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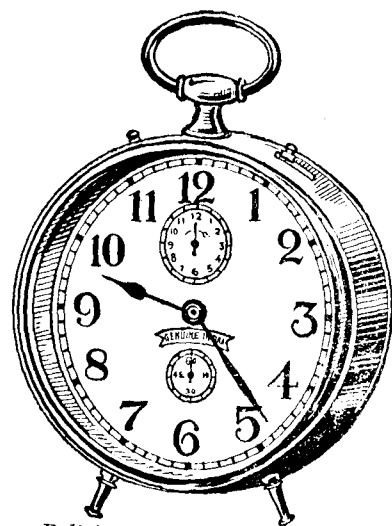
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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Delivered at the Thirty-first Provincial Educational Conference
at Ambasamudram

BY

DR. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.O.G.,
Principal, Medical College, Madras.

Mr. Chairman,

I am deeply grateful for the honour that has been conferred on me by this great organisation of teachers, who have invited me to preside at their Annual Conference. It is an honour that I appreciate all the greater as I have not had opportunities to come into close touch with your Association and ordinarily, I should not have anticipated that your choice will fall on one belonging to my profession. I must confess, however, that I feel the responsibility all the greater and I hope that the same kind consideration which prompted you to elect me as your President, will make you forgive my shortcomings and my limitations.

The Great Shadow

We are meeting at a time when there hangs over the whole world a dark shadow, the like of which it has not been possible even for us of this generation to envisage before. The Great War that is now being waged so relentlessly in the Western hemisphere is a war which has brought out more clearly, the need for stressing those eternal truths, those principles which ought to guide the activities of humanity, and those great moral laws which should be the bulwarks on which the safety of humanity is based. To none should these great principles for which the war is being waged, appeal more than to the members of the teaching profession. On the one hand, you have a relentless foe to whom

nothing is sacred, whose blood-stained grip would appear to strangle the freedom of all small nationalities, to whom the lust for power, for that dominance in the world, is a sufficient impetus to ride rough-shod over all that humanity had considered as sacred and worthy. The cause for which the Allies are fighting, is a cause which must appeal to all who have the rights of humanity at heart and who believe in the eternal verities of life and do not subscribe to the maxim that "Might is right." I do wish our countrymen would realise that this Great War is not a war with European nations but is a war in which all humanity is not merely interested but deeply involved. On the success of the Allies depends the future of nations and of individuals. Let us make no mistake about it. The more one considers deeply, the more one realises that the war is not merely waged on fundamental issues, but issues which are so large and so transcendental in their importance, that a mistaken conception of their true significance may lead to a fatal step, towards that abysmal dungeon of unredeemed humanity. Nor do I think there is any justification for that optimism that seems to prevail in some quarters, that our country can afford to look on, as a disinterested spectator, sympathising with the great moral issues at stake but not particularly anxious to take its rightful place in this great titanic struggle for right against might, for justice as against brute force and for the assertion of human rights and privileges. Let us all join in the prayerful wish that ere long, the cause of justice may triumph and that those nations who have ranged themselves so magnificently for the protection of the small nationalities will come out victorious and that the result of this Great War will be one more supreme effort to broadcast humanity on the fundamental rights of individuals and nations.

True Patriotism

Looked at from another point of view this war should have a great lesson for us to teach to the younger generation. It is surprising that every nation is fighting with grim determination and the individuals composing that nation are fully convinced that all their sacrifices are worthy of the cause. It is only those who can see from a far off distance the picture in all its aspects that realise more clearly how mistaken conceptions of narrow nationalism, how perverse views of patriotism can sometimes lead men to the greatest of sacrifices. Throughout the history of nations one can see, that not infrequently the greatest of crimes have been committed, and the greatest of sacrifices made because human emotions have been chartered by designing people in the furtherance of a questionable cause. May it not be that these considerations make us think a little more closely what the right attitude of the individual should be to the State, to his own Motherland, to

nations in other spheres, to the nations of the world at large and to humanity. It was such ideas that must have actuated one of our noble ladies to speak the other day at a meeting in Bombay, sentiments that will find a ready echo in the hearts of her countrymen. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, speaking to an audience at Bombay stated "It is not enough to be patriotic. Patriotism must be tempered with love of humanity and true nationalism should be keenly alive to the rights of other nations." At no time was there a greater need for this message of good fellowship, of faith in a larger humanity, of love for fellow-beings; at no time was there a greater need for such a message to be broadcast to all the nations of the world and to Indians alike. The teaching profession, which has the responsibility to place before the younger generation proper ideas and ideals, encourage them into lofty thoughts and instil into their tender hearts correct views as to patriotism, nationalism and love of humanity, should be in a position to place before them a correct view of their duties and responsibilities.

Universal Brotherhood

I am tempted to make these observations at greater length in view of the peculiar difficulties through which our country is passing. Perhaps it is inevitable in a transitional period, but one cannot help feeling a strange pessimism creep, as one goes through the events chronicled from day to day in our dailies and weeklies. The dissensions, the strange differences, the suspicions and mutual recriminations which unfortunately seem to be increasing instead of decreasing, these all make it inevitable that the teacher, more than anybody else, should strive to keep before his mind a clear idea of the picture, with a calmness that is borne out of experience, so that his whole outlook may be transmitted to the students under his care and they may be in a position to realise what is best for country and nation. That great ideal of the ancient Roman Empire which has been so touchingly described by Macaulay is still the great ideal that can well be placed before the youth of any country. "Then none was for a party; then all were for the State; then the rich man helped the poor and poor man loved the rich; then lands were fairly parcelled; then taxes were fairly levied. The Romans were like brothers in the brave days of old." May we not hope that in our own time, some great bard may be able to sing "The Indians are like brothers in the spacious days of to-day and to-morrow." What better ideal can a teacher place before his students? What better inspiration can he give them? What better preparation can they have for the great task that they have to face than to stand forth on the threshold of their new career with that great spirit of brotherhood, with that ever-abundant love for all Indians, with that more human outlook which em-

braces the world at large, as a family wherein everybody should have a peaceful, contented, happy life, pursuing his ideals, following his avocations and reaching to the height of his noble ambitions.

Conference and its objective

Delegates, let me next address myself to some of those topics which must necessarily exercise your minds and draw forth your discussions. If I understand the spirit in which these Conferences are being held, it is with a twofold object. Firstly, I am sure, that all of you are interested to see that we, members of the teaching profession, contribute our best to the great task to which we have been called, and these conferences give us an opportunity of examining our work in the past, preparing us for the future and helping us to avoid the pitfalls and to securely tread on the safer and better ways of the future. Our first task, therefore, is to see how best we can discharge those duties and responsibilities which it is our privilege to share. What contribution can we make to the building up of the nation, to the up-bringing of the younger generation and for the promotion of the cultural, the moral and physical outlook of the future leaders of this country. That is our first duty. Incidentally, of course, and as a second duty, we must bestow some attention on those problems which concern us more personally perhaps, but which we are bound to take note of, and it will be mere prudery to ignore. There are, I feel sure, many problems that are now agitating you as teachers, problems connected with your status, with the position that you hold, the security of tenure of your office, with the emoluments that are vouchsafed for you—problems which undoubtedly have a large share in securing, if satisfactorily solved, that peaceful atmosphere that is so essential for the discharge of your duties with a concentration which should be an essential pre-requisite for a successful career. Grave as these problems may be, manifold and diverse as they may appear, I would still beseech you to concentrate upon the first great important task and let us then venture to see from that point of view how the problems of the second may be solved.

Educational Reconstruction

At the present day there is a widespread demand for educational reform, not only in this country but in many countries all over the world. With changing times and the trend of modern events, with the cataclysmic events that are taking place everywhere and the changing angle of vision, it should not be a matter for surprise that there should be so much of criticism on the present system of education. It is when alternative systems are suggested, that one realises the enormous difficulties that lie ahead and the many defects in the alternative systems brought up for consideration.

The end and aim of all education should be to prepare the individual to play the role of a citizen in his country and take an effective part in the larger sphere of world citizenship. The training given should fit him eventually to function as a useful member of the society, to bear his share of the burden and so to conduct himself that he is a help and not a drag on society. And with this larger outlook before us, it should be obvious that there should be many ways of reaching the common goal and that no particular method could possibly fit in, for all conditions of society.

There are different grades in any system of education and we are accustomed to the three grades, primary, secondary and higher or University grade of education. These different grades have each a definite objective and should form each a complete whole by itself. Thus the object of primary education should be to impart permanent literacy to the individual so that irrespective of the opportunity for higher study, the individual so trained will have placed before him the rich treasures of knowledge which he can explore at leisure, as time and opportunities make it possible for him to do. It is because of these possibilities that the idea of compulsory education has taken root and no country or state could be said to have fulfilled its obligations that does not offer these facilities to every boy and girl of the school-going age.

Secondary education takes us a step further and should form a complete scheme by itself so that a person who has finished this stage would be in a position to choose one of four courses:

- (a) It should fit him to go out into the world and seek some occupation.
- (b) It should enable him to pursue technical or technological studies.
- (c) It should entitle him to a higher grade of education in a University.
- (d) It should fit him for some professional courses of study.

University education should be at the disposal of all those who can afford to take advantage of it or who, by their mental equipment, are well-suited for such education. The more University education spreads and the greater the number who are enabled to take advantage of such education, the better will the state or society be served. At the same time, it is well to realise that the hall mark of the University is not the only hall mark to denote culture, erudition or scholarship and that

there are and have been not an inconsiderable number to whom the portals of a University have been denied and who have made noteworthy contributions to the sum total of human knowledge or wisdom. If to-day University education has fallen from its high pedestal or is looked upon with indifference or suspicion, the fault must be ascribed not to the University type of education but to the alumni who have failed to realise their proper role.

Let us examine briefly the position occupied by these different grades of education in our country. At the outset, I would emphasize the fact that in a vast sub-continent like ours, it is a mistake to aim at uniformity. The problems in one province are not the same in another and the methods applicable to one may be ill-suited to another. A certain amount of elasticity is essential and what should be aimed at is more "unity in essentials, diversity in non-essentials and efficiency everywhere." When, therefore, reformists try to suggest one common scheme or one definite plan of campaign, it seems to me that any such plan is bound to lead to results, the opposite of what the originators had in view.

Primary Education.

Primary education or the literacy test as it may be termed has made some progress, but judged from the standpoint of mass literacy, much leeway has yet to be made. It is here that great thought and foresight are required and it is in this, the most difficult type of education to be imparted, there is great need for improvement in the quality of teaching. Given the proper type of teacher, it should not be difficult for a boy to cover the field effectively in the space of three or four years. Conditions being what they are in this country, a uniform type of primary school is hardly likely to meet the needs of all classes. It may be that set hours of school education may not be always feasible and we should contemplate the possibility of schools functioning in the morning hours only or in the evening hours or during the day depending on the needs of particular areas or classes of population. The wastage in this type of education is serious and demands the earnest attention of the teachers. By more earnest attempts at securing the co-operation of parents, by greater laxity in the hours of education and by providing greater attractions in the school in the shape of games and other side activities and above all by a more earnest attempt at individual training, it may be possible to promote those conditions which conduce to a more complete type of instruction. Why should certain types of schools show better progress than others? Can it be that in this sphere of education the Missionary zeal and devotion to duty is more necessary than even in other types?

