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CONTENTS

ARTICLES :	PAGE
Postwar Education (Discussions)	259
FROM OUR ASSOCIATIONS	267
EDITORIAL	271

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THE SOUTH INDIAN TEACHER

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POSTWAR EDUCATION

(With the kind permission of the A. I. R., Madras, we are publishing the full text of the series of three discussions on Postwar Education broadcast from A. I. R., Madras.)

First Discussion

Participants :

Rao Bahadur K. V. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR, M.A.,

Upadhyaya Sangha Karya Praveena

Rao Bahadur S. K. YEGNANARAYANA IYER, M.A.,

Rev. Fr. Jerome D'Souza, S.J.

K. V. R. :—Two important documents have dealt with the subject recently, namely the Sargent Report and the Plan of the Bombay Industrialists. Both have received a fair volume of distinguished support. But, a movement like this needs wide popular support and enthusiasm. To evoke both, all useful methods of publicity should be welcome. Now that we are here, may we begin with some of the salient features of the Sargent Report?

S. K. Y. :—Should we not also take up other important plans like those of Sir M. Visveswaraya in his 'Reconstructing India' and the well-known "Wardha Scheme on Basic Education?"

J. D. S. :—The framers of the Sargent Report have, I think, taken cognisance of these earlier discussions. So for all practical purposes consideration of that Report would cover the ground sufficiently.

K. V. R. :—Quite so. The chief merit of the Sargent Scheme is its comprehensive character. It attempts a synoptic view of the entire field, and attempts to give from official data an approximate estimate of our liability in men and money.

S. K. Y. :—But, the Sargent Scheme is applicable only to British India. It leaves out of account the vast area of the Indian States.

J. D. S. :—Not quite. A scheme envisaging a progressive application for about forty years, must imply the possibility of the whole area of India coming within its operation. This report cannot deal, naturally, with details of the political unification, but its claim to outline a national system of education has the implication of its applicability to the whole of India.

K. V. R. :—I see your point. You anticipate that just as we form an economic unit we must within that period become an educational unit.

S. K. Y. :—Do we need forty years for it?

K. V. R. :—You have put a pertinent question. Our colleague, I feel sure, does not consider so long a period to be necessary for the disappearance of the differences which now stand in the way. I think, at the same time, that objection may be taken to the long period from a different standpoint. Why should our country wait for forty years to obtain the literacy and educa-

tional level which have been achieved elsewhere in our own times within a third of this period?

J. D. S. :—It can be argued mere literacy is only part of our problem, but that in India today the economic and political conditions necessary for the effective enforcement of a comprehensive National scheme do not yet exist.

S. K. Y. : Perhaps. But, I would hope that the pace of progress will be accelerated and our goal will be reached well within a generation.

K. V. R. :—It is not wise to hazard prophecies about the future. The world has advanced latterly at a pace that has surpassed the wildest anticipations. My difficulty is that you cannot prepare blue-prints for even one generation. Within a few years, our data will be obsolete and so also our anticipations. The Soviet has wisely stuck to five-year plans. Again, it is not right to presume that we can tie the hands of those who will follow us for very long periods. Further, a forty-year scheme carries with it an implication that its authors believe that conditions will remain static.

S. K. Y. :—Ideas must respond to changing values of life—even in education?

K. V. R. :—Quite so. It is necessary to make a start at once, as one signatory to the Sargent Report has urged. I would deprecate a detailed long-term plan, except as an indication of priorities and of his liabilities to the Finance Member.

J. D. S. :—There is, however, a difficulty, which I envisage as more fundamental. We have a very detailed scheme to be worked out during a long term of years. It is a comprehensive scheme. It deals with the education of boys as well as girls, adults as well as young, and all avenues to all professions. We are all agreed that education should evolve a democratic spirit and prepare for a democratic scheme of life. If that be so, is this excessive regimentation, which puts all education in an official steel-frame, desirable in the best interests of the nation? Is it consistent with the freedom of learning and of teaching

which are vital necessities in a free society?

S. K. Y. :—This will be my reply. We have suffered from lack of plan, of co-ordination and of co-operation. The result is that we have not moved on. Unless we have a directing authority and a scheme to be worked up, how can we, with our notorious fissiparous tendencies, move forward at all?

K. V. R. :—I understand our colleague's point of view to be in essence this. You may have a plan, but it must have sufficient elasticity and offer due scope for adjustability to changing conditions, and for individual variations; and, above all, it must give freedom, within wide limits, to private initiative and enterprise. Organizations like the family or religious groups cannot surely be sacrificed for a regimented Plan!

We may take it therefore that we are agreed that we must have a common plan, for a moderate period, that would be well thought-out and be not too detailed.

S. K. Y. :—If we may pass to another point, I would ask: 'If we must begin, should we start simultaneously in all branches, or give some branches of education priority over others?'

J. D. S. :—I too see the need to settle this issue. Should basic education, for instance, wait till we have all the trained men and women teachers, to undertake the task? The Sargent scheme seems to suggest that the training of teachers should precede a start on basic education. We cannot endorse such an opinion. Universal, free and compulsory basic education at least must be started *at once*, even if we cannot have a full complement of trained teachers.

S. K. Y. :—But I would stress the need to expand secondary education also.

K. V. R. :—I see the force of both. Basic education is fundamental. The nation cannot take a single step forward without it. It is necessary for an extension of the suffrage; it is necessary for an improvement in the standard of public health; and it is a vital prerequisite of industrial advance. In all

these lines secondary education will strengthen progress and prevent any going back.

J. D. S. :—Agreed. We may now turn to two other problems. First, we cannot allow national education to remain torpid. Secondly, we must move within our means, and adjust plans to our resources.

