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Education a Glorious Mess of Magnificent Misadventure

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'GOD, ONE GOD, THE ONLY GOD'



FIRST INSTALMENT
COMPLETE IN ITSELF

What is wrong with our Education?

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PREFACE

Always begin at the beginning. Remember that, in everything, *you* have to start from *yourself*. With *yourself*. And *you are you*, remember again, *without* your own knowledge or consent! All you can do, therefore, is to be *yourself*. Never be so stupid as to try to be somebody else! Be sure always that you are you. But, a *very good you*. A strong, mighty, invincible, *good you*. There is nothing more to be done. Live, and let live. And in doing so, be *ever ready to serve*. Serve your own life organism, and serve any one who *wants your service*. And give that service *just to satisfy the felt needs* of the life organism of the *individual who seeks it*. Never judging for that organism, and *never forcing anything on it*. Never obtrude, never hurt.

If I know anything about anything, it is certainly something about education. I served nearly thirty years in all, successively, under the Tellicherry municipal council, the Basel German mission, the municipal council, Palghat, and lastly Government. In different educational capacities. As a school-assistant, high school headmaster, college lecturer, vice-principal, and principal. Besides having been member of several educational boards. And I was, first, proctor and afterwards warden, of a fairly big college hostel for boys. At the Teachers' College, Saidapet, for five years,

I was closely associated with the training of graduate teachers for their work. And I have seen, more or less intimately, something of their residential life at college. Seen also, in detail, the work of each department and each section of that institution. So, I am supposed to know something about our school and college life. And I took a great deal of pride for the share I had in all this educational work, when I was actually engaged in it.

But now, with my thoughts maturing, and watching the work from outside, as a mere interested spectator, I cannot help feeling greatly amused at my own enormous stupidity, in having contributed my mite vigorously, and with enthusiasm, to the 'glorious mess' I have tried to picture in the following pages. I did my work in the honest belief that I was only discharging a sacred duty, imposed upon me by the high positions of trust and responsibility, I have had the honour of holding. For which, let me not forget to add here, with deep gratitude, I was always very liberally paid. May I, however, never again have the misfortune to get entangled into that 'mess', however glorious it may be!

Education is really a subject of infinite magnitude. Literally infinite. For, it is co-extensive with the life of the individual. And the life of the individual is one with the infinite life, the life of the infinite universe, sometimes known also as nature. True education can therefore come only from nature. And human education is not education at all, except in a very special, qualified sense. The point examined in this instalment of our present discussion is: 'What is wrong with our education?' In the next one, I will make an

attempt to find the correct answer to the question: 'What is wrong with man?' And, the point or points that may have to be discussed after that, will be announced later on. When exactly the second instalment will be ready, is more than I can tell at this moment. Much will depend on the kind of reception accorded to this one by the public. Lest this uncertainty should cause any unnecessary annoyance to the reader, I have taken care to give the present instalment a self-contained completeness of its own.

I wish to make three things quite clear. They are *very important*. *First*, that it is *not* my point at all that all teaching and learning, and all artificialities, are to be severely eschewed. *Second*, that, except where names have been specifically mentioned, nothing in the following pages is intended to have any particular reference to any specific individual or body of individuals, or any specific government, or officer, or anybody else. Mine is simply an honest, straightforward attempt to make a clear statement of a few things I know to be true. In the true spirit of the saying: 'They that have ears to hear, let them hear'. If, nevertheless, anybody should, unfortunately, feel that anything I had said hit him, I should be very sorry for it, but the fault would not be mine. And then, — *Third*, that it is my considered opinion that that trite old saying that 'self-government is the best government', applies really *only* to the self of the individual. *Never* to the state. Or any society at all. Except, perhaps, in a very special sense.

My most sincere thanks are due to an old, faithful friend of mine, *Mr. P. Shekharan*, Artist Photographer, Tellicherry, for his very valuable service, cheerfully rendered, as

my amanuensis for the rather tiresome work of producing my manuscripts. To him again, and another good friend, and neighbour, *Mr. Kolarath Raghavan*, Editor, the *Ranjini*, Tellicherry, for very kindly assisting me in the equally tiresome work of scrutinising the proof-sheets. And to yet another old friend, *Mr. C. K. Damodaran*, my printer, for the great personal interest he has shown in the printing of this book.

Just one word more. And that is, concerning my punctuation. I have preferred a sort of rhetorical punctuation to the ordinary grammatical one. For which I make no apology. Because it seems to me to be much less artificial. And in any event, it has helped me to express my thoughts with greater ease, and, I hope, also clearness.