Secondary Education.

Let me next turn to secondary education and the problems connected with it. Secondary education, if properly understood, should provide a diversity of types of education, all aiming at a definite goal. Our secondary schools have in the past copied but one type of education and there has therefore been a stalemate leading to an over production of a type of student who finds himself thrown into the world ill-equipped for the task. The cry that our secondary system of education is dominated by the University has been raised frequently, but it is forgotten that the whole scheme of education at present imparted in these schools is such as only to fit the boys to a possible entrance to the University and to no other. When the old Matriculation examination was abolished and the S. S. L. C. scheme was first introduced, it was intended to be mainly a school record, with discretion to the headmasters to issue progress certificates and to principals to admit such candidates to colleges. The scheme had changed during the last 25 years in such a way that it bore no resemblance to the original scheme. The S. S. L. C. course is under the control of a Board, with representatives of the University, but the Board is virtually an autonomous body. Changes have been introduced from time to time and it is the S. S. L. C. Board and not the University that has been responsible for that want of elasticity that is now the chief feature of the scheme. The examinations, the standards of valuation and all the details of the syllabus are controlled by the Board and the University steps in only to decide the standard of attainment at the public examination which would entitle a student to seek admission into a college. Even these rules of eligibility do not make it obligatory on any college to admit such students, and to-day there are colleges which can and do set their own standards of admission, provided of course they do not fall below the minimum fixed by the University.

While I do not in the least wish to condone the University for the part it has played, let me frankly state that the schools themselves have not taken kindly to the scheme. The "B" Group subjects were not cared for in the majority of schools and the vocational bias that was fondly expected from this scheme has not therefore materialised. On the other hand the teaching profession and the public have time and again pressed on the University the desirability of recognising every single subject now provided in the optional group of the S. S. L. C. scheme, for purposes of entrance to the University. It is gratifying to note that in spite of this, 10 to 15% of the students take up subjects definitely outside the scope of University entrance and more would do so if alternative schemes were placed before them.

I do not suggest that the ambition to pursue a University course of study should be discouraged, but I do feel strongly that it should not be an aimless way of approach and one chosen for lack of anything better. The spectacle of parents, too poor to maintain themselves, struggling to give their children higher education and staking their little savings for this purpose is indeed a tragic one to witness. And when after such privations the young student finds he has with difficulty secured a degree which finds no value in the commercial world, the disappointment caused to the whole family can easily be understood. What wonder if such youths, out of sheer despair, fall a prey to the many 'isms' that are now so much to the forefront like Socialism and Communism.

Entrance to Public Service.

It is considerations such as these that prompted me to suggest that entrance to certain categories in the public service like clerkship for which the S. S. L. C. is prescribed as a qualification, should be limited to persons with such qualifications and the age lowered suitably. This is the practice in other countries and it would certainly afford great relief to a class of persons, the poor and the poorer middle classes who would benefit by such recruitment. Nor should it be considered that Government departments would suffer in efficiency thereby. The present system of recruitment cannot be said to yield the best results, whereby a candidate is recruited to the clerical post and then asked to study a number of subjects and pass several departmental tests while at work. This lessens the efficiency of the work turned out and does not conduce to a proper appreciation of the subjects of study either. If persons of younger age be recruited and proper training given for a couple of years in suitable centres, a better equipped class of public servants would be available, who would serve with greater knowledge of their work and with increased efficiency.

Fundamentals of Reorganization.

The reorganisation of secondary education has been to the forefront since the issue of the G. O. of 1937 wherein it was suggested that at a particular stage, alternatives should be offered to the pupils either to take to a vocational course or a more literary type of studies. The scheme has been the subject of close scrutiny at many meetings of teachers, guilds and associations of teachers. In the mean time other schemes have also been placed before the public, notably the Wardha scheme of education. I hesitate to express any definite views on this subject, but I have no doubt the subject will be fully considered by you in all its bearings. It seems to me that certain fundamental considerations should be borne in mind.

1. Any scheme of reorganisation should fit in with the needs of the country and should as far as possible be within the means of the state.

2. It is a wise rule when new schemes are suggested to try the experiment in selected areas and to watch the progress with sympathetic interest.

3. No scheme of education should be a burden on the pupils and the school should be so conducted that it will prove a source of attraction and not a place of toil and struggle.

4. The success of every scheme depends entirely on the efficiency and enthusiasm of the teacher and an abundant supply of such qualified teachers should be an essential pre-requisite for the starting or the success of such a scheme.

I would therefore approach every scheme with these conditions prominently stressed, for I feel that excellent schemes can be drawn up and unless they fulfil the essential conditions failure may result.

The Vocational Bias.

Many will agree that a vocational bias in secondary education is desirable. The difficulty is in implementing it. The starting of a few vocational classes is not enough. The vocation should be such as fits in with the needs of the classes who are likely to take to it. It must give a finished apprenticeship in at least one particular vocation. And there should be as an essential corollary for such vocational schools, higher technical and technological institutes or colleges, which would give opportunities to the better qualified among them to progress from stage to stage till they can by sheer merit and perseverance reach the highest pedestal in the particular line. Mediocrity never pays and if vocational schools are content to play the role of mediocrity, they are bound to fail. It was said of Napoleon that he gave the famous exhortation "that every soldier carried the field-marshal's baton in his knapsack". In the same spirit we should so organise vocational education that it will not be considered as a byelane for men of inferior calibre; and there should be no such idea as the separation of the sheep and goats, in the selection of candidates for such vocational schools.

The Medium of Instruction.

It is hardly necessary for any one to stress the importance of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools. The study of the mother tongue and its use as a vehicle of thought is now an accepted plan in any scheme of reorganisation of secondary education. This should

not, however, blind us to certain essential reforms that should be taken on hand. The mother tongue will be popular with pupils only when modern methods of teaching a language find favour with our lecturers. It is a fact that many pupils find it still a task and not a pleasure to study their mother tongue and this paradoxical state of affairs is due to the old system of education that is still prevalent in the teaching of Indian languages. I hope that this aspect of the question will receive increasing attention at the hands of all educationists and the pioneer work of a few enthusiasts will be more vigorously followed.

As regards the teaching of all subjects through the language of the area concerned, I would stress once again the need for an efficient staff of teachers. The new rules issued by the Director of Public Instruction in regard to recruitment of teachers will give a fillip to this subject. But much as I appreciate this reform, let me emphasize the need for the study of a language that will lay open the rich treasures of knowledge, whether it be in the humanities or sciences, before the educated individual. Other countries, whose spirit of nationalism is no less than ours, have realised the need for such study. And may I say this, that when present day controversies have settled down, when a calmer atmosphere is available, many will agree that the study of English is a valuable adjunct for all educated persons, whether it be for the pursuit of science or philosophy, whether for commerce or diplomacy or for world contact and communion.

Physical Education.

It has been a criticism in the past that our educational institutions have placed too much emphasis on the literary side and too little on the physical side of education. Such criticism will no longer be applicable to our schools and the recent order of Government has laid emphasis on physical education as a compulsory subject in all schools. I welcome this reform and I trust it will be given effect to in the proper spirit. The aim of physical education is to ensure a healthy body for a healthy mind to develop, not to turn out physical giants or to train soldiers for the battle field. Such a training will follow when it is necessary.

The emphasis laid on physical education is all to the good, provided certain safeguards are ensured. The type of physical education suited to the individual should be determined and efforts should be made to see that special facilities are available to those who are physically defective in any degree for different forms of exercise. This requires the close and intelligent co-operation of the school medical officer and the physical director and I would invite the attention of headmasters of schools to this aspect of the problem. To force a form of physical exercise on those

who are underfed and weak, or who are the subjects of incipient tuberculosis or heart disease, would be to court disastrous results. Young men eager to get into grips with Sandow's exercises or games of stress have broken down under such a strain and have become physical wrecks.

The Status of the Teacher

This Conference is naturally most interested in the status of the teacher and the conditions under which he has to work. It is hardly necessary to emphasize the fact that for the efficient discharge of his duties, the teacher should live in an atmosphere of tranquillity and should not be subjected to the humiliations and worries associated with a life of constant anxiety and uncertainty as to his pay, prospects and future. The teacher more than any one else in society is asked to follow the motto of 'Plain living and high thinking.' Whenever retrenchment is in the air, the teaching profession is the first to be chosen for the kind consideration of retrenchment committees and in any other scheme of reform towards expanding the sphere of education and extending the field of literacy, it is generally presumed that cutting down of the salaries of teachers should form an integral part as otherwise the scheme would be a financial impossibility. Such a frame of mind spells disaster for the future of education. The lowering of salaries leads to lowering of standards and the possible recruitment to the teaching profession of those who are from every point of view ill-fitted for the great task.

It must be accepted that nowhere has this tendency shown its adverse effects so much as in the field of elementary education. Nothing is more difficult in the whole sphere of education than the teaching of boys and girls in elementary schools and nowhere do we require teachers of imagination, of sound scholarship and of unbounded enthusiasm than in the field of primary and secondary education. The fact is that nowhere do we impose such minimum qualifications for these teachers and if the results are so poor there is nothing to be surprised at. We speak of wastage in elementary education. What else could we expect when the conditions under which elementary schools have to be conducted are such that the right type of teachers with a sufficiently high standard of general education cannot be attracted nor can they be retained under the somewhat humiliating conditions under which many of them have to serve. It is somewhat surprising that we expect such teachers to understand the psychology of the growing child, to adopt the Montessori method of teaching, to imbibe every new idea and to adopt new fangled schemes of primary education, the exact import and implications of which even the sponsors are probably not quite conscious of. The crying need in our scheme of elementary education seems to be better qualified and better equipped teachers to whom a

living wage and security of tenure is vouchsafed, and who should be able to carry on their work undisturbed by the din and dust of polemical activities carried on by other agencies.

Educational Expansion—Its Effects.

What has been stated about teachers in primary schools applies also to teachers in secondary schools and even colleges. The great expansion that has taken place in the sphere of secondary education within the last two decades has brought in its wake many problems affecting the teaching profession. The expansion of local self-government and the widening of the franchise have necessarily resulted in a greater amount of attention being bestowed on the nation-building activities, chief among which is the expansion of educational facilities to areas which hitherto had been denied easy access to schools. While this is a welcome feature of progress, it has to be admitted that in the eagerness to vie with each other and their anxiety to show to the electorate a record of progress, local bodies have started a number of new schools, converted elementary into higher elementary and higher elementary into secondary schools, rapidly but not too wisely. This led to the inevitable consequences, a breakdown in finance, a reduction in the salaries of teachers and in their number, a delay in the payment of even these salaries, a discontented teaching staff and an inevitable deterioration in the standards of teaching and a depletion in the numbers attending such schools.