K. V. R. :—True. We must recognize that the Sargent Report has done a great national service by putting the advancement of education and the liquidation of illiteracy and ignorance *first* in the list of national priorities. Health and education are the two things by which alone a nation can live.

S. K. Y. :—But are we to wait till the war ends, even to make a first move onwards?

J. D. S. :—We quite see that in a broad sense, all efforts must be concentrated on War. But vital needs cannot be neglected even in war time. England has initiated far-reaching educational reform in full war time. Moreover when the war officially ends, war time difficulties will not end.

K. V. R. :—A small advance immediately will be welcome. It cannot preclude a big advance after some indefinite date!

J. D. S. :—Is not the colossal cost of the scheme likely to deter its acceptance and immediate implementation?

S. K. Y. :—No. Our war experience has taught us to think in crores! Nor need we assume the estimated cost final. The Chairman dealt, I remember, with the problem in his Meyer Lectures. How does his experience fit in with the present estimates?

K. V. R. :—I am not worried over the cost. To begin with, all such estimates can only be tentative. Again, if a thing is vitally needed, it must be had whatever may be its cost. What is needed is the public acceptance by the State of its responsibility for national education as a *primary duty*.

S. K. Y. :—Is it done anywhere?

K. V. R. :—It is a fundamental article of the Soviet Constitution. The

right to education is like the right to personal freedom, and liberty of thought and expression a fundamental right.

J. D. S. :—I should like to revert to the question of cost. Surely economies are possible in the estimates contained in the Report?

K. V. R. :—We may trust the Finance Members and Legislators to see to it!

S. K. Y. :—How about the figure of per capita cost?

K. V. R. :—The Sargent scheme puts the cost per head of junior basic at about 32 Rs., of senior basic at 55 Rs., and of High School education at 106 Rs. a year. Ten years ago, when I made a similar calculation on official data, the figures were 6 Rs. a year for primary and 36 Rs. for secondary pupils. A well-equipped first-grade College could then be run for the cost now suggested for secondary education.

J. D. S. :—That gives us hope!

K. V. R. :—Thank you, Gentlemen. We are now agreed that we need a Planned Scheme, that will take the whole nation and bring in all stages of education. We are also agreed that the more fundamental stages should have priority, if, for lack of money or men a start cannot be made all along the line. We are agreed that the aim should be education for democracy, and that the plan should not be rigid and too detailed and should not stifle independence and initiative. Above all, we are agreed that in the scale of a State's duties the duty to educate every person, male or female, normal or defective, should have priority over all other obligations. We hold the right to education to be a fundamental and inalienable human right. We are also agreed on the value of the Sargent scheme and the inspiration it gives, though we are unable to accept the view that action immediately cannot be taken at once, and that it should be deferred till the requisite resources are available for a march all along the line. We are convinced that a move to the goal should be made *immediately*, with the means at our disposal, and that the resources necessary for as rapid a move as possible should be made available in the interests of the Nation.

Second Discussion

Participants:

Dr. B. V. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU,

Prof. M. S. SABHESA IYER,

Miss B. G. FRASER.

Doctor:—In the previous discussion, the speakers came to the conclusion that we should have a scheme of national education, with a view to train the citizens for democracy. They also felt that education should have priority over other obligations of the State, that every effort should be made to implement the scheme immediately, and that the State should provide the necessary funds.

As has been pertinently stated in the British White Paper, 'Upon the Education of the People of this Country, The Fate of this Country Depends'.

We shall today discuss the subject of Basic Education and High School Education. What do you think, Miss Fraser, to be the objective of the Basic Education?

Miss Fraser:—If you want to implement the aim of education, as stated in the previous discussion, that is education for democracy, one objective should be education for literacy for all boys and girls, and the Sargent Scheme undertakes to give universal, free and compulsory education for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14.

Prof:—I should say the scheme seeks to make the children of the soil good citizens and good workers. Much more than literacy is expected from the basic education for children.

Dr. Nayudu:—Literacy is undoubtedly essential, but the Sargent Scheme rightly goes one step further. It wants the pupils of the basic school to take their places in the country as good citizens and good workers. Something more than literacy is certainly aimed at in the Sargent Report, and in the light of that, we can understand the spirit and meaning of the recommendations.

Prof. Sabhesan:—Will the President explain, from his experience, whether the scheme is likely to

promote progress in other spheres, such as economic, social, industrial, agricultural wellbeing of the people?

Dr. Nayudu:—The scheme is good, so far as it goes. It contemplates education of the whole nation through universal, compulsory and free education for all children of ages 6 to 14. The scheme is based on "Learning by doing." Stress is laid on the self activity in the junior stage, and special attention to instruction in basic crafts is given in the senior stage. Such a scheme may help all round progress. What do you think of the place of crafts in education?

Prof. Sabhesan:—Craft education is primarily to aid the education of the pupil. This has the additional merit of being helpful as a fairly good preparation for an occupation. Is it not so?

Miss Fraser:—Yes, I think it is a very important point that you have raised. I noticed in the discussion between Mr. Wood and Mr. Sargent on the scheme, one of the points which they stressed was that education should be regarded as life now rather than as a preparation for life. At present, too much stress is laid on bookish learning for examination. The introduction of crafts should help to remedy that situation, but there is the risk that craft teaching may also become a means to an end instead of a way of learning creatively now.

