

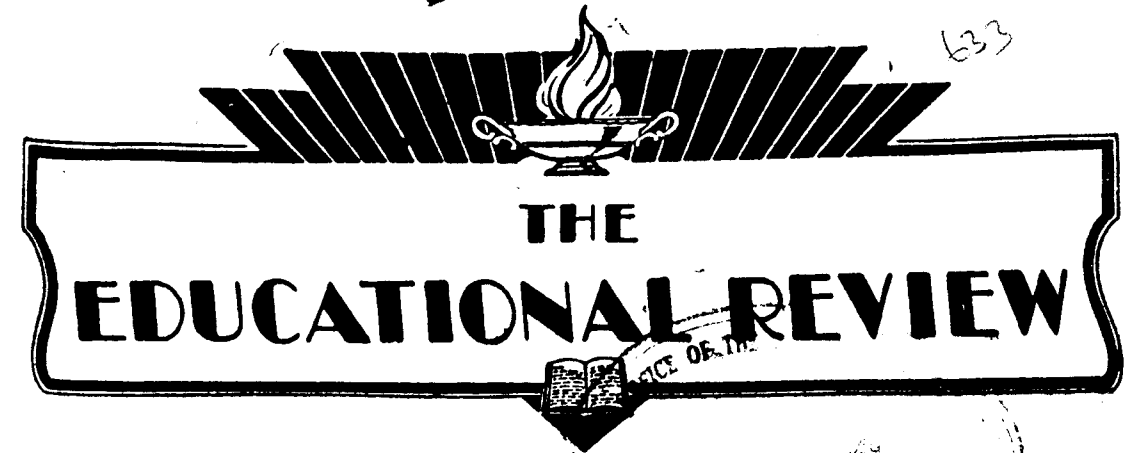
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THE URGENCY OF ADULT EDUCATION

By DEWAN BAHADUR K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L., *Retired District Judge, Madras*

ADULT Education is no longer in the region of dreams or even in the land of desirable desiderata but has become Priority No. I in our national life in Free India. Not only has the grant of Adult Franchise in the new Constitution of Independent India, as framed by the Constituent Assembly, made it urgent. On 26th January 1950 the Constitution will come into force and the Indian Republic will become an accomplished fact and every man and every woman who have completed twentyone years have a right of vote and can have a hand in shaping the destinies of India. But this is the least part of the affair, a small segment of a great circle. Unless we ensure universal literacy and achieve basic Indian culture for all, we cannot make Independent India preserve her freedom and become prosperous and progressive; and unless we maintain our highest standards in literature and art and philosophy and religion as in days of yore and unless we equal and even surpass the West in abstract and applied sciences, India cannot continue to be the honoured and respected guru and guide of the world, as she was in ancient times when she was not only independent but was also in the vanguard of the world's culture and spread the light divine over the whole world.

The present percentage of literacy in India is about 15%. There are about three crores of school-going children between the ages of six and eleven in India. Hence free, universal and compulsory primary

education for the children is a prime need. But what about the many crores of illiterate adult men and women? Their education is as much a top priority, because the presence of considerable masses of illiterate adults will lead to the lapse into illiteracy of the youth made literate. The children of school going age is only 12½% of the population whereas the illiterate adults form a moiety. The illiterate adults will be a handicap and a drag upon the youth, nay, on the country as a whole. Abraham Lincoln said rightly and wisely that a country cannot be half free and half slave. Even so a generation cannot be half literate and half illiterate. We often hear the cynical argument that the adult illiterates will all be dead and gone in a few years and that we need not bother about them. But "The evil that men do lives after them,"

"The good is oft interred with their bones". An adult made literate will be keen in knowledge and encourage knowledge in others. But an illiterate adult will spread his darkness around him and will be a potent cause of spreading illiteracy and cancelling literacy. Mr. J. K. Hart says well: "Hence we may as well admit that it is not education of children that can save the world from destruction: it is the education of adults: it is the adult who must be weaned from his provincial-mindedness, his animistic prejudices, his narrow customs, his obsolete habits; it is the adult who must be given the chance to become free in a world of science, tolerance, human sympathy and intelligent organisation."

It was my dream and my passion even when I was a law student in Madras in 1897 to tackle the problems of Harijan uplift and adult education. My friend C. Ramaswami Iyengar (well known as Ramu, the architect of the Ramakrishna Students Home) and I and others did such work in a humble fashion then. I thought at that time, with the boundless idealism and energy of youth which set at naught all the impediments in real life, that by voluntary private effort both Harijan uplift and adult literacy could be achieved. Later on I thought that by insisting on every candidate for a University degree doing at least three months' social service in such directions and by the rendering of honorary service by pensioners and others, the desired goal can be attained. In my middle age and my old age, I was and have been and am striving in such directions. But I now feel that unless the Government steps in, the goal will not be reached soon. I feel also that the teachers who impart adult literacy and education should have a sound knowledge of adult psychology and adult literacy methods and should get some training for their vocation. The mishandling of the adult will lead to the putting back of the hands of the clock. I know that the adult is more eager to learn than a child but has less receptivity than the latter. He has more commonsense and general knowledge. But he is a shy and fatigued person who has to earn his bread and can give only a short time in the evening to achieve literacy. The teacher must hence tackle him with tenderness and sympathy and cannot use the birch or the ferule. He must also have ample general knowledge of current events and general information.

I would therefore require that the adult education teacher should be given basic training in adult psychology and general knowledge for three months before being allowed to take charge of a literacy centre. I therefore welcome the recent decision of the Government to start an Institute for Social Studies. But it will not concern itself with adult education alone and is to have a two years' course and to have only fifty

students. I would therefore suggest that the universities as well as the Government should give a basic training in adult psychology and adult literacy methods for three months. Quite recently the Government of India agreed to give 17 lakhs a year for five years and the Madras Government agreed to give 6 lakhs to step up adult literacy, but I learn that the Government of India has, owing to financial stringency, given directions to defer the matter. This is a great pity. I hope that the Madras Government will not call back their promised contribution but will push on with the work. I would like the Government and the undergraduates and the social service workers to work in coordination to produce quick results. The employers should run adult education for their employees. Every one should strain every nerve and act on the "Each one teach one" rule as his minimum effort. Without quick adult literacy, our politics will suffer and our industrialisation will suffer even more.

I therefore welcome the Seminar on Rural Adult Education which is going on at Mysore and which has been organised by the Unesco. I am glad that our Education Minister Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who inaugurated it has said that the Government of India has proposed to give first priority to a programme of adult education. More than half the population of the world is illiterate, and most of these live in India. Even more basic and urgent than the four freedoms affirmed in the Atlantic Charter is the freedom from ignorance. The four freedoms as well as many other freedoms—freedom from debt, freedom from squalor, freedom from insanitation, freedom from misery etc., will all come in the wake of freedom from ignorance. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad says well: "Peace and tranquillity could become a reality only if the common people of the world asserted themselves and for that adult education is imperative". He says that two million teachers would be needed for adult education and the education of school children and that the Government was examining a proposal to use some kind of social conscription by

which all educated persons would be required to contribute to this national service for a specified period. He says about the hindrances in the way of such a consummation: "The inertia of the machine proves stronger than the energy of the individual." We hope that he will see to it that his energy is stronger than the inertia of the official machine. He has referred also to the need for literature and films and continuation classes for preventing lapse

into illiteracy. May the Government of India follow the lead! May India be quickly led into cent per cent literacy and high level prosperity and progress in the wake of her attainment of independence!

"Who loves not knowledge? Who shall rail

Against her beauty? May she mix
With men and prosper! Who shall fix
Her pillars? Let her work prevail!"
(Tennyson's *In Memoriam*)

RURAL RECONSTRUCTION STUDY HIKES

BY SRI R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, B.A., L.T., Headmaster, Sarvajana High School,
Peelamedu.

ABOUT 17 years ago, while working out the scheme of "Scouting-for-All" in my High School, I announced to the Sixth Form pupils that they would be eligible for the Headmaster's good conduct and character certificate, if only they completed within a month after the close of the S.S.L.C. Public Examination, the rural reconstruction study hike. To my wonder, all the pupils of the S.S.L.C. class, for two consecutive years, submitted themselves cheerfully to this novel test; only one pupil was not permitted by his parents to undergo the risk. They were to meet in groups of not less than two and not exceeding four, at 2 p.m. in the school, to receive the instructions regarding the journey, completely clad in scout uniform with haversacks containing provisions and utensils for cooking for two meals and two lunches, return by 6 p.m. the next day to the school, and submit by the next day's forenoon the report of the journey in the required form and the answers to the questionnaire given them.

