

The South Indian Teacher

276
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 1946

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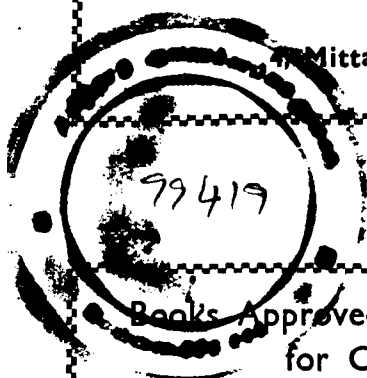
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THE SOUTH INDIAN TEACHER

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XXI ALL INDIA EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

OPENING ADDRESS

By H. E. SIR ARTHUR HOPE

Sir Lakshmanaswamy, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a very great pleasure for me to come here today morning and to open this Conference. I give you all as a temporary, honorary and proud Madras a warm welcome and I hope your stay will be as pleasant as possible and that your deliberations will be very fruitful for the whole of India. I am afraid that Madras at the moment is not as what it was, just like all other places engaged in war, and not normal again. I am quite certain that whatever material things we may be lacking, our welcome to you will be as warm as in normal times.

Sir Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar said that I knew a great deal in education. I think I am with one of those leaving school at an early age. In fact I never went to the University and I consider myself only as half educated. Time has passed and I cannot educate myself now. But I do feel very warmly indeed about the necessity of education. It is the foundation of everything. The child must be got at when quite young and gradually built up.

In Great Britain where education is good, the school leaving age is now 15

and before very long it would be 16 and in public schools the normal time for leaving except in times of war was 18 or even 19 and then the University education. I hope that this would soon be the case in this country also. I hope whatever the future form of government will be, education would be looked upon as one of, 'why'? the primary responsibility of government. I quite agree with what Dr. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar said that in the past we paid too little attention to education with the result that there is too much of illiteracy.

I do feel that the status of teachers of all kinds in this country, University, Aided schools, District Board schools etc. the status should be raised to very considerable extent. It was only a couple of days ago that I attended a Cabinet Meeting and we discussed that point. *I am quite certain that unless you raise the pay and status of teachers you are never going to get really good education in this country.* **We are trying here in Madras to revise our former notions which I think were wrong. We are trying to raise the status of teachers and to see that teachers are properly paid and their status is such that**

they will get the respect of their pupils and of their fellow people in the villages and in the towns.

We talked about planning of education. We have got to plan and plan quickly.

I am quite confident that whoever is in charge of Government here and I, I can only speak of Madras and I think it applies to all India as well—will realise that the sooner we get on with our plans of education the better. The world is changing very rapidly. Every country, no matter where it is in the continents of the world, they had been through turmoil, through what in effect was thirty years of war and I think that the war is largely due to illiteracy, to non-understanding of each other and to bad teaching—whether to be Nazi or Fascist teaching—in short to a very bad frame of mind.

What we have to do is to try and understand each other. It does not matter whether in India, England or America, wherever it may be, we have to understand each other's point of view. If we do not understand each other we are going to have another world war within measurable distance and that is going to destroy civilisation itself. Unless we understand and try to get a spirit of compromise, we are going to fail.

The world is entering a new era. It may be a better or worse one. But we should all remember that unless we understand each other and unless we have the spirit of give and take and can get together not only in a nation but between nations we are going to have a great deal of trouble stored up for us in the future.

There lies a great responsibility on the teacher who has to mould the mind of a child or a boy or a girl, or a university student, in the right direction. I am perfectly certain that if they understand each other and kept personal and

political things out of teaching then it would be very much better for the whole world.

It is up to the teachers, not only here but all over the world to see that the youth is properly educated. Here in Madras we mean to do everything we can to help the teachers and to put the whole system of education on a better basis. It is being done in other countries and it can be done here. There are bound to be difficulties but those will certainly be overcome. There is nothing in the world which is impossible and we have got to do it. I HOPE AND APPEAL TO ALL GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA, CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL, TO SEE THAT A REMEDY IS FOUND AND THE WORD 'IMPOSSIBLE' IS ERADICATED FROM ENGLISH OR ANY OTHER LANGUAGE.

Ladies and Gentlemen, in conclusion I once again welcome you all here. I hope I would be able to see you when you come to England in the future.

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ADDRESS OF WELCOME

By DR. SIR A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIAR,

Chairman, Reception Committee.