Tellicherry, July, 1939

P. Shankunny

EDUCATION A GLORIOUS MESS OF MAGNIFICENT MISADVENTURE

By P. SHANKUNNY, *Tellicherry*,

SOMETIME IN THE I. E. S.

What is Wrong with Our Education?

Is man really the lord of creation? Or, only the foot of creation? The correct answer seems to be: 'Potentially the lord, but actually, very often, the other'. It is a sadly interesting fact, that our learning, our so-called education, has, very often, the alarming effect of making fools of us all.

'What is wrong with our education?' shouts an embarrassed earth to the skies. And echo answers from the clouds, laughing: 'Education.'

What exactly does that answer mean? Just ask yourself. Very quietly. And seriously. Well, it means that what is really wrong with our education is not its manner, or even its matter, or anything else *about* education, but education itself. That is to say, *education is, in itself, a wrong step in life*. It is clearly a mistake. A tragic and disastrous mistake!

You cannot educate a natural being to live its own life. Nature must do it. And nature alone can do it. What you have done so far, and are, ever striving to do, in the name

of education, without, of course, your realising that that is all that you are capable of doing, is to make laborious and expensive efforts to adapt human beings to mere artificialities of life. But the artificialities of life, you know, are not the essence of life. Nor are they essential to the healthy growth or progress of life.

Man has, at all times, devised and employed means for the purpose — and in the hope — of enabling him to live a better, richer, greater life. The desire to live such a life is quite a natural one, in the sense that it is a direct prompting of nature, from within the human organism. There must be, therefore, in nature, also a very simple and direct, but still perfect, means of gratifying that desire. For, *it is impossible to suppose that nature is not solvent enough to honour her own cheques*. Is our education, then, that simple, direct, perfect means? And, if not, is it another means of equivalent value? Or, of any value at all? It is staggering to think that the only true answer to each one of these three questions, is a very plain, unambiguous, definite 'No'.

Our so-called 'education for life' is, on the very face of it, *wholly artificial*. And useful only as a means of enabling us to enjoy (? or, suffer ?) mere artificialities of life. Enforced by misthinking wiseacres in authority, all human education is one glorious mess of misadventure. A hopelessly tangled mess of terrible misadventure! Its entirely artificial character is the simplest and most convincing evidence that nature, without its aid, would not be driven, in the department of human life, to go into voluntary liquidation!

Take a few of the greatest men and women you know, or have heard of. And ask yourself how much of their

greatness is really due to their education. You are not likely to find it an easy job to concoct a correct and true answer to that question. That is, if you asked the question with reference to their real life as men and women, quite apart from its merely artificial side. You will find your efforts fruitless. But you may not like to admit it. And, if you happened to be an inexorable votary of education, you would still prefer to say, at the end of a long, irrefutable argument from your opponent: 'Oh, the result of education cannot always be stated in specific terms of concrete advantages gained. But there is the general culture due to education, which serves as an immeasurable basis for all subsequent achievements.'

That is grand. Such a claim, it is, of course, very difficult to disprove. But it has one very serious defect. And that is, it is equally difficult to prove it. We might as well say that our achievements are all based upon a general culture which has come to us through the colour of our skin! Of course, our achievements, whatever they may be, could not have been made, except with the colour of our skin being there. What has been achieved, has been achieved. And there is no possibility of proving or disproving what those achievements *might have been*, if the colour of the skin had been different. It is just the same with this claim put forward on behalf of education. How could you prove what *might have been* the general culture of your educated men and women, if they had been without their education? On the other hand, you can easily establish that this general culture for good, which education is supposed to impart, is

a mere myth. Educate a scoundrel. And you make him simply an educated scoundrel!

The fact is, that *life does not want any of your education*, for it to live. Human life, in common with life in general, has the full ability to live itself out. It knows how to do it, without any education from you. And it would do it, in the very best possible manner, if you would only refrain from interfering with its own normal, natural course. Let life have full freedom to live, in its own natural glory. And you will then have that better, richer, greater life, for which mankind has always hungered. Your education can never help towards that end. A life encumbered with artificialities must be poorer, not richer, to that extent. Human education is, generally speaking, absurd, unnatural, useless, undesirable, and positively dangerous.