But this is not the only unfortunate result. The widening of the franchise to local bodies naturally attracted to these institutions, a type of representative, unaccustomed to the duties and responsibilities of such work but with a consciousness of the rights and privileges of such office. The expected happened. Instances were not infrequent where teachers suffered because of the mistaken conception of the members as regards the status and prerogatives of the teaching profession. It was sometimes presumed, that a teacher who is technically 'a servant' of the local body was therefore 'a servant' of the President and individual members of the local body concerned. In their new-fangled enthusiasm for work, individual members inspected schools, checked the work of teachers, dictated to them the policy that had to be pursued and in other ways grossly interfered with the work of the school,—a procedure which would never have occurred if the members were aware of their strict limitations. In a few instances—and fortunately only in a few—it took even a more sinister form, when Headmasters of schools or teachers therein were cajoled or threatened as regards promotions and even punishments of boys. And as if this was not enough, public meetings were convened and popular leaders were sometimes forced to participate in these proceedings, with a view to coerce the managements

or teaching staff to a course of action diametrically opposed to academic standards of purity and efficiency.

Wanted A True Perspective

Let us not exaggerate the evil that has been portrayed. Fortunately there are not many such instances, but their growing tendency has necessitated the passing of several orders by the Government or the Department of education and let us hope such orders will have a salutary effect. One is not too sanguine however of the desired results. It is only when local bodies realise their limitations, it is only when the individual member is made to realise that his sphere of activity is restricted to the deliberations of the corporate body, it is only when self-governing institutions are better convinced that executive action is best left to the executive and that the duty of such bodies is to lay down the policy and give general directions and watch the carrying out of such a policy,—it is only then that evils such as have been pointed out will cease and a correct lead given by our self-governing institutions. If the evil is not checked, disastrous results must ensue which will ruin our educational institutions. The spectacle of wholesale transfer of teachers, of their suspensions and in some cases even dismissal following a change in the personnel or the political conceptions of a local board or municipality should never be allowed to repeat itself in a well-organised society where healthy public opinion can assert itself. What has been stated above applies also to private managements conducting educational institutions.

A Charter of Rights and Privileges

The trend of recent events and the experience of the last twenty years make it clear to me that the teaching profession is entitled to claim at the hands of the authorities a charter of rights and privileges so that individual or group victimisation may not be possible in future. The teaching profession is well within its rights in stressing the need for :

- (i) security of tenure,
- (ii) a living wage,
- (iii) freedom from meddlesome interference, and
- (iv) an appellate authority to which all appeal will lie in all cases of victimisation or severe punishment inflicted on any teacher.

The Department of Public Instruction under the Director of Public Instruction has not hesitated to come to the rescue of teachers in the past. The teaching profession is greatly indebted to the present

Director who has shown great sympathy towards teachers of all grades. I can assure you that in Mr. Statham we have at the helm of affairs a Director who has intimate knowledge of the conditions of teachers and a generous disposition to deal with their grievances in a sympathetic and statesmanlike manner. With his advice and guidance, I feel sure that the teaching profession can look forward to an era of progress and expansion in all fields of educational activity. And may I, on your behalf and in the name of this Conference, assure the Director that in all his great schemes for the expansion of education and the uplift of the teaching profession, we shall give our whole-hearted support and our unstinted loyalty.

A Board of Appeal

I have suggested the constitution of a Board of appeal for the benefit and protection of teachers employed under local bodies or private managements. I feel that such a Board of appeal if properly constituted would command the support of both the managements and the teachers and will be acceptable to the Department concerned. Such a Board should have on its personnel a representative each of the managements, of the teaching profession, of the Department of education with one person of outstanding eminence who has had experience of educational institutions nominated by the Government. It would perhaps be necessary to have four or five such Boards functioning over different areas, the province being divided into as many units for this purpose. Such a Board will deal with teachers in elementary and secondary schools and would function for a period not more than five years nor less than three years. The details of such a scheme can be filled up but it is necessary at the outset to emphasise the limitation under which such a Board would function. There should be no room given for the impression to be created that the teachers are not subject to the control of the managements concerned nor should the Board concern itself with any details of management. The managements are under the inspection of the Department of Public Instruction which will continue their control as hitherto.

A suggestion that is worth consideration is whether local bodies cannot be grouped for purposes of transfer of teachers occasionally and for promotion of deserving members of the profession. I can see great advantages in such a scheme if worked in the proper spirit. It not infrequently happens that the transfer of a teacher is desirable in the interests of an institution and there may be no serious fault except an incompatibility of temperament or even a trivial misunderstanding. If local bodies can visualise the larger interests of education and relegate to the background considerations based on prestige and patronage, such a grouping will be of considerable benefit.

The Responsibilities of the Teaching Profession.

So far I have dealt with conditions conducive to efficient work of the teacher, but let us not fail to realise that the teaching profession is the noblest of professions and the nobility of the profession will be assured not by a repetition of such a claim but by the work and worth of the members who constitute that profession. If we are to be assured that privilege, it is essential that there should be a healthy public opinion in the profession, which will see to it that high standards are maintained, that wise counsels always prevail and that no serious lapse is ever condoned, much less encouraged. The teaching profession should be an ideal not only to the school going population, but to the public at large whose instinctive respect and admiration ought to be vouchsafed to the teacher of character and repute. The teacher should be, as he was in the past, the friend, philosopher, and guide of the society and one should instinctively turn to him for solace, advice or approval.

Holding such views, it was with profound sorrow that many of us read of the activities of some members of the profession, who with a mistaken zeal worthy of a better cause, resorted to methods of direct action so wholly foreign to our aims and ideals. Such activities have been the subject of adverse criticism from many platforms of academicians; and men of outstanding eminence like the Right Honourable Dr. Srinivasa Sastri and Dr. Reddy have not hesitated to express their disapproval of such activities. Strikes and all the side activities connected with such methods should have no place in the *modus operandi* of the teaching profession for the redress of grievances. A strike is but a crude and primitive method of self-protection and self-improvement. As to its ethics there is room for honest differences of opinion and while one must admit that the strike mentality is perhaps the resultant of a feeling of inferiority complex and despair on the one hand and an attitude of resistance and lack of foresight finally yielding to a situation of the inevitable on the other, it cannot be denied that it is a reflection on society and on healthy public opinion which should see to it that justice is meted out.

But the aims and ideals of the teaching profession being what they are, one should have no hesitation in expressing disapproval of such methods and in appealing to the profession never to resort to such tactics. Did the teachers who resorted to strikes, to methods of coercion and boycott and open defiance of authority realise what an example they were setting before their pupils? Did they for a moment consider what a serious handicap it would be for them later, when once more they wanted to assert their moral authority over their students and guide them along noble lines of conduct. A strike is a double-edged weapon

and those who encourage such activities or take part in them must realise and have in fact realised that it can act as a boomerang and cause as much harm to them. Let us hope that the unfortunate episodes of the past are but an ugly dream and never more would such situations be allowed to develop or such activities tolerated or encouraged.

Avoid undue Publicity

Let me next touch upon some phases of school life and its activities which it would be well for us to ponder over. I am one of those who feel that the undue publicity now given to some of the school activities is not all to the good of the institutions concerned. I fail to see the value of such publicity. One has only to peruse the columns of our dailies to note the part that school and college activities play in the current engagements and in the press reports published in the newspapers of the day. These activities are welcome but their publicity gives them an air of unreality, excitement and a craze for publicity which is not in the interests of the students or of the institution concerned. Schools vie with each other in such publicity and the constant excitement and the acrimonious discussions that follow are not always conducive to that atmosphere of calm and dispassionate discussion so much to be welcomed in educational institutions. Let me not be misunderstood as preaching an attitude of isolation or favouring an atmosphere of artificial aloofness. The days are long past when our boys and girls can be kept in seclusion nor is it desirable as a familiarity with the realities and the problems of the future must form an essential part of their training in school and college. Nor do I for a moment suggest that there are not occasions when such publicity is not only necessary but very desirable. What is however unnecessary and even harmful, is the undue publicity given to every lecture or small activity of the school when such lectures or activities are solely confined to the alumni of that single institution.

Discourage Group Mentality.

There is another tendency of late in educational institutions which I deplore; the group mentality is asserting itself and group organisations are started in educational institutions which have led to fissiparous tendencies and to the stressing of points of dissimilarity instead of points of concord. There is no place for groups in any school or college whether those groups are based on linguistic, religious, communal, territorial or racial considerations. Whatever be the aims and ideals of such organisations and however smoothly conducted, they ultimately and on crucial occasions tend to become sectarian, narrow, bigoted and not infrequently exclusive and clannish. The teacher interested in the harmonious

ing of all elements in the school, of the teachers and the taught, should keep before him as his ideal the preservation of that unity which is the key for success in all spheres of activity. It is unfortunate that while some of such activities are condemned, others are condoned. It would be well if all of us realised that such activities should not be encouraged and that in a school or college with a healthy background there is no scope for such differentiating activities.

Discipline, the Keynote of Success.

Another distressing feature of educational institutions is the spread of indiscipline among the pupils or students. The discipline that is to be inculcated to the pupils is the self-discipline acquired as a result of habit instilled and fostered from the earliest age. All great religions have emphasised the value of discipline to the students. Yet counsels have not been wanting in the past and are unfortunately repeated in some quarters even today, which are calculated to undermine all discipline in educational institutions. Nobody subscribes to the archaic view of the discipline of the rod, but the discipline that the teacher seeks to inculcate is the discipline based on self-realisation and on that faith evoked by the example and precept of the teacher. The personality of the teacher is an all important factor in the creation of the proper atmosphere and in inculcating correct ideas of discipline into the young minds and the teaching profession should not hesitate to express its views, when the ideals of educational institutions are seriously threatened by outside influences.

Let me also refer to the need for personal touch with the boys and their parents in educational institutions. In schools as in colleges, the teacher who gets to know his pupils or students, who shares their joys and sorrows, who realises their difficulties and limitations will always have a greater influence than he who confines himself to class room activities and examinations. A close touch with the parents and their co-operation will not infrequently be of the greatest assistance in guiding a pupil and in weaning him from unfortunate tendencies.

• Keep the Cost of Education Low.

Considering the average income of the majority of those who seek to educate their children, it is necessary that, consistently with efficiency, the cost of education should not be a heavy burden on those classes. It is not the school fees that act as a burden but the many other charges on pupils attending primary and secondary schools. The frequent change of text-books, the prescribing of costly books for short periods, the countless note books and various other accessories are a heavy burden. One is

tempted to ask whether all these are absolutely essential. In another respect also, school activities have increased and very rightly in directions which have made school life attractive. But I would beseech the heads of institutions to take note of the poorer boys and girls to whom every additional anna is a strain.

In another respect, it is well to regulate the cost of living in hostels and boarding establishments, so that the average cost suits the pocket of the poorer middle class boy rather than that of the boy of the rich parent. I regret the tendency on the part of some parents to be far too generous in their allowances to their sons thus encouraging extravagant habits in them and giving room for a greater disillusionment, when they pass out. It would be a wholesome practice, if schools and colleges adopt this policy of a moderate charge, for a healthy mode of life.

The problems connected with education and educational institutions are so many and so diverse that it is neither possible nor desirable to touch on all of them in the course of a presidential address. I must apologise for having transgressed the limitations of time and trespassed on your patience. Conferences such as these which draw together teachers of eminence who have devoted their life time to the cause of education are of great benefit to the teaching profession. The exchange of views, the personal contacts established, the experiences recounted and the difficulties encountered stated—all these are of the greatest value to all of us engaged in the field of education and interested in gaining more knowledge and inspiration for the better performance of our daily task.