A hike means a long trip on foot. But it is used with reference to any and all trips into the open by patrols or troops, though little or no walking may be done. The purpose of the hike is to make the boy self-reliant, observant and efficient in the open, and by close contact with other boys to rub off his rough angularities and

edges. Hikes may be classified as adventure, good-turn, tracking, travel, exploration, historical, nature-study, scout-law, know-your-own-government, and so on. Hikes are planned with a definite objective; and they should provide adventure, experience, excitement, exertion, and something of surprise. No objective could be more beneficial in our country to the individual pupil than hikes which will take him to the countryside and enable him to catch glimpses of rural conditions. This is the best training that we could impart to our lads entering adolescence in developing manliness and robust attitude towards life and the country's fundamental problems. The hikers who are pioneers in adventure in their teens can never be failures in life. The example set by my school pupils proved to be an incentive to the rover scouts of the Government Arts College, Coimbatore, a number of whom won the rambler's badge by practising the rural reconstruction study hikes. The nature of the hike was left to the option of the hikers; tramps should cover 15 miles, and cyclists, 30 miles.

For the benefit of those who may organise such hikes, I shall summarise the directions given to the hikers.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Full uniform (including staff, shoes or boots may serve the purpose), ground-sheet, muffler, blankets (if the weather is cold),

CAUTION

change of clothing, towels, toilet-gear (soap, comb, caste-mark requisites?), plate, tumbler, cooking utensils, provisions for two lunches and two meals, penknife, axe, notebook, pencil, a small camera (if available), plaster of Paris for taking plaster-casts, stout cord, map of the route, compass, watch, carbon-paper.

The kit should be light and at the same time serviceable. It should be the minimum needed and at the same time should contain all the things required for bare comforts.

Equip yourself and the cycle with all the accessories (a cycle lamp, a pump, match-box, a toolbag with solution and rubber pieces).

TIPS

1. Look out for and sketch prominent buildings, chimneys, factories, temples, etc.
2. Look out for natural scenery, mountains, rivers, and sketch.
3. When crossing rivers or passing along rivers, note any landmarks on the banks, find approximate breadth of the river, speed of current, span of bridge, fordable or otherwise.
4. Note camping sites, if suitable for our troop camping (plentiful water-supply, open space for games, soil not clayey, provisions available, not too near villages).
5. Look out for birds and animals and take plaster-casts of footprints.
6. Take carbon impressions of leaves collected.

JOURNEY-REPORT

The report should be given as follows:—

1. Leave 1" space for noting Time and Distance travelled.
2. Note the log or description, in 6" space.
3. Sketches of building, & direction of wind or sun, sketch of cross-country roads, thumb-nail sketches of men, birds, &c. (7" space)

Go easy, make the journey a pleasant and prolonged stroll; one hour's walk and $\frac{1}{2}$ hour's rest is a good principle. Travel in cool hours and rest in the shade when hot, if necessary.

Do not miss any opportunity of doing good turns, on the Hike.

LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS

There must be an element of surprise and romance in hiking. The letter of instructions to the hiker at the starting-place is given in the following form:—

From the Chief of the Smiling Tribe, Peelamedu.

Dear Sri Narayanan,

You are doubtless aware that the village of Thondamuthur was for countless generations in the possession of our ancestors and that during the lifetime of our great grandfather of revered memory the same had fallen into the possession of the present inhabitants. We have now decided to capture and occupy the said village shortly. You will please understand that the country lying about on the way between our old possession and here is very hostile and that therefore you should exercise the greatest caution in moving among the people. You should have no dealings with the people on the way, nor receive any kind of help (even drinking water) in your present mission of reconnoitering the country lying about. We trust you will loyally carry out our instructions given below and submit to us a faithful report by 6 p.m. tomorrow, so that we may march on our expedition to capture the same. You will also understand that though the country is hostile to us, if you find any living beings in any difficulty or trouble, it is our desire that you should render good turns, wherever possible.

Note the following instructions.

1. Take the shortest cut to Papanaiickenpalayam along the Phone-line route; but across the field towards the North-West direction up to the Power-House, then to the Agricultural College, from the College

cut across to Vedapatti. Take the left bank of the Channel up to the village of Thondamuthur.

2. In addition to the instructions enclosed herewith for studying the country on the way, report on the following as regards the village Thondamuthur.

A. Is the village subject to any peculiar disease or epidemic? Which is the nearest dispensary? State what medical aid is locally available. Is good water-supply available throughout the year?

B. Does the village possess a sanitary appearance? What are used as latrines?

C. Is there a co-operative society in the village? What are the chief occupations or industries in the village? Is khadder popular? What do the villagers do during the non-cultivation season?

D. Is there a school for boys and girls in the village? What is the strength of the school? Is there a night school, a reading-room or library?

E. Is there a Village Panchayat, Major or Minor?

F. Do the villagers take interest in the village temple? How do the villagers spend their leisure hours? Are there any drink-shops? (The questions were set in the pre-Prohibition days). Is any picketing done?

G. Mention the names of the leading gentlemen of the village.

H. What is your general impression of the village?

We wish you all success in your hiking expedition.

Yours Smilingly,
Chief of the Smiling Tribe.

CITIZENSHIP TRAINING

The hiking party is expected to report itself to certain persons at the destination and obtain closed letters from them regarding the site selected for camping in the night, whether they cooked their own food well, with their own vessels, slept in the open and their general conduct and behaviour. It might appear that a tremendous amount of lore and craft should be learnt and practised before a hike could be ventured upon by anyone. True, Hiking is the culmination-point of all scout-training and scout-practice. It is not beyond the capacity of an average boy of fifteen. It is a corrective for bookish knowledge and day-dreaming, and a preparation for the right and proper use of leisure, but it also provides many unparalleled opportunities for studying and serving the countryside. Hiking should be an essential and necessary feature of citizenship training, as it is bound to inculcate rural sense in the would-be rural workers.

NEW PROBLEMS OF ADULT EDUCATION

By Dr. K. N. KINI, M.A., (HONS.) A.M., PH.D., DIP-IN-EDN. (COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY)
Director of Public Instruction, Jodhpur.

IN a country like India where over eighty five per cent of the people are illiterate, it is natural that Adult Education should in the first instance be mostly confined to the task of enabling the vast illiterate masses to read and write, including of course the imparting of an elementary knowledge of hygiene and sanitation, local geography and history and the very rudiments of arithmetic. Add to this, the adults once rendered

literate should be enabled to retain their literacy by reading simple books on topics of interest to them and also journals dealing with our daily political and social and economic problems.

VOCATIONALIZE ADULT EDUCATION

2. But our country has to progress industrially and in agriculture and in producing first rate materials required for

defence purposes. We should be, as far as possible, a self-sufficient nation. To produce these requirements our workers should be more skilled, evince greater intelligence and possess an elementary knowledge of science and practical mathematics and machine-drawing. For example an ordinary labourer can hardly perform efficiently the tasks involved in the manufacture of electrical machinery and radio equipment, battleships, destroyers and so on. Therefore after the ordinary literacy of the adult is achieved, we should organize courses for them in elements of science and mathematics, geometrical and machine drawing and relate these to the vocation they are following with the object of enhancing their vocational competency. An analysis of each of the jobs in which the adults of the locality are engaged should be done and the particular aspects of the above-named subjects that are applicable therein should be taught to them. If the adults find that what is taught to them has relation to their vocations and will enhance their efficiency and therefore their earning power, they will surely be interested in the instruction imported. In short we should vocationalise adult education even from the lowest level. Specially qualified persons should be employed to do the job analysis and produce suitable books for the use of the adults. Adult Education Teachers should also be specially trained to perform their tasks with zeal and efficiency and knowledge. They should keep themselves in intimate touch with industry and know their requirements.

8. In order to increase production in our country, which is the most important question of the day, we should organize as part of the adult education programme *trade preparatory courses* for those already engaged in industry. An adult has chosen, say, metal-turning as his occupation. He finds that there is no future for it in the locality and that he would take to a new vocation, say plumbing. Opportunities should be provided for such new trade preparatory courses at the artisan and journeyman level in the evening or night classes.

4. Courses of *trade extension* type should also be organised. An adult may not be very proficient, say, in 'electric welding' and he wishes to upgrade himself in the same vocation so as to enable him to earn more or occupy higher positions in the industrial employment ladder. Courses should be devised for him to reach the highest proficiency. He should be taught the science, the mathematics, the drawing and the commerce connected with the trade, which knowledge will add to his cultural equipment also. Culture should and could also be sought through the vocation.

UP-GRADING IN GENERAL EDUCATION

5. Another type of adult education greatly merits our consideration. A number of persons who have passed their examinations at various levels wish to enhance their qualifications. For example, an adult who has passed the sixth class examination wishes to study the subjects of higher classes and obtain higher certificates to enable him to upgrade himself in his profession. He is employed and cannot attend a day school. He and other people like him should be afforded facilities to progress. Classes either in the mornings or in the nights should be organized for such persons and their qualifications enhanced. Indirectly, professions and vocations will get higher qualified persons.

RURAL UNIVERSITIES IN ADULT EDUCATION

6. In all our programmes, especially of *higher adult education* we should not lose sight of the rural population. Evening courses both literary and vocational are being gradually organized in the urban areas; but not in rural parts. This is partly so because we have not got higher institutions of learning in villages. We talk of food production but do not impart suitable instruction to the village folk in the art of modern agriculture and allied occupations, principally because there are no educational institutions there which can undertake the task. It is quite likely that more and more middle and high schools will be established there. But it is highly improbable that

the nation will think of higher institutions at the college and university level in rural areas.