Prof. Sabhesan:—This point is discussed at length in the Wardha Scheme, and the Sargent Committee also has emphasized the importance of paying attention to crafts more from the educational stand point than from the occupational point of view. Now, I would like to raise the question of diversion of pupils at 11+. This diversion at 11+ is by no means new. It

has been going on in our provinces all these years. This diversion at 11 plus is to be allowed in the case of certain types of students who intend to join a high school on the completion of the junior basic stage. It seems to me that such diversion gives full scope to students who have aptitudes for higher education and advanced study, and who can take the fullest advantage of an academic curriculum. It goes without saying, that in the senior basic school stage, every effort should be made to introduce a variety of crafts suited to the aptitudes of pupils so as to enable them to equip themselves properly for life. There is no point in the catch words like "Class Spirit", "Undemocratic", which we hear frequently. Diversion is not compulsory and is permitted under certain conditions. It causes no injustice to the pupils in the basic stage while it gives an impetus to the pupils with academic bent.

Dr. Nayudu:—Let us then look at the proposals. The plan in the Sargent Scheme is that selection shall take place first on the basis of the pupil's achievement. A list will be prepared by the Head of the School, of boys, and girls, who show signs of profiting by high school education. This list will be scrutinized by the Inspector together with the Headmaster, and after the final list has been prepared, the candidates are to be tested by examination in order to discover their promise, by a Board of Examiners.

Miss Fraser:—There is a safeguard in that process to any unjust treatment. That is that even if the Headmaster omits a child's name, the parent may yet insist that his child may be allowed to take the examination. The main thing in this procedure seems to be the stress on promise rather than attainment only. The question is how can this testing best be done?

Prof. Sabhesan:—I am afraid there is a good deal of misapprehension about the selection procedure. The fear that injustice will be frequent is imaginary. The selection machinery is appointed by the Government should be presumed to be able to do the work honestly. Further there is provision for the transfer of a pupil from a basic

school to the High school at a later stage if he shows promise.

Dr. Nayudu:—There are certain difficulties in the scheme of choosing high school pupils at eleven as suggested by the Central Advisory Board. The authors of the report are alive to these difficulties, such as the late development of certain children, environmental effects, etc. All these things have to be taken together, and if a comprehensive view is brought to bear upon this question, the injustice can be reduced to the minimum. After all, even for pupils who have not been found to be upto the mark at eleven plus, provision has been made to enter the high school. Let us pass on to secondary education. The scheme suggests a period of six years, and also points out that the high school stage should be complete in itself. There is one question to be discussed in this connection, namely, the overhauling of the high school programme. May I request you, Miss Fraser, to express your opinion?

Miss Fraser:—The curriculum in the high school is to be different according to whether the school is an academic or technical high school. There is to be a basis of common subjects and in the technical high school, children will specialize according to their abilities in science, commerce, agriculture, art, and kindred subjects. In the case of girls, the report says that in addition, domestic science should be provided. This new large choice of subjects can only be good. For girls, specially suitable subjects in a technical high school seem to be applied art, domestic science, music and commercial subjects. In addition, in view of the great need for nurses, to implement the school medical service proposed in another part of the scheme, a preliminary course might be planned.

Prof. Sabhesan:—The overhauling of the high school courses as indicated in the Sargent scheme is a move in the right direction. The number of high school leavers who intend to enter life is considerable. There may be difficulty in organizing technical schools, and securing technically qualified teachers. There may be difficulty

in workshop practice, and cooperation with factories must be secured. But there is no point in the argument usually advanced that instruction in technical subjects can be of no use because there are no industries. The vicious circle must be broken at some point or other. It is very necessary that a beginning should be made at once.

Miss Fraser:—A beginning has already been made as a result of the war. Hasn't it? In certain localities, new industries have been started.

Dr. Nayudu:—Yes, I agree with you, Miss Fraser. But every effort should be made by the authorities for starting new technical institutions. These technical high schools should bear a relation to the industries of the locality, so that there may be opportunities for the young to get themselves trained in the workshop, and then, get suitable employments in the industries. This will involve the spending of large amounts of money, and adequate provision therefor should be made. Not only that, in order to make these schemes work efficiently, we must have the right type of men and women for the responsible work they will be called upon to do.

Miss Fraser:—That means, doesn't it, that training colleges would be one of the crucial points, especially for women. The report repeatedly emphasizes the necessity for women teachers, since 3/5ths of the teachers in the junior basic and all the primary stage are to be women. In general too, the importance of the teacher has been recognized in the scheme. Teachers in the basic classes are to be at least of Matric. standard, and should have had two or three years' professional training. The success of the scheme will depend largely upon the teaching staff, their personality, their training and their salaries. Won't it?

Prof. Sabhesan:—The Advisory Board leaves no one in doubt about the urgent necessity for the adequate remuneration of teachers. The report considers the present position deplorable, and suggests reasonable scales of salaries and allowances so that proper

types of men and women can be attracted to the profession. I feel strongly that under the plea of economy, the salaries of teachers should not be reduced. I should think that the proposed salaries cannot be considered high. As regards teachers for basic schools, it may be convenient from various points of view to have only one cadre of teachers with two years' training. Provision for in-service training may go a great way towards keeping them up-to-date.

Dr. Nayudu:—Thank you very much, Miss Fraser and Prof.

Sabesan, let me now sum up our discussion: Firstly, we said that the basic scheme is a good educational programme for democracy. It is comprehensive and complete by itself, and it must be complete by itself. The recommendations regarding the recruitment, qualifications and salaries of teachers deserve special consideration. The diversion permitted at 11 plus is not likely to cause injustice, but on the contrary, gives scope to pupils with aptitude for higher education. The procedure for selection at 11 plus is a cautious one and there is provision for reducing abuses to the minimum. We have also agreed that there is urgent need for overhauling the high school curriculum on the lines suggested in the scheme. There is a misapprehension that the scheme may cause some hardship to the scheduled classes, but the equality of opportunity underlying the scheme, with ample provision for maintenance allowance to all poor and talented pupils should go very far towards improving the chances of these classes. In order that this scheme may bear full fruit for the community, it is essential that the organizations interested in its welfare as well as the parents should exert themselves in bringing every child of the community to the school and allowing the child to remain in the school for the minimum period. Much will also depend upon the cooperation and the enthusiasm of the public to implement the provisions of the scheme, their willingness to experiment rather than merely to discuss and criticise some weak points. Let all of us remember "Upon the Education of the People of this Country, the Fate of this Country Depends."

