge to fill up the gaps in their education. The desire for catching up has to be satisfied and is one of the primary aims of Adult Education according to Lord Baldwin. All these may be looked upon as the cultural motives of Adult Education.

But with those cultural motives may also enter social purpose. A person may take to Adult Education because he wants to acquire a critical but constructive attitude of mind towards social problems. But this does not mean only an intellectual grasp of the social scene around us, but also a desire to be an influence for good, to act as a leaven, in whatever humble a way, amongst the people with whom our lot is cast. In the case of one man, it may mean more efficient service in the cause of local self-Government; in the case of another it may

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lead to a determination to adjust the iniquities of the economic order and a third person may feel an impulse to better the lot of those who are his co-workers.

Many a time, Adult Education may mean vocational advancement. Said a student who had been at one of the Adult Education centres that he took it up because he had visions of becoming a Labour Agent, perhaps an M. P., a Trade Union Organiser, a Miner's official, or a check-weighman. Perhaps this may not be a very laudable motive, but it exists and has to be provided for. All this goes to show that though the removal of illiteracy may be our immediate aim and the most pressing need, Adult Education cannot and should not mean only this. Through it we should seek to satisfy the hunger of the people for better knowledge, deeper culture and greater vocational efficiency. Perhaps it would take many years before we are able to have something like a Ruskin college in this country, something like University Tutorial classes or something like the Workers' Educational Association, but this does not mean that we should not have all these objectives before us.

Yet it is not enough merely to have these aims. We have to see this problem in its three-fold aspect; for it concerns the giver, the receiver, and the material. As regards the giver or the teacher, he should have not merely the necessary equipment of knowledge, but also a psychological understanding of the difficulties of his students as well as a gift and a zeal for carrying the torch of knowledge to others. The receiver has also to be ever alert and determined, conscious of his handicaps but also determined to make good. But the material has also to be properly supplied. It has already been said that the available books for a village library are generally of a poor quality. But Adult Education cannot go on unless there are suitable books to be placed in the hands of our people in their own vernaculars. So it means that Adult Education would come to nothing unless we create in the minds of people a hunger for knowledge and social betterment and try to satisfy this hunger by having intelligent, zealous sympathetic teachers and by providing interesting and simple and readable books.

Light-heartedness among Students.

By Mr. N. S. ULLAL, B.A., S.T.C.D.

We people in India are admirably composed for riding any theory in vogue to death. Time was, about a quarter of a century ago, when the proper attitude for a teacher to take in class or in the presence of his pupils anywhere was that of the Jehovah of the Bible or the Yamadharma-raj of the Hindu Puranas. He had to be always a serious-looking, sombre and awe-inspiring figure who considered it sacrilegious to laugh or smile, while the pupils were considered to be the humble servants of the teacher, obeying him blindly, listening to him in class with gaping mouths, taking, whatever fell from his lips with unquestioning trust and never daring to ask questions. Even when the teacher indulged in his periodical stock-jokes, the pupils dared not laugh aloud. Taking interest in games or gymnastics was a disqualification for a school-pupil. Class-teaching was always dull and un-interesting. Extra curricular activities were unknown. Caning the pupils even for failure to understand the teacher,— was considered the sacred right and privilege of the teacher and it was the duty of the pupils to meekly submit to the caning. The harder a teacher could cane, the more efficient was he considered to be. A pass at the Matriculation Examination was considered the crowning glory of a school-pupil. The periodical Examinations were considered as sacrosanct as the final University entrance examination. No doubt under this system the pupil had no freedom of thought and reasoning, was not allowed any power of initiative, was simply a passive receptacle of whatever was instilled into his mind by the teacher, was lacking in zest and spontaneity and got a purely literary education fitting him only for a clerk's profession; but this system had few advantages. In the first place, a seriousness and an earnestness of purpose and respect for and confidence in the teacher engendered in the pupil that proper attitude of mind so essential to success in study. Secondly, this attitude of mind brought in its train concentration, exactness and precision in anything that was undertaken as well as a desire to excel in his own field. One has, however, to admit that the key-note to success in this system was the fact that a pass in the Matriculation or any other University Examination was sure to secure a job for the happy recipient of the Examination Certificate and so the teacher taught and the pupils learnt with great enthusiasm.

Now, however, the pendulum has swung to the other end. The teacher has, now-a-days, to be all smiles and to maintain an inviting

and even indulgent attitude towards the pupil. The rage for the "Play-way" in education, the teacher's efforts to make class-work interesting and attractive, the need for his close association with the pupils in their games, an attempt to put into practice the principle that strict discipline is destructive of individual initiative and freedom of thought, the large variety of subjects to be taught in the class-room and what is more, an excessive attention paid to sports and games and inter-school competitions in these, which now-a-days, are spread over the whole academic year, have all conspired to reduce zest and enthusiasm for studies among pupils to almost the freezing point. Superficiality and irresponsibility form the watch-word of the pupils, now-a-days, while a devil-may-care sort of air has been growing on them apace. While formerly games and sports were neglected, they have now become the all-absorbing factor in the pupil's life. While in the past the teacher was held in awe and reverence he is now treated with scant courtesy if not with ridicule. He is, at best, tolerated. Parents also help towards this denouement by openly speaking disparagingly of teachers in the presence of their school-going children. Discipline of any sort is resented, freedom of thought is mistaken for licence to do as one pleases and light-heartedness is mistaken for levity.

For this state of affairs the present day teacher is partly responsible. That type of teacher who is an all-rounder, excelling pupils both in the class-room and in the games-field and who can freely mix with the pupils and yet can keep up his dignity, is yet to be evolved. A large majority of our modern teachers are products of our old system of education, who can scarcely lead the way to the pupils outside the class-room and who are misfits in the sports-field and in extra-curricular activities. Even in the class-room they can scarcely work with half the enthusiasm that the teacher evinced in the past. This is particularly the case in a big city like Bombay. Owing to the small salary offered to him the teacher can hardly make both ends meet and he tries to recoup himself with private tuitions in which his energy is well nigh spent and it is his bored and tired ghost and not he himself that enters the school at 11 a. m. Naturally precious little of enthusiasm can be expected of him. Many a teacher is, again, a square man in a round hole, having taken to teaching as the last resource left in life. It is not known when that long-wished for millennium will arrive, in which only those who can produce a certificate from a properly constituted Board of Registration will be appointed teachers. At present anybody and everybody is considered fit for a teachers' job.

Again the old allurements of a post to the successful student is wanting. Day after day the school-going pupil sees before him the depressing sight of M. A.'s, B. A.'s and LL. B.'s moving about the streets without employment and attending school, so to say, aimlessly, for want of anything better to do.