ABSURD

There is such a thing as the dynamic of nature, which pervades the entire universe. It can be known really, and in its fulness, only from within. And by each individual, only through his own self. But it can be known. And, by every individual. Left to himself, every individual is bound to realise it, sooner or later in life, without any teaching, by simply living his own life naturally. It is flowing unceasingly through everything, in all possible directions. And it is interflowing between the inside and outside of every separate thing, and also between each separate thing and its surroundings. But we will speak here, for the present, only about human beings and their surroundings. Each moment of his life, the individual finds himself in an actual life situation

which is acting on his organism, as a natural stimulus, automatically calling forth from that organism, a response, in the shape of a re-action, — the most appropriate and adequate possible. This stimulus-response circuit of activity is really only an outward manifestation of the play of life in the individual and his surroundings, which is going on within. And, it indicates the growth of life in the individual. Each moment of that life is a preparation for the next. And this preparation alone can be described as a real preparation for life. Or, as real education. It may be described as natural education. But really, nature does not educate. Not, at any rate, in the way that we are trying to do. She simply lets life grow, and go on. One of the results of that growth is that, every moment of its progress naturally serves as a preparation and education for the next. Life is going on, education is only one of the incidental concomitants of that natural process. Each incident in the progress of his life is an experience of the individual. And this experience, recorded in his consciousness, is his knowledge, which, when it has sunk deep enough into the fabric of his being, matures into wisdom. The process of gaining this knowledge, and, in a secondary sense, also the knowledge itself, so gained, is learning. Natural learning, if you please. It is obviously important to remember that this education, knowledge, and learning are all natural. Natural education, natural knowledge, and natural learning. So, in nature, we have, first of all, and throughout, life actually lived. Lived as life, and for life's own sake. And, that always gives us all the necessary education, and its concomitant knowledge, and learning. This is precisely what seems to be implied in our simple,

plain-spoken grandmother's ancient saying: '*Live and learn*'. But we, who have reached proud heights of extremely complicated, artificial development, are rarely willing to accept plain facts at their true face value. And, we are always laboriously trying to put the cart before the horse, by devising all manner of schemes to base life on education, secure education through knowledge, and attain knowledge by learning. What a grand and glorious reversal of nature's order! And how thorough! When the sun is exactly overhead, we have our shadow precisely under our feet. And we know it. But who would attempt to utilise that knowledge to bring his shadow under his feet with the object of getting the sun overhead of him? Yet, is it not a very similar thing that is sought to be done in human education? And how would it improve matters, if that education consisted mainly in imparting second-hand knowledge, and the method employed even for that purpose, was the method of third-rate teaching and learning?

Life, it has to be remembered, is a natural thing. If you want to realise its inherent joy, you must live it naturally. You could certainly do it. And very easily, but for the very painful fact that our artificial education, and our misguided civilisation have practically reduced human life wholly to a mere bundle of artificialities and conventions. For many years, without a break, we have been brought up, and we have lived, under purely artificial conditions, to which we have, therefore, become habituated, to our cost. And, our habits of life have taken such deep root in us, that we are really incapable now, without mighty, deliberate efforts, even to see the difference between real, natural life and the artificialities of life. And the inevitable consequence has

been the greatest tragedy of life. Namely, a hopeless twist given to all correct ideas of what are known as the values of life. For most of us today, the natural part of our life is not its essential part, but a mere peg as it were, on which we could very conveniently hang all its artificialities. For us today, these artificialities seem to contain all the treasure! They form the priceless reality!

The full gravity of this fatal error has to be realised, first. And then, unless we are determined, through grossly misdirected, insatiable greed for mere material gain, to plunge headlong into a clearly apprehended error, we must firmly turn back from it. And re-start along the right lines. Life can be lived naturally. And its glorious inherent joy, fully realised. Without the slightest danger of mankind, as a whole, sinking into savagery and cannibalism, or falling into a state of helplessness. Let your life live and grow, naturally. Getting into nothing but natural relations with anything. Even with the mere artificialities of life, such as it may be necessary for it to contact. Then, it will reveal itself. Reveal itself in the fulness and all the richness possible for it. And, all the natural education, and knowledge, and learning that it has any need of, will come to it, in due course. Also quite naturally. And without anybody having to seek it, or to work for it, in anticipation of some need arising in the undeterminable future. And each individual will, further, make, or seek and find, every such artificiality as his own life organism felt impelled to obtain.