POSTWAR EDUCATION

Third Discussion

Dr. CHANDRASEKHARAN (Chairman).

Mr. KURUVILA JACOB,

Mr. S. NATARAJAN.

Chairman:—If you agree, gentlemen, we shall now consider certain important aspects of the report which were not touched upon in the last two discussions, for instance, the Board's recommendations regarding university education. What do you think of them, Mr. Natarajan.

Mr. Natarajan:—One recommendation relates to the three-year degree course and the abolition of the intermediate section. The Sadler Commission recommended this so early as 1917. The same recommendations are now made. May I know if there is any chance of the universities accepting it?

Chairman:—The universities have accepted the principle as you will see from the report itself. In fact, at the Hyderabad meeting of the Inter-University Board last year, and also at the quinquennial Inter-University Conference, this recommendation was accepted, after considerable discussion, with the proviso, that the three-year degree course should come into operation only if the secondary school system is reorganized, staffed and equipped on the lines recommended in the report.

Mr. Jacob:—Soon after the publication of the Sadler Committee's report, did not the Mysore University introduce the three-year course; and drop it afterwards?

Mr. Natarajan:—The proviso you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, is very important. Mysore probably dropped the three-year degree course because their High Schools had not been reformed and improved.

Mr. Jacob:—The students who go to the Medical Colleges and Engineering Colleges would miss that cultural education that they will be now getting in the intermediate classes, unless, of course, something of that nature is added to their course.

Chairman:—These are matters of detail. The transfer to the Medical

College would take place, I presume, at the end of the first year of the degree course. The Delhi University has started this experiment, and other universities have not, so far as I know, raised any difficulty about admitting their students to the various courses which they provide.

Mr. Natarajan:—I presume these recommendations assume that 1/15 of the high school leavers will be enrolled in the university. They want a very careful selection for university entrance. Is this not a restriction, and is it not likely to affect the progress of some of the communities which are educationally backward? The cost they are estimating is much higher than the prevailing cost of university education. And university education may become class education only for the rich, is it not so, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman:—You are overlooking a very important part of the recommendations that at least 1/3rd of the undergraduates in the universities should be provided not only with free tuition but also with maintenance allowance. This recommendation has been made so as to provide generous facilities for young men of ability who have not the financial means to take up university education. Only those who have no ability or promise will be eliminated, not those who are poor but deserving. Promising youths of all communities will have equal chances of receiving higher education. You may also note that the number of students under the scheme will be more than double the present number. Another important recommendation of the Board is the creation of the Indian Universities Grants Committee. What do you think of that?

Mr. Natarajan:—I think that the creation of the Grants Committee would remedy one of the serious difficulties that we notice, overlapping and dispersion of effort. The Grants

Committee must have some statutory functions and must be able to guide and advise the universities. You were present, Mr. Chairman, at the meeting of the Central Advisory Board when this report was passed. I should like to know what exactly are the functions of the Committee. There is a fear expressed by some that this Grants Committee may mean a serious interference with the autonomy of our universities.

Mr. Jacob :—I think that the Report states quite plainly the functions of the Committee and that it will not interfere with the autonomy of universities, and the whole aim is to help the universities to work better. But I do not know what will be the relation of the Grants Committee with affiliated colleges.

Chairman :—You must remember, that we in the Board were considering a national system of education. A national system of education means planning and co-ordination. It is at present nobody's business to plan and co-ordinate university development. Universities spring up in a province or a State, either due to popular pressure or for some other reason. It is necessary to have some authoritative and expert body which will all the time be considering the creation and development of universities in the interests of the country as a whole. This recommendation was made primarily for shaping future developments in the interests of India as a whole, on an efficient and economic basis. The country may require for instance more doctors, and that will mean more medical colleges. It is for this body to make recommendation to a particular university and to offer a grant for starting a Medical Faculty. It is also proposed that this Grants Committee should try and prevent overlapping and ensure the maintenance of high and uniform standards in all Universities. Some apprehension was expressed in the Inter-University Board and the Conference that the autonomy of universities will be interfered with. But as it has been pointed clearly in the report, the Grants Committee will work more or less on the lines of the University Grants Committee in Britain. There is no question

of interfering with the ordinary administration of universities.

Mr. Natarajan :—Will this be an independent body?

Chairman :—It will be a statutory body.

The members of the body will be neither Provincial Government nor Central Government officials. They will be men of distinction with experience of educational administration. It is hoped that this body will command respect and confidence and that its recommendations will not be tampered with by the Central Government. The same healthy conventions as have been established in Britain will, it is presumed, grow up here also. As for the affiliated colleges, the point which Mr. Jacob raised, the Grants Committee will have no dealings with them. It will deal only with the Universities themselves. We may now pass on to technical education and I am sure you will welcome, as I do, the recommendation of the Board that a comprehensive system of technical education in all stages should be established. The Board has not been able to specify the nature and scope and the content of the various kinds of technical and technological education, because they say they cannot forecast the nature of industrial development that will take place after the war, but they have made general recommendations for training various categories of technical men and I presume those recommendations will be generally approved.

Mr. Jacob :—I think perhaps the most important recommendation is the new type of secondary school called Technical High School.