In the net result, the average secondary school pupil as well as the college student, now-a-days, behaves as if he has no purpose in life, achieves very little solid from his education, though he acquires costly tastes. He has little or no respect for authority and of courtesy he has next to nil. At gatherings, whether they be social gatherings or audience at a lecture or discourse, his behaviour is wanting in decorum and he is callous to the feelings of others. At lessons or lectures very few attend to the thread of the narrative, the majority being on the look-out for something curious in the teacher's or lecturer's features, dress, manner or speech and always on the alert to seize a stray word or expression here and there and raise a hue and cry. Any attempt at enforcement of discipline on such occasions is resented by the pupils and students as an offence against their freedom. It is true, freedom of thought is badly needed by the pupil; he was in the past kept down under the dogmatic thumb of the teacher. But the freedom he seeks should be one of the right and healthy kind. No teacher can give a lesson successfully if every pupil claims freedom to act as he likes. One may want to poke fun at the teacher's nose, another may desire to quarrel with his neighbour and a third one may decide to sleep. The freedom should not be in these directions. All the pupils are gathered in a class with a set purpose, namely, to learn something from the teacher or by their own reasoning. The freedom comes in for instance, while arguing out the various points of view about a theory or statement and not in effectually preventing the teacher from having his say or preventing intending hearers from hearing him. No nation has become great without discipline. Discipline is everywhere seen in nature. Look at the disciplined movements of the sun, moon and stars. One wrong move on their part and we shall be finished. Again look at the disciplined behaviour of our internal organs. Where shall we be if the heart, lungs or liver wanted freedom of conscience of the type pupils and students want now-a-days in schools and colleges? The teacher or professor may excuse us for a breach of the school or college discipline, but nature is merciless. Not even one transgression, however slight, is excused. Every lapse or fault in hygienic discipline, is briskly and definitely punished. Proper discipline is, therefore, essential to life and ought to be submitted to by pupils and students.

Then there is the question of the play-way in teaching. True, dull, uninteresting teaching leads to brain-fag, but the play-way should not deteriorate into flippant child-play. Just as all work and no play makes Rama a dull boy, all play and no work, I mean, serious work, makes Rama a half-baked, superficial, though gay student. Life is not one whole of play and frivolity. It is true, boys should be taught to take the difficulties of life calmly, patiently and smilingly. But this refers to the exterior, while the interior under-current of seriousness there remains and the future citizens should not quail under it, and towards this end the pupils should be trained by being inured to serious study and a disciplined life when at school.

Last but not least the angle from which school and college education is viewed both by parents and by pupils and students is a faulty one. The commonly prevailing idea is that this education is nothing if it does not serve as a passport to service in some Government, Local Board or Mercantile Office. Just as the ore from the mine is to be smelted, burnished and polished before it can be of use to the community, similarly every individual should receive general culture by way of polish before he or she can stand on his or her legs in society and can be a useful member of society. Education rounds off angularities, softens rough natures and develops patience and reasoning powers in man. Just as large fishes swallow small fishes, the educated prey upon uneducated economically and commercially as well as politically. If not from any other point of view of self defence and self preservation in future life, should pupils in schools and students in colleges take seriously to the general education they receive in their institutions, instead of treating it with indifference and wasting their precious time in childish frivolities and superficialities.

We are at the threshold of a great effort in responsible Self-Government in India; we have to work hard for the betterment of millions of our unhappy brethren and, if we are to achieve any measure of success in our endeavour, the sort of irresponsible levity and licence masquerading as the play-way and freedom of thought in education, prevailing among our school pupils and college students, must forthwith cease, yielding place to earnestness and seriousness of purpose, for the more earnest and serious they are in their work, the better will it be for the future of our country. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of us all teachers to give a serious thought to this problem and to instil into the minds of our pupils a strong desire to be serious in that part of their work in which seriousness is due.

(The Karnatak School World.)

Japanese National Character

An Interesting Study.

By EISAKU WASEDA

The subject of Japanese nationality is certainly too large and deep a one to be treated with anything like full justice. The thought fragments bearing on the subject thrown at random in this article are intended only to stimulate interest in and investigation of this important study.

Always at the bottom of the Japanese mind is the singularity of the constitution of the Japanese nation — the supremacy of the Imperial Family and the democracy of the people. Japan is a compact state having an Imperial Family for its nucleus — the Imperial Family which has ruled, in an unbroken line, the land never trodden by foreign conquerors. "Ruler and subjects in name but parents and children in feeling." This noble phrase used in one of the Imperial rescripts issued by the Emperor Meiji well sums up the relationship between the people of Japan and their Imperial Lord. In the West, individuals make a State possible but with us the Imperial Family is everything — without it there could be no Japanese people. Loyalty to the throne and to the country forms, therefore, the backbone of Japan's national character.

It was this spirit of loyalty that developed the much admired Bushido in Old Japan. It was this spirit of loyalty again that assumes the form of filial piety, which is another name for loyalty to the master of a family state.

The people of this Sunrise Land have been much influenced by the sun. The attributes of the sun enter a good deal in the formation of Japanese character. Love of purity and cleanliness is one of its prominent traits. Washing of the hands before worshipping at a shrine is a manifestation of this trait. This was originally a practice in Shinto worship, but it was later introduced into Buddhist temples. The important place the public bath-house, occupies in Japanese life is another evidence of Japanese love of cleanliness.

The Japanese is a great lover of light, having a strong hatred of darkness. The Japanese is partial to simplicity in all things. In colour his preference is for yellow and white. He likes to leave the timber of his house unpainted so that the inherent beauty of its grain may be enjoyed.

Like the sun whose beams touch all things alike, the Japanese spirit touches everything which is good in other peoples. Like the sunlight in which are harmonized the prismatic colours in one transparency, the Japanese assimilate foreign cultures and make them their own. One humble instance of the Japanese capacity of assimilation is presented by the successful acclimatization of wild birds imported from foreign countries. Canaries, budgerigars, lovebirds, linnets — these have all been successfully bred, and birds, formerly imported are now exported. Chinese are clever in rearing birds, but their chief delight in their culture seems to be in making playthings of them, often training them to do some curious tricks.

Japan might be described as the "land of paper houses". This shows that nature is so friendly in this country that there is no need of a more substantial partition between her and the occupants of a house. Occidentals regard nature as something to be conquered, to be placed under subjection, and to be harnessed for the service of man — the development of science is the result of this attitude. Orientals are less positive and self-assertive, and look upon nature as something to enjoy and to be in spiritual harmony with it. Japanese take pleasure in adopting names that are associated with nature — names of members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms and names related to physical geography. The Japanese love of nature is also evidenced by the featuring of objects of nature in popular festivals: the pine at New Year, the peach blossom in the Girls' Festival in March, the iris in the Boys' Festival in May, the bamboo in the Tanabata festival in July, and the moon in the Full-moon Festival in August.

Japan is a country of abundant and pure water, and perhaps this has had the effect to some extent of cultivating the Japanese love of cleanliness. China suffers from scarcity of good water, as is suggested by the name of the Yellow River. Japan on the other hand is favoured by an abundant supply of good water. The story goes that a certain British Minister to Japan, when coming here to take up his duties, took care to include some bottles of drinking-water for his use, fearing that satisfactory water might not be available in Japan, but he found the precaution was totally unnecessary, as excellent water was so easily obtainable everywhere. Owing to this abundance of water, Japan is specially rich in aquatic plants. Japanese people returning from abroad keenly realise the pleasing wealth of green things in their home country.