7. I plead that we should establish new types of colleges and universities in rural parts to suit the social and economic life of the rural population. Rural Colleges and Universities should be pre-eminently institutions for teaching people to produce food, clothing, and building materials required by the nation on modern scientific and technological lines. Agriculture, animal husbandry, textiles, forestry, pottery, fishery, rural electrification, rural building trade, soil conservation, small scale industries etc., should be the subjects of study at college level in their natural setting and the rural population should have opportunities of going up to the highest stages including research in these branches.

8. Laboratories for study of forest products and of problems on fisheries, agriculture and animal husbandry are set up in cities, where there is no proper environment for these occupations. When an alien people, who were not earnest about these matters were occupying the highest posts, these laboratories were constructed in cities so that they may all reside in the urban areas and enjoy club life with their compeers in other departments. They had nothing in common with our rural population. They did not really mean to solve their problems either. But when we Indians are at the helm of affairs, we should take a correct view of the whole situation and see that what is due to the rural people is vouchsafed to them. I therefore strongly urge that colleges and Universities be established in the rural areas and all rural subjects be studied in their natural environment much to the advantage and benefit of the rural population, who have after all to produce the food that we need and who can produce many other articles for us provided we afford them suitable opportunities to do so. If we do not effect this reform, the more intelligent rural people will flock to the towns to add to the numbers of the un-employed or under-employed people and cause economic waste and dissatisfaction in the land.

9. If rural colleges and universities could be established with the above objectives, adequate and suitable arrangements can be made for upgrading the cultural as well as vocational levels of the rural population in their own environment and at times suited to their hours of work. During slack seasons, the farmers could have day courses and in the agricultural seasons, they could have night classes. "Trade preparatory" and "Trade extension" courses can be easily organized in these institutions of higher learning at any desired level. Of course, these institutions for rural folk should not be run on the cast-iron principles of urban colleges and universities with their interminable rules and regulations, ordinances and schedules which confuse even an intelligent urban population. In rural universities, examinations should be all internal, more or less on the type of the old Gurukulas where the pupils were not allowed to leave until they attained cent per cent competency. The relations between the adults and the teachers would be more intimate and there will be no attempts by the candidates for examinations to steal question papers and for examiners to tamper with the marks. The performance of the pupils will be measured by their day to day performances and their studies will be continued until they satisfy the teachers that they are adequately competent.

NEED FOR A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE.

10. In order to resolve the poverty, illiteracy, and ignorance in the land, we should develop a new philosophy of life and propagate it in classes for adults. The old slogan "Simple living and High thinking" has led to poverty and ignorance. We should adopt a new slogan *High Living & High Thinking* which are not incompatible with each other. On the other hand high living goes well with high thinking in this materialistic world.

11. Production should be speeded up and the co-operation of adults is most needed in this matter. "Slow and Steady" does not win the race. Instead "Quick and Sure" wins the race of life, and our people should adopt this principle in their occupations.

12. The colossal illiteracy in the land cannot be removed by the older method of 'hasten slowly'. A big programme should be adopted and worked most briskly. "Hasten Hastily" alone will serve the nation in this matter. At our present rate it will take decades, if not centuries, to make India fully literate.

13. Defence should be a great concern of our nation. "Home Guards" should be organised on a tremendous scale in towns as well as villages. The Adult Education movement and Home Guard movement should be co-ordinated. Adults should be interested in the matter of protecting themselves and their goods. *Every adult should be a soldier.*

THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION*

BY SRI A. R. HANUMANTHACHAR, *University Teachers' College, Mysore.*

'Peace hath her victories no less than those of war' and the UNITED NATIONS has proclaimed 'the defences of peace must be constructed in the minds of peace men'.

Love of peace is the monopoly of the cultured nations and culture is the essence of education. A peace-maker, however imaginative and skillful he may be, fails miserably to inject even the feeblest feelings of peace into the blood of the members that constitute a militant nation to which cultural paramountcy means nothing but military achievement means everything. UNITED NATIONS has emerged out to 'teach peace' even to such militant nations as have no belief in the victories of peace, by instituting a proper and well thought out universal system of education placed in the hands of her daughter organisation, UNESCO, the life work of which is to promote the educational, scientific and cultural advancement of each nation in particular and of the world in general.

As Mr. M. Jaime Torres Bodet, Director-general of the UNESCO, has rightly pointed out in his illuminating address at Elsinore, 'the technique of killing and the art of dying can more easily be taught than the technique of tolerating and the art of peace-making. War is thought out by the leaders and carried out by their subordinates. But to make peace, all men must

unite exercising their free will.' Hence problem of peace is bound up with the problem of individual freedom which in its turn is knit closely with the problem of education. Hence, it is, that UNITED NATIONS' plan of right education has become the forerunner of its plans of world peace.

When the UNITED NATIONS came forward with its gigantic plans of education surely faced from the educationists and cultural leaders of the world the arresting question whether there is any country in the world which has no individual organisation of its own to educate its masses and is waiting with eagerness and patience the drafting of common plans by this international organisation? Though the answer to this question is an emphatic 'no', it can be said with equal emphasis that each country has its own peculiar motive in educating its children and adults. No doubt most of the countries aim at the development of culture through education but it is rather hard to say whether there is any country in the world which educates its masses for responsibility. A culture based on the sense of responsibility is what is needed most by the present day world and each one of us should be made to feel that 'each of us is responsible for everything to everyone else'. UNITED NATIONS strives hard to inculcate this noble feeling in the hearts of men by planning the right type of education according

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sible to all without distinction of race, sex, language or religion.

The UNITED NATIONS attaches no importance to the time old and conservative type of schooling that has marred the nations instead of making them. Its motive principle is 'to collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image.' Hence it promotes free and increased flow of information through newspapers, magazines, radio and motion pictures. Rich supply of information by these about one country to all the others will educate their peoples to understand in the right spirit the position of that country and provide no opportunity for misunderstanding to set in. Newspapers give a frank and graphic picture of the countries to which they belong and if they are allowed to move freely from one country to another, will act as a preventive against misconception and misunderstanding and will therefore insure peace and stability.

So do the magazines. If newspapers give a detailed description of the country's situation, magazines periodically give in a nutshell the position of the country and will in their own way serve good will and proper understanding. It is hardly necessary to point out that the UNITED NATIONS has but chosen the best method of instruction through radio when about 300 million people listen daily to some form of broadcasting.

Visual education through motion pictures is of no less importance for even the illiterates can understand the most complicated things if they are presented to them in the form of pictures, and that too, motion pictures.

These industries which the UNITED NATIONS has chosen to educate the masses are cooperating internationally to teach peace and remove obstacles to the movement of ideas by word and image.

'Literacy makes better farmers and citizens' is the fundamental belief of the UNITED NATIONS and its 'pilot projects' are founded upon this belief. The 'projects' aim at the spread of fundamental education in the countries of the world taking the financial co-operation of the local governments. It is working with tremendous success in British Nyasaland where the organisation has been granted £ 250,000 by the government and the UNITED NATIONS has furnished the services of a Danish expert, the latest tools of instruction including films and the advice of its worldwide panel of experts. The 'pilot projects' aim raising the living standards of a tribal agricultural community and to spread literacy at first in the mother tongue and later in English. If every country in the world volunteers itself in welcoming the guidance of the UNITED NATIONS in its educational activity and provides opportunity for her to launch her well thought out campaign for literacy, education of the right type automatically makes its way into that country and creates culture in its truest form.

Education fails to serve its purpose if the educand is not made to put into practice what he has been taught and the UNITED NATIONS attaches special significance to the practical side of education. If the education is to prepare youths to shoulder responsibility in the democratic world, the educational methods must be so fashioned as to make youths of a country become sincere lovers of work. The 'work camps' of the UNITED NATIONS have arisen solely to prepare a band of honest workers in each country. The work camps provide scope for their members to do every kind of work with innate zeal and develop a spirit of co-operation and high sense of duty. The campers will at the same time have ample time for reading and discussing world affairs, economics, philosophy, cooperative living, industrial problems and rural questions. 'Most important of all, the camp itself is a living laboratory where volunteers can see worked out in practice much of what they have read about or discussed.' Moreover nationally known leaders are

Invited to the camps to contribute fresh ideas and outlooks. Service in such work camps, in short, is education in its most stimulating form and it is gratifying to see that the UNITED NATIONS has included in its cultural programme the imparting of such a practical and living education. The organisation is supplying the work camps a library of books on various subjects in various languages and is thus presenting the richest source of knowledge to the enthusiasts. It is the staunch desire of the UNITED NATIONS to see the establishment of work camps in every country to educate its people for responsibility, service and sacrifice.