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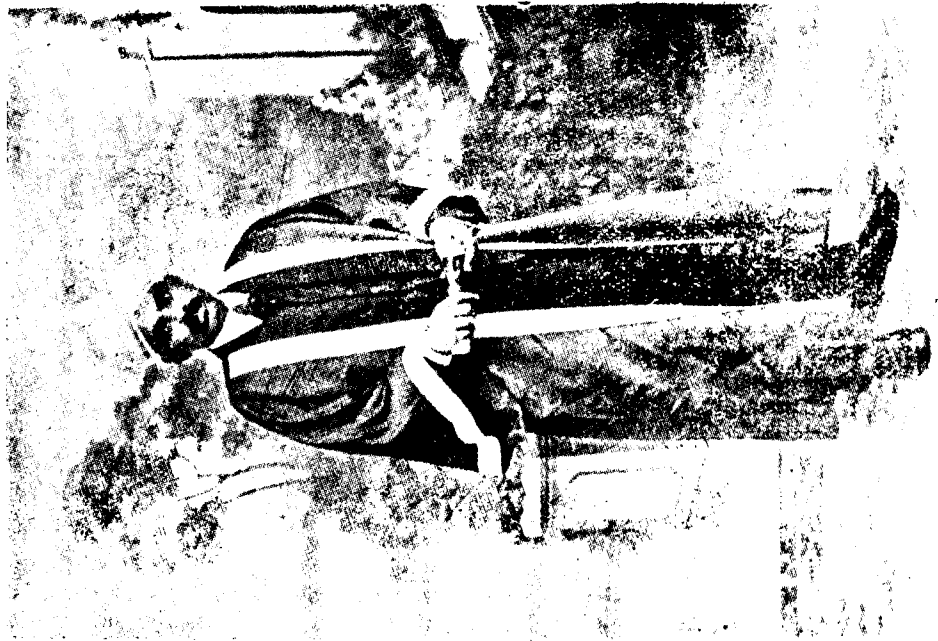
Your Excellency, Ladies & Gentlemen,

It is my privilege, as Chairman of the Reception Committee to welcome you to this city and to express the hope that, with all the deficiencies and the inconveniences, you will find your stay here both pleasant and profitable. Madras cannot and does not wish to compare itself with some of the great cities in India either in the splendour of its great buildings or the lavish hospitality that may be extended to its visitors; but in its anxiety and sincerity to play the role of a host it yields to none and we of the Reception Committee beg of you to forgive our lapses and to take the will for the deed.

It would not be a repetition of the copybook maxim if I were to state that we have assembled here at a critical period and on the eve of great changes in our own country and in the world at large. Events are still occurring in different parts of the world that may have a profound effect on the shape of things to come. Even before the echo of the sound of the lost shot of the World War had faded, 'incidents' began to take place and situations developed which have given room to misgivings in the minds of some whether the ideals for which this Great War was waged have receded into the background and whether after all, imperceptibly and almost unconsciously, some at least of the nations that fought Nazism and Fascism have begun to imbibe and adopt something of that mentality and outlook. This is not the occasion to enter into a discussion on the subject, but we should be failing in our duty if we did not recognise the fact that all these events, international and internal, have had and are having a profound effect on our educational institutions and more particularly on the alumni of these institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen, There is, and quite rightly, a great deal of discussion on the subject of Post-War Reconstruc-

tion in Education as in other spheres of national activity and blue prints are available in plenty from every Province and State and from many organisations interested in matters educational. You, doubtless, will discuss these with the care and attention that the subject demands and from the programme, somewhat overcrowded, that you have before you, I notice that almost every sphere of activity will come under your purview. It is not my intention, nor do I feel competent, to offer you any advice, much less to suggest any ready made patent remedies for the many ills that may be present in the educational polity of our country. I would, with your permission, content myself by inviting your attention to a few salient features of the problem which in my opinion deserve careful consideration at your hands. Let me at once exhort you to remember that we are not writing on a clean slate. The policy pursued in British India at any rate—I prefer to keep the Indian States out of the picture for the present as I know very little about most of them—the policy in the past has not been a policy based on social justice and equal opportunities for all. In educational as in some other spheres, there was not that urge to serve the needs of the poor, of the rural population and of the under-privileged, and although in recent years some attempts have been made in this direction, the fact that nearly 85% of the population is still illiterate cannot but give rise to qualms of conscience in all interested in or responsible for the educational progress of the country. But I venture to state that even this picture of 15 per cent literacy is too rosy for it does not take into account the fact that this represents an average which is largely due to the high level of literacy in certain classes, in urban areas and among the rich and the middle classes. If these factors were excluded, it will be found that there are sections and areas where there is not even one per cent



DR. SIR A. LAKSHMINARASWAMI MUDALIAR



H. E. SIR ARTHUR HOPE

literacy; yet these are the very people to whom sufficient and special educational facilities have not yet been made available, if only to rectify the defects of the past. It is our hope that in any scheme of Post-War Planning, sufficient attention will be devoted to this aspect of the question and instead of being content with introducing or advocating free and compulsory education up to a certain standard for all, the State will assume direct responsibility, not only to give such facilities as are made available to all, but to ensure that special facilities are available to those who have been neglected for long, both in the sphere of compulsory education and higher education in all grades. There can be no moral justification for the State, in future at any rate, not to afford such facilities and such persons should not be left to depend on the charity and philanthropy of outside agencies. And here let me state how much these persons are indebted to those agencies, who, with whatever objective, brought light and learning to many of these homes and have carried the torch of knowledge to many a dark recess at a time when neither the State nor the public were alert to such obvious duties.