The source of water is rain, and the abundance of water means the abundance of rain. Japan is a rainy country. It has been humorously said that weather forecasting in Japan is an easy affair, because

rainy days are so many that the forecast for the next day, if announced as rainy each time invariably, will hit the mark in half of the 365 days. The poetic element in the rain has appealed to the Japanese muse and poets, especially the composers of "haiku", have tried to transfer in their cameos scenes of beauty executed by the magic hand of rain.

The abundance of vapour has enriched Japanese skies with a wonderful variety of form and colour, which would have delighted Ruskin immensely. Kafu Nagai, a noted man of letters who has seen the world with the eye of artist, has said that the exquisite beauty of the close of day in Tokyo with the gorgeous sunset as its central attraction is without parallel in the world. The beauty of Japanese skies has fascinated many master artists of Old Japan and it is well said without a knowledge of the alluring beauty of the Japanese sky one cannot hope to have a full appreciation of many of the master-works by artists of the Shijo school and other monochrome landscape painters.

The insular condition of Japan has placed its people at a disadvantage. The people have been exposed to the influence of nanism similar to that working on animals in general transferred from a continent to an island. But thanks to the capacity of assimilation with which the Japanese nation is richly endowed, it has successfully withstood the grip of insularity, which would certainly be a serious handicap in Japan's functioning creditably as a World Power.

One advantage of Japan's insular position is that she has served as a sort of treasury of the cultures of the Continental East. Japan, for instance, has preserved the art and other features of Chinese culture better than in the country of their origin. Confucianism was fathered by China, but it has been well taken care of and is in a state of excellent preservation here. And we have among us some literary monuments which would have been lost to the world but for their preservation in this country. Japan might be described as the cultural museum of the Far East.

As the British Isles have been the final terminus of the westward flow of human streams from the Continent, Japan has been the terminus of the eastward flow of human streams from the Asiatic continent. Specimens of many races, perhaps some half a dozen, including the Ainu, thus converged in this insular group have contributed their shares of blood to the making of the Japanese race. The Ainu, being of the European origin, forms a line connecting the Japanese with the white people. Scholars are agreed as to the superiority of a mixed race. I

heard a similar opinion expressed by the late Professor Sayee, the distinguished linguist and assyriologist, when he lectured many years ago before the students of Waseda University.

It may be argued that because of a mixed race the Japanese are progressive and assimilative. Like Shakespeare the Japanese are myriad-souled: all sorts and conditions of features in alien civilizations appeal to them and find a welcome in their receptive-mind. "A world-wide search for knowledge," which was emphasized by the great Emperor Meiji in his solemn oaths taken by him on starting the work of creating a New Japan, has been the main driving force in the building up of Japan of to-day. Japan has always been willing and indeed eager to adopt what is good in other peoples. To the Japanese nothing good is foreign to him. Like a mighty ocean which willingly accepts tributes from all rivers, large and small, he is ready to adopt anything and from anywhere so long as it is calculated to make his country better and greater as a nation.

The Japanese have been slightly spoken of as a people clever at imitation, which is no doubt true, as the Japanese love of the good first takes the form of imitation faithfully followed. But imitation is only the first stage; in due time comes adaptation and finally creation. The Japanese are not content with mere learning: they go to school as docile pupils and are ambitious enough to aim at outdoing the teacher. This is what history tells us.

Let me take the instance of language, which has played so important a role in the progress of man. What has Japan's behaviour towards foreign language? Well, let me begin with Chinese, the second language of Old Japan. There had been no written language in Japan, so our ancestors adopted Chinese ideographs. The adoption gradually developed into adaptation, or almost into a creation by the evolving of the phonetic syllaberies known as "katakana" and "hiragana." In imitation of this convenient device in use in Japan for centuries, the Chinese have only recently formulated their phonetic alphabet. A conspicuous case of "teacher taught"!

The second language of Old Japan was so intimately interwoven with Japanese life that it actually became the national language with the intelligentsia. It was through this language that Japan has been enabled to elevate her culture to the level of that worthy of the foremost nation in the Orient. Confucianism and Buddhism, two of the pillars of moral and spiritual Japan, flowed in through the channel of the Chinese language.

Upon the re-opening of the country to Western intercourse, Japan's situation altered. She had to turn round and face the West. Westernization of the country became an urgent necessity. To have her place in the sun, Japan had to reinforce herself with modern institutions and modern ideas from the West. A linguistic vehicle to take the place of Chinese was found indispensable. And English became the second language of New Japan. Thus English played a very important part in the stirring drama of the birth and development of Modern Japan. To the Japanese, English is not a mere foreign language: it is symbolic of Japan's endeavour to understand the world for the mutual benefit of her and the rest of the world and to serve the world through that medium.

The Japanese have wrongly been accused of being a warlike people. But they have always been a peace-loving nation. "Wa," a name for Japan given by ancient Chinese and adopted by the Japanese, means peace. Whenever we are compelled to take up arms against a foreign country, we are justified by the force of circumstances. Human nature has not yet arrived at the state when all international grievances can be amicably settled through the bloodless battle of the tongue. War exists meanwhile as a necessary evil and as a stepping-stone to peace. Through the war-clouds Japan sees in the distance the dawn of peace — the peace of the Far East and the peace of the world. (I. R. I. B.)

Everyman's Library

By SRI D. KRISHNAYYA, Cert. Libr. (Madras University.)

'The better part of every man's education is that which he gives himself; and it is for this that a good library should furnish the opportunity and the means.....'

James Russell Lowell.

Every one needs a library as much as each bird a nest. 'If a book is worth reading it is worth buying' is often said, and there is much truth in it. Just like a workman and his necessary tools, every one who loves reading, be he or she, must have a library of his or her choice and what the contents of this should be must be determined by the user and not by others as tastes are often individualistic. In the words of the Rt. Hon'ble The Earl of Lytton, 'We must be like the bees, and gather our honey from whatever books we may choose ourselves.'

Books of reference must necessarily be there and other books as suited to the tastes and requirements of the user. Everyman's library is his workshop and he cannot construct anything without it. Even furniture may be a luxury but a library is a necessity of life. With a library of choice selection and collection, one need not think of solitary hours, for, in the company of books, we can never be lonely, as books are the never-failing friends of mankind.

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'Everyman's library series', is a good example of what the contents of everyman's library can possibly be. It tries to satisfy all tastes of readers be they literary, technical, professional or any other.

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Everyman's library is supplemented by the Public Library where books of general interest in different subjects are found in plenty. Some books of Reference, like The Encyclopaedia Britannica, The Book of Knowledge, The Treasury of Knowledge, Chamber's Cyclopaedia, Who is who? The Oxford English Dictionary, Webster's International Dictionary, The Dictionary of Thoughts, Biographical Dictionaries, Classical Dictionaries, Dictionaries of Antiquities, Dictionaries of Bibliography and a number of others are absolutely essential in this age of growing culture and knowledge. Thus, the Public Library must be the chief source of knowledge for one and all who approach it for study, recreation, entertainment and culture. Any Public Library is a public educational institution — nay the people's University, — 'the true University of these days is a collection of Books', as Carlyle puts it.

Mere collection of books is of no use. Every step has to be taken to keep the books in efficient use. Therefore, it is that the contents of any library should be well arranged, organized, classified, catalogued and kept ready for use, for without such methods and a host of others, books will have very slight chances of reaching the readers or of readers coming in contact with their books of choice and selection. Mere collection of books amounts to a sort of greed and USE only can make any library big, in the words of the Universal poet Tagore.

