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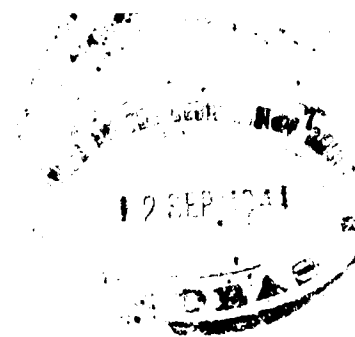
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JULY 1944

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THE SOUTH INDIAN TEACHER

Vol. XVII

JULY, 1944

No. 7

WHAT IS EDUCATION?

The Secondary School Teachers' Association, Mayavaram, presented a welcome address to Sir S. Radhakrishnan on the 25th of June 1944, Sri V. Raghava Iyengar, M.A., L.T., President, District Teachers' Guild, Tanjore, presiding. In reply to the address Sir S. Radhakrishnan thanked the teachers for their 'words of generous praise' and said:

"You refer to my being a teacher. I left the Teachers' College, Saidapet, in 1910 and from that time till to-day, I am still a teacher while in India or elsewhere. I believe that the teaching profession, whatever might have been its past, has a great future.

A great Chinese thinker says that the child is like a raw material of pure silk. You dye it in blue and it becomes blue, red and it becomes red. So what you make of the child depends on the pattern. Here also we believe that education is the main way by which we can develop radically new types of men if we desire, and we had our own system of education. People might come forward and tell us "Is it any use pursuing your ideals? They have not bettered you." I must say that the political and economic condition of India need not be regarded as invalidating Indian culture any more than the present war can be said to invalidate the spirit and the value of science. We cannot say, that because science is being abused, it is a futility. Even so Indian Wisdom is not a futility. What is required is that the two things need the support of each other. We require the wisdom, the enlightenment, as well as the knowledge that is power. If we have failed, it is because Philosophy did not have enough practical application. And if science has failed, it has not looked to philosophy for guidance. It is a combination of the two that can save all countries.

Speaking to teachers, I may mention one word. Some of us are made to believe "Take hold of the child, put him in the mill and make him what you expect to be useful to society. In other words, look upon the child as a guinea pig and manipulate it so as to make it conform to the pattern of society. That is a compulsory regimentation of the child's mind. You have another view. 'Leave the children to themselves. Let them elaborate their instincts and go in any manner they choose. Then the best of the child comes up.' There are people who believe that if the former leads to slavery of body and of mind, the latter leads to anarchy and confusion. What is essential is to put before the child the best that you can think of and leave it to discover the truth. You will find a typical illustration of it in the *Bhagavad Gita* where you have a model teacher. There Krishna does not say 'I am going to mould your mind.' Nor does he say, 'I am not going to tell you anything. Go ahead.' But he says 'These are my views. I present them to you and it is for you to decide.' That is how the teacher winds up. He respects the dignity of the pupil. He respects the sanctity of his judgment. It is not for the teacher to impose his opinion. Education is essentially a personal achievement. You will see, therefore, that in the dialogue between the teacher and the pupil you have insistence on the dignity of the individual and the sanctity of the individual's pursuit of truth. It avoids both the extremes of absolute regimentation on the one side and absolute anarchy on the other. It steers a middle course and that is a lesson which we can remember and lay to our hearts in our daily dealings with young men.

THE MADRAS PROVINCIAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE—34TH SESSION, ANNAMALAINAGAR

The symposium on "the Sargent Scheme" was continued when the Conference resumed its sitting on May 10 at 5 p. m. at the Srinivasa Sastri Hall with Sir N. Gopalaswamy Iyengar, President of the Conference, in the chair. Mr. Ruthnaswami, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. M. S. Sundaram, Educational Officer to the Government of India, and the D. E. O. of South Arcot Mr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar were also present.

Mr. A. Gajapathy Naicker, Dt. Munsif, Chidambaram, speaking in support of the Sargent Scheme, observed that India had been taken as a unit by the framers of the Scheme and that it was a step taken in the right direction. He felt that education must be imparted in the mother-tongue, though the same Scheme might be utilized for the whole sub-continent. Some people might ask as to what attitude should be adopted regarding the question of a common language for the whole of India. That question, too, he felt, must now be settled.