To the teacher who loves his work it is no task. I have for over twenty-five years had the rare privilege of teaching young men and women on the threshold of life and to me it has been a great education, a pleasure and a privilege and a source of unbounded joy to watch their progress, and to note their reactions. It might be that to the outside public, the other aspect of my career as a professional might be better known, but I confess that to me all the inspiration of my life, all the knowledge that I have gained has come through my career as a teacher. The teacher is a perpetual student enjoying perpetual youth and buoyancy of spirits, thanks to his daily contact with the youth of the country.

Let us therefore realise how much we owe to our students the success of our life and let us not imagine that it is all a one-side traffic—that it is all giving and not receiving. If we approach our daily task in that spirit, I feel sure that the teacher despite the many drawbacks and inconveniences, will be sustained by that inspiration and enthusiasm that arise from a correct appreciation of the role he has to play.

Mr. Chairman, I must now conclude my address. I thank you all once more for the honour you have conferred on me. I have in the course of this address tried to place a few ideas before you for your consideration. We are now on the threshold of a great reformation. It is idle to expect the old order of things to continue. New ideals, new aspirations and new hopes are convulsing the world at large and it is futile to expect our country to escape the impact of these world forces. How far we will be able to imbibe the best in human civilization and to what extent we will successfully withstand the onslaught of those mighty forces which are directed towards ruin and disaster, towards the enslavement of the human mind and the encirclement of the human intellect, towards the ultimate destruction of human society—how far we will circumvent the evil forces let loose, is a matter for serious consideration. It is easy to let loose elemental passions. It is well nigh impossible to control them at a later stage. The history of mankind abounds in instances of that kind. On the other hand, a perverse obstinacy which refuses to see the trend of the times and to make those adjustments in the body politic so essential to safe and steady progress, will inevitably lead to the letting loose of those very forces which will end in ruin and disaster.

The teaching profession can play its part in the noble task of moulding the youth of the country such that they will avoid both these extremes. You have a great part to play in the modern renaissance movement in India; great are the opportunities before you and I exhort you to play your part well and worthily. And in that task may the Giver of all good help us and guide us aright, inspire us to lofty ideals and encourage us to great deeds, deeds that will be an inspiration and an example to our countrymen, such that when the dust and din of present day controversies and conflicts settle down as inevitably they must, the bright examples of the teaching profession will stand out as beacon lights for posterity to follow with pride and gratitude.

SCHOOL EXCURSIONS*

By

K. GOVINDACHARY, M.A., L.T.,

Excursions have been recommended as a cure for the monotony of regular school life. As education in cities prevails at present most of the scholars are day-scholars and as such close personal contact between the teacher and the taught becomes rather difficult. But excursions have not been very popular with the majority of pupils due to the rather high cost per head and the apathy of the parents themselves. Though short week-end excursions to places in the vicinity of schools are becoming more popular and feasible, only in some well organised institutions was it found possible to undertake mass-itineraries for hundreds of pupils together. The Railway concessions, half the usual fare, are not very attractive indeed. Some railways of late have given half fare privilege (for every group of ten pupils) to one teacher and one attendant. But organised excursions as in evidence in the book-lets sent are next to impossible where local bodies and the states are absolutely indifferent to the amenities of pupils in general. Some impetus has no doubt been given by enthusiastic organisers in schools and the benign pressure of some Inspecting Officers. Some managements have willingly accorded half grant towards the expenses. But as a problem a sort of educational adjunct of normal school life, it is difficult to solve so long as the State does not come to our rescue by enforcing cheap travel to school children in tramways, buses, and railways. Before I venture on suggestions to improve the state of affairs here, let me point out the salient features of the Excursion Scheme in British Isles,

- (1) there are organised week-end camps;
- (2) the batches are not very unwieldy but in restricted numbers of 100 each trip;

- (3) there is co-operation of Local Authorities and the assistance of the police and public health authorities;
- (4) complete equipment are available at these holiday resorts, where the establishment is perfect with trained officers, cooks, attendants and caretakers;
- (5) the daily programme of these holiday camps is chalked out beforehand;
- (6) the holiday camp is a happy blend of the open air life and school (or school at camp) with occasional teaching in the early hours of the fore-noon, leaving the after-noon free to visits of places of interest, to observation of village agricultural pursuits, or collection of actual history specimens, etc. This keeps up the continuity of the education process of the school and incidentally affords a welcome variety to the hum-drum life at a city school;
- (7) from the pamphlets, one could gather the adequate idea of the best facilities of village life, given to visiting pupils;
- (8) there is adequate scope for communion with nature and places of interest, historical or otherwise, are always visited. Thus pupils gather details of local history and geography;
- (9) the discipline of the camp leaves nothing to be desired and the teachers in charge are given specific instruction to conduct classes and afternoon visits according to schedule and well established principles of affording pupils to gain first hand knowledge of every type of village activity; and
- (10) the best feature noticeable is the willing help and sympathy of voluntary workers at each centre.

One feature that struck me was that the trip costs as much as £10 per boy, a sum at which parents here would stagger. Though Rs. 10 is accepted as the maximum a middle class parent can afford for the excursion-trip of his boy, even that may not be forthcoming in the case of many pupils whose parents groan under unpalatable conditions of life.

If excursions on the scale mentioned in the pamphlet could be adopted to suit local needs the following conditions are absolutely necessary :—

- (1) A good grant by the school at least half the expenses for such purpose. Collections from pupils to be spread over 4 or 5 months of the school year to facilitate easy collections;

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1. Glenton Motor Coach Holiday Tours.
 2. Youth Hostel Association Handbook for 1929.
 3. Walsack Education authority. Permanent School Camp Report, 1928.
 4. Wolverhampton Education Authority School Camp.
 5. Llanelly Education Authority Pendine School Camp, 1935.
 6. Manchester Education Committee Week and Holiday Camps.
 7. Sunderland Education Committee Middle School Camp.

- (2) Week-end camps should be made compulsory in batches of not more than 80 per trip with at least 4 teachers to be in charge of party;
- (3) Rural education camp sites to be spread over the districts, under the control of caretakers, appointed by the Local Authority (of not less status than a District Board) the sites, equipments and maintenance and staff to be supervised by the Educational authority of the area—by the Deputy Inspector of Schools of the range;
- (4) The co-operation of local officials, the Revenue Inspector, the Board School Headmaster, and the Police Officer of the area, is indispensable;
- (5) Railway Companies should be authorised to issue one-fourth concessions (and not half as at present) with teachers free at the rate of one teacher for every ten pupils. Teachers who accompany groups of pupils do so not for their pleasure, but they perform a healthy national service;
- (6) The former Congress Government had stated through the Education Minister that Scouting and Cubbing could be made part of school curriculum compulsory for every pupil. This certainly is a healthy start, for scouting is after all "disciplined life at school";
- (7) Normal school strength in High Schools is about 500. It should be possible to take the school in ten batches of say 50 pupils each, not to one excursion resort, but to as many as ten in the district;
- (8) These camps should be visited by Local Educational Officers, and any special needs of camping schools promptly attended to;
- (9) Specific programme of work, the precise time-table to be followed, the ordinary seasonal occupations of people in the locality, the pocket notebook with questions for each pupil, —all these should be discussed and chalked out beforehand.
- (10) Medical assistance should always be available in cases of emergency. Normally medical examination before excursion is necessary.

If a study of comparative conditions in Ceylon could help us I may point out the existence of rural education centres, the scout camp schools, all under government patronage. Before complete adoption of craft basis to education in

city schools, a proper groove can be created by sponsoring the excursion idea with the following objectives:—

- (a) First hand knowledge of crafts in villages—at a smithy, a weaver's hut, or a potter's house,
- (b) Visits to places of historical interest, a temple or a fort for information in regard to subjects studied,
- (c) Making a model hut or a bridge across a stream with wood cut on the spot and improvised material,
- (d) Collection of medicinal herbs, etc.,
- (e) Close scrutiny of agricultural occupations by lending a hand at:—
 - (i) obtaining seed paddy, manures, etc;
 - (ii) preparation of nursery;
 - (iii) preparation of soil in field;
 - (iv) transplanting with the help of local youths;
 - (v) weeding and destroying pests;
 - (vi) preparation of threshing floor;
 - (vii) harvesting;
 - (viii) gathering and stocking crop;
 - (ix) threshing, drying, winnowing, bundling up, etc.;
 - (x) collecting various specimens of paddy.
- (f) Survey of one section of a field and filling up the field book;
- (g) Incidentally collecting curios, relics, tales and songs when at work with peasants;
- (h) Gathering ideas of physical features of the environment.

For small pupils of tender age, it is best to confine excursions to within 5 to 7 mile radius. Engaging buses (on co-operative basis), one bus to be owned by 4 or 5 schools to be used at convenience by each. The one great handicap to excursion activity is the dearth of cheap transport. One anna per boy 'Travel as You Please', tickets can be given by the M.E.T. Company. In the mofussil, the local board buses with benches fixed in for seating of pupils, can be made available at dead cheap rates.

In midsummer for well-to-do boys excursions of a longer range say to Mettur, Sivasamudram, Tanjore, Ceylon, North India can be undertaken. As stated already public utility concerns all over India should cut down rates to one-fourth ordinary fare to school children.

More than the enthusiasm, earnestness, of teachers and schools, for a National System of Education State help is necessary from beginning to end.

REORGANISATION OF EDUCATION

SECONDARY EDUCATION—SPENS COMMITTEE REPORT

In the following remarkable passage from the report of the Spens Committee the commissioners expressed the view that the difference between technical and secondary education is one not of kind or character but of emphasis :—

1. *Secondary Education—Traditional, Literary and Technical.*

“We have spoken as if technical and classical instruction alike fell as subordinate or co-ordinate divisions under the common head of secondary education. We are aware that there are some who would limit the term education to the discipline of faculty and the culture of character by means of the more humane and generous studies, and who would deny the name to instruction in those practical arts and sciences by means of which man becomes a craftsman or a bread winner. But this is an impossible limitation as things now stand. We have just seen that the training in classics may have as little liberal culture in it as instruction in a practical art; modern literature may be made a field for as narrow and technical a drill as the most formal science. Education inevitably becomes more and more practical, a means of forming men, not simply to enjoy life, but to accomplish something in the life they enjoy. We may, therefore describe its general idea, thus :—All education is development and discipline of faculty by the communication of knowledge, and whether the faculty be the eye and hand or the reason and imagination, and whether the knowledge be of nature or art, of science or literature, if the knowledge be so communicated as to evoke and exercise and discipline faculty, the process is rightly termed education.

