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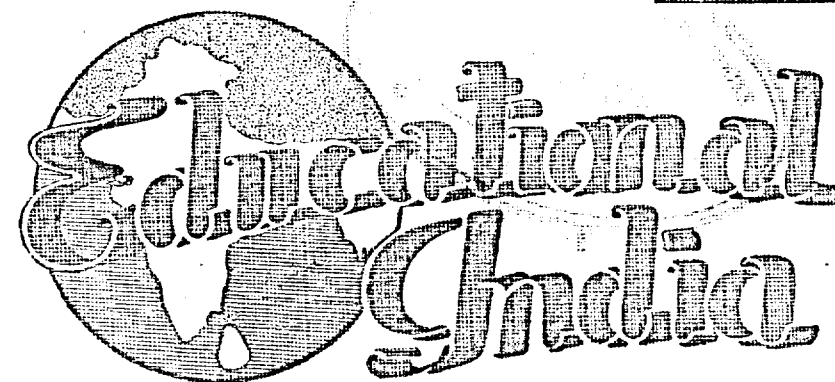
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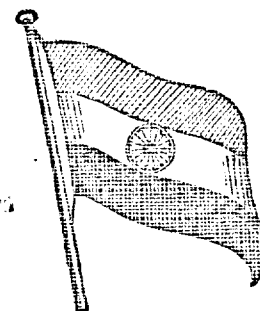


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EDUCATION DURING 1949-50 AND PROGRAMME FOR 1950-51

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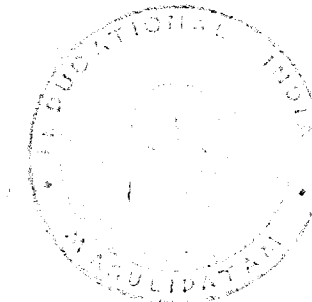
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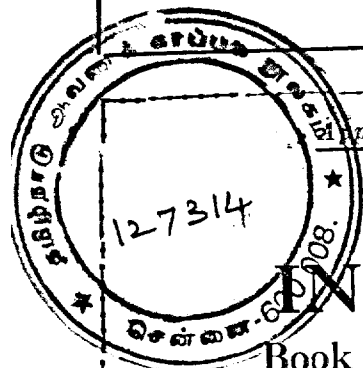
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Promotion of Social Understanding

What the Colleges are for

Prof. M. S. SRINIVASA SARMA, M. A.,

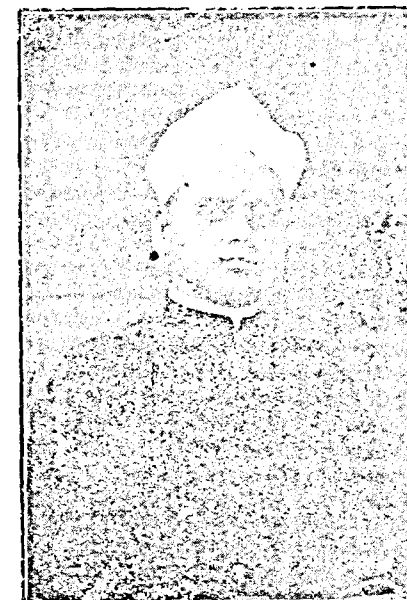
Principal, National College, Trichinopoly

FOR the building up of a united Free India it is indispensable that education should be so organised as to promote social understanding, and to develop social efficiency in the younger generation.

The college students are at a time of a life when impressions are freely received and assimilated, when the world was brought to love or frustration to endeavour, and when the appeal of idealism is most intense. Colleges therefore must influence them by instilling in them the fact of fellowship, the duty of service and the power of sacrifice, and combat the sectional movements that are clog

ging our progress. Adolescence is the period of intensive building of social deals; and the fruit of education is the training of the young to forget the self in the service of the community. There is really no division between self-culture and service; in fact culture is the power to renounce. A human soul reveals itself to another only in love and sympathy. To give the lowly and the lost understanding and sympathy is to wash their sins and clean their stains. We are in danger of individual and

social disaster if we confine ourselves to our local, petty and selfish aims and interests. Modern medical psychology regards self-centredness as the primal evil. When anyone consciously lives for his own isolated



self with interests only for himself, he is unethical, anti-social. Not only that; for a man to have his interests turned in upon himself and not upon others is to have a man who is not likely to be healthy for long. Personal attention to the woes and difficulties of others, personal help rendered, personal advice given—in such seemingly small acts of goodwill is the leader

of men born. An education that brings up the young in entire indifference to the misery and poverty surrounding them is essentially a failure.

"Empathy"—The Secret of Social Power

To be moral is to develop a social attitude towards the human environment which culminates in the formation of "character". Character is the organised capacity for efficient social insight and social executive power. The secret of this power is to be found in "empathy".

