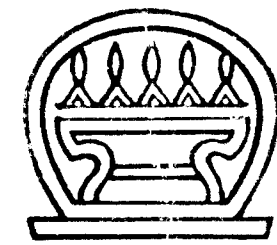


Nai Takinn Sevagram

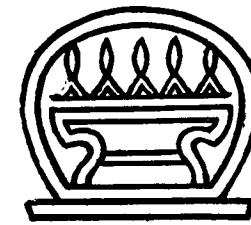
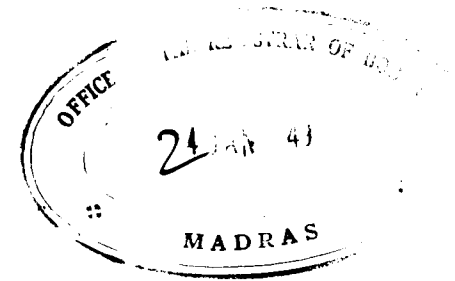


NAI TALIM SEVAGRAM



HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH
WARDHA

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Hindustani Talimi Sangh
Wardha

T. M. H.

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EDUCATION FOR LIFE

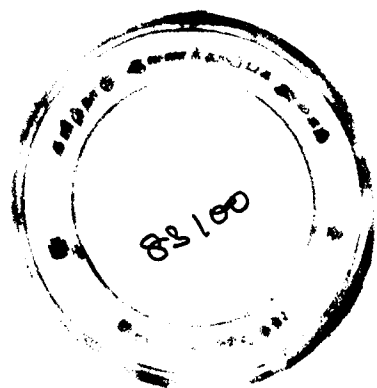
GANDHIJI defined 'Nai Talim' or the New Education as 'Education for Life'. "The field of 'Nai Talim'", he said, "extends from the moment a child is conceived in the mother's womb to the moment of death".

But the definition "Education for Life" goes deeper. It not only refers to the span or length, but also the content and depth of the educational process. It means that education is both for and through life. "Education covers the entire field of life", Gandhiji said, "there is nothing in life however small, which is not the concern of education".

"You should bear in mind", he said further, "that this primary education would include the elementary principles of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, of doing their own work and helping their parents at home".

Education, thus conceived, becomes co-extensive with life itself—with cleanliness and health, with citizenship, work and worship, play and recreation—all this not as separate subjects of the syllabus but as inter-related processes for the development of a harmonious and balanced life.

The ultimate objective before this 'New Education', however, is not only a balanced and harmonious individual, but a balanced and harmonious society—in Gandhiji's words, "a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom".



Preparation for this 'Juster Social Order' is thus the foundation on which the house of the new education is to be built; children, therefore, begin their education with practical training in this 'New Citizenship.'

This training cannot be given theoretically through lectures but has to be given through living experience by sharing in the life of a community. Unfortunately, no such communities are available where students of Nai Talim may receive their understanding and practical experience of citizenship in a 'Juster Social Order'.

The first task before an institution of Nai Talim is, therefore, the building up of such a co-operative self-sufficient community—a community, which will produce its necessities in food, clothing, shelter and tools—not as processes of production and commerce but as educational processes for a balanced life—a community which will be able to meet many of its æsthetic, spiritual and intellectual needs—creating its own art, music, literature and drama—and above all a community where man will be respected as man and there will be no distinction of caste, class or creed—where all religions and faiths of mankind will be equally honoured.

An attempt is being made by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh at Sevagram to translate this educational philosophy into practice by the building up of such a community. This community consists of both children and adults, pupils, teachers and workers—men and women from all the provinces of India, from all castes, and representing the different world-faiths. All the members of this community take their share in the sanitation and preventive health work of the community, work on the farm and in the community kitchen, learn the whole process of cloth-making from cotton to cloth, nurse their sick, eat together in the community kitchen and meet for community worship at the hour of dawn and in the evening. This community also does not seek passive entertainment outside, but has its own art-society, music-society and literary societies, and organises celebrations and festivals where men, women and children from the surrounding villages are invited.

This educational community is divided into five departments according to the age and needs of the group it serves :—

1. The pre-basic school and grades I to II of the basic school form the first educational unit. It is not a residential institution. The children and teacher live

in their homes in the village and come to the school which is situated in the heart of the village.