This leads me to the consideration of the question, what is the State's responsibility in matters educational. Recent utterances of certain responsible leaders are not calculated to ease our fears that a correct appreciation of the responsibility of the State has been ensured in quarters where this is necessary. To suggest that the State is concerned only with the question of literacy or with affording facilities for Secondary Education is to ignore the trend of modern opinion in matters educational and the progress envisaged in other civilised nations. If the State were not to assume responsibility in all grades of education, Secondary, University, Professional, Technical and Technological and Research, to the extent necessary to foster the spread of such education, the very fabric on which the State should build up its superstructure will be weakened. Is it suggested that the State can secure its teachers, its engineers, its doctors, its technicians and technologists, and its research workers not to speak of its lawyers and jurists for the present, —if it shuts its eyes to the need

for simultaneously encouraging these spheres of education and with Micawber-like simplicity wait for something to turn up? To speak therefore of a Government not sharing its obvious responsibility in the spheres of Collegiate, University and Higher education in general is to ignore the obvious consequences of such an unfortunate policy and to perpetuate the defects and drawbacks of the past. It may interest you to know that the Education Act of 1944 passed by the Parliament provides for primary education for children up to twelve years of age, Secondary education for children up to between fifteen and nineteen years of age and further education for persons over the compulsory school age, and for this purpose County Colleges are to be provided. Besides undertaking the responsibility for Technical, Commercial and Art Education, the Government of Great Britain has shouldered a heavy responsibility in regard to University Education.

There is an impression in certain circles here that University Education should largely be dependent on private philanthropy. While welcoming private philanthropy and expressing the hope that more private aid will be forthcoming in the future for increasing the scope and efficiency of Indian Universities let me again emphasise that the State cannot divest itself of its share of responsibility. Before the War, the British Exchequer was distributing six million pounds a year to the 18 Universities in Great Britain through an independent body of academicians of experience known as the University Grants Committee. This Committee had full discretion to distribute these grants, they were not considered as doles—to the different Universities concerned, but such financial help did not indicate any the slightest interference with the autonomy of the Universities, much less any interference with their internal administration. The Inter-University Board has at recent meetings recommended the formation of a similar Committee for distribution of grants from central revenues, whose constitution, functions and modus operandi will not be dissimilar to those of the University Grants Committee of Great Britain.

And here may I invite your attention to a financial paradox, which is likely to grow in proportion, if a timely protest was not made. There is a feeling that the Central Government thinks that its responsibility is limited to certain institutions directly under its control and hitherto has contented itself with affording such financial help to such institutions. While not contesting the claim of such institutions for help, I should like to state that this policy is not fair. The revenues of the Central Government are by no means derived from the small area which it controls directly, but the bulk of it comes from the Provinces. And yet what has the Central Government done either in the sphere of education, public health or medical relief to afford some help to institutions and agencies outside its small circle? In fairness let me state that the recent award of a fairly large number of foreign scholarships to the alumni of all Indian Universities is the exception that proves the general rule. University circles were therefore perturbed when recently the Government of India constituted a Grants Committee to advise the Centre regarding the distribution of grants to the three Universities created by the Government of India. Neither the composition of this Council nor its method of functioning— not to speak of its scope— has commended itself to the Inter-University Board and I trust that ere long the Government of India would reconsider the whole matter and bring into existence a Body differently constituted and with an All-India scope and different method of functioning. Such a Board, while it may note and take into consideration the grants made to Universities by Provincial Governments, should not have any voice over such grants; much less should the Committee have authority to control or direct such grants.

May I touch on one other question of prime importance to educationists in this as in other countries. To what extent does responsibility of the State imply control by the State in educational activities? I am not here referring to administrative control exercised by the State to ensure efficiency and sufficiency of education for all in the State. State control is needed to ensure the

compliance with the minimum requirements regarding school buildings, care of the children, qualification of teachers, adequate scales of pay, and in general the efficient running of educational institutions.

The main point to ensure is that this control does not extend to the academic field, that it does not force on educational institutions certain curricula of studies or methods of teaching, that by one stroke of the pen the State does not introduce what it considers are the proper lines along which the future citizen should be educated. Herein lies the gravest danger to society and the experience of the Nazi and Fascist regime in Europe should be an object lesson to the democracies to avoid such pitfalls. That academic standards and academic courses of study require careful consideration and much thought at the hands of those responsible for the upbringing of the youth of the country is obvious. That those on whom such responsibility lies should be receptive to new ideas, examine all suggestions without prejudice or fear and should follow a progressive policy in matters educational, taking due note of the needs of the State and the conditions in a changing world should also be obvious to all educationists. While therefore the lines and general principles on which education should be based for the proper training of citizenship and to meet the needs of the State should be in close cooperation of the State, experiments in education should be left to trained educationists to plan and inaugurate in conformity with sound educational ideals. Nowhere is there greater need to keep this in view than in the sphere of education, for failure will affect the future of a growing generation of the youth of the country adversely.

And democracies as they function everywhere, susceptible as they are, and must be, to changes in public opinion based on many considerations other than educational, should not have control over such educational experiments. This idea has been well expressed in the Introduction to Education Act of 1944 passed by Parliament. "The education service is responsible for the growth of individuals, for the transmission of the cultural inheritance of the

Nation and for the progress of ideas. For this reason education should not be controlled by the central authority which may at any time desire to impose a particular view of human nature, of culture or of progress, in accordance with the ideas of the Government of the day."