* * * * *

At home one is often disturbed, distracted and inconvenienced but in a Library as Silence supreme reigns, the very atmosphere is highly conducive for study. Therefore, it is no wonder that scholars spend their time usefully in libraries for enriching their experiences and exercising their thoughts.

How I wish the dawn of the day when the libraries in our country had come to be profitably employed, as their sisters all the World over!

Educational Reforms

Achieved and Contemplated

(Excerpts from the Opening Address of the Hon'ble C. J. Varkey, Minister for Education, at the Madras Educational Conference.)

WORK OF THE UNION.

The Conference meets at a time when the Government are considering various problems connected with educational reorganisation, particularly the reorganisation of secondary education; and the teachers assembled in conference here could render a valuable help to the Government for solving several problems successfully and satisfactorily.

These annual Provincial Educational Conferences, organised by the South India Teachers' Union, have served the useful purposes of creating a professional solidarity among the teachers of all grades in South India and of crystallising their ideas and ventilating their grievances in a recognized constitutional manner. It has been able to focus public attention on matters of educational importance and on the need of greater cooperation between the public or the parents and the teachers for effective promotion of sound education.

I would venture to suggest that it would be conducive to produce better results, if each year the Union and the Conference were to concentrate their attention on one problem or one aspect of educational reorganization and on one or two of the grievances of the teachers. Thrashing out one problem a year is, I submit, a better policy than dealing with many problems, leaving every one of them half digested or half solved. With greater concentration of attention on one problem at an annual Conference and trying throughout the year successfully to solve that problem, I am sure, the Union will have more tangible achievements to its credit.

WHAT GOVERNMENT HAVE DONE.

Mother Tongue :

I think it would help you in your deliberations if you had before you a conspectus of what the present Government have already done for reorganisation and reorientation of education and for improving the condition of teachers in the Province.

I will first refer to the policy of the Government in regard to the place of Indian languages in our scheme of education. That the language of a district or the mother tongue of a pupil should be the

medium of instruction in all the classes of a high school is a healthy reform introduced by the present Government and universally appreciated. The next thing to be done is to make each of these languages the first language of study, making any other language, Indian or foreign, a second language.

The first step in this direction is now taken by making the mother tongue of the child the first language of study, making English the second language, in the revised syllabus for all elementary schools. Gradually we may introduce this policy into the secondary course as well.

Hindustani :

Another aspect of the policy of the Government in regard to the study of languages is the introduction of Hindustani as a language of compulsory study in the impressionable years of I, II and III forms of a secondary school. Though there is a certain volume of dissatisfaction in this matter it is such that we need not take any notice of it; and we proceed with this policy by introducing it in 100 more schools next year.

Building Grants :

Another important reform adopted is in connexion with building grants for educational institutions under private management. As soon as the Congress assumed office, an embargo was placed on building grants. Now, by a Government Order dated Dec. 3, 1938, the whole question has been placed on a new footing which I consider is more advantageous to financially stable managements.

Formerly, unless the management secured the sanction of the Government after a prolonged and cumbrous process before the building operations began, no grants would be paid. Now, under the new system, without the long and tedious process, so well known to private managements, one could begin the construction after the Director of Public Instruction is satisfied that the building is necessary and suitable, and after the advice of the Public Works Department is secured.

Formerly, if the sanction of the Government was not obtained beforehand, the management was precluded from applying for a grant after the building was completed, while, under the new arrangement, the management will not be so precluded. The provision in the new G. O. is:

The Director will maintain a list of schemes approved by him, and he will each year recommend for the consideration of the Government such new schemes out of the list as he considers deserving of a

grant, and "the Government will in connexion with the Part II estimates of each year, take such recommendations into account."

Teachers' Service Register :

A still more important and bold step has been taken by introducing the system of the Teachers' Service Register.

The main purposes of this measure are twofold, namely, first to give teachers in aided elementary schools greater security of service, instead of the present system by which managers are free to send away teachers for no adequate and recognised reasons and, secondly, to give to the teachers some fixity and certainty of regular payment of their salary and to give to the managers a certain fixed proportion of grant for the proper maintenance of the school.

It is my firm conviction that, when the Service Register system is worked well, the present state of affairs will be improved: both managers and teachers will know their respective duties and rights which were hitherto not defined under the old policy of drift.

If the system is found to work satisfactorily, it may well be adopted also in secondary schools, so that the present system of agreement between the manager and the teacher may be replaced by the Service Register system, giving greater security of service to teachers in secondary schools.

Associations recognised :

Another reform was introduced by a set of three G. O.s regulating Teachers' Associations, Teachers' Unions, and Managers' Associations. The former policy of drift had led to the establishment of different types of unions and associations which often worked in such a way as to bring about conflict between teachers and managers and between the Government and the Departmental Officers on the one side and managers and teachers on the other. Hitherto there were no rules regulating such associations and unions, and, therefore, they could not be recognized.

Now, with the new G. O.s such unions and associations get recognition and a better status. They will now be regarded as properly constituted, so as to be consulted on important matters connected with elementary education. Teachers are given a statutory voice in such matters, apart from their right to ventilate their grievances.

Teachers and Politics :

In this connexion, I wish to state that a certain amount of misunderstanding has arisen among teachers on two points. The G. O.

was misunderstood as a measure intended to prevent teachers from taking part in political and social activities. This misunderstanding is the result of not reading the G. O. correctly or of not understanding certain expressions in the G. O.s. I have already explained elsewhere that teachers are not precluded by the G. O.s. from taking an intelligent interest in political and social matters for the advancement and progress of our country.

What is intended by the provisions in the G. O.s. is that a Union or an Association formed for definite educational purposes should not be utilized for other, political or social purposes.

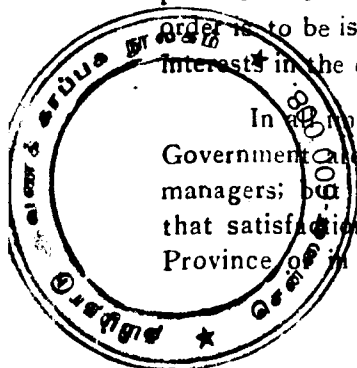
The second misunderstanding is about teachers' joining such organisations as the District Teachers' Guild or the South India Teachers' Union. Here, again, critics rushed to the Press not caring to understand what the meaning of the G. O. is.

The first duty of teachers who felt aggrieved in any way was to consult the Government or to address the Secretary or Minister for education, and find out the meaning or purport of the clauses or provisions that they found unsatisfactory in their own opinion. If teachers or any others misunderstand, or do not care to take steps to understand from proper authorities, the meaning of G. O.s. and if, instead, they rush to the Press with their own uncharitable remarks, the Government are not to be blamed, and it only shows what different specimens of teachers we have for educating the rising generation of the future citizens of our country.

I may take this occasion to warn the teachers that irresponsible writing in the Press, which the Government will simply ignore, will only do harm to the teachers' cause and retard the progress of the measures contemplated or adopted for their good.