The teacher divides his time between the school and the homes of the children and considers himself a worker in adult as much as in child education.

2. The other activity which works from home to home and not in the form of a single institution is the department of adult education. This department is concerned with all the problems of village life. Thus it is concerned with the filth before the doorsteps and in the lanes, with the epidemics, with birth and with death, with illness, with making of not only cloth, but of baskets, mats and the earthen pots in the villagers' homes, with their food, their drinking water, with the working tools of the villagers, their quarrels with their neighbours, their vices, their recreation and their fairs and festivals. It is an education which has its roots in the realities of village life as it is to-day and which is working towards a happy, healthy and clean village community.
3. The third department is the residential basic school 'Anandaniketan,' for children from seven to fourteen. The programme of the school includes sanitation, health-work, kitchen-work and gardening, but the basic craft round which the educational programme is mainly built up is cloth-making from the cultivation of cotton to the finished cloth. All the knowledge is to be given and attitudes and habits are to be developed round this basic craft.
4. A fourth department has just been started for boys and girls who have completed seven years of basic education. This is the post-basic department corresponding to the University Stage. This aims at preparing the students for their future vocation and give a general education through vocation. This department has at present taken up agriculture, horticulture, dairying, weaving and oil-pressing, health and music. It is hoped to develop all the nation-building activities through this department.
5. A fifth section is the training institute, which prepares village workers, teachers, professors of training schools and organisers and supervisors of basic

education. This has a special section for training women village workers for the Kastur Ba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. There are about 100 students, both men and women, from all the provinces of India under training. Their educational programme includes sanitation, health, gardening, and agriculture, spinning and weaving, social training, cultural activities and professional training as teachers and village workers.

The last word of all remains with the originator of the scheme :—

“ If we want to eliminate communal and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education I have adumbrated. That plan springs out of non-violence”. The educational centre at Sevagram is making an earnest endeavour to work according to their ‘ plan ’ which ‘ springs out of non-violence ’, and builds up a society which will be ‘ free from communal and international strife ’, and lead to world peace and brotherhood of man.

A year ago a representative from ‘ The Times of India ’ came to Sevagram and took a few photographs of the activities of the educational community. These photographs were later published in the ‘ Illustrated Weekly of India ’, under the title ‘ Better living for India ’. Some friends expressed a wish to see these photographs together as a complete picture of Nai Talim in all its aspects.

We are, therefore, publishing these pictures with short explanatory notes. We hope it may prove useful to educationists and to all others who are interested in the creation of a new ‘ juster ’ social order through education.

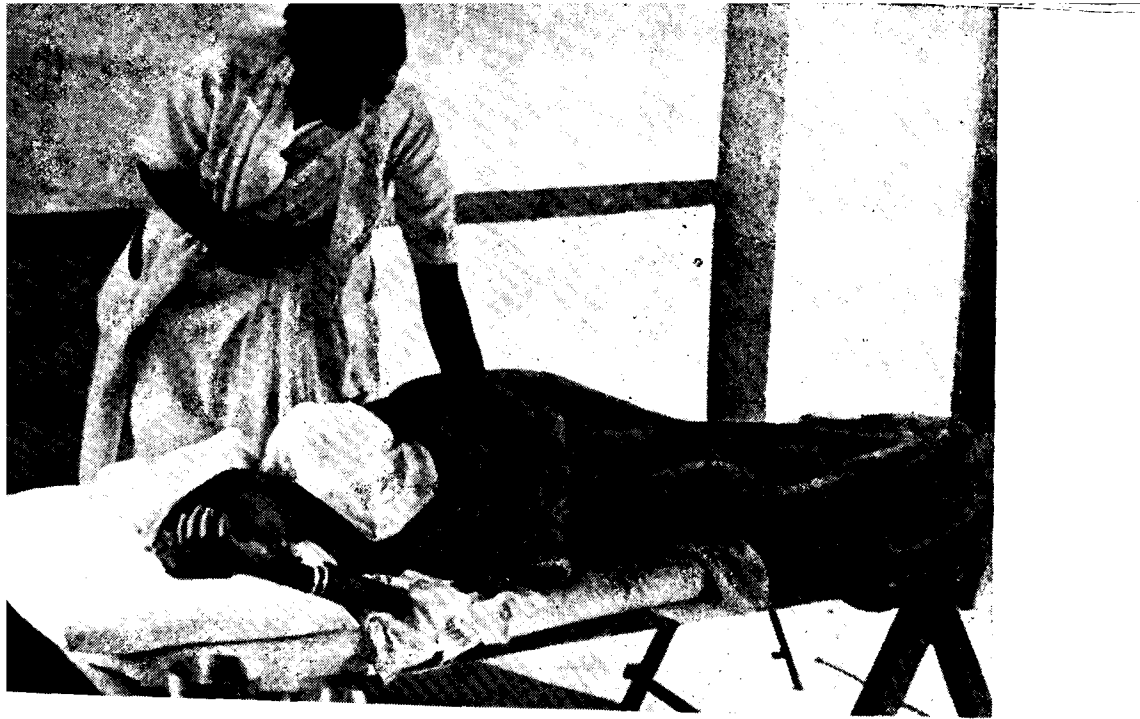
We express our thanks to Mr. S. Jepson, Editor, ‘ Times of India Illustrated Weekly ’, for permission to reprint these photographs in book form. We are thankful to Sri V. R. Chitra, Deputy Director of Cottage Industries, Government of India, to Marcella Hardy, Editor, ‘ Silpi ’, and to Marjorie Sykes for their help in seeing to the get-up and printing of the album.