Mr. C. R. Myleru, lecturer in English, Annamalai University, speaking on the "recreative aspect" of the Scheme, criticised it for adopting the Western model regarding recreative travels. He felt that India being a poor country, people might not like to spend much money on travel; besides what was good to England might not be good to India. He pleaded for more financial support to aesthetic sciences and dramas, by which the culture of the land might be developed remarkably well. The cinema too could be used and educational films exhibited to the student-audiences, who might profit more by such an education.

Mr. M. S. Sundaram, Educational Officer to the Government of India, then replied to the criticisms made. He said:

"I am not surprised at the criticisms made on the different aspects of the Scheme. I am glad to note that there has been a general unanimity of opinion with regard to the broad outlines of the Scheme. In such a comprehensive Scheme, as the Sargent Scheme, there will be a large variety of opinions with regard to the details. The criticisms will enable the framers to further think over and do what they can on the matter. The originator of the Scheme does not claim this scheme to be the last word in the matter of educational reform. After 150 years of educational policy and administration in this country, for the first time a complete picture has been worked out. That is what I want all of you to realize first. It is quite possible to alter it in a variety of ways, so far as details are concerned. Let me now proceed to answer the criticisms made. There is first the question as to what would happen to the existing structure of education, when the new Scheme comes into force. It would be most fantastic for any educational administrator to say that in order to build new foundations, all the existing structure should be thoroughly dismantled. It is obviously impossible to destroy first, before building anew. The new structure has to come side by side with the existing one and when the new structure takes a firm hold on the soil, the older one will gradually vanish. The younger generation of teachers in the present system would be trained for the new basic schools. The elder teachers would be left undisturbed, and their services utilized till the new personnel would be ready to take over the work. As regards the cost, the present system costs, for the whole of India, about 30 (thirty) crores of rupees. It is to be replaced by a system which would involve an expenditure of about 313 crores of rupees. So that, the new system is by far the most elaborate and expensive one and so will not in the least affect the existing structure at all.

Secondly, there was the question regarding the position of the denominational and communal schools in the new Scheme. I would like to say here that these points were raised at the meeting of the Central Board of Education itself by the Ministers of Bengal, who stated that they had thousands of MADARASAS.

The answer of the Board as well as of the Advisor to the question is, that in any national scheme of education, all denominational institutions will have a place. So far as these schools are willing to adapt for at least part of their training the basic scheme and the syllabus, there would not be any violent interference with such denominational schools. With regard to schools for the privileged classes like the Anglo-Indians, Europeans, and the Chiefs (Princes) the State will not pay more than what is legitimately due per capita per pupil in any type of State Schools. The State too will not be justified in paying more to those schools, where there was expensive education. The entire cost of such privileged education will have to be met by those who want those schools. We cannot go further and penalise them.

"The Vice-Chancellor raised the question of religious education. While doing so, he stated that he might be considered "old-fashioned". But according to modern trends, as far as I have noticed, to become religious all on a sudden has become the fashion of the day. (Applause.) Doubts have been expressed all over the world in the method so far followed in teaching the "True Faith" national politicians attribute the present War to not teaching the "True Faith" to the people of Europe. So much so, religion has come into the English Education Bill. The Sargent Report has recognised the importance of religious education. A special committee has been appointed, as suggested at the meeting held at Baroda of the Central Advisory Board, to thrash out this question and produce a report on the question imparting religious education in this country. It is not a question in which an educational authority can produce a report off-hand. It is a delicate matter and ready answer cannot be given immediately. The question is a complex one. So, the Board has not come to any definite decision and has left it for investigation.

There was also a question regarding the position of parents. I assure you that parents' wishes would be consulted regarding the education of their children. The scales of pay of teachers would not be rigid; but would be flexible.

It was suggested during the discussion that the Scheme should be brought into force immediately, as the integrity of the Government would thereby increase. I am not competent to answer such questions. It will all depend largely upon the urge and pressure of the people of the country and the demands of the people for the implementation of the Scheme. Policies of governments will change according to the will and pleasure of its people.