Mr. Natarajan :—I think by far the most important recommendation is the opening of senior technical institutions for the purpose of training research workers in industries and that the technical institutions should be under the control of a Central Council of technical education.

Chairman :—I am glad you support the recommendation that higher technical education should be under centralized control.

Mr. Natarajan :—The Report does not say much on agricultural

education. It simply mentions that agricultural education must also form part of technical education, but there are no details.

Chairman :—We have set up a Committee for agricultural education and their recommendations are awaited with interest.

Mr. Natarajan :—Will it not be possible after the end of the war for the war technicians to be recruited, for doing teaching work in the junior technical schools, so that the technical schools can be started much earlier than what the Report contemplates.

Chairman :—That is a good suggestion, but there is one difficulty.

The men who have been recruited for wartime technical training scheme may not possess the general qualifications required for becoming efficient teachers in technical schools. Let us now look at the proposals regarding recreative and social activities. I am particularly interested in the recommendation regarding an All India Youth movement. What do you think of that?

Mr. Natarajan :—It will be good to have an All India Youth movement, but the recommendations do not place before us any definite ideology for such a movement. In all western countries, where youth movements exist, there are definite principles and aims but in our country, in the present political situation, a definite purpose is lacking. Under the circumstances, I doubt if an All India Youth Movement will be a success.

Chairman :—That is a very good point. That is my own feeling

about this recommendation. Unless the All India Youth Movement started under the national system of education has definite ideals and objectives underlying it and inspiring it, it will fail to attract the youth of the country. The youth of the country will be captured by communal or party organisations with definite ideologies—the Muslim youth by the Muslim League, the Hindu youth by the Hindu Mahasabha and the scheduled classes by the Scheduled class organisations and so on and the All India Youth Movement will fail.

Mr. Jacob :—But you cannot expect the Central Board of Education

to formulate the ideology of an All India Youth movement.

Chairman :—I agree. That should be the duty of our national leaders and of a national Government if and when it comes into existence.

Mr. Natarajan :—The Youth movement is a necessity, but for its success we should have a National Government and then the ideology would be supplied by them.

Chairman :—That is where I feel pessimistic owing to the fissiparous tendencies in our country. Would our national leaders realise the need and the urgency to give educationists a strong lead in this matter?

Mr. Natarajan :—Now about religious education—the report does not deal with religious education. It merely expresses a pious hope that religion will be the basis of education. It makes no recommendation as to how this religious education should be imparted in our educational institutions.

Mr. Jacob :—The Board has, I believe, appointed a committee, and I think, you, Mr. Chairman, are a member of it. My own feeling is that provision should be made for religious education even in State schools. This may be done in two ways. One—Denominational Religious instruction may be given by approved persons either members of the staff or visitors. And in addition, all school children should be given an opportunity to know something about the religions of the country. This is a very difficult problem, but we must try and find a way out.

Chairman :—I thank you for the suggestions. They will be of help to me in the discussions in the Committee on Religious Education which is meeting shortly at Delhi. My own view is that true religion cannot be taught as a class room subject. Of course communities like the Roman Catholics and the Muslims may provide denominational instructions in their own schools, but it is a very controversial and difficult matter for State schools to provide such instruction. Anyhow, let us wait and see what the Committee has to say on the subject.

About the training of teachers, have

you anything special to say about the recommendations?

Mr. Jacob:—The entire programme will depend upon the rate at which trained teachers can be produced. Better salaries and more attractive conditions of service are absolutely essential for obtaining the requisite supply of teachers. A beginning should be made even now with the existing teachers.

Chairman:—The Board has recommended considerable increase in the salaries and improvement of the conditions of service.

Mr. Natarajan:—They want a matriculate with two years training on a salary of Rs. 30 to start with, rising to Rs. 50. You will admit that it is a ridiculously low salary. He can get much higher than that anywhere else. Rs. 30 will be too small a remuneration for a teacher. I know many teachers welcome this recommendation, not because of the attrac-

tive salaries proposed, but because of the fundamentally good features of the whole scheme. In regard to salaries, the recommendations do not go far. Unless they are improved further, we may not be able to get really efficient men as teachers.

Mr. Jacob:—While the suggested salaries are better than the salaries given now in many parts of India, they are still not good enough.

Chairman:—The Board's recommendations are, I think, very fair, having regard to the resources of the country and the taxable capacity of the people even under improved post-war conditions. Well, I thank you, Gentleman,—you will agree that we have had a very useful discussion on some essential aspects of the Report. As Mr. Natarajan said it is a fundamentally good scheme and I fervently hope, as you do, that it will be implemented without avoidable delay.

(Continued from page 272.)

variety and extent of such instruction which has secured for itself an accepted place in school life in Britain and how it is contributing to the reduction in the number of road accidents. Road safety for children is becoming a problem and if any one should observe the weekly reports of road accidents he cannot fail to be alarmed at the increasing toll of the road. The authorities in Madras have decided to exercise their powers by punishing pedestrians that do not keep to the pavements and several batches of people have already been arrested and punished. But punishments can never lead to understanding. The man in the street has to be made to understand the dangers to himself of jay-walking and the advantages of walking on the pavement. He has to be educated into safety and a big drive for Safety

First instruction has to be inaugurated. The Safety First association of Bombay is doing useful work and most schools in Bombay are co-operating with the Association by imparting Safety First instruction to their pupils. Madras, too, has a Safety First Association. We are not aware of its activities. It does not seem to be worried at the appalling rate of increase in road accidents. But fortunately educational authorities are not indifferent. About 500 students of the St. Gabriels' High School, Madras, have taken the Safety Pledge and a School Safety Squad has been organised. May we hope that the lead given by this institution will be followed by others. Undoubtedly safety education is a great necessity, since all other education will become useless if the life of the child receiving it is forfeit.