SEVAGRAM,
30th September, 1948. }

E. W. ARYANAYAKAM,
Secretary,
Hindustani Talimi Sangh.



BEGINNING THE DAY WELL: The preparatory class prepares, serves, and enjoys a meal, which is so planned as to make good any deficiencies of the average home diet. The children bring their own vessels and carry out the whole activity; the teacher watches from the background, ‘ seen but not heard ’.



NAI TALIM begins with the health of the child even before birth. Here a doctor gives a liver injection to an anaemic expectant mother.

PUTTING DROPS IN AN INFANT'S EYES. The Welfare Centre is open every school day, and as the Health Worker is the wife of one of the school teachers, they are able between them to assist the health of the child from birth to adolescence. They take every opportunity, at the Centre, at school and in homes, to teach mothers good habits in cleanliness, cooking, diet and everything else pertaining to infant and child welfare.



CLASSES I & II AT CRAFT-WORK. Carding, sliver-making and various methods of takli spinning. The yarn made at this stage is not very strong, so it is twisted double on the apparatus behind the teacher (background) and then woven by him into coarse cloth, which the children wear. Children are encouraged to learn the lesson of self-help from the commencement of their education, and they generally show eagerness to do so.

GINNING AND CARDING with rod, plank and bamboo knife preparatory to making the slivers. Conscientiousness in every little detail is encouraged.





HEALTHY, CONGENIAL PLAY-WORK: Eleven-year-olds and twelve-year-olds picking cotton in the compound of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The Sangh claims that bright, clean, healthy youngsters like these, turned out after seven years of basic education, are not behind the pupils of the old primary schools in what are known as academic subjects, and are superior in knowledge relating to their lives and environment, including scientific knowledge and training in a productive craft. Seven years are considered to be the irreducible minimum essential from the point of view of self-sufficiency.

CHARKA SPINNING BY THE CHILDREN OF CLASS VI. This charka, being light, portable and easily kept in repair, is best for children of 10—12 years of age. And its output, being more than that of the takli, is adequate for self-sufficiency in clothing. When they have mastered this simple charka, they are 'promoted' to the more complicated charka on the



THE FINISHED YARN, wound into goondies by the spinners, is classified according to quality and count. Children in Class VI can spin up to 40 counts: average speed 260 yards an hour.

THE MAGAN CHARKA doubles the output by the use of both hands, the wheel being kept in motion by the feet. From the time they begin their craft work in the preparatory class, the pupils are encouraged to be ambidextrous; and they find this an invaluable acquirement when they reach the Magan Charka standard.





THE LAST STAGE : Pupils of Class VII at work in the weaving shed. All the processes from cotton to cloth are mastered during the course of seven years. Children gain self-confidence, and their personality is developed through such achievement.