“Now, Secondary Education may be described as a modification of this general idea. It is the education of the boy or girl not simply as a human being who needs to be instructed in the mere rudiments of knowledge, but it is a process of intellectual training and personal discipline conducted with special care and regard to the profession or trade to be followed. Plato in the *Protagoras* draws a distinction between the man who learns the arts of the grammarian, the musician, or the trainer as a craftsman, for trade, and the man who learns them as a private person or freeman, for education or culture. But even culture is not an end in itself: it makes the private person of more value to society and to

the State. All secondary schools, then, in so far as they qualify men for doing something in life, partake more or less in the character of institutes that educate craftsmen. Every profession, even that of winning scholarships, is a craft and all crafts are arts. But if Secondary Education be so conceived, it is evident that under it technical instruction is comprehended. The two are not indeed identical, but they differ as genus and species, or as general term and particular name, not as genus and genus or as opposed terms. No definition of technical instruction is possible that does not bring it under the head of Secondary Education, nor can Secondary Education be so defined as absolutely to exclude from it the idea of technical instruction. Under the common head there are many species, each distinguished by the particular means and instruments employed and faculties exercised, but all agreeing in method and end, viz., the discipline of faculty by exercise. Technical instruction is secondary, i.e., it comes after the education which has awakened the mind by teaching the child the rudiments, or, as it were, the alphabet, of all knowledge, and the better the whole of this alphabet has been mastered the better and the easier the later learning be. And secondary instruction is technical, i.e., it teaches the boy so to apply the principles he is learning, and so to learn the principles by applying them, or so to use the instruments he is being made to know, as to perform or produce something, interpret a literature, or a science, make a picture or a book, practise a plastic or a manual art, convince a jury or persuade a senate, translate or annotate an author, dye wool, weave cloth, design or construct a machine, navigate a ship, or command an army. Secondary Education, therefore, as inclusive of technical, may be described as education conducted in view of special life that has to be lived with the express purpose of forming a person fit to live it.”

2. *Secondary Stage Curriculum.*

Schools of every type fulfil their proper purpose in so far as they foster the free growth of individuality, helping every boy and girl to achieve the highest degree of individual development of which he or she is capable in and through the life of a society.

The prime duty of a school providing secondary education is to cater for the needs of children who are entering and passing through the stage of adolescence, giving the pre-adolescent and adolescent years a life which answers to their special needs and brings out their special values.

The curriculum should be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored.

Both the conservative and creative elements in the activities of the community must be represented in the curriculum and a larger share must be found for those activities which are creative.

The studies of schools providing secondary education should be brought into closer contact than at present with the practical affairs of life.

3. *The School Certificate Examination*

While we fully recognise that the School Certificate Examination has been one factor in raising the general standard of attainment in school subjects to a level which could hardly have been reached without the incentive of a public external examination, and it has also prevented narrow specialisation for pupils below the age of 16, we nevertheless think that this examination is affecting, and often adversely, not only the courses of study and methods of instruction, but also the physical health and mental outlook of many pupils.

Though at the inception of this examination it was regarded as a cardinal principle that the examination should follow the curriculum and not determine it, we consider that it has had the effect of intensifying the tendency towards uniformity in the curriculum for pupils under the age of 16.

We think that the demands of this examination as at present constituted, the rigor of the preparation for it, and the importance attached to the School Certificate by employers and others, are such as cumulatively to cause overstrain and excessive anxiety in many pupils, especially in cases where the possibility or degree of financial help for further education depends on the result of the examination.

We consider that a dominant cause of the pressure exercised on pupils preparing for this examination is the fact it has been used at the same time for two distinct purposes:—

(i) to test the results of the first stage of the education provided by Grammar Schools;

(ii) to enable the pupils of such schools to obtain a certificate which would exempt them from Matriculation Examination.

We think that the conjunction of the Matriculation Certificate and the School Certificate has helped to upset that balance between academic and non-academic subjects which we believe should be maintained.

We welcome the proposal that matriculation should not be obtainable solely on the School Certificate Examination. We think, how-

ever, that, with a view to preventing premature concentration on one or two subjects, the School Certificate or its equivalent should be a first condition for matriculation.

4. *Education—Liberal and Technical.*

There is an instructive passage on the difference between liberal and technical education in a valuable work by the Rev. Henry Latham (1821–1902), Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, entitled *The Action of Examinations* (1877), pp. 5-7:—

“It will be of service to fix precisely the meanings in which the terms Liberal and Technical Education will be used. These two phrases are commonly employed so loosely as to be useless where precision is required. I propose to use them in a rigorous sense; premising that most Liberal Education are so far Technical that they enable a man to do something which he could not do before, and most Technical Education are Liberal ones also in so far as they really improve the man by disciplining his attention and forcing him to care and accuracy; moreover, it has a good moral effect on a youth to feel that he has acquired a mastery over matter, or the power of doing something which is of service to other people.

“An education is liberal so far as it concerns itself with the good and the cultivation of the pupil; valuing any accomplishment it may give him, for the new perception it opens out, for the new powers it confers, or for any other good it may do the man, and not regarding the work produced: Liberal Education would like to make a man an artist, that he may have a delightful occupation, and acquire an eye for beauty and for truth; she would like him to paint well because this would show the possession of such an eye and many other qualities as well, but she would not care much about the pictures themselves; she would not care a bit whether his pictures were valuable or not.

“An education so far as it is technical is careful not for the workman but for the work; Technical Education wants good pictures, and she only values any qualities of an artist so far as they conduce to this end. She aims at moulding the man into a perfect instrument for a particular purpose.”

Professor A. N. Whitehead in his volume of essays entitled *The Aims of Education and other Essays* (1929), p. 74 writes:—

“The antithesis between a technical and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical; that is, no education which does not impart both technique and intellectual vision. In simpler language, education should turn out a pupil with something he knows

“There are three main methods which are required in a national system of education, namely, the literary curriculum, the scientific curriculum, the technical curriculum. What I mean is that every form of education should give the pupil a technique, a science, an assortment of general ideas, and aesthetic appreciation, and that each of these sides of his training should be illuminated by the others. Lack of time, even for the most favoured pupil, makes it impossible to develop fully each curriculum. Always there must be a dominant emphasis. The most direct aesthetic training naturally falls in the technical curriculum in those cases when the training is that requisite for some art or artistic craft. But it is of high importance in both a literary and a scientific education.”

"No human being can attain to anything but fragmentary knowledge and a fragmentary training of his capacities. There are, however, three main roads along which we can proceed with good hope of advancing towards the best balance of intellect and character : these are the way of literary culture, the way of scientific culture, the way of technical culture. No one of these methods can be exclusively followed without grave loss of intellectual activity and of character. But a mere mechanical mixture of the three curricula will produce bad results in the shape of scraps of information never interconnected or utilised. We have already noted as one of the strong points of the traditional literary culture that all its parts are co-ordinated. The problem of education is to retain the dominant emphasis, whether literary, scientific, or technical, and without loss of co-ordination to infuse into each way of education something of the other two."



Re-makers of Mankind

THE FIRST QUESTION

The diversity of replies received is indicated by the following:

“The answers to the first question varied from country to country. Most typical is that of the Japanese. Their leader said, ‘We want to make Japan more perfectly herself. This is very understandable if one knows something of the history of Japan. It is the one country which has had one dynasty during its entire history. It is the one nation of any age that has never been defeated in a war. It is a nation where religion and politics are one. The Emperor is literally

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a god. I do not mean that he is divinely inspired, but actually a living god. If time would permit I would give you a number of illustrations of this. The Japanese people are united in a religious fervour for their Emperor and a religious nationalism which makes Japan one solid unit, which makes it impossible for them to conceive of any other system or to think that it could be better than their existing social order."

RUSSIA—

"In talking with the Consul of Education in Russia, I found that they certainly do not want to perpetuate the existing social order in Russia. He said, 'We have not achieved our objective. Our educational program is all directed towards bringing about a state in which there shall be no classes, a state in which no man can possibly exploit another for his own personal advantage, a state in which machinery shall be used for the liberation of man, a state in which the leisure shall be brought about through the wise use of machinery, a state in which there will be security for all who are willing to work. We do not have that type of state in Russia, but we want to bring it about. Education is our means toward that end.' However ignorant we may feel Russia is as to the acceptability of its ideal, this much we must recognise,—that for the first time in the world's history, a nation has deliberately set about, through education, to bring about the realization of a dream. And it is doing it with amazing efficiency in various ways. They are not trying this programme through private methods and they do not allow any local autonomy as to what their laws are. Not only the public schools, but the newspapers, the radio broadcasts, theatres, magazines, books, and every means of communicating ideas is included in this gigantic idea."

ENGLAND—

"The English answer was rather typical. The man to whom I talked said, 'Certainly the school is no place for propaganda either for the existing social order or the future social order. I believe that if our boys and girls are taught to think honestly for themselves, to see for themselves, and to face issues, they will realize that the British system is the best.'"

INDIA—

Gandhi said, "The main purpose of education is the training of character. The Three R's are valuable, yes—they are useful tools, but in the hands of the man who lacks character, they are a dangerous weapon. When the schools concentrate upon developing in our boys and girls not any especial ideology, but the ability to work for the well-being of their fellow human being, then the social order, whatever it is, will work by itself."

THE SECOND QUESTION

"Do you want, through education, to help boys and girls to grow up with so strong a spirit of patriotism that they will subordinate their own conscience, their own sense of what is right, to obedience to the dictates of their government; or do you want them to grow up into men and women who will put their own conscience first and the dictates of their government second?"

Japan did not know what was meant. Their leader said, "Their conscience would tell them to do what their Emperor wants." Russia did not understand. The Chinese leaders in various parts of the country said, "Let us try to get the people to follow their own individual consciences. The great bulk of the people, in times

of crisis, will follow the herd, and that will not make a large enough number to do any harm to the safety of the country. It is a wholesome thing to work toward, but let us not over-do ourselves."

One Russian said, "I hope that our government will never be small enough to tell us what we must believe or what we may say and do."

The Arabs said, "We have had too much of following individual consciences. The Arabs have not been able to unite because of the differences of the consciences of people. We must forget individual differences and unite so that there will be brought about a greater union of the Arab people."

An English leader said, "You cannot study the history of England without realizing that it is the history of revolt against authority. We have always respected the person who would stand up against authority for the thing in which he believed."

Gandhi said, "We want to bring about in India a much stronger national conscience. The court of last appeal is the individual conscience. Each person must live what he believes to be true." One of Gandhi's leaders said, "We must allow people to bow to their conscience and let them be so sure of what they believe that they will be willing to suffer for it."

THE THIRD QUESTION

"Are you trying to make of your children nationalists who will put the welfare of their country first, or world citizens who will put first the well-being of the world as a whole?"

The Japanese leader said, "Japan is like a family and community. In its relation with other families, it is fair and just. We respect their property and honour their rights. Japan will always live at peace and harmony with other nations if other nations are righteous."

Russia said, "What do you mean by world well-being? If you mean the well-being of classes, naturally we are concerned. If you mean are we interested in the well-being of Russian workers only, or the workers of all the world, we are interested in the well-being of all workers."

China said, "Why should we be concerned about the well-being of other nations?" This leader referred to other nations trying to take away part of Chinese territory on every side, and added, "Why should we be interested in those who are exploiting us?"

The Arabs said very much the same thing. Their leader said, "We were once a great people. You owe much of your science to us. We are now torn apart and utterly exploited by other nations who have used our knowledge. We are not concerned about the well-being of other nations, but let us unite all Arabs who will arise and be the people we once were."

Gandhi said, "We need to develop internationalism in India. We need to develop a strong love of country, but it must be only a prelude to internationalism. We must not use it to exploit any other nation."

Einstein said, "What are these boundary lines that make a nation? Who put those lines there? Those lines shift from generation to generation. What makes them shift?—mass murders and political conniving. Is there anything holy about these boundary lines that a person who was once there ceases to be my brother? Is there anything about these lines that keeps human beings from being human beings? Patriotism is a beautiful name for a dirty thing."