Regarding University education, I feel that Government have brought into existence universities due to popular pressure. Their progress and development have not been looked well, both in the case of quantity as well as of quality. On an average about 36,000 pupils are in the undergraduate classes in every year in all universities in India. The strength of the B.Sc. & B.A. classes is about 10,000 per annum, of course for the whole of India. There are about 7,000 students in the several Law Colleges in the country. All these graduates are manufactured, for what purpose in view, nobody can answer. Universities too are not financed well by the Government. For the sake of mere self-preservation, lecturers professors and teachers have to show some quantity regarding results. Sometimes they have to go on canvassing for students. In Oxford, there was a timewhen there was not even one student taking the Hons. course in history consecutively for two years. For that, the Professor there did not lose his salary or part thereof. In those two years, he produced an excellent book, which was worth more than the graduates he could have taught. But in our country, if Honours course in philosophy is threatened to be abolished, then the professor has to go about canvassing, at least to continue his existence. This is a scandalous state of affairs in any centre of higher education. This should be remedied by

very liberal grant to universities. They must all be placed above want and financed to such an extent that they will admit only students of merit. The failures in our universities are too many. Nowhere in the world, can you see so much failures, as in India. That shows the enormous waste of energy, time and money. This state of affairs cannot be remedied by a stroke of the pen. There is a proposal. A central grants' committee must be established for giving grants to universities and make them function well and efficiently and without depending upon the fee-income.

On the question of introducing the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction, I should like to state openly here that only Indian languages will have to be the medium of instruction in all stages of education. To begin with, the Central Board of Education has recommended the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction for basic schools. In order to meet the opposition from some provinces like Madras, an alternative in the name of English has been included in the Report. As to the desirability of making the mother-tongue the State language, the legislators must answer."

Concluding, Mr. Sundaram referred to the Butler's Education Bill received by air-mail and pointed out how the expenditure for post-war education in England according to that Bill would be increasing by leaps and bounds. Speaking on the Indian educational reform, he said: "The expenditure on primary or elementary education as at present, is Rs. 7—12—0 per pupil per annum in India. In the proposed scheme, the rate of expenditure on junior basic schools, which correspond to the existing elementary schools, would be Rs. 31—14—0 per annum per pupil. In England the rate of expenditure on primary education is £15 11s which amounts to about Rs. 204/- per pupil per annum. China spends twice as much as India now in the matter of education, her actual expenditure being Rs. 13—8—0. For middle schools, the above rate now is Rs. 19—0—0 and according to Sargent Scheme it would be Rs. 55/. For high schools, the rate now is Rs. 47/- and the Sargent Scheme proposes Rs. 109/-.

According to the Bombay industrialists' Plan, the *per capita* income in India in the post-war world would be about Rs. 65/-. That would help us in finding money for our new educational schemes. The total revenue of all the Provinces and the Centre for 1940—41 was 253 crores and 65 lakhs of rupees. Out of this, the State had spent about 12 crores on education in all stages and that works out to an average of 5.3 per cent of the public funds. The expenditure per head per annum of the population now works out to be 0—8—9 pies, while in the proposed Scheme it will be about Rs. 100. If we can increase the *per capita* income of the country, we shall certainly be able to finance the social services including education, health, rural sanitation etc. The *per capita* income of the people must be doubled in the first ten years, and trebled later on.

I thank you for all your courtesy in listening to me. I think I have answered all criticisms.

The Rev. Dr. Freeman then read a paper on "Basic English"

Concluding Address

The President Sir N. Gopalaswamy Iyengar, winding up the discussion said: "I am leaving for Kodaikanal tonight and Mr. Ruthnaswami has kindly agreed to preside over the deliberations. I am indeed thankful to him. I must thank you all for cooperating with me to make this conference a success.

"We have had a number of speeches on the various aspects of the Sargent Scheme today. Mr. Sundaram has given us a full account of the background behind the formulation of this Scheme. He has also dealt with the several features of this Scheme and has tried to answer many of the criticisms that had been made in respect of the Scheme. I do not think it necessary for me

to refer to all that had been said on the subject. I hope there is a consensus of opinion that at last the country has before it a comprehensive plan of educational development which certainly does not deserve to be thrown into the waste-paper basket. What we have to see is to see that it is not put on the shelf. We should see that it is taken out, modified and improved in order to suit the needs and conditions of various parts of the country. There may be alterations necessary, according to the needs of different provinces. It is important that gatherings of this kind should take note of the basic ideas underlined within the Scheme and lose no time to put pressure on the authorities in order to implement it. That I think is the underlying idea of the speakers also today. Various things had been said as to the importance of the Scheme. I personally think that Mr. Ruthnaswamy made a big point when he said that this plan should not be a post-war plan, but that it must be taken into consideration immediately. Even when we go into the question, we should take such steps to give effect to such parts of the Scheme which it is possible to do so under the existing conditions. That I think is the very big point. As Mr. Sundaram has pointed out, it is for people like us, to take this Plan and put pressure on those who are in position and power to implement it as soon as possible. I would like to point out that it is not a difficult thing to implement such a Plan."