Let them realise that the Government is the Government not only of teachers, but also of students, of managers, of parents and of taxpayers. It is simply impossible to carry on the administration of a province like Madras, consulting teachers and managers whenever an order is to be issued or placating teachers at the expense of other interests in the country.

In all important matters and in all reasonable ways, the present Government are anxious to consult and to satisfy teachers and managers; but that consultation cannot be in every matter, nor can that satisfaction be at the expense of various other interests in the Province in the field of education.



Taluq Education Committees:

The sixth major reform effected by the present Government is the abolition of the District Education Councils and their substitution by Taluq Advisory Education Committees. There are some differences of opinion on the constitution and functions of the new committees, as in every such case there must be such differences of opinion. It is no use asking the Government now to modify the provisions of this G. O. The order was issued after mature deliberation taking into consideration the past history of the District Educational Council, the present policy of the Government in the matter of spreading elementary education by voluntary co-operation and services of men really interested in the spread of literacy and in the growth of schools without unhealthy rivalry.

After the system outlined in the G. O. is worked for a year or two, we shall modify it in the light of experience that will be gained, and then teachers' organisations will get an opportunity to place their suggestions before the Government.

Revised Syllabus :

The seventh and last important step our Government have taken is the introduction of the new revised syllabus for elementary schools. That this syllabus is a great improvement over the present one is acknowledged by all those who have had a vision of it. Even the *Harijan* of Mahatma Gandhi had a word of appreciation to say on this syllabus, which embodies the spirit as well as some of the important features of the Wardha scheme of education.

Here, again, after the new syllabus has been put into use, for a year or two, all over the Province, teachers' organisations will be asked to suggest any necessary changes so as to improve the new syllabus.

Thus from the seven measures enumerated above you will admit that the present Government have taken in hand both the improvement of the system of elementary education and the progress of elementary schools, as well as the betterment of the condition of aided elementary school teachers.

REFORMS CONTEMPLATED:

Indeed, many more things have to be done to improve the state of education in the Province and some of these things we propose to take up during this year.

There are now seven measures under varying stages of consideration, viz., opening of a Wardha Training School, reorientation of the

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system of secondary education and of S. S. L. C. examinations, reorganisation of the system of the appointment of the Text-book Committee and of publication of text books, readjustment of the administrative machinery, recognition of the South India Teachers' Union as the organ of the teaching profession in the Province, the question of creating a Provincial Advisory Education Council, amending of the three University Acts, and expansion of facilities for women's education.

All these reforms are important, and some of them are of a far-reaching nature. I am not a revolutionary, but, like our great national leader, I am for a silent revolution by a series of evolutionary changes. Based on this principle of administration, especially during a period of transition as we find ourselves in at the present moment, I intend taking them up during the year. No doubt, it is a stupendous task, but as a teacher and as an educationist, whom Providence has raised to the position of a Minister, I hope to work out the schemes patiently and successfully, provided I get adequate and the proper type of co-operation from my brother teachers and educationists—sincere friends of educational progress.

Let me explain to you the proper type of cooperation for which I appeal to you.

The first thing you must realise and recognize is that the present Government are, not only not your enemy, but your friend, with a genuine sympathy for teachers and with a willingness to listen to you, and that, if the Government do not satisfy you in every way and to the extent you desire or expect, it is because of various limitations and adverse circumstances under which the Government are functioning to-day.

A WARNING.

Thirdly, let no true teacher worth the name entertain the notion that by direct action teachers could gain what they want.

Let me assure you, those present in this hall as well as the army of teachers outside in the Province, that it is disgraceful for the teaching profession, in this country of high ideals and of ancient educational glories, to have recourse to direct action, and that as long as I remain Minister for Education, every case of direct action will be severely dealt with.

I do not want teachers of my country to imitate the labourers of the degenerate Western nations. I look upon such teachers as my enemies, as unworthy of any support from the Government.

Fourthly, let no teacher be found at the bottom of any students' strikes. It is the duty of teachers so to adjust their conduct as to create an atmosphere of peace and goodwill in their respective schools. Those who pour oil on troubled waters will only be helping themselves to get out of the teaching profession. By fomenting troubles with the manager or headmaster or students, some teachers have given trouble to the Government and to the Ministry of Education. It is not such cooperation that I seek from teachers to push forward schemes of educational reforms.

Fifthly, do not attempt to frighten the Government to do things by intimidation and threats. Let the spirit of violence in thought, word and deed, be not found among the ingredients of your character. You cannot call yourselves friends of the present Government, displaying violence in this manner or entertaining prospects of direct action as some of the teachers in our Province do.

In conclusion, I appeal to teachers to place greater confidence in their Government, to feel sympathy for a hard-worked Government with a poor treasury, and to elevate the tone of education in the various stages in our Province. Let your deliberations at this Conference promote that peace and goodwill, that harmony and cooperation, that sweet reasonableness and spirit of compromise—qualities which are highly necessary to carry on schemes of reorganisation to a successful conclusion.

Educational Aims and Reorganisation

(Excerpts from the Welcome Address of Prof. M. S. Sabhesan, M. A., at the Madras Educational Conference.)

The Government of India has called upon Local Governments to take in hand the thorough overhauling of the present system of education. The Madras Government published its scheme of reorganisation of education and there was feverish activity for some months everywhere. The South India Teachers' Union expressed an adverse opinion in regard to the proposal in the *communique* of the Government. (The proposals were to abolish the Intermediate courses of studies, to extend the B. A. and B.Sc. courses by one year, and to divide the high school into vocational and pre-university courses.) It may be of interest to you to know that the Madras, Andhra, and Annamalai Universities are opposed to some of the chief proposals of the Government. In the meantime, the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education has been published and the Central Advisory Board of Education has emphasized

the soundness of the scheme and also commended it to the provinces with certain minor alterations. There has been a lull in the air for several months and we are in a state of suspended animation. It is more than a year since the Congress Party assumed office. Persons frequently ask us what the next step of the Government will be.

While other Provinces have shown a determination to make a beginning and also appointed committees to suggest a line of action, we are asked to believe that the Government *communique* is the last word on the subject of reorganization of education and that all that is needed is a revision of the syllabus.

CONFLICT OF IDEOLOGIES.

One important point that cannot be ignored in the planning of education to-day is the conflict of ideologies in our country and in other parts of the world. How far the increasing tension in the international situation is likely to influence the school programme in the years to come is difficult to imagine. Teachers in South India are seriously told by responsible leaders that they need not concern themselves with anything other than the class routine. This advocacy of segregation should appear strange when we find that teachers in England are called upon to be ready, among other things, to lead thousands of children to specially constructed shelters in up-country districts with provision for protection against attacks from the air. The India of to-morrow which forms a favourite theme with our leaders can be secured only when it rests on a well-balanced and properly reorganised system of education.

A hundred years ago the question of what the system of education ought to be, formed the subject of controversy and there was a battle royal on that. The same question is raised to-day in a still more complex form and a solution should be found if the India of tomorrow should grow from strength to strength. Can we turn to the history of Indian Education for guidance just now?

A good deal of harm is often caused in this connexion by laying stress on catchwords like cultural education, vocational education, projects, Wardha education and so on. At the time of the introduction of the Western education, it was a question of 'Oriental studies' versus 'western knowledge'. Now, it is 'book-learning' versus 'learning and doing'.