FROM OUR ASSOCIATIONS

The North Arcot District Teachers' Guild

The twentieth Annual Conference of the Guild was held on 4—11—1944 in the Cobb. Hall, Voorhees College, Vellore. Mr. S. J. Savarirayan, M.A., Principal, Voorhees College and President of the Guild presiding.

The delegates were entertained to a dinner at the premises of Sri Mahant's Devasthanam Hindu High School, Vellore.

After prayer by Mr. S. Satchidanandam Pillai, the Retired District Educational Officer, North Arcot, in Tamil, Mr. S. J. Savarirayan welcomed the delegates.

Mr. Syed Kader Muhammad Nainar Sahib Bahadur, the District and Sessions Judge, North Arcot, in declaring the Conference open, pointed out that, the first requisite of a teacher is tolerance, and how Post-war needs are going to develop India, from an agricultural country, into a great industrial country, whether she wants it or not, and that the primary requisite of an industrial country would be a high and liberal technical education.

The President in his Address, spoke on the Sargent Scheme.

He hoped that in working out the syllabus, details of the curricula, text books, medium of instruction, etc., the teachers will be given their proper place.

Mr. S. Srinivasaiyer of Chengam next presented the minutes of the previous meeting.

Mr. M. Rangachariar, the Secretary of the Guild, next read the annual report and the audited accounts for the last year.

Mr. T. P. Srinivasavaradan, Secretary of the S. I. T. U. Madras, later delivered a lecture on "The public and the Teaching profession." He suggested the formation of parents association as a connecting link between the teacher and the public. He referred to the present system of educational rationing now followed by the Government in the admission of students in the Medical College, Engineering College and other Colleges which prevents the best and intelligent students from entering special courses.

Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyer of Chengam then initiated a discussion on "The future of our education." He stressed the fact that while in educationally advanced countries like America the voice of the teaching profession is the voice that determines the curricula, text books and educational policy it is not so in India and pointed out that till it is so, there can be no bright future for education in this country.

8. Election of office bearers for 1944—45 is as follows.

President: Mr. S. J. Savarirayan.

Vice-President: Mr. M. Natesa Iyer.

Joint Secretaries: Messrs. M. Rangachari, S. Srinivasa Iyer and V. Nilakantan.

Representative to the S. I. T. U.: Mr. S. Subramania Iyer.

At a public meeting with Mr. M. A. Manickavelu Naicker, B.A., B.L., member in charge of Secondary and Elementary Education, North Arcot District Board, presiding, Mr. T. P.

Srinivasavaradan on the "Sargent Scheme and the Public." He answered the various criticisms levelled against the Scheme.

Then the President, Mr. Manickavelu Naicker, in his concluding remarks, appealed to the teachers to do their best to remove illiteracy from the country as far as possible by following any scheme that might be mooted out by the Government and suitable to the public.

The South Arcot District Teachers' Guild

The Annual Conference of the South Arcot District Teachers' Guild was held on Saturday the 28th of October 1944 in the Municipal High School, Cuddalore N. T. with the President, Rao Bahadur C. S. Srinivasachariar, in the chair. Mr. R. Swaminatha Iyer, Headmaster, Municipal High School, Cuddalore, welcomed the gathering. The President spoke about the salient features of the Sargent Scheme and urged the teachers to support it.

Sri T. N. Jagadisan, M.A., Publicity Secretary, Empire Leprosy Association, spoke on "The Prevention of Leprosy." Sri S. Panchanatham Pillai, M.A., L.T., Headmaster, Ramaswami Chettiar's High School, Chidambaram, spoke on "The Crisis in Education." Sri D. Ramanujachari, B.A., L.T., of the Municipal High School, Cuddalore, spoke on "The Inhibition of the Mother Tongue in the Teaching of English." Sri S. Ramachandra Iyer, B.A., L.T., Headmaster, Pachaiyappa's High School, Chidambaram, spoke on "English in Schools." Sri V. Muthukrishna Pillai, B.A., L.T., Assistant, Municipal High School, Cuddalore, N.T., opened the discussion on the circular issued by the Director of Public Instruction to the managements of schools for steps to improve the standard in English. Many teachers took part in the discussion.

The Secretary, Sri C. S. Ranganatha Aiyangar, B.A., L.T., presented the Annual Report on the working of the Guild.

The Accounts of the Thirty-fourth Provincial Educational Conference were presented by the Treasurer Sri C. Tirunavukkarasu Pillai and were passed.

The following office-bearers were elected for the year:—

President:

Rao Bahadur C. S. Srinivasachariar.

Vice-Presidents

Dr. A. Narasinga Rao.

Sri S. Panchanatham Pillai.

" S. Ramachandra Aiyar.

" Janab Abdul Rawoof.

" R. Swaminatha Ayyar.

Secretary and Treasurer

Sri C. S. Ranganatha Aiyangar.

Members of the Executive Committee:

Sri V. Jayarama Iyer (Representative of the Guild at the South India Teachers' Union.)

Sri C. Tirunavukkarasu Pillai.

" P. S. Lakshmanaswami Pillai.

" Roberts.

The Bellary District Teachers' Guild

The annual Conference of the Guild was held on 18-11-44, at Wardlaw Hall, Bellary, Dr. Nagan Goud ; M.Sc., President, District Board, presiding.

Dr. Nagan Goud surveyed the educational needs of the District and paid a tribute to Sir M. Statam for his work on behalf of the education of girls. He pointed out the close connection between economic conditions and education and described the work of the District Board. He referred in general to the necessity of improving the conditions of service and to some abuses such as excessive private tuition and the use of printed notes.