And lastly, let me invite your attention to yet another pitfall that may lie ahead of educational progress. Ere long nascent democracies will, we hope, be functioning in this country. History is not unlikely to repeat itself and in the first flush of newly vested power, great plans for the spiritual, moral and material regeneration of the people may be envisaged. To establish on earth an ideal state of society is laudable objective indeed, and few would dare to criticise much less oppose these excellent schemes for moral regeneration, except on the one ground that all such schemes will fail and fail miserably if they are not laid on sure and safe foundation. And here is our duty, clear and crystal, now and when the dust and din

of political controversies do not drown our feeble voice— now is the time for us educationists to state in no ambiguous terms that the first duty of the State is to educate, to give the citizens the knowledge and the power to think aright and appreciate all such reforms, for into the darkness of ignorance and superstition such ideas will never penetrate nor gain permanency, unless light through learning be first ensured.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I must apologise for having exceeded my self-imposed limitations. You have many subjects for discussion and many problems to solve and may your labours end in success to the satisfaction of all educationists and to the permanent benefit of those entrusted to our care.

It is to us a great privilege and a source of inspiration to have His Excellency amidst us today and we deeply appreciate his kindness in consenting to inaugurate this Conference. May I request Your Excellency to kindly open this Conference.

36th Provincial Educational Conference

is to be held at Bellary in May '46.

Delegates should register themselves on or before 31st March '46.

Last date for giving notice of resolutions for consideration

at the Conference is 7-2-46

EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITION

OPENING ADDRESS

DR. S. R. U. SAVUR,
Director of Public Instruction, Madras.

I have been asked to open this Exhibition arranged in connection with the 21st All India Educational Conference. I accepted this task with pleasure as this gives me an opportunity to welcome you all from all over India and get to know you.

I am glad I have been permitted to associate myself with the work done by our boys and girls and teachers. As you go round the Exhibits you will be able to judge for yourself the nature of the exhibits. Some may be attractive to a few and even dull to some others, but this much I can say that every Exhibit gives us a glimpse of the thrills of joys and sorrows of those who manipulated and brought out the various Exhibits. The planning, the skill, the thoughts behind, the ideologies of all these are of great value. I am reminded of the sayings "SEEING IS BELIEVING" and that "WE LEARN THROUGH THE EYE NO LESS THAN THROUGH THE EAR" and the Exhibits here will very well illustrate the points I have in my mind. You are all familiar with the oft-quoted criticism that our education is bookish and that adequate opportunities are not given for pupils to do creative work. In a way, this Exhibition answers the challenge. These Exhibits also clearly illustrate that excellent educational doctrine that work and play are indistinguishable at their highest level. These further help us to modify our teaching plans and methods so that the schools can be transformed from places of passive receptivity into those of spontaneous activity; from place of boredom to joys of achievement—in short, to make our schools from bookish to activity types. Work of the mind and that of the hands and eyes is educative. Self-planning, self-activity and self-criticism are necessary for educational processes.

This work attains higher level when it is made in a co-operative endeavour. In fact, you will realise that an educational exhibition is a utility and a necessity. Knowledge that is merely abstract rarely impresses itself upon the child but knowledge imparted in a concrete manner with definite visible proof becomes part and parcel of pupil's learning. The methods of the Laboratory are coming into their own so that instruction can be sound and indelible. The teacher and pupil rely on an actual experiment rather than on a mere authority, on personal knowledge rather than tradition, on experiment and demonstration and not on hearsay. It is more easy to impart knowledge in this way, and more easy, to receive it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I see from the hand-book various sections of an interesting nature have been opened in connection with this Exhibition. There are sections allotted to teaching aids—very necessary to make teaching effective and learning easy. Arts and Crafts have their share. The value of these cannot be easily assessed as they are above all value. They answer to the craving of the creative abilities in boys and girls. I am sure this will make us pause and think of the potentialities of our younger generation. Pupils, if only they are given the necessary facilities and the proper guidance, can show a wealth of creative thinking. Music which makes education really soft and pleasant has its deserved place. Exhibits on Physical Education, Health and Nutrition and Exhibits from the State of Travancore noted for its artistic values are also there. One section on "Safety First" illustrates how ideals of Safety First could be applied and practised in the normal school work combining with the various curricular subjects of Primary, Middle and High Schools and

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N. S. 14.

also Technical schools. We are also to have a glimpse of the activities of the Department of Psychology which has to play a great part in coming years. Above all, we have those beautiful books—I may call them Treasures—for children given as gifts by the Government of U.S.A. and the set of 200 photographs received through the kindness of the American Consul in Madras illustrating Education in America.—I am sure you and I will be greatly benefited after going through all the Exhibits.

Before I formally declare the Exhibition open, I feel it may not be out of place to mention in passing the extraordinary times through which we are passing. The Global War has just ended and the problems of peace seems to be as difficult as the problems of war. If future world wars or strifes within a country have to be avoided a very great responsibility rests on us—the teachers and the administrators. It is, in the manner in which we impart our, I won't say, instruction, but education,

in the manner in which we are going to make our pupils see their inter-relationship, their homogeneity, the spirit of tolerance and the spirit of compromise, give and take. We have before us great plans of educational re-organisation, free and compulsory Elementary Education for all children upto 11 to start with, of Bifurcated courses of studies in Secondary education, of sound technical education, the medical inspection of children and above all the pay and prospects of teachers. It is good to realise that the Central Advisory Board of Education has stressed the need for the improvement of the status and pay of teachers, for whatever may be the scheme and whatever may be the plans, unless and until the teacher is contented and maintains his self-respect in the world, nothing worth the name is possible. I am sure you and your colleagues will give valuable suggestions towards such needs.