Here Sir N. Gopalaswamy Iyengar spoke in detail as to how he brought into effect educational reform in Kashmir, within three months' time as soon as he assumed the Dewanship of the State. Within three months after the appointment of a committee to go into the educational reform question in Kashmir State, he requested them to give him the first instalment of their Report, as the budget had to be prepared within that time. The Committee, which was presided over by an eminent educationist of India Mr. K. G. Saiyidain yielded and H. H.'s Government too took it into consideration at once and made provisions in the budget for starting the school in the new budget year. They had also made provision for inaugurating a programme of adult education. In a few months time, the full Report was produced and most of the recommendations were accepted and some of them are seen in the present Sargent Scheme. This instance he gave, only to show how "If right people are in power and are really anxious to do something to the cause of education, they cannot plead the existence of War." "I consider adult education more important. Why should the War stop us from liquidating illiteracy of the adults? That question is of great importance. We must proceed forward in introducing universal elementary education in this country. The Government should be forced to do these things. Regarding the starting of training schools for training teachers under the new Scheme, I feel that they must now be started in large numbers in the different provinces. That would save us enormous amount of time. If delay was made in starting those training institutions, that would affect the general education of the country. University education too can be re-organised; they need not wait for the end of the war. Technical high schools too should be started in different places. If we proceed with this programme in this way, we can make a very good beginning. (Hear, hear.) We must mobilize public opinion in such a way that nobody in power could sleep over the question.

As regards the details of the Scheme, I would say that after all they are details. Some of my suggestions have not found favour in some quarters. I am not infallible. I am ready to consider and adjust. My mind is open. They would all agree that the Scheme has not given adequate attention as to what is to be done with the existing System. I am anxious about it also. About 90 per cent of the teachers in the present System are trained in one way or other. They cannot be asked to give room for others. What can they do then? I am glad Mr. Sundaram has answered that point. If what he has said is the view of the Government, then it is good. Of course, it is not after all difficult to brush up

the existing teachers by giving them some more training. They are not a hopeless sort of people to be done away with. They can be made use of.

"As regards denominational schools and other institutions they are there. For many long years to come, they will have to be there and they will be there too. What the State has to see is that the secular part of education given to the standards in other institutions is given in these schools also. So long as they do they should not be disturbed. With regard to religious institutions, Mr. Ruthnaswamy has indicated a correct attitude to be taken. I am glad to hear that a new Committee has been appointed to go into the question and report. An institution must be free to impart religious education to children of its own community in the manner it desires. It should not be part of the regular secular Scheme. Whatever might be said, I do not think that the Sargent Scheme ignores the question of religious education."

On the question of splitting up the basic school stage into Junior and Senior, I have already referred to in my address. Still I feel that the whole stage should be taken as an organic whole. I am still unconvinced as to the suggestion made in the Report in favour of splitting up the basic education period. I feel that the Scheme has not taken a correct attitude. The basic education that is proposed to be given to all children between 6 and 14 years of age, should be a unit by itself. It is not right to split it in the middle. It may be said that at a certain stage in this period of eight years, you may have to intensify certain aspects of the curricula. That does not mean that children should be segregated in separate schools. Segregation seems to be the essence of this Plan. Let Mr. Sargent come forward and deny it, if it is otherwise."

Continuing Sir. N. Gopalaswamy Iyengar said: "As regards other matters, I do not think I need go too deep into them. Something has been said by certain very wise persons about my statement that the maxima and minima should be adjusted. I hope very many people, whether brought up under Congress traditions or otherwise, will agree with that observation. I stop there. I would like to point out that the Wardha Committee fixed the minimum scale for primary school teachers at Rs. 25 p. m., and they added a rider that it should not be below Rs. 20 under any circumstances. But when the Congress Ministries functioned, in certain Congress majority provinces that recommendation made by the Wardha Committee of Mahatma Gandhi had to be altered. In fact, salaries were turned down when the popular ministries were in office, though it had been repeatedly said that the Indian bureaucracy was notorious for low salaries. By saying this, I should not be taken as one whose intention is that the so called subsistence minimum should be reduced.