THE UNITED NATIONS has been aware of the fact that, 'the world's inheritance has suffered from destruction and loot in recent years'. Books have been burnt by Dictators and now the task of THE UNITED NATIONS is to conserve and restore. The organisation hopes to do this by establishing an International Museum which should possess within itself the world masterpieces. Such a museum will surely be everyman's property and aid the countries of the world in their educational activities to an appreciable degree. No one thinks of reducing such an international museum to ashes even in the times of deadliest of wars and 'knowledge' remains in an unpolluted form for all time to come. This educational activity of THE UNITED NATIONS will, it may be believed, surely invite the appreciation of all fair-minded educationists of the world.

Apart from creating a wide scope for the flow of information from country to country through newspapers and radio, the UNITED NATIONS has thought out practicable plans for the exchange of ideas through seminars and conferences. These seminars and conferences periodically arranged attract a host of educationists from all over the world. Exchange of ideas by these expert educationists will naturally result in the betterment of educational systems in the different countries of the world. UNITED NATIONS will then succeed in creating a uniform

system of education in all parts of the world, which in its turn succeeds in spreading the uniform culture which puts a full stop to misunderstandings and hostilities between nations and nations.

As an immediate and useful course of action, the UNITED NATIONS has been making attempts to make books available everywhere by preparing a universal copyright convention, publishing the world classics, organising travelling libraries and projecting ways to overcome difficulties in purchasing books from another country. This is the greatest work that the organisation can think of doing in the field of education for no education is possible in the absence of books. Moreover monopoly of books should not be enjoyed by any one nation and UNITED NATIONS has been justified in trying to reserve the copyright of books in the hands of an international organisation.

The question of Adult Education has not gone without receiving the keen attention of the UNITED NATIONS. As the Director-General of the organisation himself has pointed out, the problem of Adult Education is occupying a large portion of the UNITED NATIONS' educational programme. 'In order to educate the citizen it is necessary to educate the city. And so in order to educate the child, it is necessary to educate the adult.' THE UNITED NATIONS hopes, by educating the adults, 'for no better results than the awakening in the consciousness of every adult of an awareness both of his personal responsibility and of his intellectual and moral fellowship with the whole of mankind'. It is for this reason that the organisation proposes to educate all adults—workers or peasants, craftsmen, bureaucrats or soldiers. If these adults are educated the UNITED NATIONS believes, the education of the children becomes quite an easy task. The resolution adopted by the UNESCO at its conference held in Mexico City in 1947 clearly epitomises the scheme of adult education that the organisation has drafted. The resolution reads:—

"In collaboration with adult education organisations, leaders and persons

prominent in Adult Education, to produce materials on international affairs suitable for adaptation and extensive use by adult study groups."

Great are the works that the UNITED NATIONS has undertaken to do in the field of education with the assistance of her daughter organisation, UNESCO. The organisation has drafted magnificent plans to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance and to plant a right and universal system of education available to all without any difference of race, sex, language or religion. Such an education surely succeeds in promoting the right type of culture based upon the sense of responsibility, service and sacrifice. UNITED NATIONS places greater emphasis on the practical aspect of education rather than on the theoretical aspect and if nations stretch forward their bountiful

hands, the organisation spares no pains to make their schemes culminate in the maximum success. Though pessimism may force a few men think that the 'dreams' of the UNITED NATIONS will ever remain 'dreams', the fact that most of our dreams of yesterday have become the realities of today shall instigate them to believe that the educational programme of the organisation will never go without being carried out if culturally minded men offer their heartiest cooperation. Is it not an established fact that 'Each Nation or Religion will contribute its particular genius to a world composition'? If the UNITED NATIONS succeeds in its noble attempts in the field of education, world peace and world culture will no more remain an illusion. "MEN MAY NOT EVER THINK ALIKE, BUT THEY MAY COME TO FEEL ALIKE".

THE PROBLEM OF ADULT EDUCATION

By SRI. S. R. VENKATRAMAN, B. A. B. L. *Servants of India Society, Madras*

Implications of Adult Franchise:

In the next elections, the adults in the country, will be called upon to elect their representatives to the Legislatures in the Province and thus make the governments of the Provinces truly the governments of the people by the people and for the people. This responsibility which has devolved on our adults can be usefully and advantageously discharged only when the adults are made to fully understand the implications of the vote, that it is a sacred trust which cannot be prostituted for political, communal and personal ends.

Appalling Illiteracy.

With about 88% of our people illiterate, we have a difficult social and political problem before us. It is very difficult to realise the full benefits of the democratic system of government unless the illiteracy among our adults is liquidated. Efforts in this direction are not wanting. Voluntary agencies and Government bodies have been

engaged in this adult literacy campaign. And every effort has been made by every one who wishes well of the country to lend his support to this work of first-rate national importance.

Obstacles in the way

But there are several obstacles which have to be faced and overcome if all the efforts of voluntary bodies and Governments are to be fruitful. The disinclination on the part of the adults to attend the classes regularly, the lack of enthusiasm on the part of workers and several other difficulties have to be faced with sympathy and understanding. The illiterate adult should be offered an inducement in the shape of graded cash grants when he becomes a literate, when he is able to read and write well and so on. And also promotion in his job by the employer.

Script Reform necessary

Compared to several Indian languages, Tamil language is comparatively better and

more satisfactory from the point of view of phonetics and script. But there are certain complexities in Tamil script which if remedied will help the learning of the script by the adult illiterate much more easily and in a shorter time. The sanest reform is to have separate symbols for vowels and consonants and separating vowels from the consonants.

The Tamil language has no letters to vocalise ga, dha, ba, da, f & z. If the Tamil language has to serve as a satisfactory medium for expressing scientific thought and knowledge, provision should be made in it for these six letters. This is imperative in view of the fact that the mother tongue has been made the medium of instruction in the High Schools. When scientific and technical words and proper names have to be expressed and written, we require letters in Tamil to vocalise the above six sounds. Without them words like Bombay and Pompeii; Rippon and Ribbon trop; Tata and Dada; Ghandhi and kanti; Formosa and Parameswar; Zanzibar and Gingi; will be written and pronounced alike leading to a lot of mistakes in pronouncing them. I have heard adults not taught to appreciate the niceties of the pronunciation and sounds of letters read "Patel" as "Badel". Instances like this can be multiplied. The writer of this article had proposed the reform of the Tamil script on the above lines several years ago. Unfortunately owing to the pre-occupation of our leaders, in the political affairs of the country, no sufficient attention has been paid to this most vital and fundamental reform of the Tamil script. If this reform is effected, the pace of the adult literacy movement will be quickened a great deal.

Literacy and General Knowledge.

One reason why adult literacy work has not produced the expected result is that the adult is not satisfied with literacy alone. He wants that his prospects in life should be improved and that he must be able to go

higher up in his profession and earn more. Take for instance, an ordinary labourer in a Mill. Literacy may enable him to read newspapers and books and to write letters. But if in addition to literacy he is given facilities to learn all about the textile mills, the looms, the spindles, carding and dyeing and given training to work in these departments, he will feel enthused in attending such adult education classes.

Education for relaxation

Most of the adults in our country are workers. They work on farms, railways, factories or offices. After the day's hard labour when they return home, they require complete relaxation. To ask an adult who is dead tired to attend the literacy class is not to understand the feelings of the worker. What he requires first and foremost is recreation. Towards this end the programme of the adult-education centres should be so arranged as to meet the emotional, the psychological and intellectual needs of the worker and correlate adult education to the work in which he is engaged.

Conclusion

There is at present a tendency in our country to attach too much importance to literacy alone to the neglect of the more important needs of the adult. These can be satisfied through Music and Drama, Kathakalakshepam, Recitations, Radio Programmes and Cinemas. Talks on general subjects, particularly a knowledge about his own country, its history and civilization, about its economical and industrial progress, a knowledge of the world and of the recent advances made in different branches of knowledge, about his rights and duties as a citizen and his own responsibility to his family as well, will make the adult education programme purposeful. A suitable programme on these lines will liquidate the appalling illiteracy of the masses in the country and hasten the advent of an enlightened and responsible electorate which will shape the future of this country.

CRUSADE AGAINST MASS ILLITERACY

BY SRI P. KODANDA RAO, *Servants of India Society, Bangalore.*

Still Examining: In his opening address to the UNESCO Seminar on Adult Education held in Mysore on the 2nd November, 1949, the Hon. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Education Minister of the Government of India, said that Government was still examining the proposal for adopting some kind of social conscription by which all educated persons would be required to contribute to the national service of teaching for a specific period in order to liquidate the vast amount of illiteracy in India, which was causing grave and anxious concern. The proposal for the "conscription" of teachers was casually mentioned and dismissed in the Sargent Report. The outlines of a definite scheme for training teachers and utilising them for national service was submitted to the public in 1945. (Vide P. Kodanda Rao's Presidential Address to the Secondary Teachers' Conference, Nagpur, on Dec. 17, 1941). It was discussed, among others, by the Nagpur University and the Central Provinces and Berar Post-War Committee on Education in 1945. The Scheme was criticised in some quarters on the ground that the "conscripted" student-teachers would be unwilling and incompetent to do the work. It is proposed to examine the criticisms and submit constructive suggestions.