I wish you all a happy time at Madras.

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2. At present our office is situated at VILLUPURAM, S. I. R.
3. Whatever books we have in stock can also be had of our Sole Agents at Madras:
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4. In these difficult times—for any errors or omissions on our part—we beg to be forgiven by our friends, well-wishers and patrons.

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SOME GREAT SOUTH INDIAN EDUCATIONISTS

RAO SAHIB R. SWAMINATHA AYYAR, KUMBakonam.

Rao Bahadur Sadhu Seshayya of the Kumbakonam College is still remembered with profound gratefulness and veneration by all who came in any way under his influence. A magnificent Library known as "The Sadhu Seshayya Oriental Library" stands in Kumbakonam as a monument to his great services to this part of India as an eminent educationist and public worker. He won his way up from the position of an assistant in the Kumbakonam Provincial High School to the Principalship of the College by dint of his remarkable all-round ability and devotion to work. He served the Government besides as Tamil Translator for years.

I had the good fortune to sit at his feet all the four years of my college career and enjoy the benefit of his uncommon goodness and kindness of heart. As a Lecturer, his work was noted for a keen sense of proportion, rare discernment and lucidity of exposition. When the texts prescribed in English happened to be stiff and above comprehension, he would give summaries or notes giving their substance, which would be simply classic in style and delightfully simple and plain. His lectures in English would be supremely scholarly and inspiring and would be most edifying to the students. His class examination papers would be highly educative and of utmost value to the candidates.

He was of a most genial disposition and his love and affection to his students were overwhelmingly great. He would readily render them what help they needed, whether they were at college or had passed out. Even strangers, when in trouble, would appeal to his generosity and readily obtain the needed relief. As a matter of fact, he had an open hand and his hospitality knew no bounds. As a leading citizen, he would evince most enlightened sympathies and spare no efforts in getting wrongs righted and procuring relief to the distressed. He was practically a prince

among men. "To err is human, to forgive is divine," was his motto all through life. In civic matters he took a prominent part and gloriously functioned long as Chairman of the Municipality, giving complete satisfaction to the Government and providing all legitimate amenities to citizens.

In all matters, civic, educational or other, he would evince sublime nobility and wisdom and the authorities concerned found in him an able exponent of the cause in question and guided themselves by his ripe experience, unerring judgment and wise suggestion and advice. He was in fact a universal friend, a tower of strength to the college over which he presided, to the schools and other useful organizations in the town and, above all, to the Kumbakonam Public in general for about a generation before he passed away in 1897, except for some brief periods for which he had to go out as Inspector of Schools and as Principal of the Government Training School, Madras.

2. Professor K. Sundararama Aiyar was really a great and versatile scholar and teacher with a vigorous intellect and a highly retentive memory. His keen sense of duty and an uncommon devotion to learning and teaching were universally admired. His lectures would be highly stimulating and calculated to create in the students a love of knowledge and a taste for reading. All his life he was an ardent student of History, Economics, and Hindu Religion and Philosophy. He began to study Sanskrit late in life and very soon acquired an admirable mastery of the Vedanta Philosophy. His writings and speeches on these subjects were most instructive and would serve as a lasting memorial of his strenuous labours in the cause of religion, learning and culture. His was preeminently a life of extreme simplicity and high and noble thinking. There was nothing mean, so to speak, within a mile of him. He was strikingly open handed and there was no

deserving good cause in and about Kumbakonam, which failed to get his aid. His illustrious son, Sri Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri has recently founded a library in Kumbakonam as a memorial to his revered father, which is to function along with the Gopal Row Public Library.

3. Rao Bahadur Prof. M. Rangacharya was indeed a star of the first magnitude in his time in the educational firmament. His versatile genius, his encyclopaedic knowledge, his oratorial powers, his vast intellectual resources and his nice discernment and love of the good and the beautiful in man and nature and above all, his noble bearing and dignified reserve and independence marked him out as a "Prince among men" worthy of all respect and consideration. He had almost completed the highest course of studies in the Madras Medical College before he entered the Madras Educational Service, in the eighties. He had acted as Professor of Physics and Chemistry in the First Grade Colleges under the Madras and Travancore Governments before he was appointed as Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology in the Madras Presidency College, with which post were linked several other positions of importance and responsibility. Whatever subjects he had to lecture on, his lectures were superb and most illuminating and the students before him would feel as though they were lifted up for the time being into a distinctly higher plane of thought. During all his spare time he laid his supremely high talents at the altar of learning and spent himself in extending the domain of knowledge. Though his work lay in the higher plane of the educational edifice, he did not forget his obligations to his colleagues on the lower plane. He would readily preside or otherwise take part at the meetings of Teachers' Guilds and at Teachers' conferences. As Secretary to the Triplicane Hindu High School, he gave it for years the benefit of his extensive learning, experience and wisdom.

Exalted as he was officially, his personal friends, and there were a host of such, he would never forget; they could have ready access to him and obtain what help or relief they needed. He was indeed most sympathetic and warm-

hearted and gave freely to the deserving poor. I was his devoted student and disciple for over a quarter of a century and enjoyed the high privilege of his valued friendship all the time. Hence this humble tribute of mine to that great soul.