THE FOURTH QUESTION

"Are you trying to teach history objectively as a science, showing both sides of all controversial questions, showing the faults as well as the virtues of national heroes, showing the wrong your country has done, as well as the right; or are you trying to teach history in such a way as to develop certain attitudes and points of view on the part of the children, subordinating some facts and emphasising others to this end?"

Japan said, "Children are much too young to hear about the faults of their heroes."

The Chinese said, "We Chinese people are suffering from an inferiority complex. To teach to our children the faults of our heroes is to pick out those parts of history which will not give them self-confidence. We should try to give them the kind of history which will stimulate them to do things to strengthen the Chinese nation."

Russia said, "Do you think that any people ever succeed in teaching history objectively as a science?" This leader referred to the histories in the United States and pointed out the fact that the South has a different history, on the Civil War than the North."

In Germany and in France, "the attitude was that we should try to have an objective in our teaching of history, but that we should not fool ourselves." Their leaders said, "We have to make a selection and the selections are going to be determined by our outlook on the world. We are going to have to make choices in what we are going to teach. No matter how democratic we try to be, our history will always be biased history."

"The teachers of France, however, are much more international in their attitude than is the government. Through organizations they constitute a very real force. France has 120,000 elementary teachers, 80,000 of whom are members of the Teachers' Syndicate, and 20,000 of whom are members of the Teachers' Federation—a Communistic group. They have succeeded in having thrown out of the schools, twenty-three books which they thought were not of the right type.

"I talked with the English labor leader regarding this point. Referring specifically to the World War he said, 'I suppose we could get away from this tendency to give a nationalistic slant to our history if each time that we used an English textbook on a controversial question, we would use a corresponding translation of a German textbook, or some other textbook'."

Gandhi said, "You mean, are we teaching history as it is taught in English and America? Why not? Let us have faith in the course and give the course no matter what it happens to be."

Einstein, some French instructors, and a professor at John Hopkins said, "the reason our histories are vague is because they are concerned with political factors." In effect they all said, 'We win and lose our wars. Let us concern ourselves with the things that have really counted in the human race—the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution—those things that have no boundaries. We would do well if we would confine our attention in history to the basic progress of the human race'."

THE FIFTH QUESTION

"Do you believe that children should be allowed or encouraged to discuss controversial issues in school? If so, should the teacher attempt to avoid influencing the conclusions they reach, emphasizing only open-mindedness, fact-finding and logic, or should the teacher attempt to direct the discussion in such a way that the children will come to a conclusion in accordance with the point of view of the proponents of one side of the issue? If the latter is the case, should the teacher try to influence the children toward his own personal viewpoint or toward that of the government?"

"The answers to this question were not as clear-cut. They differed widely among individuals, and chiefly about that of children discussing controversial issues," Doctor Washburne stated.

The Japanese answered, "Children come to school to learn, not to talk."

Russia said, "Why surely, they may discuss anything.' I asked Do you mean that you would allow them to discuss whether Communism was right or wrong? The leader hesitated, and then said, 'Yes' and told of a student at the University of Moscow who got up in the classroom and said that he thought Capitalism had certain advantages over Communism, adding 'But we graduated him.' The leader continued that the students may even discuss radio addresses in school. I asked him whether they could discuss the question of whether or not Trotsky should have been exiled. He replied that that was a past issue and would not be discussed."

France said, "It is against the law in France for children to discuss controversial questions until they reach the logical age in school—the last year.' Incidentally, less than one percent of all pupils get that far, but up to that time any discussion is taboo."

England, and Gandhi, and most people in this country were definitely in favour of allowing freedom of discussion on controversial issues, as to the issues only by the age of the children.

As to Germany, "Hitler was then just coming into power, but a great many leaders in Germany advocated a certain amount of discussion."

The English leader said, 'Yes, they should have freedom of discussion, but the teacher must necessarily guide that discussion,—she must necessarily guide their conclusions. She cannot help it. A teacher would not be a teacher if she did not have the means to guide the children.' This leader said very little as to the direction in which the children shall be guided," Doctor Washburne stated, "that is, whether toward the personal viewpoint or of the governmental viewpoint."

The Turks said, "The teacher has a mandate from the state. For the teacher to influence the discussion in any direction other than the state's direction would be contrary to that mandate."

A leader in Berlin said, "Well, after all, the teacher is the agent of the state, and as an agent, he must influence the children toward the belief that the state is right. If he cannot do that, he has no choice but to resign.' However, one leader in Germany said, 'Suppose a teacher has a belief that is contrary to the government which happens to be in power. A teacher's loyalty is not to any power but to the truth.' Incidentally, this leader is now in prison."

"Einstein had the best answer. He said, 'Let the children discuss if they be able to discuss the question intelligently. We waste a great deal on discussion in school before the children have any viewpoints or any ability to discuss them. They merely tell what they hear at home. Just as soon as a child is old enough to be really interested, and is old enough and interested enough to get facts, then let him attempt to discuss such issues. But even then not toward a particular conclusion, but toward an honest attempt to find facts, toward the use of a sound logic. That sort of influence from the teacher is necessary for education. Discussion under those conditions may be absolutely free'."

"From the answers to these questions, it is clearly apparent that educators today are not in agreement as to the kind of individual, or as to the kind of society, they are trying to develop through education. Each of these questions must be thought through, and if education is to have a real effect in helping the oncoming generations to approach world problems intelligently, those who are in charge of our schools today, and the population which supports those schools as well, must have a clearer vision than now exists as to the purposes of education.

We who are 'Remakers of Mankind,' each in his own small degree, has to face these problems. It is our responsibility to find a way to answer them honestly, in our own school systems, if our children are to be able to make a better world than that into which they have been born."

What do parents expect of the schools?

Lester S. Irvine, Dean, Defiance College, Defiance Ohio, issued a questionnaire to several thousand parents from all walks of life in the different income groups, of various nationalities and from all parts of the U. S. A. The results of such a survey are made available in the October 1939 issue of the journal of the National Education Association of America. "What are the most desirable lessons to be taught" formed a question and the answers are listed below, rated in their rank order:

1. Lessons that will impress the value of a good character.
2. That may prevent selfishness toward others.
3. That will improve or produce good manners.
4. That teach the value of honesty and truthfulness.
5. That will aid in good sportsmanship.
6. That will teach respect for church, other pupils, and authority, as well as for the proper kind of government officials.
7. To impress the value of cooperation with others.
8. Worthwhile lessons from the text-books.
9. Facts from magazines and library books that contain a lesson of importance.
10. To show why great men did succeed.

Asked about the characteristics which they expect from a good teacher, their answers are :

1. One who commands the respect of the pupils and the community by the life he leads. One who stands for honest and thorough work by the pupils.
2. One who teaches the value of a good character, good health, and good citizenship.
3. One who stands for honest and thorough work by the pupils.
4. One who shows respect for the less fortunate.
5. One who teaches respect for authority.
6. One who is a good American citizen and who believes in a democracy.
7. One who teaches his pupils the proper respect for the church and the reasons for regular attendance upon the services of some church.
8. One who shows patience toward retarded pupils.
9. One who possesses a thorough college training as well as common sense.
10. One who is industrious and eager to advance in his profession.

Reading the replies one is struck with the fact that parents are deeply concerned over developments tending to the secularisation of modern life and over the emphasis that schools place upon the spectacular in Education to the detriment of programmes that will improve the manners and morals of children.

Education and War

The American Youth Commission was formed in 1935 by the American Council of Education which is a non-governmental organisation composed of major National Educational Associations and institutions. The Commission for the last four years has been conducting an extensive series of studies and field researches with the object of working out a comprehensive programme for the care and education of American youths. Its activities have been financed by a large educational foundation. It makes the following recommendation in regard to Education in order that the younger generation may be better fitted to face and solve crisis.

"There is every reason to believe that a defective educational system weakens the ability of the nation in time of crisis, diminishes the nation's power to protect its security without war, and, in case of war, will reduce its fighting strength. Internal soundness is the best guarantee of our ability to choose our own path in world affairs. An educated citizenry is one of the major elements of internal soundness."

"The deficiencies of the past cannot be overcome in a moment, but the present crisis is no valid excuse for continued neglect. On the contrary, it is a reason for special effort to provide a satisfactory education for the young people whose character and ability will be vital factors in the ultimate outcome."

"Education requires immediate improvement along several lines. The quality of school programs must be raised. Financial and administrative reforms are badly needed. More adequate provision should be made to help young people whose families are too poor to keep them in school."

"As the war situation develops abroad, there may be a tendency here to believe that we must economize on education in order to find money for special defence budgets. Such an opinion would be shortsighted even from a strictly military point of view, since the skill and intelligence of the soldier are more important in this day of technological warfare than ever before. The educational deficiencies of many out-of-school young people are so great that a nation-wide program of remedial education is essential if they are to be effectively useful to their country in either peace or war.

In the larger view, the primary motive of any program of national defence is to protect our freedom and our democratic institutions. In this respect, education is established in public policy, not as a secondary interest, but as the first line of defence against that internal breakdown which in many nations has proved to be even more dangerous than external attack.

In the present situation there is danger not only that the financial support of schools and other educational institutions may be curtailed when it should be expanded. There is also the far more important danger that in the heat of controversy the schools may fail to achieve, or even in some cases may be excluded from, their most important objective; so to educate that conflict of opinion on current issues of the will be changed 'into a search for truth and for a wise course of action.' At all times, it is the peculiar function of education "to place beneath the headlined surface of current events a background of knowledge that will check irrational prejudices, enrich discussion, and lead to wise decisions."

"In the world in which war may be the dominant feature of international relations for a long time, it seems clear that the survival of any measure of democracy in this country is dependent upon our utmost efforts to improve education for even a brief period. From every point of view, whether for the long future or the immediate present, we must press on in those efforts with all the energy at our command."

Association Montessori Internationale

INDIAN SECTION

In the course of a Press Communique the Secretary writes to say that Dr. Maria Montessori has decided to prolong her visit long enough to hold another course and possibly to establish a permanent centre where she will return from year to year.

The second course, it is said will commence in september and last till early december. Details can be had from the Secretary, Montessori Training Course, Olcott Gardens, Adyar.