Supply of Competent Teachers as Bottleneck: Educational progress cannot outstrip the supply of teachers, observed the Sargent Report, which propounded a national system of education. On the basis of certain standards and presumptions, the Report estimated that the goal would be reached, at best, in forty years after the last war. Even so, India would have only reached a stage of educational development which most of the advanced countries had reached before the war. If India is not to lag behind permanently and increasingly, she must accelerate her educational progress by something like double quick and even triple quick marches, as it were.

"Educational Emergency": The first requisite is to acknowledge that there is an "educational emergency" in India, which calls for "emergency methods", like the "emergency methods" adopted in so many respects during the last "war emergency".

In England: It is interesting to note that even in advanced England there was the same problem, not only in war time but also in peace time, of finding an adequate supply of teachers. The Statement, called *The Teaching Profession Today and Tomorrow*, issued in 1944 by the Nuffield College on the authority of twelve top ranking British educationists, including Mr. A. D. Lindsay and Sir Cyril Norwood, spoke of post-war "educational emergency" in England and advocated "emergency measures" to cope with it. The Statement said that if the output of teachers was doubled, it would take twenty years for the supply to meet the demand. The British Government had proposed some "emergency measures" which would reduce the period to thirteen years. Even so, said the Statement, the pace was too slow! And it proposed steps to reduce the period much further by tapping new sources of supply, and adopting new methods of recruitment and forms of training and, if necessary, the dilution of standards!

In India: If there was an "educational emergency" in England which called for "emergency measures", there is a much greater "emergency" in India, and there is justification for more heroic measures to cope with it. It should, therefore, be realised and publicly declared there is an "educational emergency" in India calling for "emergency measures".

Sargent Proposals: The Sargent Report insisted that the present educational standards, general and professional, of teachers in primary and secondary schools should not be lowered, for they are low enough in all conscience and should be raised. It

insisted that teachers in basic schools should be at least Matriculates with two years professional training, and that teachers in high-schools should be University graduates with one year's professional training. It contemplated the continuation and expansion of the current system of professional education being given in special training institutions, though it disapproved of such segregation. It estimated that about 35 per cent of the annual output of Matriculates might be attracted to the teaching profession by the improved scale of salaries it suggested. At that rate of expansion of the supply of teachers, the goal would be reached in forty years.

"Education" as a Compulsory Subject: If this long period is to be shortened, some method should be devised to increase in the first place the supply of teachers with the requisite general and professional qualifications. It is accordingly proposed here that *"Education" theoretical and practical, should be made a compulsory subject in the last two years of the high school course leading to the Matriculation certificate, and in the first four years of the University course, leading to the first degree.* Under this proposal, all Matriculates and Graduates will have the qualifications, general and professional, better than under the present system and better than under the Bargent Scheme. Instead of the professional course following after the general course, the two will be concurrent, thereby saving time and expense in teacher-training. Of course, the present curricula will have to be reorganised in order to include a compulsory course of "education" and teacher-training.

Cultural and Professional Value: "Education" and teacher-training have as much cultural value as any other subject now included in the curricula for the Matriculation and the University degree. They have besides professional value. At present the candidates who complete their matriculation or B. A. courses, have no qualifications for immediate entry into any profession. Under the proposed system, every Matriculate and Graduate will *ipso facto* be qualified to become a teacher in a primary

or high school immediately, and there jobs waiting for them to take up, if temporarily. It is generally agreed that women should largely man primary schools. Today, the women matriculates and graduates have no particular profession to go into at once. The proposed scheme will automatically equip them to become teachers, if they care to.

In Every High School and College: subjects of "Education" and teacher-training are not likely to be as expensive as demanding of accommodation, etc., Science subjects, like Physics and Chemistry, and it should be possible to provide them in every high-school and college. These institutions have already a fair high proportion of teachers trained in Teacher-training Colleges, and they could be asked to undertake the teaching of the subjects of "Education" and teacher-training in the schools and colleges. It is an advantage to every student not only to learn a subject but also learn to teach it to others.

Voluntary Recruitment Inadequate: Under the Scheme adumbrated above, Matriculates and Graduates will be qualified to teach. It is essential to enlist the services as teachers to meet the "educational emergency". Under the present voluntary system of recruitment, the pay and the prospects are the chief determinants. It is not possible to raise them so high as to secure the required number of permanent teachers.

Teaching a "Required" Subject: If the voluntary system is inadequate, other methods must be tried in the educational emergency. It is suggested here that *national service as a teacher* for a prescribed period should be made part and parcel of the curricula for the Matriculation certificate and University degree. It is a "conscription", but just a "requirement", a qualification for the certificate or degree. Nobody is "conscripted" to take the certificate or degree, but those who seek the certificate or degree, must qualify for them as prescribed by the authorities. It is like the University requiring the candidate for a degree to take some compulsory subjects, put in at least

minimum prescribed attendance, produce a certificate of physical fitness, and in the case of subjects, like engineering, to undergo practical training in a factory. It is like adding Hindi to the compulsory or optional subjects.

Educational Value of National Service: National service has been justified from the purely educational point of view by Sir Cyril Norwood's Committee on *Curricula and Examinations* in England. It said:

"From an educational point of view, the value of the service which boys and girls of eighteen are now giving to the country can be seen, even on the partial assessment now possible, to be very great. If, after the war, some form of public service were to be required, we can for see similar educational value resulting from a period of six months given by boys and girls, drawn from varying circumstances of life, to work of national importance—in industry and agriculture, at sea, in the social services and in similar fields, no less than in the armed forces. Such period so spent might do much to fuse the country into a whole with a common purpose and a common understanding".

In the case of India today, such national service has not only educational value to the candidates but also practical value to the country.

Priority for Teaching: The Norwood Committee envisaged a variety of national services including defence and industrial production. It is a matter of opinion what should be the order of priority. If education is more fundamental, it must receive first, or at any rate, high priority.

Period of Teaching: It is suggested here that *Matriculates should be required to teach for one academic year in primary schools or in adult schools to qualify for the Certificate; and graduates should teach for a similar period in high schools or adult schools to qualify for the degree.* Thus, every Matriculate will have put in one year's national service and every Graduate two years'.

Sacrifice Not Too Much: Considering the great sacrifices made by the citizens of other countries who were conscripted during the last war, the sacrifice, if it be so, required of Indian Matriculates and graduates in the temporary educational emergency in India is fully justified. Indeed, it is hardly sacrifice; it is good individual and national investment. If "conscription" be justified to kill or be killed in war, a "requirement" for the national service of teachers in India is more than justified.

Efficiency: There is no compelling reason to suppose that teachers under the scheme will be less efficient than others. For one thing, it is generally admitted that most of the present-day teachers even in more advanced countries, not to speak of India, chose the teaching profession, not because they had a special aptitude for it or had a "call" for it but because they could not do better and would quit it as soon as they could do so. It may be urged that under the system advocated here, the student-teachers would quit before they got into their stride, as it were, and therefore their teaching would be inefficient. The problem of short-tenure occurs under the present system also, even in the most advanced countries. In UK and USA, for instance, where most of the teachers in the elementary schools are young women, most of them are on the look-out for marriage and quit teaching on marriage and have to be constantly replaced by other young women similarly bent.

Advocates of short tenure: Some authorities actually advocate short tenure. *The Teaching Profession Today and Tomorrow*, published by the Nuffield College, recommended that young untrained people should be appointed as teachers for two years on the specific understanding that at the end of it they quit the job and proceed to higher education or seek other openings, and only thereafter return to teaching, if they so preferred.

Economy: Under the present system there are separate institutions for teacher-training, and the students therein are paid stipends for taking their professional edu-

cation. Under the system here proposed, there will be no such special institutions and no such stipends. Reorganisation of educational curricula in ordinary high schools and colleges to include teacher-training will cost less than the multiplication of special institutions. Students will pay fees for their education, which will include teacher-training.

Scholarship: It is proposed that while the candidates do their "required" teaching for the Matriculation Certificates and University degrees they should be paid a small scholarship, which will be much smaller than the regular salaries paid to permanent teachers. Thus, students will pay fees for their education, general and professional, and they will be paid when they render national service as teachers. The over-all expense will be much smaller.

Conclusion

The proposals made here may thus be summarised:

(1) An "Educational Emergency" should be recognised and "emergency methods" should be adopted;

(2) "Education and teacher training" should be made part of the regular compulsory curricula of the Matriculation and University courses and taught in the ordinary high schools and colleges;

(3) National service as a teacher should be made a compulsory requirement, a necessary qualification, for the Matriculation Certificate and the University degree;

(4) Candidates for the Matriculation Certificate should be required to teach in primary and adult schools for one academic year, and candidates for the University Degree should be required to teach in high schools and adult schools for one academic year before being awarded their certificates and degrees.