The crisis in education is more serious to-day. Should the early stage of the traditional literary type be replaced by the Wardha Scheme of basic education to be adopted as the first step in national education? Once a thorough overhauling of the system of education is found

imperative, it will be prudent and wise on the part of the public to welcome this Wardha Scheme which, more than any other scheme, holds out a chance of making our children able-bodied, cultured, intelligent, and self-reliant.

A no-changer who tenaciously clings to the traditional type does as much disservice to the cause of education as one who has an exaggerated notion of the benefits of the Wardha Scheme. The historical parallel points to the necessity for understanding the realities of the situation and extending our whole-hearted support to the Government towards the introduction of the Wardha Scheme. This support of the Wardha Scheme need not and should not necessarily mean that the traditional type has no great purpose to serve. Social conditions are continuing to change rapidly and the educational system and methods should evolve side by side.

A sum of Rs. 2½ crores is spent from public funds every year on education. There is again the money spent by other agencies on education. How to get an adequate return for the money spent on education is the question that engages the attention of the South India Teachers' Union and the Government. The Union realises that the Ministry for Education is not a bed of roses and that it should receive the willing support of the public and the teaching profession.

ABOVE PARTY POLITICS.

The Union is of opinion that it should have no politics of its own and that education should be above party politics. In the interests of education, the Union holds the view that the teaching profession should not affiliate itself to any political party.

There is, however, one important ideal which the Union wants the teaching profession to bear in mind. The community of teachers should take no note of differences of caste, race, creed, language, etc., in the work of schools. Further, it is essential in the peculiar conditions obtaining in our province that our schools endeavour to bring up children on healthy cosmopolitan lines which will prevent their becoming anti-social owing to territorial, linguistic, and communal, or religious bias.

The teaching profession should see that the undesirable influences noticed in society do not affect the tone of the school and that due care is taken to foster the growth of sound conventions, abiding goodwill and mutual understanding among children in schools. Much will depend upon the outlook and attitude of the personnel of the teaching profession. The efficiency of the teaching profession and its usefulness to

the body politic are closely bound up with the opportunities it enjoys for enlightening the public in regard to educational matters and for influencing the educational policy of the Government. In the absence of such facilities, its discussions become unreal and futile.

INDISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS.

It is a matter for careful consideration whether the teaching profession should not study carefully the problem of indiscipline in schools. A proper school atmosphere is the only remedy for indiscipline in schools. A well-managed school is usually free from dissatisfaction and discontent and the atmosphere of such a school is one where the germs of indiscipline can hardly flourish.

ACTION NEEDED.

In the circumstances in which this province finds itself to-day, it is for the Government to take the initiative immediately and adopt a definite plan of action. While the Union may have no hesitation in assuring the Minister for Education of its whole-hearted support, it should at the same time appeal to him to realise the need for a distinct change in the general outlook and to be ready to take action, as suggested by the Commissioner for Education.

In the first place, a distinct admission that the education of the people is primarily the responsibility of the Government will remove mis-apprehensions and pave the way for national education. Secondly, a small representative committee should study the proposals for the reorganisation of education and the Minister should formulate on the basis of the expert advice he has received a comprehensive and articulated scheme of national education with a ten-year programme.

It will at the same time be necessary for him to have the financial implications of the scheme examined. He may have to see how far the present method of preparation of the educational budget is satisfactory. It will be desirable if he could make the Cabinet agree to a formula which will be elastic enough to meet the growing needs of education as years pass on.

PRIVATE MANAGEMENT.

A still more important question which requires his immediate attention is the problem of the managing agency. There is a good deal of complaint about the administration of schools, whether under local bodies or under private management.

The fate of many schools is hanging in the balance. Cuts and reduction of scale of pay, stoppage of increments, and retrenchment are

becoming common in most schools. The entire question of the managing agency requires to be reviewed in the light of present-day developments and the Minister should come to a definite conclusion with regard to the policy to be followed hereafter. Alongside of the managing agency, should be discussed the conditions of service of teachers.

There is lip sympathy everywhere. It is surprising that, in these days when even persons occupying honorary positions like the chairmen of municipalities are successfully urging their claims for allowances to enable them to visit several areas, teachers are still called upon to regard the flattering and meaningless platitudes about the nobility of the profession as substitutes for hard cash. The Minister should see to it that teachers are treated in the same manner as public servants and that the rules relating to the conditions of service of teachers are not different in principle.

A PROVINCIAL EDUCATION BOARD.

Lastly, the Minister should have a standing expert body to advise him on all educational questions. By whatever name it may be called, the need for a Board of Education is real at the present moment and it is essential that the Board should consist of the representatives of Universities, the Management, the Government and the South India Teachers' Union.

The financial resources of our province may be inadequate and inelastic; but what is available can be utilised to the best advantage if education be considered as a whole, and if the Government chose to take the partners into its confidence.

The Union believes that much can be achieved if the department, the management and the teaching profession could sit together and discuss freely all problems.

Presidential Address

(Extracts from the Presidential Address of Mr. V. P. Audiseshiah, Principal, Voorhees College, Vellore, at the Madras Educational Conference in May, 1939.)

TENDENCIES IN EDUCATION.

The tendency during the last 25 years has been to re-think, and re-state the implications of sound education to examine, to sift and analyse the system of education, in its various aspects and stages, and to recast, modify and adjust it in such a way as to meet the social, economic, cultural and practical needs of the present time. Such a complex,

harmonious, well-balanced system of education is not easy to achieve at one stroke. It must be evolved gradually in the light of experience, as the result of patient thought and strenuous endeavour. That is exactly what has been going on for some years. All along there has been a sense of inadequacy and that has led to such tremendous changes. Now the emphasis is placed more on practical and human side, on education in close touch with the realities of life and environment.

Some of us are the products of the old system. We even pride ourselves on the fact that the old system was far superior to the new in that it cultivated accuracy, precision both in thought and expression, development of correct notions of things and depth of knowledge. But there is a great deal to be said in favour of the new system.

Some of these new methods have not been a conspicuous success, for example, the Project method. The reason is that it takes time to train pupils adequately according to this method, but the parents are impatient. They want quick returns. They desire to see that their children get degrees and titles, without caring much what kind of knowledge they acquire and whether it is really sound. People are rarely prepared to pursue knowledge patiently because commercialism and rank utilitarianism play a very powerful part and prevent acquisition of really solid knowledge and culture.

THE WARDHA SCHEME.

The Wardha scheme of education contains, it is claimed, the salient features of the previous systems, in addition to being craft-centred, and is pre-eminently practical. A great deal has been said and written on the scheme.

The scheme is still to be tried. Time and experience alone will show its real value in liquidating illiteracy and laying the foundation for the choice of a proper vocation for the pupils in after-life.

Among other things underlying the conception of the scheme seems to be the economic efficiency of the future generations, but the most recent criticism of the system is that it over-emphasises crafts and eliminates all cultural education. Further, it is said that it neglects English, without which for a long time to come we can ill-afford to live or carry on our business and negotiations. Again it is said that psychologically it is an unsound system, because intensive work at craft at an early stage would have a deleterious effect on the mental training of the pupils. These are some of the features that are supposed to vitiate

the scheme. The picture is rather overdrawn. Without claiming infallibility for the scheme, it may be tried, and if the result proves unsatisfactory it may be discarded.