One other matter. That refers to the separation at the 11 plus stage. I feel that 11 is too early a date to make selection. I think on the whole it is best we go back to the main idea of Mahatma Gandhi that the basic education period should be an organic one and should not be split up. I enjoyed my stay here. I am deeply interested in the implementation of this Scheme at the earliest possible moment. That there is a large amount of public opinion in favour of this Scheme, nobody can deny. So it is incumbent on the authorities to implement the Scheme with the least delay.

"I thank you for all your hospitality and also thank the delegates in helping me to conduct the proceedings. I have no doubt that tomorrow you will make very wise decisions in the best interests of the country."

Rao Bahadur C. S. Srinivasachariar expressed the satisfaction of the Reception Committee, and observed that the Presidentship of Sir N. G. Iyengar had given them a large amount of prestige and a respectable and solid moral level. His integrity of character, his boldness and his high moral standard had added prestige to the conference. He was one of the elder statesmen of the day and for all that he had done them for the cause of education, he would like to express, on

behalf of the Reception Committee, for which he had the privilege to be the chairman, their heartfelt thanks and that he should live very very long and given opportunities to serve the country.

Sri T. P. Srinivasa Varadan, in seconding the vote of thanks, said that considering the huge expenditure in the scheme and the administrative details, the Executive Board realized that at this time the Conference should have, as its President, an able administrator and the Union found in Sir N. G., such a man. As suggested by him, the Conference would take steps to appoint a Committee to go in detail into the Sargent Scheme and formulate the views of the Union. He requested him to accept the Chairmanship of the Committee. He associated himself with the sentiments expressed by the previous speaker and thanked the President for the lead he has given.

Third Day Proceedings (11-5-44).

The Conference met at about 9 a.m. at the Convocation Hall under the presidency of Mr. M. Ruthnaswamy, Vice-Chancellor. Prof. M. S. Sundaram and the D. E. O. Mr. S. Krishna-swamy Iyengar attended the session.

Moved from the Chair, the following resolution was adopted all standing: "This conference places on record its deep sense of sorrow at the passing away of Srimathi Kasturba Gandhi, Begum Azad, Dr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar, Sri A. Nagaraja Aiyar, Sri A. K. Krishna-swamy Iyer and M. S. Sunderesan."

The above resolution and the following resolutions were passed at the Subjects' Committee meeting and they were placed before the open conference for discussion and approval.

Resolution No. 2: "This conference rejoices over the release of Mahatma Gandhi and prays for his speedy restoration to normal health in the cause of the country."

This resolution was moved by Mr. G. Sundaram Iyer, who in a short speech explained how the country received the news with great relief. It was seconded by Mr. Abdul Khuddus of Vaniambadi and was passed unanimously.

Resolution No. 3: "This conference urges on the Government the extreme urgency of their taking decisions on the proposals made in the Sargent Report so as to enable the necessary legislation being undertaken by competent authorities without loss of time."

The resolution was moved by Mr. C. Ranganatha Iyengar. He referred to the several speeches made on the different aspects of the Scheme and said that the urgency of taking decisions was apparent from these speeches. He was glad that after all the teaching profession had received the attention of the authorities, though he had his own doubts as to when effect would be given to these proposals. But whatever one might say, they should all agree with the resolution and pass it unanimously.

Mr. G. Srinivasachariar supporting the resolution remarked that teachers had not been given a chance to discuss the Scheme. He felt that the organisers of the conference had drafted the resolution and had also prepared a list of speakers too, who had all spoken very well.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Resolution No. (3a): "This conference authorises the Working Committee of the S. I. T. U. to appoint a Standing Committee of the S. I. T. U. to go into the Sargent Committee's Report and formulate the Union's recommendations."

Mr. S. Natarajan moving the above resolution observed that it was difficult for a body like the conference to go into the whole Report and submit recommendations, and that it was quite fitting that a special Committee should be appointed for the purpose. He felt that the Committee could go deep into the question. He said that the Committee's recommendations might be helpful both in securing public support for Education reform and for the drafting of a suitable Education Bill.

Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar supporting the resolution endorsed the observations of the previous speaker.

The resolution was passed.