4. Rao Bahadur S. Appasastriar was a striking personality widely known as Manager, Proprietor, and Headmaster of the Kumbakonam Native High School. He was an enlightened pioneer in Indian indigenous Education, and conducted his school most efficiently without much of extraneous aid amidst overwhelming difficulties for over half a century. His gentlemanly bearing and sweet polished manners enabled him to gain the respect and goodwill of the powers-that-be, while his kind and courteous treatment of his subordinates in the school secured their utmost sympathy and co-operation in its internal working.

The School was thus admirably progressing allround, gaining in prestige and popularity and the noble manager naturally won laurels in the field of education. No higher compliment could be paid to him and his school than to state that they brought up, from the lowest right up to the Matriculation class, V. S. Srinivasan, now the Rt. Hon. Dr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri P.C., C. H. of international fame, about whom Lord Reading is reported to have said at a state banquet in 1922 "his high character and skill in argument and eloquence in expression have produced an effect on the representatives of the nations of the world, which has markedly enhanced the good name of India and elevated the reputation of her people." He loved his School most dearly indeed and gave his all to it all through so that parting with it towards the close of his life must have been to him a great wrench. He was a pillar of orthodoxy in Kumbakonam, giving it most liberal encouragement and aid; the poor and the distressed alike long enjoyed the benefit of his goodness and large heartedness. He was indeed a rare type of the school manager and headmaster.

5. Sri Kulapathi P. A. Subramanya Aiyar, the distinguished Headmaster of the Triplicane Hindu High School, is a

gentleman of outstanding ability and accomplishments. I have been having the privilege of his valued friendship now for over four decades and a half enjoying all the time the benefit of his great qualities of head and heart.

As Headmaster of the Hindu High School, he made the institution the envy of the sister institutions in the city. It developed tremendously in his time in respect of numerical strength, educational efficiency and financial resources. He served the public besides, as a member of the University Senate, of the Government S.S.L.C. Board and of various other educational Conferences, Committees, Guilds and Associations, Government and non-Government, and rendered, in connection with every one of them yeoman's service to the cause of education. Whatever work he undertook, he brought to bear on it his great ability, his up-to-date knowledge of pedagogy and his fine discrimination and judgment. His educational articles, notably, his pamphlet on the Madras Grant in aid Code, have been of inestimable value. His admirable sense of fitness and proportion and his ready perception of the beautiful and the good in man and nature are most noteworthy. In a word, he made the best possible use of his talents, in the more energetic part of his life and is now in his retirement, like the proverbial *vanaprasthasrami*, spending his time in religious study, prayerful worship and divine meditation. May Sri Rama bless him! May his exemplary official life and his present life of devotion inspire us all!

The late S. Krishnaswami Ayyar of the Town High School, Kumbakonam, was indeed a personality to be gratefully remembered and honoured. In all South India he was known for his ability and enthusiasm as a teacher of English and his contribution to the cause of education was by no means small. He adorned the Town High school as Headmaster for twenty-two years from 1882 to 1904, identifying himself with it so greatly that the public in general knew not in the earlier years of his headmastership that there were a managing body at all over him.

Educated as he was in the Government College, Kumbakonam, under the

distinguished educationists, Messrs. Porter and Gopal Row, he early imbibed his masters' love for the students and their zest in teaching. Teaching was religion with him and there was nothing he would not do to advance the interests of the students. Himself a good scholar and speaker, his teaching of English was sublimely inspiring. He would never limit himself to giving the meaning of the passages dealt with but would aim for higher, bringing out most vividly the characteristic thoughts and ideas of the writers concerned, as well as the peculiar feature of their diction and style. The telling illustrations from life and the apposite quotations from classic authors, which he would bring to bear upon his lessons in class to drive home to the pupils what he had to say, were most remarkable and praiseworthy. Verily his teaching, absolutely realistic as it was, would be a delightful treat to the pupils before him, who would naturally feel sorry that the time was up so soon.

His supervising work as Headmaster was equally note-worthy. Woe to the teacher who came unprepared for his work in the school! He was an unsparing critic. Everybody dreaded his sharp tongue. Wherever teaching was defective or below the mark, he would unhesitatingly step in and continue the lesson in the presence of the teacher or teachers concerned, as a model for them to follow. He would lay special stress upon the weekly composition work and see to it that it was done in every class with due care and attention. His own work in that direction would serve as a model for the whole school to copy. In fact he knew no rest himself nor gave others any in the school. A terror to the slackers, he was, so to speak, a friend and guide to every honest and conscientious worker under him. He was a rare type of the teacher and headmaster and one would wish there were many such. The writer of this sketch considers himself lucky in having come under his influence early in his life as a school-master, so that he could learn enough and give of his best in the fullness of time to the noble profession he so dearly loved.

All honour to the good departed soul!

CORRECTION OF COMPOSITION EXERCISES

B. A. SAMAH, B.A., L.T.,
Board High School, Udipi.

It has been an oft-repeated complaint that correction of composition exercises is a thankless task not only in English but almost in all the languages. Teachers as a class are at their wits' end as to how to make their correction work effective, how to make their attempts in this direction beneficial to the student population. Various devices have been evolved to produce the desired results. The teaching profession is only too familiar with all these, and it is superfluous on my part to recount all of them here. More than a decade ago the practice was to point out errors of various descriptions by means of symbols such as gr, T, I, Sp, W, O, etc. It was explained to the pupils what each symbol stood for, and they had to rely upon their own knowledge of the peculiarities of the language to effect the necessary changes in the light of the suggestions made. Later on, however, it was discovered that this method was futile, for more often than not the pupils, when they were left to make the corrections by themselves, made fantastic corrections resulting in errors of a more serious nature. The reason is not far to seek. Had they known that they were violating the rules of grammar or punctuation or idiom, they would not have committed the blunders at all. It almost amounts to the belief that they did all this mischief, if it can be called a mischief, wilfully. With the exception of a few pupils, this theory certainly cannot hold good.