THE SOUTH INDIA TEACHERS' UNION

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S. No.	Name of the Guild	No. of Assns.	No. of members.
1.	The Anantapur Dist. Teachers' Guild	7	120
2.	The Chingleput Dist. Teachers' Guild	4	112
3.	The Chittoor Dist. Teachers' Guild	22	507*
4.	The Coimbatore Dist. Teachers' Guild	23	150*
5.	The Guntur Dist. Teachers' Guild	4	174
6.	The Kurnool Dist. Teachers' Guild	11	174
7.	The Madras Dist. Teachers' Guild	..	696
8.	The Madura Dist. Teachers' Guild	10	430
9.	The Malabar Dist. Teachers' Guild	16	327
10.	The North Arcot Dist. Teachers' Guild	21	527*
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II

S. No.	Associations directly affiliated to the Union	No. of members.
1.	Teachers' Assn., Hindu Theological High School, Sowcarpet, Madras. 59	
2.	Teachers' Assn., Board High School, Kandukur, Nellore Dt. †	
3.	Teachers' Assn., Board High School, Yellamanchalli, Vizag. †	
4.	Teachers' Assn., Wardlaw High School, Bellary	.. 31
5.	Teachers' Assn., Municipal High School, Bellary. †	
6.	Teachers' Assn., Board Middle School, Hadgalli. †	
7.	Teachers' Assn., Board Middle School, Kampali, Bellary Dt. †	
8.	Teachers' Assn., Board High School, Amalapuram, E. Godavari. †	
9.	Teachers' Association, V. R. College High School, Nellore. †	
10.	Teachers' Association, Board High School, Gudur. †	
11.	Teachers' Association, Board High School, Duggirala. †	
12.	Teachers' Association, Board High School, Kavali. †	
13.	Teachers' Association, Board High School, Bapatla. †	
14.	Teachers' Association, Board High School, Pulivendla	.. 12
15.	Teachers' Association, Municipal High School, Bhimlipatam	.. 13
16.	Teachers' Association, Taluk High School, Tenali, Guntur Dist. †	
17.	Teachers' Assn., R. K. Middle School, Allur, Nellore Dt.	.. 7
18.	Teachers' Assn., Board Middle School, Allur, Bellary Dt.	.. 8
19.	Teachers' Association, Board Middle School, Udayagiri. †	

S. No.	No. of members.
20. Teachers' Association, P. R. College, Cocanada. †	
21. South India Pandit's Union, Kadayanallur, Tinnevely Dt. ..	50
22. Madras Provincial Physical Education Assn., Saidapet, Madras. ..	253
23. Teachers' Assn., Board Middle School, Atmakur, Nellore Dt. ..	10

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Individual members directly admitted to the S.I.T.U. .. 72

* Incomplete.

† Information not supplied.

N.B.—A Register of Members of the Union is being prepared. As some Guilds and associations have not supplied particulars of membership of their associations, the union was unable to publish the list as was originally planned. Secretaries of Guilds and Associations are requested to send the necessary information to the office of the Union as soon as possible.

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THE TEACHERS' BOOKSHELF

Suggestions for the teaching of the Mother-Tongue in India. By W. M. Ryburn, published by Oxford University Press. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

The importance of the mother-tongue does not need an emphasis any longer. Those who speak of the mother-tongue think very often of its place in the curriculum in high schools. Mother-tongue is the only medium in elementary schools but its teaching has not received the attention it deserves. That proper attention should be paid to the modern methods of teaching the mother-tongue in elementary schools is clearly brought out in the small book of "Suggestions for the teaching of the Mother-Tongue" by Mr. Ryburn. This small but interesting book is a very clear and suggestive handbook for teachers in elementary schools. It may be that many of the teachers may be aware of the methods referred to in the book and some may even write pages on the advantages of these methods. But it is well known that few teachers make it a point to adopt these methods in the day-to-day practice in the class room. This book deals with all aspects of the study of the mother-tongue, and there is a clear presentation of the methods in regard to Reading, Oral Work, Writing, Spelling, etc. A conscious and constant application of the methods suggested under several chapters is sure to raise the standard of the mother-tongue and to stimulate interest. The author has emphasised the need for the application of modern methods of teaching a language to the mother-tongue as well. The chapter on *Creative Writing, Using the Play-Way and Story Telling*, contain useful hints which a teacher interested in the teaching of the Mother-tongue will highly appreciate. It is a happy idea that the author should have thought it necessary to deal with certain allied topics like the individual work and the project method. These show the extent to which the teaching of the mother-tongue may be helped. The last chapter on "Teaching Adults to Read" tells the reader that the approach should be different and that great care should be taken to treat adults with consideration and to avoid ridicule. The book is sure to prove a practical handbook since the subject matter is treated in a clear manner and with a sympathetic insight. Few teachers in elementary schools will be in a position to have access to the English edition and understand it. In view of the desirability of teaching the mother-tongue on modern lines, we suggest to the publishers the desirability of bringing out editions in the South Indian languages so that teachers may understand aright the importance of the mother-tongue and equip themselves for the work. The Bibliography and the Index at the end will be a real help to the reader. The get-up of the book is good and both the author and publishers have done a service to the mother-tongue through the book under review.

M. S. S.

Measuring Intelligence of Indian Children. By V. P. Kamath, B.A., Ph.D., with a foreword by Mr. McKenzie. Published by the Oxford University Press. Price As. 4.

The scope and value of mental tests in general are well understood in Western countries and it has become the practice with the school and managing authorities to make use of these tests to find out the educational possibilities of the school-

going children. Mental tests are yet in the debating stage in India. It cannot be said that any attempt has been seriously made to devise tests suited to our conditions.

Mr. Kamath has succeeded in adapting the Binet-Simon system with the Stanford Revision to the Kannada and Marathi areas. He has placed in our hands a "reliable foot-rule of mental measurement." His book is a clear account of the results of a study he made with 1074 children of all ages from 2 to 20. The short foreword of Mr. McKenzie and the author's introduction explain how the idea of undertaking a work of this kind came to be entertained.

The book begins with the general history of mental testing and then deals with the principles underlying the theory and practice of intelligence testing. While on this topic, the author refers to the two important factors of Prof. Spearman, namely, the *g* or general factor and the *S* or special factor. Later on, the uses of intelligence tests are explained in detail. The author shows how the I.Q. concept will prove valuable to teachers and school administrators. He also points out that the intelligence test helps us to recognise individual differences and emphasises the necessity for adopting individual methods of instruction in schools. Reference is also made to the use of the intelligence test in regard to vocational guidance. The author then proceeds to give an account of the Binet-Simon scale and the Stanford Revision. This is followed by a clear account of the Bombay Karnatak Revision undertaken by the author to adopt the Binet-Simon scale to Indian conditions. The chapters on the "Concept of the intelligence quotient and its significance" and "General directions for giving the tests" are very interesting and contain valuable information. It is found that the I. Q. of the genius class is above 140 while the superior intelligence class shows an I.Q. range of 120 to 140. The I. Q. range of normal intelligence is 90-110 against that of 70-95 for the dull. Persons with I.Q. below 70 are classified as feeble minded and these are further classified according to the range of I.Q. into morons (I.Q. 50-70), Imbeciles (I.Q. 20-50) and Idiots (I.Q. below 20). Several chapters are devoted to the details of the tests and the procedure devised for years 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 19 and 22. Teachers will do well to read these chapters with care. There are two appendices at the end, one of which forms a study of the typically mentally deficient children in the children's Home near Bombay. The Bibliography and the Index are other features which will be appreciated by readers.

The book under review is sure to stimulate teachers to undertake similar studies in their respective provinces and devise suitable tests. There is a real need for intelligence testing which will help us to know the possibilities of our school-going children. If waste and misfits should be avoided and if children should have their chance in life, it is essential that the intelligence tests should be administered at the time of admission. The author has succeeded in relating the intelligence of Indian children to a scale and he has thereby rendered a distinct service to the country. The publishers also should be congratulated on the excellent get-up of the book.

M. S. S.

Training in Thought and Expression. By Frederick T. Wood, B.A., Ph.D. Macmillan and Co., Ltd. Price 2s. 6d.

This is an excellent treatise written by a practical expert on the art of writing English. It enables any pupil to express clearly in speech or writing his own

thoughts and to understand the clearly expressed thoughts of others. It is out and out a teacher's book. The author is surely a critic who has a sense of values. Hence I would strongly recommend this book to be read by each and every teacher and translate the benefit of his study to his pupils. The exercises are copious, scholarly and useful. Unfortunately this is not a pupil's book. The contents are really intended for the Matriculation standard. As a guide to composition writing this a very good book, instructive and educative and well provided to meet the present day requirements of those who wish to qualify themselves to assume the responsibilities of a citizen in these days of democracy. In fine, I wish this book as well as the other erudite publications of this author to find a prominent place in the shelves of every school library.

K. NATESAN, B.A.

Elementary Mathematics, Book IV. By S. Balakrishna Aiyar. Oxford University Press, Tamil and Telugu Editions, Price Re. 1-4-0 each.

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In these days when the mother-tongue is becoming the medium of instruction in schools, books written in such a style as the ones under review really serve the cause.

The printing and get-up of both the editions leave nothing to be desired.

C. R.

Text-Book of English Grammar and Composition for High Schools. By Ina Dean, B.A. (Hons.). P. Varadachari & Co., Madras.

This is yet another text-book on English Grammar and Composition. It is intended for the use of pupils in High Schools and 'for advanced students' receiving individual tuition'. It is divided into 2 parts—the first is concerned with individual words and the second with sentences and the use to which they are to be put in prose and poetry. The book aims, as the author says at covering a wide field. It follows, in general the same plan as is adopted in the text-books now in use. The publishers have spared no pains in making the book attractive. It is printed in bold type.

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TRAVEL NEWS—APRIL, 1940.

The following institutions organised educational excursions in April, 1940:—

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2. *Christian College High School, Madras.*—A party of 22 members went on a tour to Ceylon on 19—4—40.
3. *D. R. Secondary School, Conjeevaram.*—27 members went on excursion to Trichinopoly on 27—4—40.
4. *St. Thomas's Higher Elementary School, Veerapandiyanpattanam.*—A party of 123 members visited Ambasamudram and Papanasam falls on 28 & 29—4—40.

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EDITORIAL

1938-1939.

No one can fail to perceive the feeling of satisfaction running through the Report on Public Instruction for 1938-1939. The decrease in the number of elementary schools, the increase in the number of pupils, the increase in the number of complete elementary schools and the doubling of the strength of V Standard are pointed out as the visible indications of the success of the policy of elimination till now vigorously pursued by the government of Madras. How accommodating and elastic the present policy of elimination is will be obvious when the authorities safely rely upon it to explain away even inconvenient situations. If there be a decrease in the number of schools it is attributed to the policy of elimination and the public is assured that there is no cause for alarm. If there be an increase in the number of schools which is quite unlikely, the department can easily point out that the fears of the opponents of the present policy of elimination are groundless.

There are one or two obscure points in the Report on account of which the public may not have the same feeling of satisfaction. It is hoped that the authorities will, at the earliest opportunity, explain the position fully and clearly. Let us take the following statement in the report. “During the year under review the number of complete lower elementary schools rose from 13,143 to 25,535 an increase of 12,392. This may be regarded as extremely satisfactory especially in view of the prevailing financial stringency and the difficulty of obtaining additional staff.” It may not be easy for the public to appreciate the real extent of progress unless details with regard to the lower elementary schools under reference are available. One would like to know for instance details about the number of standards in each of the 12,392 new complete lower elementary schools prior to their conversion into complete ones. A standard-war classification of such schools is necessary to have a true idea of the progress. Curiously enough, the G.O. reviewing the Report is somewhat more explicit and we gather that this large increase in the number of complete schools is entirely due to the opening of the fifth standard in as many as 12000 schools. It is therefore fairly certain that there has been very little success in the conversion of the complete schools with two or three standards into complete schools. The reference in the Report to the financial stringency and the difficulty of obtaining additional staff is very disquieting. One cannot do better than reminding the department itself of a statement it frequently makes,

namely that a mere increase in the number is no indication of progress. This feeling is strengthened when, later on in the Report, we come across a statement that the total number of teachers employed in elementary schools for boys decreased by 1629. On the one hand, there is an increase of over 12000 complete schools consequent on the addition of one or more standards and on the other hand, there is a decrease in the number of teachers. Should we not expect an increase in the number of teachers? It is well known to the public that the department has no good word to say about single-teacher schools and is strongly opposed to their continuance. It would have been good if the Report gave us information about the number of teachers in the new complete schools. As matters stand at present, one will not be wrong if he should gain the impression that the number of teachers has not kept pace with the phenomenal increase in the number of complete schools and that the evils of single-teacher schools seem to have been allowed to persist.