Resolution No. 4: "Without prejudice to the recommendations that the S. I. T. U. may make after a full examination of the Sargent Report, this conference urges on the Government that immediate effect be given to the modifications suggested by the S. I. T. U. regarding service register and contract."

Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar moving the resolution referred to the miserable condition of some teachers in some aided schools. People might ask why a teacher should have got stomachs and actually get something less. "The answer to it is teachers' responsibility." He did not say that the condition existed in all aided schools. In fact, there were some schools where the treatment was exemplary. In some schools,

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teachers were deprived of summer vacation salaries. The contract system had not been a success. It had been more abused. Why should you have a service register, if the teacher was going to be sent out within a year or two after he had joined? In Malabar, they saw very recently the pitiable condition of teachers, who had to go on strike. Though he was opposed to teachers resorting to strike method, he was for some method, by which they could all effectively make the authorities know how they could show their protest and get their grievances redressed. He felt that the matter contained in the resolution was one of primary importance to the teaching profession itself.

Mr. A. Sundaresa Aiyar supporting the resolution and speaking in Tamil suggested that they should all organise themselves as a trade union. He was for some organised way of making the management and authorities know their ability to have their legitimate grievances redressed.

Mr. S. Natarajan strongly criticised the mild wording of the resolution. He had been noticing the drafting of resolutions by the S.I.T.U. They had always been mild and he failed to understand why they should be so even after government had expressed their inability to accept their recommendations. He was afraid the resolution would bring no relief. Nor was he hopeful of the public recognising the difficulties of teachers and of coming to their help. He strongly objected to the President's observation regarding the scales of salaries proposed by the Sargent Committee, that the maxima and minima could be modified to effect a reduction. He wanted the Conference to realise what impression such a statement could produce especially when it comes from a veteran statesman, and administrator. The condition of teachers in some aided schools was beyond description. He knew of schools wherein teachers had to undergo a test before each and every summer vacation, if they wanted to continue their service in that school. He would describe it as nothing short of "a scandalous state of affairs." The so-called Rs. 2 increase in the grant paid to aided Elementary School teachers has actually resulted in a reduction of annas four. Elementary school teachers could hope for no increase nor could they expect any help if they fall sick. Such was the state of affairs in schools. It had been suggested that they should all organise as a trade union and strike. He was opposed to it. There was not merely a profession but higher than that—a calling. He would suggest another alternative. If they find that they cannot carry on their duties without justice to the cause of education, and if the managements were not prepared to give them a living wage, they should leave the profession and seek jobs elsewhere. That was the advice he desired to give them. They should never strike. In fact, many teachers had joined the War. There was really dearth of teachers. Under such circumstances he felt that a silver lining had come and that there was some hope for them if only they should ask for higher salaries.

The resolution was then passed.

Resolution No. 5: "In the interests of sound education this conference urges on the government the view that teachers employed in non-government institutions with a specified period of approved service be eligible for appointment to the Inspectorate and that a definite proportion of vacancies arising each year be filled up from such eligible candidates."

Mr. S. Srinivasan, Madanapalle, speaking in favour of the resolution, stated that he did not aspire for any such post and that he should not be mistaken for one advocating that all teachers should become Deputy Inspectors of schools. In fact he knew that some of them desired to occupy such posts and it was in their interests that he moved the resolution. Besides theory and practice must go together for efficient work. By this resolution, teachers might have some "hopes" at least of their future.

Mr. Hanumantha Rao of Perambur seconding the resolution stated that there were today many Inspectors of schools, who knew nothing of the difficulties of an elementary teacher, especially in villages. If they had been for some time teachers, they would realize the difficulties and would be more sympathetic.

The resolution was passed.

Resolution No. 6: "This conference has reason to believe that the panel system for appointment of headmasters of High schools under local bodies has not given entire satisfaction and therefore it is time the Government made an enquiry into the working of this system so as to remove any defects therein."

Mr. T. P. Srinivasavaradan, moving the resolution, referred to certain anomalies observed in the system due to communal jealousies, as a result of which the services of efficient men with long experience were overlooked.

Mr. S. Vaideswara Iyer seconding it stated that he knew of an instance, in which L. T. assistants of over 15 years' service were overlooked and an L.T. with a few years' service was appointed headmaster. The resolution was passed.