Mr. V. Natarajan the D. E. O., dealt with the individual problems and opportunities of the teacher even in the present conditions, and made many suggestions for the teaching of the main subjects and in general urged the necessity of harnessing the natural impulses of the boy instead of going foster to them.

The Annual General Body Meeting was held at 3 P. M. on 18-11-44 in the Wardlaw High School Hall, Bellary, Mr. E. D. Martin, President of the Guild, in the chair. There was a large attendance.

The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read.

Secretary's Report and Statement of Accounts.

Were then presented and adopted.

Officers for 1944-46.

The following were unanimously elected:—

President: Mr. B. Gururaja Rao, B.A., L.T., Yemmiganur.

Vice-President: Mr. N. Sundaram, Raya-drug.

Secretary and Treasurer: Rev. F. H. Brown, M.A. Wardlaw High School.

Mr. Sundaravaradan of Municipal High School, Bellary was elected to audit the Accounts for 1943-44.

The Madura District Teachers' Guild

The Madura District Teachers' Guild met in the Setupathi High School, Madura, on the 11th November 1944 at 2 P.M. with Sri V. Jambunatha Aiyar, B.A., L.T., President, in the chair. About 350 members attended.

The Session began with a prayer by Sri Palaniappa Pillai of Bodinayakanur. The Secretary announced, in the course of his statement, that the strength of the Guild was 763, and that the Managing Committee had elected, under Rule 12, two Vice-Presidents, Rev. Fr. J. G. Gomez, S. J. of the St. Mary's, Madura, and Mr. D. Michael, B.A., L.T., Headmaster, Pasumalai, in place of Rev. Fr. X. M. Adaikalam, S. J. and Mr. A. S. Rajamanikam.

The Guild then condoled the death of Messrs. A. V. Subramania Aiyer (A.R.H.S.), V. Rajamayer (U.C.H.S.), T. P. Pattabhiramayer (Periyakulam), Harold Grey and N. R. S. Sarma (Pasumalai).

Sri S. T. Ramanujam, B.A., L.T., Secretary, Vigilance Committee, S.I.T.U., Trichy, addressed the Guild on the Sargent Report. He enlightened the members on the various aspects of

the Report and explained its merits and demerits. The Guild then adjourned for lunch. After lunch, Sri S. T. Ramanujam answered a few questions put to him on the Sargent Report.

The Chairman, in his concluding remarks, observed that the Session was one of the most well-attended meetings. He also observed that the Sargent Report had three special merits in that it was based upon the Wardha Scheme, that it recognised the need for national education and that it also recognised the status of the teacher; and consequently, the Report was the Magna Carta of the teaching profession. He also remarked that the scheme had certain defects, but that they could be overcome by a National Government, which would surely be set up.

S. R.M. High School, Nattarasankottai.

Under the auspices of the School Teachers' Association, the Education Week was celebrated for 5 days from 9-10-44 to 13-10-44 both days inclusive.

The Municipal High School Karur. (Trichy Dt.)

The Diamond Jubilee of the Municipal High School, Karur, Trichy Dt., was celebrated for four days from 17-11-44 to 20-11-44.

On 17-11-44 there was an impressive procession, of about 3500 pupils—High School and Ely. School pupils.

On 18-11-44, the celebration was inaugurated by Prof. V. Saranatha Aiyangar, M.A. Principal, National College, Trichy. The subject of his address was Education and the State. Later, the Jubilee exhibition was opened by Sri Rajabader Udayar B.A., B.L., Dt. Munsif of Karur.

On 19-11-44, Foundation stone for the proposed Jubilee Hall to commemorate the Jubilee event was laid by Sri V. C. Velliyangiri Gounder of Coimbatore, in the morning.

The portraits of retired Headmasters of the High School—"Mr. S. S. Krishnaswamy B.A., L.T., and Mr. T. J. Mulley, B.A., L.T., were unveiled, as also those of Late Pethachi Chettiar and Late Mr. S. G. Sengodaiyan, I.C.S.—both old pupils of the School.

The Jubilee Address was delivered by A. S. P. Aiyer Esq., M.A. (Oxon) I.C.S. F.R.S.L., Dt. Judge, Ramnad. After welcome by Sri K. Ramaswamy Gounder B.A., M.L., Addl. Sub-Judge, an old pupil of the School, Mr. A. S. P. Aiyer, touched on the various aspects of Education at present obtaining in our country and criticised the Sargent Scheme as being a slow programme and inadequate to meet the situation.

The valedictory address was delivered on Monday 20-11-44, by Mr. A. Ramaswamy Gounder, M.A., L.T., Principal, Salem College.

In the unavoidable absence of Sri T. Krishnamachari M.A., L.T., D.E.O. Trichinopoly, Sri L. T. Radha Krishna Iyer, B.A., L.T. Senior Dy. Inspector of Schools gave away the Prizes to the winners in the Jubilee Sports and also for the best exhibits.

With a vote of thanks to all proposed by Sri K. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, Advocate, and President of the Jubilee Committee, Jubilee celebration came to a successful end.