The question of the re-organization of secondary education is on the anvil. The system has become out of date, and requires to be adjusted to altered conditions.

CO-EDUCATION.

Co-education has been carried on for more than thirty years in a very limited scale in the lower stages; but recently it has increased by leaps and bounds, especially in the University classes. It augurs well for the nation that the women of the country are taking advantage of the opportunities given to them and are endeavouring to measure up to the standard of Western women. Indian women should be increasingly educated to enable them, not to compete with men, but to contribute their share to the advancement of the nation so that our country may take her legitimate place as a free nation in the world. Under the present circumstances girls may be educated side by side with boys until they reach ten years of age, and in the college classes co-education may go on as at present.

DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS.

It has been said that the relationship nowadays between the teacher and the pupil is not what it was in the good old days. The teacher is helpless when he is confronted with breaches of discipline and disorderly behaviour on the part of the pupils. They say that it is all the manifestation of the spirit of the times and should be dealt with tactfully and sympathetically. We have been reading recently in the newspapers about strikes, revolts against school authorities, picketing, walk-out, etc. Surely, sound judgment and critical thought, acquisition of solid knowledge, and diligent application to studies cannot flourish in an atmosphere of tension and turmoil.

No efforts on the part of the teacher in putting down such indiscipline will be adequate unless the parents co-operate. Educated parents can render a valuable help in this matter. The pupils are sometimes under unhealthy influences. Political exploitation of students has been responsible in a great measure for this state of indiscipline. Immature minds easily fall victims to flattery and cajolery of irresponsible politicians.

The teacher's task becomes extremely difficult in such a plight but he must rise to the demand made on him by such a situation and use his moral force in drawing the immature minds to the path of rectitude and dignified behaviour.

The capacity of the teacher to cope with such a situation will be in proportion to the confidence he is able to infuse into the pupils by his good work, exemplary conduct and the love and respect he is able to command and the sympathy he shows to the legitimate aspirations of his pupils. Such a talented teacher is sure to earn the lasting gratitude of the pupils and of the parents.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

University education has undergone tremendous changes during the last 25 years both in the curricula of studies and in extra-curricular activities. The opportunities afforded to the students are as numerous as they are valuable in spite of the acute unemployment problem, which has a depressing effect on the students and chills their enthusiasm.

One of the suggestions made to lay this grim spectre of unemployment is that, instead of scrambling for Government posts, and becoming disgruntled when unsuccessful, university men should enter into enterprises of various kinds, rural uplift work etc., to keep them busy. It is a well known fact that the earning capacity is rarely in proportion to the amount of knowledge or high degrees and titles acquired. It is a mockery to call upon these ambitious young men who are at the threshold of life, with rosy visions of their future to do honorary work or set them adrift on society to take their chance.

The University and the Government are endeavouring to devise ways and means to help these young men. There are some private bodies who are working towards the same object. But nothing very substantial has been done till now or their efforts have not touched even the fringe of the problem. The problem ought to be solved and the tense situation eased. The sooner it is done, the better. It should be taken up and tackled seriously by the Government, business firms and other private employers.

MORE GRANT WANTED.

The serious handicaps of the teachers' life should be brought to the notice of the authorities. It must not be regarded as a customary complaint and brushed aside. The teachers' security and tenure of office, pay and prospects and kindred questions, especially in institutions managed by private bodies, have been engaging the attention of the South India Teachers' Union, but nothing very appreciable has been done to improve their lot. I take it that there can be no two opinions on the fact that the Grant-in-Aid. Code should be revised. The grant should be given more liberally.

Equipment grant should not for any reason be curtailed or stopped as was suggested some months ago by the Premier. It may be true that in his days as a student they got on fairly well without costly equipment. Now the days are different. These are days of tremendous improvements in all directions. Education has become more realistic and knowledge is not built upon mere imagination. On the other hand, it is based upon the pupil's living contact with concrete elements and environments. Thus it is necessary to have fairly good equipment which will be helpful in making the child's education really concrete.

State Vocational Welfare in Japan

An Object Lesson for India

(From A Correspondent.)

The management of vocational service bureaus, for many years one of the activities of city, town and village administrations, was brought under the control of the Government on July 1, 1938. This type of social service is not exactly new in Japan. It originated toward the end of the feudal period (about the middle of the 19th century) and was conducted entirely by private agencies. In the latter part of the Meiji Era (1868-1912), however, due to the concentration of a destitute population in the metropolitan areas, new problems arose necessitating the creation of relief establishments. This situation was answered by such philanthropic bodies as the Salvation Army, various public organizations and the Tokyo Municipal Office which took up vocational aid work as one of their established activities. It was at this time that such terms as Employment Agency and Vocational Service came into popular use.

In 1920 the Government enacted a law for the establishment of employment bureaus in cities, towns and villages with the object of co-ordinating the work and granted a subsidy toward this end. It was at a time when Japan was hard-hit by the world-wide post-war depression and faced the problem of solving the severe unemployment situation in the modern industries. The Convention on Unemployment which was adopted by the International Labour Congress in Washington, D. C., in 1919, urged the participating nations to establish a vocational aid system.

In 1937, there were 717 employment bureaus under the management of cities, towns and villages, and 28 others operated by various social welfare organizations. In the same year, more than 966,000

persons were given employment through these agencies, while jobs were found for 10,195,000 day labourers.

However, the present war-time situation, which demands that the nation mobilize its entire man-power, in order to enhance the national strength, has necessitated the unification and control of the nation's labour resources. To make this effective, the law governing employment agencies was revised, bringing the entire work under direct Government supervision with the primary object of ensuring the proper distribution of labour and services.

With the transfer of control to the Government, the employment bureaus formerly under the management of city, town and village administrations were entirely abolished and the creation of new, private agencies prohibited. Those operating employment agencies, as well as those engaged in recruiting workers by means other than advertisements, must now obtain the permission of the Government.

There are now 384 Government managed employment bureaus and 150 additional sub-bureaus. Of the total, 42 bureaus specialize in handling jobs for day labourers. These bureaus are located in all of the important cities and centers of agricultural districts, each having its own jurisdiction. A sub-bureau may be established in any of these jurisdictions where transportation facilities are poor.

In addition to finding employments for applicants, these bureaus offer vocational guidance, as well as other vocational aids, when such need arises. Furthermore, these bureaus have been designated as official places of registry in accordance with the provision in the National General Mobilization Law, which requires the registration of the people's vocational abilities. Registration opened on January 20th of this year.

In the large cities, each employment bureau is divided into a number of sections, each specializing in certain types of vocations. The ordinary bureau, however, consists of three general sections—for men, women and youths. The office hours are from 8:00 a. m. (9:00 a. m. during the winter months) to 4:00 p. m., Sundays and holidays excepted. Bureaus handling day labourers begin at 5:00 a. m., and are open on Sundays and holidays. All services are rendered free to job-seekers as well as to prospective employers. Those introduced to jobs in distant places are given a fifty percent discount in railway and boat fares.