How many of the teachers who are reported to have left schools are trained teachers is another point of importance, especially in view of the difficulty felt by the Department in respect of obtaining additional staff. The policy of elimination which is pursued by the Government presumably for the sake of quality will be indefensible if on grounds of financial stringency, the new complete schools be not enabled by liberal financial aid to employ the necessary qualified staff. We may be willing to believe that the Government is not pursuing the policy of elimination for its own sake but we are not quite sure whether any real progress is possible in the face of the tendency on the part of the department to resort all on a sudden to drastic cuts in the teaching grants to aided schools. What will be the condition of hundreds of aided schools if a pro-rata cut be made even in the assigned teaching grants? A difficult situation seems to have arisen in regard to Panchayat schools. We find from the Report for 1938-39 that the allotment for panchayat schools was not adequate since the government did not sanction the additional sum of Rs. 60,000 needed for panchayat schools. Several of the panchayat schools had to go without grant and comment is needless. Managing bodies have been bitterly complaining against the new rules for grants-in-aid enforced by the department in pursuance of the policy. Rightly or wrongly the present policy of elimination, concentration and consolidation has been pursued most vigorously only in Madras province as is evident from a perusal of the eleventh quinquennial review published by the Government of India. The time has come for an independent enquiry to be made with a view to determining whether the policy has really contributed to the improvement of quality and whether the continuance of this policy is likely to prove beneficial to the further progress of the province. A resolution on this topic is to come up for discussion at the Pro-

vincial Educational Conference. Among the delegates who are likely to take part in the deliberations of the Conference are several who have been bestowing attention upon the many-sided aspects of the problem of elementary education. Some of them are members of the Taluq Elementary Education Committees and it is expected of them to place their personal experience and impression before the delegates and help them to arrive at the right conclusion.

Unite.

The annual Conference of the teachers of the Andhradesa was held under the auspices of the Andhra Federation of Teachers' Associations on the 6th May at Tenali. Sri Venkatarangayya who is well known to the members of the South India Teachers' Union presided over the Conference. That a veteran educationist of his standing should make a strong and well-reasoned plea for mother-tongue, Wardha Scheme and Reorganisation of Education on modern lines is what should be expected. There may be a difference of opinion in regard to some of the points touched in the address. His plea for careful and efficient training should not be mixed up with the present unsatisfactory position of training schools. A higher standard of work which is far more difficult than the existing one is expected from teachers to-day and much will depend upon efficient training. We have no doubt that he expects all facilities to be provided for others during the training.

The addresses delivered at the Conference and the resolutions adopted there show that the problems confronting the South India Teachers' Union and the Andhra Federation are identical and that the method of approach is the same. It is therefore essential that teachers of South India should join together to solve the problems of education. They should take their stand as teachers in the same province knit together by common interests while at the same time they should study intensively the problems in relation to local conditions. We appeal to teachers of Andhradesa not to confine their attention exclusively to the Andhra area. They should also look beyond North Pennar and they will be doing their bit for the province if they should join the provincial organisation without any reserve or hesitation. So long as the Madras province remains what it is to-day, it is necessary and desirable that a single strong organisation of teachers should exist and represent the entire teaching profession in the province. The principle of federation on which the South India Teachers' Union is based can be found to be comprehensive enough to give the Andhra Federation and the federations of other linguistic areas like the Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada areas equal opportunity for shaping the educational policy. What is

needed is that the Andhra Federation should immediately set about organising District Teachers' Guilds to which the associations in the local areas in the districts should be affiliated. Once this plan of organisation is completed it may be easy to have under the common roof of the Union which throws open its membership to all teachers irrespective of caste, creed, or language, organised linguistic federations such as the Andhra Federation, the Tamil Federation etc., enjoying equal status and studying more intensively the problems affecting their respective areas. The rules of the S. I. T. U. provide for equal representation of district guilds on the executive board and hence the question of swamping does not arise. The efficiency of any organisation and the power for good do not rest so much on its numerical strength as on its academic ideals, realistic outlook and capacity to pull together as a team. We understand that the aim of the organisers of the S. I. T. U. has been to bring into existence district organisations one in each district. Now that the Andhra Federation has been revived, we hope it will take in hand the organisation of district guilds in the Andhradesa and also get into touch with the S. I. T. U. Nothing is gained by a policy of splendid isolation since it will only result in the frittering away of energies. Let there be mutual trust among teachers; and those who understand aright the signs of the times should be keen on the teaching profession coming by its own. They should not be slow to sink their differences and leave aside personal considerations. They should also be willing to bring the perfected linguistic federations under one provincial organisation, the South India Teachers' Union.

Text-Books.

Our Poona contemporary, *the Progress of Education*, has deemed it necessary to devote its March issue exclusively to the consideration of Text-books and their prescription in schools. The question of text-books has ceased to be a matter of concern and interest to teachers alone. It may not be an exaggeration if we should say that politicians and political parties have come to exercise a dominant voice in the prescription of text-books under some pretext or other. Many are the misconceptions held by the public and the politicians in regard to the preparation and choice of text-books. In this unseemly and prejudiced method of approach of the problem, the real educational interests of the child are quietly ignored though there is profuse lip-sympathy for it. Other things being equal, it is the suitability of a book that should weigh with the school authorities in its selection as a text-book. The problem becomes complex when irrelevant considerations and points which are injurious to the education of the child happen to be seriously urged by persons

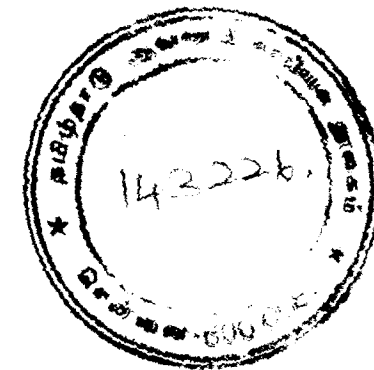
vested with power. An occasion which necessitated prominent attention being given to this text-book problem in the Progress of Education was furnished by a resolution moved by Mrs. Lilavati K. Munshi in the Bombay Legislative Assembly in April 1939. It is unnecessary for us to deal at length with the points raised by her. We should appeal to teachers to read this number carefully. We should congratulate our contemporary on its having succeeded in pointing out the untenability of the arguments advanced by Mrs. Munshi and maintaining the dignity of the teaching profession. We are sorry to note that Mrs. Munshi should have indulged in arguments which are unfair to teachers. They are as irrelevant as they are amusing. Let us just quote one passage. "So in the interest of education as a whole, it is necessary that we should have uniformity in text-books. Of course, teachers do not like uniformity in text-books because it is against their interest. Most of the people who write text-books are teachers and they make a little more income out of writing text-books and those text-books are prescribed by other teachers who are their friends or relatives. That is how we find that in every school there is different standard of education." The account of her experience as a member of the Schools Committee which seems to show that pressure or influence is brought to bear upon members is a reflection on public men entrusted with the discharge of a responsible duty, and the defects of character, if any, which some may show cannot be advanced as an argument for uniformity in text-books or for standardisation. Never can education in two schools in the same area be of the same standard; nor is it proper or possible to attempt to bring about uniformity of standard through text-books. The Hon. Mr. Kher who spoke on behalf of the Government did not choose to point out the irrelevant nature of the arguments of Mrs. Munshi but explained that the questions before the Government were (1) whether the Government should undertake the preparation of school-books departmentally or invite suitable writers to do the same; (2) whether the Government should undertake the publication or leave the publication to private firms on a contractual basis; and (3) whether Government should leave the schools free to change their text-books as often as they liked or whether government should exercise some control and prescribe a fixed period for their use." A committee was appointed to study the question and submit a report though the original resolution was withdrawn. Dr. Paranjpye who presided over a conference at Poona clearly showed that the objections of Mrs. Munshi could be easily answered and that radical measures proposed by her were unnecessary. He pleaded that teachers should have as wide a freedom of initiative as possible.

The selection of text-books and the method of prescription vary from province to province. The system that is in force in our province for the

approval of books to be used in schools compares very favourably with that in other provinces. The text-book committee which consists of teachers recommends to the Government that books included in the list are suitable for use in schools. This list is fairly big so as to give a wide field of choice to the authorities concerned and there is no rule compelling any authority to choose any particular book. Unfortunately the prescribed procedure for the prescription of text-books leaves room for improvement. In the case of local bodies and municipalities, the prescription is to be done by the committee of the local body or by the chairman of the municipality and teachers have no voice there though their views might be obtained. It is an open secret that the President happens to dominate the show. Any scheme which ignores the teacher in the selection of text-books is bound to fail or prove injurious. It is unnecessary to advance arguments for such an obvious statement. If teachers go wrong, many are the persons that can take them to task. Can anyone say that a President or Municipal Chairman will or can ever be called upon to explain his conduct even though politicians themselves keep on crying that considerations other than academic enter into the prescription of text-books in schools under local bodies. After all is said and done, it should be admitted that the prescription is good enough in the majority of cases since it can be only from among the approved books in the official list. The incessant criticism in regard to text-books continues to be heard presumably because of the profits that publishers are able to get. Publishers are businessmen and they are sure to have an eye on profits. Their books come to have a value only on the approval of the Text-book Committee with regard to quality, get-up and price. Why should anyone lose his peace of mind if the publishers get good profits in return for hard work? What the South Indian Education owes to publishers is not fully recognised. As educationists, teachers are interested in suitability and availability of books. It is easy to say that the government should undertake the publication. If this idea should materialise every teacher has to accept what is offered and none can criticise. People have no idea of the time that the government will take for the preparation of a book. Can anyone say that the government will supply books at cost price? The moment that the new syllabus for higher elementary schools was introduced, there were several books of good quality in the field. We should invite the attention of our readers to the observations made by Sri Venkatarangayya in his presidential address in this connection. Time and again the complaint is made that the adoption of the mother-tongue as the medium is delayed because of the lack of suitable books. Why should not the critics of private publishers prevail upon the Government to bring out text-books in the Indian languages? The private publishers have run a risk in undertaking the publication of books

on various subjects in the South Indian languages. The present day competition has been stimulating the publishers to keep abreast of the times, to understand the needs of pupils, and to pay special attention to the get-up. They are sensitive to criticism and have always shown a readiness to incorporate suggestions. If, for any reason, the opportunities that publishers now enjoy be denied, we shall be stifling book production on the whole and thus be creating a very unsatisfactory situation in the near future. There is room for the government to play its part but we doubt whether it should ever concern itself with the preparation and publication of text-books.

A lot has been said by politicians and teachers on this question which unfortunately has assumed more importance than it deserves. Our Poona contemporary has stated the position of the teaching profession clearly. Let teachers show the public that they are not irresponsible, that they are having the interests of the child at heart and that it is safe to leave the prescription entirely in their hands.



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