(Note:—We are sorry we have to omit the resolutions, etc. for want of space.—Editor)

EDITORIAL

The Madras Scheme

The recommendations of the Education Sub-Committee of the Madras Postwar Reconstruction Committee were released to the press a few days ago. It looks as though the members of the Committee were more weighed down by an oppressive sense of the complexity of the problem and of its cost than urged by any inspiring ideal. The committee recommends that 'Elementary education for both boys and girls of all communities should be introduced in all areas in the first instance from standards 1 to 5....and that after the scheme has been completed steps should be taken to extend compulsion to the VI, VII and VIII standards.' We do not see the word 'free' anywhere in their recommendations. Does it mean that elementary education would be only compulsory and not free? It is recommended that the Education Department should be invested with powers to enforce compulsion. While this may solve a seeming obstacle in the way of effective compulsion we doubt the wisdom of the Education Department being invested with such powers. All the world over, the tendency is to provide equality of opportunity to all children of school going age by making education free up to 15 or 16 and by awarding maintenance grants where such grants are necessary to enable the poor parent to send his child to school. It is unfortunate that the experience of the last 25 years of the working of the Elementary Education Act has not been rightly used. The 1921 Act aimed at 5 standard compulsion. The 1937 government communique on educational reforms restated that as the goal. How far have we advanced towards this goal? Beyond an improvement in the ratio of the strength of pupils in standard 1 to standard V no substantial progress has been made in bringing all children of school going age into our elementary schools. Prof. M. S. Sabhesan rightly observed in his presidential address at the ninth annual educational conference

of the Kottayam Aided Elementary School Teachers' Union,

"It was hoped that the Madras sub-committee on education would make such recommendations to the post-war reconstruction committee as will enable Madras province to make rapid progress. Unfortunately the final decisions of the committee in respect of the basic education are vague, disappointing and unsatisfactory. There is no indication that the sub-committee has considered the recommendations of the Sargent Committee with the attention they deserve. It is surprising that the objective seems to be more literacy. The decisions seem to indicate a determination to let the existing practice continue with as few changes as possible. The existing agencies with all their defects are to continue to function and participate in the expansion of education.

It is something that the committee agreed that one of the major post-war educational reforms should be the improvement of teachers' salaries, and that some way must be devised to compel all managements which were in a position to do so to pay the minimum salary laid down without government subsidies. The committee seems to have further decided that all the existing agencies should have to be made use of to the fullest extent in opening the new institutions and courses contemplated by the proposals under elementary schools. The blind can be led, but you can do no help to one who has eyes but refuses to see. Reports of public instruction have time and again stressed the irreparable harm that has been done by handing over responsibility for the education of the rising generation to non-government agencies and the report of the Central Advisory Board is very emphatic in its recommendation that Provincial Governments should assume full responsibility. The resources of aided agencies are very slender and they cannot be expected to meet the demands of modern education. Primary education is a responsibility of the State and it can only be construed as shirking of that responsibility if government should continue to depend upon aided agencies and local bodies for the fulfilment even of their restricted programme of compulsory primary education up to

the V standard stage. We admit that there is need for an efficient control and that the calibre of the administrative service should be improved and to this purpose the pay and prospects of the officers must be made attractive and the committee's recommendations are generous.

In other respects too the recommendations are dull and take us nowhere. There is a pious wish for an immediate increase in the provision for technical education in all institutions. What this means we are unable to understand. We hope when the full report is published more light will be thrown on the subject. Two other welcome features are the references to visual education and medical inspection of pupils.

The sub-committee has taken note of Sir Meyerel Statham's dissenting minute to the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education and has laid special emphasis on (1) Women's education, (2) the needs of backward communities, and (3) the problem of the returning soldiers.

A five year plan has been suggested. Yet one cannot help feeling disappointed at the recommendations. They are uninspiring, halting and they lack the determination to effect noticeable improvement. They rely more on the uncertain and admittedly inefficient service of the local bodies and aided agencies. The real problem in our province is the problem of the managing agency. Recent events have demonstrated that no educational progress can be expected with the existing local bodies and private managing bodies under the present policy of state aid and Government cannot be said to be unaware of their position. It is apparent that the committee have taken no note of the tide of marching events in the world and of the progressive tendencies.

Teaching

We have pleasure in commending to the notice of all teachers the last two issues of 'Teaching.' The September issue gives an account of how the problem of Religious and Moral Training is tackled in some of our progressive schools. Principal S. Ramali describes how in the Vidya Bhawan, Moral Train-

ing is imparted. Mr. P. N. Razdan of the Biscoe School, Srinagar, writes an inspiring account of how the famous schools of Kashmir are developing the moral consciousness in children. Mr. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Headmaster of the Sarva Jana High School, Peelamedu, writes a detailed account of how moral instruction is organised in his school and it will be found very helpful to those who seek guidance to make moral instruction fruitful. Margaret Benjamin of Bombay pleads for right and proper sex instruction: H. P. Chatterjee in his article proves the need for sex instruction and Rev. Fr. Sequiera of Tinnevely, giving the Catholic view point, shows how best sex instruction could be imparted. The two topics are major educational problems of to-day and the Editor of this journal deserves to be congratulated on being able to devote a whole number to these problems and making known to the world the experiences of experienced educationists.

The December issue is equally interesting. Mr. Rowland Lewis of St. Bedes of Tanjore, writes on the problem of the Bright Child. We consider it is a timely article. With all the enthusiasm for helping the backward boy in our schools our bright children are being neglected and Mr. Lewis has drawn pointed attention to the danger of such neglect. Rev. Fr. Freeman, Principal of the same school, writes on some errors on the Teaching of English and it is sure to open the eyes of most teachers of English. Mrs. Sinha's article 'To Art Teachers' has rightly been given the place of honour and she gives very practical suggestions for making 'Art' an interesting school subject. Mr. Bhatia's article on Perception in Reading should enable us to understand the many common errors of our pupils.

Safety First

In a pamphlet entitled 'Life Saving Education' circularised by the Bureau of Public Information, Government of India, Lt.-Col. J. A. A. Pickard, D. S. O., General Secretary of Britain's Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, describes how in Britain, teachers have been imparting instruction in Road Safety. He describes the

(Continued on page 262.)



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