Among the special features of the employment bureau are its work in connection with workers for the war time industries, disabled and wounded soldiers, and graduates of elementary schools. Of these, the first is of particular importance today in view of the fact that these

industries require an ample supply of workers. Most of the workers in the war-time industries apply for jobs with the vocational bureau of the Welfare Ministry. The Ministry then allots the applicants to the various prefectures and reports this fact to the governors who are the chief administrators of the employment bureaus in their respective territories. The governors, in turn, mobilize all of the bureaus under their supervision, and all applicants are summoned to appear for examination. Applicants selected by the bureaus are interviewed by the prospective employers, and those who meet the requirements are introduced by the bureau to their new jobs.

In order to enable disabled and wounded soldiers to secure occupations again, the employment authorities are constantly co-operating with various organizations and owners of businesses all over the country. Representatives of the employment bureaus make rounds of the hospitals to interview wounded soldiers who are about to be discharged to discuss vocational problems. In accordance with the advice and recommendations of the medical officers regarding the various soldiers' vocational aptitudes, the bureaus render every possible assistance in finding suitable employment for them.

In finding employment for young citizens who are planning to enter vocational life after their graduation from elementary school this spring, the bureaus are cooperating with the schools to provide vocational guidance. Bureau workers visit schools, even in the remotest mountain villages, in order to give proper guidance to the pupils in accordance with the teachers' findings as to their character and aptitudes. Recent tendencies reveal that the vast majority of these adolescents want to become machine workers. This fact may be considered to be a reflection of the present-day Japanese industry, which is now in the midst of transition from the light to the heavy industries.

For the unemployed created by the fluctuation of industrial activities due to the China hostilities, it has been made possible for job-seekers to obtain the necessary knowledge and ability to change vocations at the special training department attached to the employment bureaus. There are many kinds of vocational readjustment courses offered. The most typical is the training given to those formerly engaged in making metal art goods to learn how to make machine-parts and such other booming industries which call for large supplies of skilled labour.

Since compulsory registration of vocation ability went into effect, the employment bureaus have become extremely busy. Hitherto their chief function had been mainly to find employment for applicants, but

now, however, they have the added task of making vocational readjustment for those already employed, if such are deemed necessary. Applications of labourers and technicians are given careful attention by the bureaus.

The total number of clerks working in the employment bureaus throughout the country is about 6000. In the large bureaus of such cities as Tokyo, there are more than 500 clerks, while in small village bureaus the average staff numbers no more than five or six.

The administration of the vocational welfare work is far-reaching. Over 12,000 city mayors, municipal ward chiefs, town mayors and village headmen have been instructed to aid the employment bureaus, and in addition, over 57,000 honorary liaison officers have been appointed in thousands of smaller communities so as to extend this service to every section of the country. The fund appropriated for this work totals 9,000,000 yens, of which one-third is contributed by the local administration.

Vocational aid is an important service, especially in such times as these when the nation is undergoing significant shifts in industry. The Government employment bureaus are, therefore, directing their work in line with this situation, fully aware of their responsibilities to contribute to the national well-being. (I. R. I. B.)

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Notes.

Training for Examiners.

Year after year complaints have been appearing in the dailies from teachers criticising the nature of the papers set for examinees in different subjects. Some of the papers in the last S. S. L. C. Public Examinations of Madras lacked a sense of proportion, had gone beyond the syllabus, or were disappointingly simple. The purpose of an Examination, qualifying and not competitive as the above, would be better served by setting question papers with straight, simple questions without a catch, representative of the whole subject matter and capable of being completed by average pupils in the given time. With such model papers, examiners could afford to be strict and demand full and accurate answers. With papers of the wrong type, in order to avoid abnormal failures, examiners have to relax principles and manipulate the marks leading to the lowering of standards and making the test unreliable. To obviate such degeneracy, the Department would do well to organise a course of lectures for the benefit of paper-setters, which would help them to enter into the psychology of examinees and frame papers capable of testing them fairly and minimising at the same time the baneful effects of an external examination. In the absence of such disciplined efforts, examiners very often learn the art of paper-setting by experience gained at the expense of the candidates. Novel as our suggestion may look, we hope teachers, parents and pupils who have been victims of examiners' caprices, would appreciate its usefulness and practicability and move for necessary action.

Educational Reforms in Madras.

ACHIEVED AND CONTEMPLATED.

The Hon'ble C. J. Varkey, Minister for Education, in the course of his opening address at the Madras Educational Conference early this month, claimed teachers' appreciation for the educational reforms the Government had effected till now, and outlined the measures contemplated for the year to improve the

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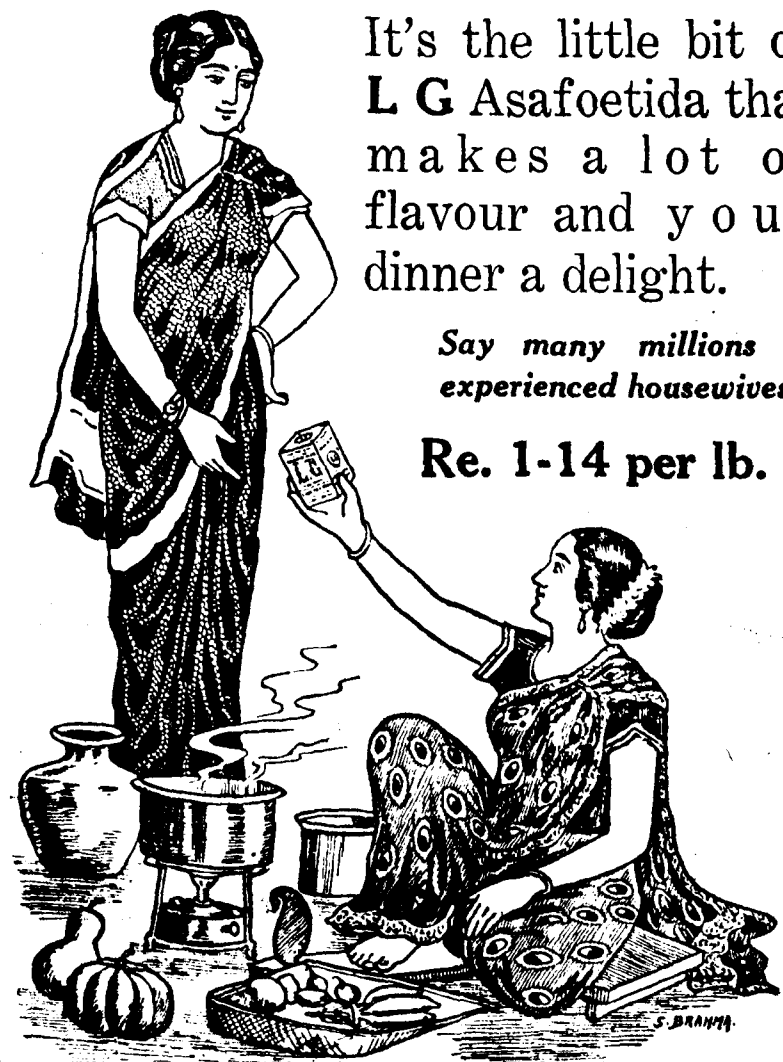
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