Resolution No. 7 & 8: "This conference urges on the Government that the Secondary Grade trained graduate teachers be allowed for the L. T. Examination and Higher Elementary teachers for the Secondary Grade examination without the production of any attendance certificates."

Mr. C. A. Samuel moving the resolution stated that there would be a future for teachers who wanted to rise. Mr. P. R. Subrahmaniam Iyer seconded. Mr. S. Srinivasan of Chengam opposed the resolution on the ground that the syllabus of secondary grade teachers and that of the L.T. training were quite different. The resolution was put to vote and carried by a large majority.

Resolution No. 8: "This conference views with grave concern the reports from elementary school teachers in North Malabar about the great difficulty in the procuring of foodgrains and other essential articles and appeals to the Government to take necessary steps towards relieving their distress."

Mr. V. Srinivasan moving the resolution detailed the hardships teachers were undergoing in Malabar and pleaded for equal treatment of teachers with railway servants, who were supplied with essential foodgrains through grain shops. He also pointed out that the teachers were paid a poor salary and dearness allowance was either very small or nil. Under such circumstances, he felt that the conference must agitate for their redress as a hungry teacher was an "evil" to society and he knew of instances in Malabar wherein teachers had swooned in class-rooms due to hunger.

Mr. K. M. Sundaram supported the resolution, which was passed unanimously.

Debate on the Sargent Scheme

The debate on the Sargent Scheme was again continued in the discussion. Mr. N. K. Srinivasa Iyengar criticised the Report. Mr. S. T. Ramanujam Iyengar stated that the Report had been brought out new, only to placate political agitation. He strongly criticised the Report and felt that the government were simply diverting their attention from more important questions. But at the same time, he felt that something must be done to the teaching profession, without which there might be serious revolt very soon. He advocated the Wardha Scheme of Mahatma Gandhi and pointed out how it had worked out successfully in provinces like the C.P., U.P., and Bihar.

Mr. A. Sundaresa Aiyar too criticised the Report and observed that teachers had not been given a fair chance to discuss the Scheme in the open conference.

Mr. N. Kuppuswamy Iyengar, in a written speech, strongly condemned the Scheme as useless to the needs and present circumstances of the country and questioned the *bona fide* motive of the framers.

Prof. M. S. Sundaram of the Government of India then replied to the criticisms. He said that Mr. N. Kuppuswamy Iyengar's criticisms were not new to him as he had already stated in the All India Educational Conference that the Scheme was "not worth the paper" on which it has been written. (Mr. Kuppuswamy Iyengar rose up and explained that he did not say so but that if they were to take 40 years to work out the scheme then it was not worth the paper on which it was written and that if the Scheme was to be modified he would welcome it but that if it has to be taken *in toto* then he would flatly vote for complete rejection of the same).

Mr. Sundaram continuing said: "If there are differences of opinion, then it is for educationists to suggest alternate proposals. Regarding the implications of the Scheme as a whole, cynicism or defeatism to start with is no good. Vague suspicions about the *bona fide* of the framers' intention had been raised. It has been stated that it had been brought out to 'placate political agitation'. There is no use of such baseless suspicions or charges. We are a body of educationists. We have been asked to give our considered opinion whether it is ultimately for the good of the country and whether it is advisable to launch upon a nation-wide Scheme or not. Under these circumstances, suspecting the *bona fide* of the motive underlying the Scheme at the very start would not help us in any way. There has been a great many divergence of opinions. But at the same time, there has been a consensus of opinion regarding the broad outlines of the Scheme. If teachers and the public are convinced that something should be done in the matter of one of the most important of the social services, namely education, then let us take courage in our hands and demand it unanimously. After all, Government consists of representatives of the people. If people demand a thing in their own interests, no Government can offer resistance for the same. I thank you for all your courtesy."

The discussion on the Sargent Scheme ended.

A delegate from Malabar on behalf of the Malabar Teachers' Guild invited the S.I.T.U. to hold its next annual conference in Malabar. He referred to the serious food situation and hoped that things would be alright next year. He was sure of collecting rupees two to three thousand which is the estimate cost of the conference according to the Secretary and others, but had his own doubts as to how to get food grains and other articles in Malabar. Anyhow he had taken courage to invite the conference to Malabar and hoped that it would be a success. Mr. T. P. Srinivasavaradan, Secretary, S.I.T.U., accepted the invitation with pleasure on behalf of the Executive Board.