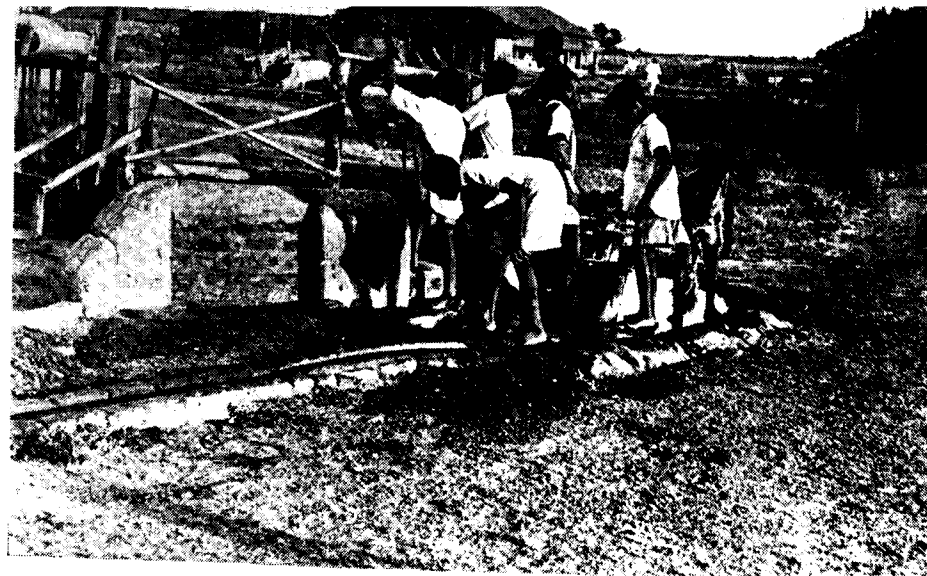
MORNING CLEAN-UP : College students set out at Sevagram, some to empty the rubbish baskets that abound in convenient but unobtrusive places, others with picks and shovels to clean the latrines, and others with brooms to sweep the compound.

JUST BEFORE WEAVING : As the yarn is being wound off the skeins, the teacher discusses the quantity of yarn required for setting up the loom, shows how to calculate spinning time involved and wages earned, and thus to estimate what the price of the cloth should be.



URINAL BUCKETS are being carried to be emptied in the compost - manure pits.

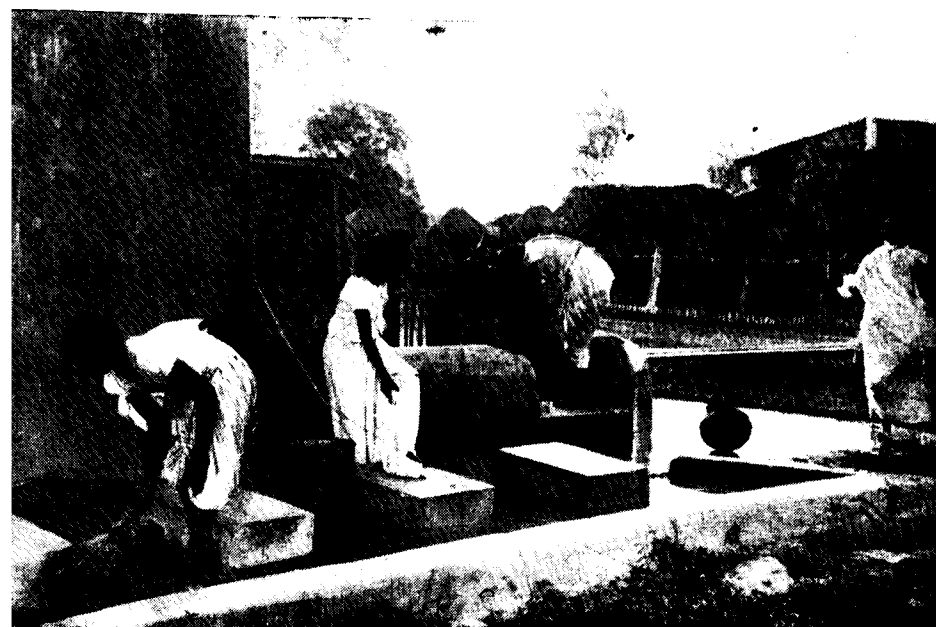




AT THE MEN'S WELL: Schoolboys sweeping, swilling and cleaning up generally. Note the simple contrivance for drawing water.