The present day tendency has been to do away with this practice of simply pointing out the errors. It is a matter of common experience that if the pages of an exercise book of a pupil are opened, one rarely fails to see whole sentences, sometimes paragraphs after paragraphs, rewritten by the teacher effecting the necessary corrections. The pupils are made to rewrite what has been written by the teacher in the fond hope that they would endeavour to note for themselves the nature of the mistakes committed by them. Alas! This device too has been disappointing. It

is found that the pupils are not only incapable of reproducing what has been done for them by their teacher, but to our dismay, instances are not wanting in which they are found to commit bewildering errors entirely of a new description.

Naturally the question arises: Wherein lies the remedy? Are these wards of ours to be left severely alone to their fate? We hear the cry everywhere that the standard of English attained by the pupils of the present day has deteriorated beyond toleration. The teachers in charge of this particular subject are indeed helpless. Paying individual attention is out of the question for reasons which are too obvious. In a class of forty to forty-five pupils is it ever possible to pay individual attention? Judging by experience the candid answer is 'No'. Some of the teachers are found to be so very patient and painstaking that they even go to the extent of grouping together all the mistakes committed by the pupil at the end of the exercise, and advice to this effect is seriously given: "Specially avoid these mistakes." All this has been found to be simply a cry in the wilderness. Then are we to give up the practice of making them rewrite their exercises? Or are we to give up the practice of making corrections at all? These are some of the serious problems that confront us today.

Based upon my own humble experience, I would venture to offer the following suggestions. Such of those as feel that these deserve a trial are requested to do so forthwith. Finding

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that it is rather irksome to make the pupils write an exercise every week for the fear that corrections are to be made regularly, most of the teachers including the writer of this article, make the pupils write their exercises only once in a way. Here I have to make a special reference to the writing of composition exercises in English. It is an admitted fact that English is a language totally foreign to us. A language, as we already know, is best learnt by hearing it spoken. But opportunities of hearing English spoken in India, especially in mofussil places, are few and far between. Then how are we to attain the much desired mastery over this language? The only possible and effective method that can be offered is to read as many good books as possible. So it is our duty to place the best possible books consistent with suitability in the hands of our wards and see that they read each of the books at least five times. No doubt when the books are read for the first time, pupils, or for that matter grown ups, are carried away by the story or the subject matter of the book. When the books are read for the second or the third time it is possible for us to concentrate more on the language side of it. The pupils then must be made to write answers to the questions on the matter they have read. It must be a regular practice with us to make the pupils write at least one exercise per week if not two or more. In the act of writing, the pupil will have the opportunity of collecting all the ideas in their natural sequence, and he will no doubt have the further advantage of using, while he is writing, the different words and phrases he has been able to pick up in the course of his reading. In short what is required is first extensive, secondly intensive reading and thirdly practice in the use of the vocabulary gained in the course of his reading. It is my firm conviction that corrections of an intensive type will not produce the desired result unless individual attention is paid. Even here I entertain my own doubts.

Rules of grammar however skilfully driven home to the minds of pupils are not capable of rewarding us. Rules of grammar and correct usage are imbibed by an unconscious process. And it is for this reason that I recommend extensive and intensive reading. I make bold to say that the pupil, in spite of himself, will acquire a considerable degree of accuracy in the art of writing if he is made to read, read, read and then to write.

Now with regard to correction work—My plain advice is to do away with this thankless task of making corrections in detail. And it has been rightly and justly described as such. Our concern is to see that the pupil writes every exercise that is set. But care must be taken to see that every exercise is written independently by him. Of course I don't advocate wholesale boycott of correction work. If wholesale boycott of correction work is resorted to, the pupil will develop a sort of prejudice against the teacher, and come to the conclusion that the teacher is neglecting his duty. The incentive to write may gradually disappear. To avoid this tendency on the part of the pupil we must take care to see that at least the glaring mistakes are brought to his notice, mistakes which he is capable of avoiding and rectifying. This may not tell upon the patience of the teacher and it may not prove to be taxing to him. Exercises will have to be graded and it must also be borne in mind that questions requiring long answers, especially in the lower classes, are to be strictly avoided. No doubt the pupil is apt to commit mistakes, nay, grave mistakes, in the initial stages. But in course of time he himself will be able to avoid these mistakes, of course unconsciously. If a pupil, therefore is compelled to write say forty or fifty exercises in the course of a year, it will certainly go a long way in avoiding the present day unpleasantness that goes hand in hand with the system now obtaining.

EDITORIAL

A Dearness Allowance again !