(5) While engaged in national service as teachers, the student-teachers should be paid small scholarships.

In so far as national service as teachers will not be "conscription" but only requirement and part of the curriculum and as the student-teachers will be on scholarships, the scheme is likely to be acceptable to the students, who will be better educated thereby. Indeed, they will be persuaded to take to the scheme with enthusiasm if the national leaders make a fervent appeal to their patriotism and nationalism. Every student in school or college knows, or must be told, that he was educated partly, if not wholly, at public expense, and that the great bulk of this was being contributed by people who had no similar chances for their own education. The great majority of the poor and uneducated, is paying for the education of the small minority of students. The latter are, thus, under a debt, more or less not legal, to the former. It is not too much to ask the students to repay their debt, at least in part, to the public by whom they are undertaking the national service of teachers, before they bend their individual energies primarily to seeking their individual fortunes.

The student-teachers will not be less efficient than a great majority of the present run of teachers; if anything, they will be more efficient. There will be economies as much as there will be no need for special institutions for teacher-training of all grades. There will also be some economies in stipends for students now undertaking teacher-training in special institutions on scholarships paid to the student-teachers. The total number of trained teachers in service will be equal to the number of Matriculates and University graduates every year. Mass education will be speeded up a great deal by the employment of more and better teachers at less cost, and efficiency and economy will be added to the greater good of the student-teachers and the nation.

SOME TRADITIONS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA

BY SRI M. R. SAMPATKUMARAN, M.A.

The uncultured may read, but are uneducated; men of culture unlettered are men well read.—*Naladiyar*.

THE appalling illiteracy of India is a notorious fact. But it is not equally well known that, in spite of this terrible handicap, India has achieved the miracle of a widely diffused and pervasive culture. Foreigners have noticed how distinctive and individual this culture is and how thoroughly it has permeated all sections of society throughout the length and breadth of this land. The prince as well as the beggar, the illiterate peasant as well as the learned philosopher, show that in some way they belong to one and the same culture.

When the East India Company began seriously to organise the Government over large areas of India at the beginning of the 18th century, they found a widespread system of education struggling to survive. Almost all the larger villages had schools, where the three R's were taught. There is good reason to think that literacy then was considerably more widespread than it is to-day. And quite apart from literacy there was a wide diffusion of religious and cultural ideas. Keay speaks of the common man in India getting "scraps of folklore, mythology and epics and other stories that might be handed down in the family, or related as the villagers gathered for gossip and discussion in the evenings, or taught by some wandering mendicant or temple-priest". He also refers to women becoming "acquainted with something of the vast heap of the mythological stories and folklore which had been handed down and accumulated in India from ancient times".

It is this body of folklore and mythology, of religion, moral and aesthetic sentiment, which has been the visible expression of the mind and soul of India through the ages. How has it managed to survive the vicissitudes of centuries, foreign rule and economic impoverishment? Much of course is due to the vitality of Indian culture, its deep

roots in the spirit of man. But is not something also due to the efficient transmission of Indian culture, from generation to generation? "Indian art and literature," writes Professor S. V. Venkatesvara, "are eloquent as regards the cultural institutions of ancient India. These were transmitted to posterity by a sound system of education. Here we get an explanation why, while other ancient communities are long dead, India and her heritage have survived."

Throughout the greater part of Indian history the spread and preservation of culture have been inspired by religion. It is possible that the composition of the *Ramayana* was the first grand effort at adult education in India. Valmiki is known to tradition as the *adi kavi*; and the opening cantos of the *Ramayana* describe how the chanting of the epic by Lava and Kusa created a great sensation. Its music and poetry thrilled even the self-controlled ascetics, not to speak of the common people. Invited to chant the epic before the people gathered at the place of sacrifice, the boy rhapsodists kept them spellbound. Rama was so moved that he descended from his throne and sat down among the people below. Neither he nor the audience noticed what had happened.

It is definitely claimed by Valmiki that the *Ramayana* was composed with the object of elaborating the teachings of the *Vedas* and spreading them. A similar impulse lay behind the composition of the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*, whose author, Vyasa, is praised for his benevolent and tireless efforts to redeem mankind from ignorance.

The best elements in the culture of the *Vedas*, including the lofty philosophical speculations of the *Upanishads* became the possession of the common man through the epics and the *Puranas*. Culturally they unified India by supplying a common body of myths,

legends and poetically transformed moral and religious ideals. Local traditions all over the country accommodated themselves to the needs of unity by discovering—or inventing—connections with the main body of myths and legends. A semi-civilised tribe for instance may claim that its queen in the golden age was a bride of Arjuna.

In practical religion, the epics and the *Puranas* popularised the worship of the incarnations and encouraged and spread temple worship. In earlier ages the kings and priests performed elaborate sacrifices: and philosophers meditated on the Absolute. The cult of the epics and the temples brought the philosophies, as it were, to the marketplace, simplified religious ritual and aimed at universality.

Inspired by the epics and the *Puranas*, all kinds of fine arts prospered. The architect and the sculptor imaged the stories of the epics and their underlying concepts in the proportions of the temples and the statues and idols for decoration or worship. Folk dance was refined and induced to take up sacred themes. Both classical and popular music struck roots in this common culture and never forgot their affiliations with it.

Poetry and literature grew up with this background. The two great epics have been an inexhaustible treasury for the poets who came afterwards. Innumerable poems were written on themes suggested by them in all the languages of India. The vast majority of the plays dramatise the gods and heroes of the epics and the *Puranas*. They used to be staged during fairs and festivals, religious and secular.

The institution of the pilgrimage was a potent instrument of adult education. Travel widened men's minds, and the encouragement of pilgrimages resulted in a practical knowledge of the geography and political divisions of India and a practical realisation of the fundamental unity of her culture.

In all the great ages of India's past there was widespread and varied activity in consolidating and broadcasting her culture. The

golden age of the Guptas is generally believed to have carried out a monumental recension of the epics and the *Puranas* and have inspired much poetry, drama, sculpture and architecture. It is significant that under Harsha, under the Pallavas and Cholas, under the Vijayanagar empire and under Shivaji similar activities were notable. The revival of culture under the Marhattas was marked by the development of the art of *Harikatha*.

Ancient Hindu culture was integrated and unified. Over large areas of North India the influence of Islam led to a friendly change of ideas and discussion of ideas which influenced both the Hindus and the Muslims without calling upon them to lose their individuality. But what passes for culture today in India lacks roots in the integration and unity.

The Western system of education has torn away the educated classes from the culture and from the masses. One of the first effects of the new education was the paragement of popular religion. Among the Hindus the educated classes affected to despise Puranic Hinduism and to go back to the pristine purity of the *Vedas*. What the value of this movement as an attempt at modernising Hinduism is recognised, its significance as an anti-democratic segregation from popular sentiment and culture is not so readily grasped.

The India of today needs a vital living culture to integrate her life and ideas. Political unity cannot be built on the basis of contempt for or violent antagonism to popular sentiment or traditional culture. The apparatus of cultural education is intact—art and poetry, a background of common sentiments and a body of common myths and legends. Some of the institutions devised for transmitting and propagating this culture still survive.

The *Purana-bhatta* lingers on, though days seem to be numbered. Festival fairs continue, and pilgrimages are not out of fashion among the vast majority of the people. Cannot something be done

foster a cultural revival by making use of time-honoured institutions and widely spread sentiments and ideals?

It would be unfortunate if this problem is shirked on the ground of India being a secular state. Indian culture is largely bound up with religion, and unless the state is to be indifferent to culture it has to reconcile itself to the necessity of encouraging culture in all aspects. Hindu kingdoms have always been secular in the sense that they did not impose any state religion on all their subjects. But this did not prevent them from encouraging impartially the cultural and religious activities of all the groups of people in them.

It is significant too that Mahatma Gandhi deliberately made use of traditional methods and appealed to traditional sentiment in

educating the people of India in politics and nationalism. He revived the old institution of *hartal* as a method of political protest. His Dandi march recalled the tours of the religious teachers of ancient India who walked about from village to village, preaching their doctrines. What was not unfashionable for Mahatmajji should not offend the sense of propriety of any of our administrators.

What we need immediately today is not cent per cent literacy, but widespread culture and knowledge. The Indian peasant continues, in spite of all handicaps, cultured though he is illiterate. Let us make the citizens of tomorrow literate. Let us try to make as many of our citizens of today also literate. But meanwhile let us not stint any effort to make them cultured and knowledgeable.

A PRACTICAL PROGRAMME FOR RURAL ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA TO-DAY

BY SRI M. A. NARAYANA IYENGAR, M.A., B.L., *Retired Deputy Director of Public Instruction, Mysore*

DURING the last two centuries of British rule in India, the interests of the vast majority of the people were sacrificed to benefit the middle and upper classes of India and England. In consequence of this the people in our villages are ignorant, illiterate and poor. With a democratic constitution based on adult suffrage about to be adopted, there is no need for our leading educationists to waste any more time in discovering arguments in favour of adult education in rural India. It is to be hoped that the Unesco Seminar, deliberating at Mysore, will give practical suggestions to Asiatic countries and particularly to India, for an effective campaign against the ignorance, illiteracy, poverty and misery of the masses.