This is a Greek term which means "feeling into;" and modern Psychology takes it to signify the ability to enter into and share the minds of others. Imagination plays an important part in empathy; for it is only by imagination that we can get outside of our own experience, identify ourselves with other people, and manifest a feeling of "*at-one-ment*" with them. It is empathy or social imagination that is suggested by such maxims as "putting ourselves in the other fellow's place," "seeing ourselves as others see us." In all enjoyment of art—poetry, painting, drama, music—empathy is at work. The inspired actor in a drama lives and feels the experiences of the character that he impersonates, and actually succeeds in producing similar emotional responses in the audience.

Care should be taken not to confuse empathy with *sympathy* which is sentimentalism, and *pity* which is domineering and condescending. These tend to build up a subtle egoism in the person, and weaken the springs of courage, confidence and self-respect in others. They are usually partial and one-sided as they attach themselves vehemently to those of blood relationship or to immediate associates in such a way as to favour them at the expense of others, and lead to positive injustice towards those beyond "the charmed circle".

Social life which is a cooperative enterprise is impossible without the ability to "identify" oneself with others. Without empathy we cannot appreciate the other man's point of view; nor can we realise that what hurts us and makes us unhappy will also make others miserable. It is the lack of empathy that is at the root of all misunder-

standings between husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants and teachers and pupils. Empathy which is socialised affection is the lubricant of social intercourse, and contributes effectively to the liberation from convention, fanaticism and bigotry. The neurotic, the criminal, the drunkard etc., are failures in life because they are lacking in fellow-feeling and social interest, i. e., empathy. Only in so far as man "identifies" himself with others and seeks a common good can there be association.

A Humanising Influence

All good things must be cultivated; they do not grow like weeds. The joy that comes from devotion to duty, self-forgetting zeal for a cause, and from service of man is the choicest fruit of discipline. We must therefore apply ourselves assiduously to the cultivation of human nature, and cleanse our minds of all its personal separatist tendencies, its filth of selfishness, greed and fear, clothe it in the royal robe of humanism, and give it its birthright of the joy of knowledge, of altruism and of brotherhood. Colleges can do much to bring home to the human mind the essential dignity and the high privilege of service, and teach the young how in serving their fellows and in bearing one another's burdens they may find the path of a perfect self-realisation. Social work is an organised attempt to aid certain disadvantaged classes, such as the victims of poverty, disease, ignorance, and faults of character. It includes the discovery and classification of the conditions of maladjustment, tracing their causes, and devising methods for their relief and if possible removal. It aims at the development of personality and group life. In fact

it is the establishment of human contacts which results in mutual understanding, tolerance and service. Social work is thus indispensable not only for "humanising" the collegemen and forming the character but also for social betterment and the removal of social wreckage caused by the complex modern civilisation. What is called the "character" of a person is really the product of the habits of good action; it does not consist in single solitary acts of goodness, but in the formation of grooves along which right activity smoothly runs. What is at first the long and hard won fruit of normal effort becomes, as a result of habit, ultimately the spontaneous expression of the "new nature" which has thus been born within us.

The College Atmosphere

A corporation of learning which a college is should encourage a commerce of ideas and the enrichment of life's values. A well planned programme of games and sports, a varied menu of debates, dramas and excursions—all backed up by an organised student body and encouraged by an enthusiastic, democratic staff should go a long way to make college life the lively, absorbing and delightful thing it ought to be. It is in the "give and take" of this active life that rough corners are knocked off, and adjustability and agreeable manners are cultivated. College tone and corporate life are educative forces of great potency. From this point of view the most valuable lessons which we may learn from English and American schools and colleges is their recognition of the value of the more purely social activities as a means of training the youth. Virtues do not grow in a Social Vacuum.

Voluntary spare-time service may be performed by small groups in organising night schools and lectures on a variety of topics in the slum areas and at local fairs. They can organise games for little children of the poorest quarters in the locality, and take them to museums, parks and exhibitions, and give them a pleasant outing. They may visit patients in the local hospital, and spread the smile of health and joy from bed to bed. They may be of service to them by writing letters to their relatives and friends, and read out newspapers or some interesting story. They may go in batches to the surrounding villages, sweep the streets and explain the principles of hygienic living. They can make themselves more serviceable by studying for the First Aid Examination of the St. John's Ambulance Association. They can investigate and alleviate cases of student poverty in their own midst. A small batch may be asked to study the quality of stuff sold at coffee clubs and eating houses. Sanitary supervision of the college may be entrusted to another batch to prevent committing of nuisance in the precincts of the college. All students can spread the cult of Swadeshi by example as well as advice.