A list of persons and schools, to whom certificates of merit and medals for their respective exhibits in the exhibition was read.

Sri Harisarvottama Rao, a representative of the South Indian Adult Education Association spoke on "Adult Education." He said that Adult Education was the fundamental constructive programme and that it had been neglected all these years by all parties in this country. He congratulated the Annamalai University on embarking on a scheme of giving more education to adults and stressed the need to remove illiteracy and ignorance prevalent amongst the masses. Under such environments, children, who were the future citizens of India, would be most affected. At least in their interests, they must all go forward with a scheme of adult education. It was incumbent upon them to press upon the authorities to do something in the matter.

Concluding Address

Mr. M. Ruthnaswamy, who was in the chair, bringing the proceeding to a close, first explained the Adult Education Scheme of the Annamalai University. He said that it did not aim at liquidating illiteracy, but aimed at offering opportunities of higher education to those who were already literates but who could not take up to higher education while young due to reasons of poverty or other circumstances. On account of lack of publicity and other circumstances such as lethargy of the people and their usual scepticism in any thing new, the beginnings had been rather modest or discouraging. But he was optimistic about it and hoped that in the years to come it would be a success with better attendance.

Referring to the plight of teachers, he advised them not to be pessimistic. He was sure their condition would be better very soon. He was thoroughly opposed to any form of direct action. If the strike method was adopted, it would be the poor pupil who would suffer. Society would degenerate. However much the stress and strain of a teacher would be, he should not, under any circumstances, resort to strike. The consideration must be weighed well. He felt that two professions, namely the medical and teaching, should not under any circumstances, resort to the "Strike Method." If a medical man struck work due to grievances against the management or government, then it was the innocent patient that suffered. The same argument could hold good for the teacher too. There was another advice tendered to the teacher, who had grievances against his Manager. That was to leave the profession. Even in that affair, the teacher should not leave in the middle of the academic year, as that would affect the poor pupils. For saying all these things, he should not be mistaken as one, whose interests were different. In fact, he had the teacher's interests always at heart. He felt that there was a good future before them all. Teachers must work with a spirit of dedicating their services to society. That was what he wanted to tell them. He was glad to note the high order of debate re Sargent Scheme.

Rao Bahadur C. S. Srinivasachariar, as Chairman of the Reception Committee, proposed a vote of thanks. He expressed how they all felt diffident at the beginning about making the Conference a success and how as days passed on, things went smoothly and the conference made a tremendous success.

Mr. S. T. Ramanujam Iyengar, on behalf of the S.I.T.U. thanked the Chairman of the Reception Committee, for their kind reception and excellent arrangements.

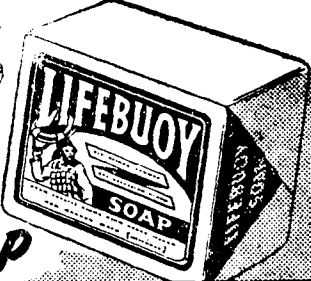
Mr. C. S. Ranganatna Iyengar, Local Secretary, finally proposed heartfelt thanks to one and all who made the Conference a success.



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We do appreciate the difficulties of the Government faced as it is with decreasing imports and an inadequate production in India, incapable of being stepped up. Lack of machinery and power are largely responsible for Indian mills to increase their production. The situation certainly requires very drastic action. But such action should not set back the clock of progress. We appeal to Government to give their best consideration to the needs of education and give it a priority. It should not be difficult to gather data regarding the amount of paper that might be needed for printing books and for preparation of notebooks and make that quantity available to the interests concerned, under conditions that will help all students to get their supply of books and notebooks at a fair price.

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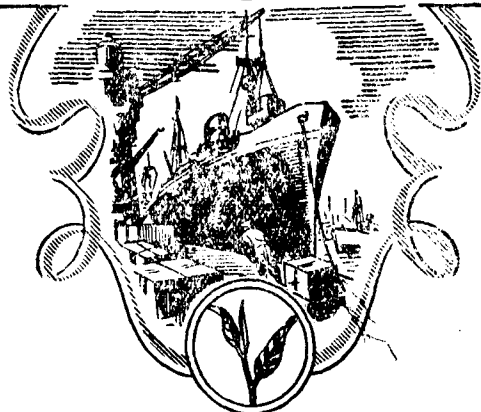
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