ADULT EDUCATION IN THE GOLDEN AGE

During the golden age of Hindu India, when the *varnashrama dharma* was followed in every village with faith, earnestness and

enthusiasm, the adults of all castes received sound education according to the standards of those days. Every man received moral and religious training in his family or sect, technical training for his profession in his caste guild and spiritual training by the study of sacred books in the case of literates and by the memorising of *sutras*, wise sayings, proverbs, and songs and by listening to discourses on *Itihasas* and *Puranas* at the temple or other public places in the case of illiterates. Books being few and printing unknown, literacy did not form an essential feature of mass education, which depended on memorising and oral instructions. Adult education was also imparted through the medium of the fine arts, such as drama, music, painting, sculpture, architecture and skilled craftsmanship in producing artistic jewellery, pottery, textiles etc. Travelling—for pilgrimage, trade or patronage from kings and nobles—was also an important means of adult education.

THE DEGENERATION OF VARNASHRAMA DHARMA.

The *varnashrama* system degenerated step by step during later periods on account of various political and economic causes. The caste system, as it has functioned during the last one hundred years, is merely the dead body of the *varnashrama dharma*; and its principles and practices are completely opposed to those of the *varnashrama* system in the golden age. Under the Muhammadan rule, the political aspects of the *varnashrama* system ceased to function; and during the conquest of India by the European East India Companies, the economic aspects disappeared. In the century of British rule after the Indian Mutiny, the new system of education and the judicial decisions on Hindu law given by English judges on the advice of narrow-minded Pandits, destroyed even the educational and cultural aspects of *varnashrama dharma*. During this millennium of the decline of *varnashrama dharma*, the education of the masses was progressively neglected, until under British rule the people were reduced almost to the level of animals. Meanwhile, the middle and richer classes developed racial, sectarian, religious, professional and provincial rivalries and vanities, forgetting the interests of the country as a whole.

CONGRESS GOVERNMENTS AND ADULT EDUCATION

It was only after the Congress Governments were established in several provinces in 1887 that a systematic attempt was made to tackle the problem of adult education. Concerted efforts were begun in the Congress-governed provinces and some progressive Indian states to promote adult literacy. But the outbreak of the World War in 1914 and the political struggle which the Congress started soon afterwards put an end to all these. It is only now, after the attainment of independence, that the problem has again come to the forefront. The central, provincial and state governments are eager to promote adult education in all its aspects and ready to make handsome grants for the purpose. This is just

the time therefore when our political leaders and educationists have to examine carefully the aims, policies and practical programmes of rural adult education.

DEFECTS OF THE PRESENT POLICY

Earnest work is being done during the last few years by the capable and enthusiastic organisers of the adult education movements in various parts of India. They have concentrated on literacy, and the statistics show that there is some increase in the numbers of literates year after year. But it has to be pointed out that much more practically useful work can be turned out if we adopt methods of adult education more suited to our conditions and so devised as to combine the virtues of Indian and Western civilisations and to avoid the defects of both.

It is perhaps natural that in the early stages of the progress of the adult education movement those connected with it should be anxious to publish annual reports, claiming credit for great work done on the basis of superficial statistics. The grants for adult education are now most likely to be spent on the travelling charges of organisers and executive officers, the salaries and allowances of teachers, the publication of text-books and other books, the purchase of magazines and newspapers, the running of Vidya-mandirs or Vidya-peetas and of tutorial and literacy classes, the equipment for such classes and for visual instruction, the establishment of rural and central libraries and follow-up book-clubs, the conduct of examinations in literacy and the issue of pass certificates (to almost all the adults who attend the classes), the construction of buildings here and there, publicity and propaganda (including the photographing of literacy and other classes). This programme has been merely copied from rich Western countries and does not seem suitable to the conditions of poor India to-day. Our villagers are wondering whether the movement has been able to secure results commensurate with the energy spent and the expenditure incurred.

A WARNING

Another important point which must be borne in mind is that we should not sacrifice compulsory primary education for the sake of adult education. In promoting adult education we are trying to make good the neglect of education of the masses in the immediate past, and we must therefore take care not to perpetuate the same neglect with regard to the boys and girls who are the citizens of tomorrow.

NEED FOR DEFINING AND LIMITING OBJECTIVES.

It is also necessary to remember that with our limited resources we cannot afford too many ambitious aims and ideals. As at present envisaged in the press and on the platform, the aims of adult education are to make the adult read and write, harmonise himself with his environment so as to make the best of the physical conditions on which he subsists, acquire skill in improved modes of craftsmanship and production, practise principles of hygiene, become a good citizen of his village, province and nation, love the democratic ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity, become aware of his rights and duties, and qualified to take an intelligent interest in the affairs of his country and the world so as to be able to influence his government to pursue the policy of peace and follow Mahatma Gandhi's message of toleration, goodwill and love for all. To carry out these objectives, the syllabus of adult education will have to include the learning of scripts, the study of text books, the perusal of library books, arithmetic, elements of science, problems of commerce, hygiene, domestic economy, child welfare, agriculture, arts and crafts, cottage industries, civics, social studies, world citizenship, co-operation etc. All these have to be taught in nine months or a year, and that too in night classes of an hour or two per day. This programme aims not merely at literacy but also at social education.

But is this programme practicable? With such a crowded programme all that may happen is that those in charge of adult education in a state or province may

introduce one or more items from this programme here and there, and claim that all the aims and policies have been carried out. But few rural adults would have been properly educated according to the programme.

It is therefore very essential that our programme, if it is to be a success, should take into consideration the mental outlook and capacity of the rural adult and should provide for gradual stages of improvement. We must also realise that a great deal of adult education work is being carried out by various agencies to-day. Village reconstruction work by government departments, propaganda by political associations and party organisations, the radio, the cinema and newspaper advertisements have their own contribution to make. The organisers of adult education should not encroach on the work carried out by these agencies and should use their limited resources in men and money on aspects of adult education which would not be tackled by other agencies.

IMPORTANCE OF ADULT SOCIAL EDUCATION

There are now three aspects to adult education work—adult literacy, adult technical education and adult social education. The greatest importance is now given to adult literacy. Only literates are taken in for technical or social education. Thus only a small percentage of villagers benefit from adult education work.

It is obvious that if the essential objectives of adult education are to be realised, we have to concentrate on social education. Technical education may be conveniently left to the government departments looking after rural reconstruction and development. Adult literacy may be confined to advanced students in social education. Adult social education, if properly organised, can be carried out more successfully and benefit more villagers than any other aspect of adult education work. Let us not forget that many kings, administrators, moralists, religious preachers, business men and artists have

risen to greatness without having been literate. Moreover in another ten or fifteen years, we will be having a completely literate generation in India.

A SYLLABUS OF ADULT SOCIAL EDUCATION

In respect of adult social education the highest priority must be given to the preparation of a clear, comprehensive, concise and graded syllabus covering both the theoretical and practical aspects of the course. It must be suited to the village conditions. A body of expert educationists should be trained to teach it in the mother tongues of the villagers. The syllabus should find place for the training of the body and the will, the education of the heart and the expansion of the intellect. The facile assumption must be given up that literacy and the study of a few books prepared or selected by the Adult Literacy Council will make the villager an unselfish and cultured patriot and world citizen. Our educated classes are not saints, and we have no reason to suppose that literacy will work wonders with our villagers. We have to educate the heart as well as the understanding if desirable qualities are to be developed. Hence due importance must be attached in the social education syllabus for the proper training of the body, the will, the heart and the spirit along with the intellect.

The body and the will may be trained by instruction in gymnastics, health, hygiene and sanitation, as well as in the conduct of agricultural, industrial and commercial occupations on modern scientific lines and in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the interests of the village as a whole. The heart should be trained so as to develop the spirit of citizenship, loyalty to the state or province, patriotic devotion to the motherland and the noble sentiment of universal brotherhood. The intellect should be trained by instruction about their physical, biological, mental and social environment, the conditions of other countries (their past history being narrated only so far as it is correlated to the present) and the workings of democratic government in a modern society.

Last but not least, the education of the spirit or the *atman* must not be neglected. The villager must be helped to understand the divinity that he really is, so that he may express in his daily individual and social life the divine power latent in him. The training can be given by teaching to him the messages of Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian Renaissance leaders and their latest scientific, historical and rational interpretations of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-gita, the Darśanas and the two epics of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. But with a view to develop only the national and international outlook in the masses in the place of their present sectarian and superstitious outlook, the teaching of the Smritis, Agamas, Puranas, Varnashrama dharma etc. must be completely avoided.