All these varied activities of a college which are sometimes called "extra-curricular" are the most successful in nursing a social outlook and spiritual power in the students training them in sympathetic understanding and readiness to serve and suffer, and developing in them mutual forbearance and tolerance. It is these things that create an "atmosphere". The atmosphere which we associate with Oxford or Eton is not, like genius, a gift of the gods, something that human

resources cannot produce. It is the resultant of determinable and controllable influences which every college must master and appropriate. If an institution lacks this atmosphere, it cannot be an effective educational instrument. Individuals flourish and wither away like the grass of the fields, but the fruits of their work endure and make possible the development of further activities and thus lay the foundation for a noble "tradition". It is such a college that offers the best laboratory in the world for the early training in social adjustment, altruism, thoughtfulness and personal service to "the down and out". Just as a squad of slouching, sprawling hooligans and wastrels are transformed by the Drill Sergeant into the smart, upstanding, accurately marching man of the army manoeuvres by regular, strenuous, prolonged and repeated drill, so also the young men at the college adopt its noble traditions and acquire the art of acting together and working for others as the fruit of long discipline directed to that end.

"Joy in Other's Joy"

There is a French proverb which says that "to understand everything is to forgive everything." It is only by developing imaginative sympathy that we can understand or influence the life around us. There must be the desire to *understand* human weakness and imperfections rather than a tendency to condemn people for what they are. The spirit of youth is hope, buoyancy, love and selfconfidence; and

life belongs to those who love, who hope, who serve. We cannot utterly perish if we work for noble things. It is possible for every intelligent being to be serviceable in some measure, and thereby share in the creative spirit of increasing the joy in the world—joy in loving service and constructive system—not merely sympathy in sorrow though that transforms sorrow—but what the Germans call "*mitfreude*." Sympathy in joy, joy in other's joy. This creative sympathy succeeds in helping people to enjoy work, and to fulfil the healthy and happy tendencies of human nature. This spirit of service shows itself not in the quantity but in the sincerity and wholeheartedness of one's gift. The students therefore should be encouraged to undertake social, economic and sanitary surveys of the conditions of their native villages and towns. Floods, famines, cyclones, earthquakes and epidemics cause untold suffering; and these are occasions for the students to show their sympathy and large-heartedness by themselves contributing what they can afford foregoing their tiffins and denying to themselves a new shirt or a coat, and organising benefit performances of their musical and dramatic talents. The colleges therefore can do much for the advancement of social understanding and the promotion of the spirit of service and sacrifice; for it is there the pick of the nation—the intelligentsia of tomorrow—spends the years of its 'greatest hopes and most praiseworthy aspirations.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING *

S. R. DONGERKERY,

Liejistrar, University of Bombay

It is generally agreed that universities have three important functions to fulfil, namely, the transmission and diffusion of culture, the advancement of knowledge and the preparation of its *alumni* for a specific profession or calling. If one looks at the origin of the universities of Western Europe, one finds that preparation for the learned professions was the main object with which they were founded. The licence to teach was the earliest of academic degrees. The mediaeval universities of Europe trained up their students in theology, medicine and law. The Scottish universities were established for the chief purpose of preparing men for the priesthood and the ministry. The ancient English Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and even some of the universities in the United States of America such as Yale, Columbia and Harvard, continued for a long time to look upon the training of candidates for the ministry as their main function. The transmission of culture was incidental to professional training, inasmuch as those who intended to become ministers of the Church, teachers, doctors and lawyers required learning and a general or cultural education, apart from special instruction in the technique of their professions. The earliest Indian universities were also founded primarily with the idea of training up men who could assist in the running of the administrative machinery of the then government. The

idea of vocational training being provided by the universities is, therefore, not a new one. It is true that in more recent times greater emphasis has been laid on the other two aspects of university education, namely, the diffusion of culture through teaching, and the advancement of knowledge through research.

The term 'vocational training' is understood in two different senses. It has a wide and a narrow meaning. In its narrow meaning it is contrasted with professional training. Professions are occupations which have their roots in cultural and idealistic soil. They are regarded as altruistic while vocations are labelled as utilitarian, since the majority of those who follow them are more concerned with the quick returns they bring than with the opportunity they provide for the service and amelioration of society. In the present talk, vocational training has been taken in the wider sense of occupational training, or preparation for the life work of the student, whether it be the profession of a lawyer, a doctor or a teacher to which it is customary to apply the epithet 'learned' or that of an engineer, a chemist or a business man. The University Education Commission refers to vocational training of this kind when it speaks of education having the double aim of preparing for a particular vocation and also for citizenship in a democratic community.

Cardinal Newman propounded the view that university education should be primarily non-vocational. In fact, almost till the close of the

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