While we welcome the Government's G. O. clarifying their earlier order regarding the grant of dearness allowance to teachers in aided educational institutions inasmuch as it clearly defines what is meant by a surplus or profit institution, and holds out a hope for increased D. A. to teachers in aided Elementary Schools, we are sorry to have to point out that Government do not seem to have realised the serious hardship that teachers are undergoing. Government are aware that the salaries of teachers are considerably less than what others of similar qualifications are earning in other walks of life. They must also be aware of the prevailing high cost of living. Under the circumstances it is strange that they are not inclined to interfere with the 'autonomy' of the private managements and to compel them to grant dearness allowance at Government rates. While Government felt it necessary to help employees of Railway Companies, Mills, and Factories by prescribing rates of War Allowances and other ameliorative measures, it is hard to understand why they should hesitate to do likewise with managements of aided educational institutions. His Excellency the other day, inaugurating the All India Educational Conference referred to his Government 'as trying to revise their former notions which I think were wrong' and observed 'I am quite certain that unless you raise the pay and status of teachers you are never going to get really good education in this country.' We are afraid that this G. O. on dearness allowance does not indicate that His Excellency's Government in Madras have taken a proper view of the question. If the Government had examined, why even after their promise to accept for purposes of aid expenditure on D. A. at half rates many institutions did not grant dearness allowance even up to that limit, they would have felt convinced of the desirability of compelling managements to grant adequate relief to their teachers. With a few honourable exceptions most managements do not go beyond their

routine unless compelled to do so by Government. The autonomy of the management is all right if managements realise their obligations and are earnest in the discharge of their duties. But when managements only watch with complacent indifference the sufferings of teachers and offer mere lip sympathy to their petitions and prayers for help, they cease to the right of their freedom and must be compelled to adopt measures which would ensure the contentment and well being of their employees and the efficiency of their work. By virtue of the recognition granted to these institutions and in accordance with the rules laid down, Government have a legal and a moral obligation to see that in aided educational institutions, teachers are paid adequate salaries and that the conditions are such as would be conducive of good educational work. They cannot shirk that responsibility.

It is now for the managements, if they are keen on preserving their rights and if they do not want Government interference, to act. Repeating the old slogan that they have no money to pay the teachers dearness allowance at Government rates will be of no avail. If they cannot find the money, then they have no claim to act as managers. Private managements are not there to exploit teachers and thereby help Government to spend less on education—a very false economy—and make the people pay more for the education of their children. If they consider managing an institution a service, let them do it all right. If they continue their attitude of indifference, they will only exasperate the teachers who are already facing heavy economic strain brought about by 7 long years of high prices and a big crisis will soon develop.

Unjust

We trust that the teaching profession all over India will record its protest in unmistakable language at the attitude taken by the management of the K. H. School, Tanjore in denying permission to its Headmaster Sri K. M. Sundaram

to accept the office of an Assistant Secretary to the Reception Committee that was constituted for making arrangements for the holding of the XXI All India Educational Conference. We do not know what prompted them to refuse permission to Mr. Sundaram. His election to the office was an honour to the institution and a recognition of the abilities of Mr. Sundaram. Their attitude is very regrettable. We further understand that they have relieved Mr. Sundaram of his office as in one of his letters, it is said, that he offered to resign if permission be not accorded. Mr. Sundaram has served the school for nearly 22 years and has been its headmaster for well nigh a decade. During his headmastership the school has made notable progress. It is unfortunate that the management, even after an appeal from the Secretary of the Union, should not feel inclined to reconsider its action. The management could rise in the esteem of the public without standing in any sense of false prestige, they would reconsider their decision and restore Mr. Sundaram to his office.

Y. Srinivasan

We deeply regret to have to record the death of Sri V. Srinivasan, B.A., L.T. He was a good teacher and had a strong professional spirit and took a keen interest in professional activities. He was for many years member of the Madras Teachers' Guild, having served it as Secretary of the Science Section and as member of the Council. He served the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund as its Secretary for nearly 8 years. He was elected to that office at a critical time in the history of the Fund when it had to be remodelled and registered under the Insurance Company's Act. During his Secretaryship the Fund showed remarkable progress. He resigned the office in January 1945. At the time of his death he was employed in the S. I. E. Society High School at Matunga. His death, sudden and unexpected at the early age of 48, is to be deeply deplored and we offer his only son, a lad of 14, his 2 daughters and his wife our heartfelt sympathies in their tragic bereavement.

TO THE UNKNOWN TEACHER

I sing the praise of the Unknown Teacher. Great generals win campaigns, but it is the Unknown Soldier who wins the war. Famous educators plan new systems of pedagogy, but it is the Unknown Teacher who delivers and guides the young. He lives in obscurity and contends with hardship. For him no trumpets blare, no chariots wait, no golden decorations are decreed. He keeps the watch along the borders of darkness, and makes the attack on the trenches of ignorance and folly. Patient in his duty, he strives to conquer the evil powers which are enemies of youth. He awakens sleeping spirits. He quickens the indolent, encourages the eager, and steadies the unstable. He communicates his own joy in learning, and shares with boys and girls the best treasures of his mind. He lights many candles, which, in later years, will shine back to cheer him. This is his reward. Knowledge may be gained from books; but the love of knowledge is transmitted only by personal contact. No one has deserved better of the Republic than the Unknown Teacher. No one is more worthy to be enrolled in a democratic Aristocracy, "King of himself and servant of mankind."

Henry Van Dyke



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