A GANDHI ASHRAM FOR EVERY VILLAGE

After getting a suitable syllabus for social education prepared under the guidance of educational experts, the next duty of the popular government is to recruit the workers to teach this syllabus. A number of undergraduates, who have passed the Intermediate examination and who are by temperament fit for this kind of service to the villagers, may be selected and given at least six months training in a Gurukula or residential institution like the Special Teachers Training Centre at Huttanahalli in Mysore state. Each of them after training may be placed in charge of the adult education of one village. He will be asked to take all possible help from the Taluq District and Provincial or State Adult Councils as far as possible in respect of lands, buildings, equipment, books and libraries and to secure the co-operation of the leaders of the village, the co-operative societies, schools and government offices.

The Adult Education Centre of a village may be called its "Gandhi Ashram". It must have a nice hut erected on a large plot of ground with enough vacant space to grow a garden, and to conduct social gatherings and special items of work. Some acres

agricultural land must be made the property of the Ashram.

The worker in charge must collect first statistics of the adults in the village, divide them into different groups according to their qualifications and tastes, and arrange for each group being educated at the Ashram in their leisure hours. The necessary finance for the upkeep of the Ashram should be obtained from Government grants made through the Adult Education Council, contributions of local bodies, donations of philanthropists and voluntary subscriptions from enthusiastic villagers willing to become members of the Ashram. Students and teachers of schools and colleges in the neighbourhood may be requested to help, particularly during their vacations. Reputed lecturers may be invited to speak to the villagers. In fact the Adult Education Council will do well to engage capable lecturers to tour among the villages and deliver discourses on different subjects of general interest.

CONSTITUTION OF ADULT EDUCATION COUNCILS

The leaders of the people living in the rural parts must be influenced to take keen interest in the work of the Gandhi Ashrams. This can be done only by allowing them to manage the work, getting of course necessary assistance from the Education Department and the University. Adult Education Councils, in charge of adult education work, should be democratically constituted. It is suggested that there may be a General Body consisting of representatives of villages which have started Gandhi Ashrams. These will elect members of Taluq committees, who in turn will elect District Committees. The District Committees will choose the Provincial or State Adult Education Council. The government of course must be free to nominate educational experts and enthusiastic workers to these Committees and Councils. Then only will there be solid support forthcoming for Adult Education work in rural areas.

It is equally important to rouse keen interest among the village adults for the programme of work of the Gandhi Ashram. This can be best done by including in the adult education programme social dialogues, dramas, *harikathas*, readings from the epics, folk-songs, games, athletics, musical performances, fancy dress competitions etc. All the while the main aim of adult education should not be lost sight of, namely, to inculcate in the villager the spirit of *dharma* and love of a life of purity and social service based on devotion to truth, as distinguished from the Western conception of rights, based on the spirit of selfish aggrandisement for the gratification of one's pleasures. Mahatma Gandhi must become the holy symbol of *dharma* in modern India, and his practical ideals must be made to enter into the hearts of the villagers. They must be attracted to the Ashram in their leisure hours and the Ashram Organiser should take special pains to call on all those keeping away from the Ashram and persuade them to participate in its work.

CONCLUSION

Gandhi Ashrams, properly organised, will gradually create in each village a permanent body of cultured men and women, who will spread enlightened ideas and be a model to the rest of the village. A new spirit may thus grow in each village and a new tradition get built up. Only then will the villages be effective and powerful units in modern democratic India.

The adult education movement has so far concentrated on literacy work and has not interested the vast majority of the village adults. Insufficient funds and paucity of enthusiastic workers have also stood in the way. It is the duty of the governments to make handsome grants of money for adult education work. They must see at the same time that the moneys thus given are actually spent in education the rural adults and not for the direct or indirect benefit of organisers, social workers, teachers, publishers and merchants.

EDITORIAL

MAULANA ABDUL KALAM AZAD inaugurated on the 2nd of November the Seminar (now going on at Mysore) on Rural Adult Education. It is attended by many representatives of Asian countries and guided by three experts of the Unesco. Maulana Azad stressed on the education of the electorate as the essential condition for the surviving and proper functioning of the Indian or any modern democracy, and hinted at Government possibly enforcing a kind of social conscription by which all educated persons would be required to contribute to the great national service of educating the adult population along with the children.

Adverting to the urgency of this great problem, particularly for Asian countries, the Maulana said:—"Important as a sound system of education is for all countries, it is still more important for the countries of Asia. Here we are witnessing a new awakening after centuries of slumber and quiescence. The past glorious traditions of the Asian countries demand that this new awakening must bring to the world a new message even as our ancient civilisations sent forth to the farthest corners of the globe; for Asia gave to the world its religions, philosophies, cultures and civilisations.

"The challenge of our ancient traditions and the spiritual poverty of our immediate past both require from the peoples of Asia an exceedingly great effort for the reconstruction of their lives in all spheres. This involves a basic reconstruction of our mode of education, for without such education we cannot fulfil our hopes. Ours is essentially a democratic age, and the spirit of equality, fraternity and liberty is sweeping over all the peoples of the world. Asian countries must reconstruct their polity and their society in conformity with this spirit".

The Seminar has to devise ways and means of solving this problem, which will be

an effective remedy against internal configurations. It should give priority to social education, which would make of individual a rounded man and a conscious and active citizen in the best sense of the term, thus assuring to the Government popular support in achieving and maintaining peace and progress. At the same time, illiteracy is to be prevented by all means.

Adverting to the lessons of Indian history useful in this respect, he said:—"I would, before I conclude, like to draw the attention of the distinguished participants in the Seminar to the lessons of Indian history. India has been at her best when her doors were wide open to all who came from abroad. She freely partook of the best lessons the world had to teach. The acceptance of unity in diversity has been her motto throughout the ages. The essence of this principle is a large and hearty toleration in which differences are recognised and given their due. The Indian genius has always recognised that truth has many facets, and conflict and hatred are because people claim a monopoly of truth and virtue.

"This was the lesson of India in the history of her glory. This is the lesson that Mahatma Gandhi has taught anew in the context of the modern age. His message to the Indian people was one of the highest goodwill and love for all. Hatred, which is born of weakness and fear, and before exhorted his countrymen to overcome fear. He believed in a new order which would reshape the character of the nation, to eradicate the impulse to violence, violence and ill-will from the individual and the society. He not only laid down his life to vindicate these values. It we can instil in our private and public conduct his spirit of tolerant, large-hearted humanity, so that different communities can exist side by side without conflict,

will have solved one of the most difficult problems of the modern world".

The Seminar is to evolve a practical scheme for educating the rural adult which should be capable of being immediately implemented in its general lines. It will split up for purposes of detailed work into four main study groups, each to tackle a distinct aspect of rural adult education.

When the Seminar course is completed about the beginning of December, its recommendations will, we presume, be both practically fruitful and acceptable.

Sri M. L. Malakul's remarks as to the real utility of literacy, and its place in the proper life of man are to be borne in mind:

"What is needed most is education, and literacy is just a medium through which this can be realised. Adult education is also concerned with healthy living, the means of living, social contact and culture. A man is no better off, if he is just be able to read and make some scribbling that goes for his name, if he still has to live in abject misery, in conditions of sanitation that are not fit for human beings.

He should know certain elements of good living. He should know how to produce crops well how to manage small industries, and he must realise his rights and duties to the immediate and to the larger communities. The concern of the Seminar will, therefore, be wider in scope than mere literacy.

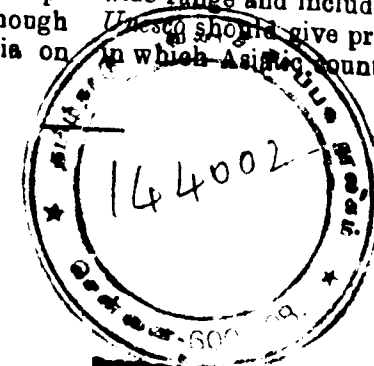
We think first of literacy because it is the first step. We understand literacy, and we seem so far to have concentrated more on literacy, but that was because these are criteria from which we can judge the progress. We often say that in such and such a country there is so much percentage of literates. Statistics is unfortunately a failing of human society. But we have no criteria from which we can judge the sanitary conditions of a village or community. We cannot indulge in statistics. We cannot know how well the children of a family have been taught and raised. We cannot tell how high the standard of culture of a village is. Had we known accurately indeed, we might be shocked and would deplore all the time wasted hitherto. These are the problems that we will face and thoroughly discuss at the Seminar. We shall try to pool good ideas for the benefit of those who can make use of them".

BOOK REVIEW

THE REPORT OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNESCO, HELD AT NEW DELHI IN APRIL 1949. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

This Report contains the speeches of Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad and the resolutions passed at the plenary meetings and the sub-commissions. Panditji gave a warning that we should give up the conception of our being superior to others, though a big burden had been cast upon India on

account of geographic, historical and cultural factors and it could not be shirked. The Maulana emphasized the fact that national cultures had a vital role to play in the development of world culture and that India might well influence the world to reach a higher level. He also hoped that the resolutions adopted by the Commission would be implemented soon. The recommendations of the Sub-Commissions cover a wide range and include proposals that the UNESCO should give priorities to those items in which Asian countries were interested.



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