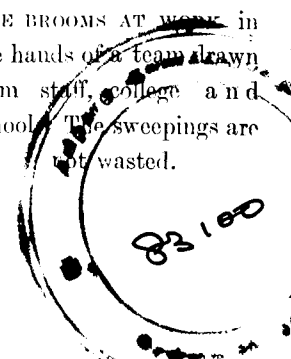


CUTTING AND CARRYING grassy rubbish from field and hedgerow for the compost heap. Sweepings are added to this. Nothing that can possibly be of use in this direction is wasted, even if it entails work less congenial than this healthy outdoor exercise.



AT THE WOMEN'S WELL: School girls do their daily washing. While there is no hard-and-fast demarcation of duties, and everyone, adult or adolescent, cultivates the spirit of lending a hand at anything, certain types of work have, through usage, become the special concern of certain groups, and by mutual understanding and eager co-operation; confusion and duplication are avoided.

THE BROOMS AT WORK in the hands of a team drawn from staff, college and school. The sweepings are not wasted.





SELF-EXPRESSION IN THE ART CLASS: The beautiful screen is there for inspiration, not to be copied ; for, copying has no place in the teaching of art according to Nai Talim, except to a small extent among the oldest children, after five or six years of free self-expression.



THE ASSEMBLY ELECTS ITS CABINET: The Talimi Sangh is a miniature democracy in which all rules are made by a general assembly ; every one has one vote.



CHILDREN OF CLASS VII doing fresco painting on the wall of the buildings.

CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT to sing devotional songs in chorus.





FOLK DANCE combining self-expression and music. Children and grown-ups alike delight in all forms of folk dancing, and they find plenty of opportunity for this, as regular classes are run.

A HEALTHY MIND IN A HEALTHY BODY: Class VII boys doing their daily *asan* exercises, which are usually followed by *Surya Namaskara*.



THIS GAME REQUIRES NO EQUIPMENT: It is in complete tune with one of Nai Talim's principles—to achieve the maximum of effect, or enjoyment, with the minimum of expense.



BOYS OF CLASS VII ARE MAKING BREAD : Cooking in the community kitchen is done by the staff and students.



SCHOOL MEAL in the open air : All sit together and eat the same food.



CHILDREN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY to meet and mix with visitors from all parts of the world and to learn their world geography. Here is a couple washing dishes with the children

WASHING-UP : Students, staff, visitors and children—old and young, male and female—each cleans his or her own utensil with wood-ash and water : no soap is needed. The specially public spirited take a cooking pot to clean as well as their own personal things. Talk flows freely, and ideas are exchanged





TEACHERS UNDER TRAINING are going out of the main hall after a craft class in spinning. Note the simple craft equipment in their hands.



TEACHERS TAKE A COURSE IN SPINNING.

CRAFT INSTRUCTOR: showing the cloth woven out of the yarn spun by the trainees during the first term. This adds interest and reality to their work.

MEN AND WOMEN IN THE CRAFT CLASS make slivers from carded cotton for spinning. The Sangh trains instructors for Basic Training Schools and Colleges deputed by the various provincial governments, averaging eighty trained graduates per year.





DEVELOPING KEEN SENSES :
Pupils spin while listening
to a talk—not too easy as
they are expected to do the
manual work well while
imbibing what is said.

FLAG SALUTATION has been observed every Monday at 7-30 a.m. regularly since the inception of the Basic School in 1939. Even when hoisting the flag was illegal during the 1942 movement, the Basic School at Sevagram continued doing so, which meant that some of the members of the staff went to jail.



SRI E. W. ARYANAYAKAM at work in his office. This office building is a simple mud-hut which was built at the cost of Rs. 700 in 1939. It has become historical as the place from which the 'Quit India' resolution was passed by the Working Committee of the A. I. C. C. in July 1942.



Group of trainees and pupils of Nai Talim at Sevagram in November 1948. Dr. Zakir Hussain, Sri Asha Devi and Sri Aryanayakam are seen in the centre.



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