Natural life, naturally lived, is always in direct intimate contact with nature, whatever may be the artificialities with which it may be surrounded. In direct intimate contact, not

only with the outside of nature, but also with the inside of it, what may be described as the inner spirit of nature. And in close, conscious touch with God. And, life so lived, will reveal itself to its full dimensions. And revel in its own natural joy of infinite glory. That life, you will find, is not in your power to make. You can simply live it. All efforts to improve upon it are vain, and arise out of mere ignorance. It is absurd to attempt, or hope, to teach a natural being how to realise its own natural life. And, without that natural life being fully realised, at each step of its progress, nothing else can ever succeed. Not a single artificiality can avail. For, after all, the greatest of your artificialities could succeed only as a mere artificiality, and cannot, in the nature of things, help to make a natural thing any the richer, in reality. Would anybody ever think of attempting to paint a natural flower, with the object of improving its appearance? Or, to spray it with scent, in order to make it more sweet-smelling?

If you want to enjoy natural, cool, fresh water, you must take it direct from the mountain spring. You might not, indeed, like to drink spring water! And you might want to make it agreeable to your taste, by mixing with it, for instance, some milk and fruit juice and sugar-candy. And you might further like to make it cooler by icing the mixture. That might be a very delicious drink. But it is not natural, cool, fresh water. That is the point. You are, however, lucky that you could reject the natural water which did not agree with you, and accept a substitute for it which did agree. In the case of your life, on the contrary, you have no such choice or alternative. And, everything else you may want, has to be built on that natural life, which impaired,

or interfered with, in any way, or to any extent, everything else is bound to be at sixes and sevens. And who has that thorough knowledge of the structure of the individual's life organism, which is necessary for handling it without causing any damage to its extremely fine tissues or texture?

Nor is it correct to think that, for natural life to be lived naturally, a knowledge of science is necessary. Science can give absolutely no help. Science is only an honest attempt to understand nature. Its approach to nature is only *from without*. Science can understand only the outside of nature. And even in those instances in which it is supposed to go into the inside of nature, it can really get into direct touch only with the outside of that inside. And science views each individual thing only in its general aspects, treating all its purely individual features, which really give it its individuality, as mere exceptions. But, in natural life, each individual knows himself *from within*. And every one of his individual features is a living reality to him. He knows himself from within as nobody else could ever know him. And there is the possibility of his knowing a great deal more. For, the way to the inside of nature lies, for each individual, through his own inside. Let the individual but look deep enough, inside of himself, and he will find the gate of heaven there. And the key of that gate is in his own hand. Would he make use of it? Or, would he prefer to sit and wait, putting his faith in science, which can only go round and round mother nature, like the inhabitants of Lilliput, round about the immense body of Gulliver? Even the most advanced science cannot know *you* as you know yourself. On the other hand *you* could know even the most

advanced science as that science knows itself. Does not that make it quite clear that, between you and the most advanced science, *you* are the greater? Then, try to understand that *you*, thoroughly. For, it is only through that *you*, that *you could know nature from her inside, and reach God. Science can know only the outside of nature and can never reach God.* Except, of course, in His material manifestations.

And now, we will turn to another absurdity of education, which is really not one single absurdity, but a medley of absurdities. And, they all lie more or less concealed in education, being so subtly woven into its very fabric. So that, they are easily overlooked, unless we looked for them with our eyes well open. We have, therefore, to look for them with a little particular care.

Quite a lot of knowledge is imparted in education. Both through language, and through activities. Through language, mainly in the ordinary class-room. And through activities, in the practical class, laboratory, manual workshop, the so-called industrial or vocational class, the stage, play-ground, and so on. Now, here is a very subtle point, which requires very, very careful attention and a willing understanding to appreciate it. Each one of the several items of all this educational work, however skilfully planned, is entirely artificial. The artificiality being peculiar to the conditions indispensable to the effective carrying out of work at the place of education. Whatever may be the character, substance or form of the work concerned, the work itself, and the circumstances under which it is done, are both, alike artificial. But, the learner, while going through this work, is at the same

time, unconsciously no doubt, living his natural life also, though, of course, very much hampered by the artificialities with which he is standing handicapped. To put it more plainly, the learner, taking his education, is, willy-nilly, living his own natural life, under the handicap of an artificial life enforced on him by wiseacres in authority. Now, the question is: 'If you lived your own natural life, under the handicap of a specific form of artificial life, for a certain period of time, how would that help you, afterwards, at the end of that time, as a preparation for living your own natural life, naturally?' Or, if you should say that, at the end of your education, you want to continue your life, again under artificial conditions, for example, as a worker in some bread-winning appointment or other arrangement, the same question has still to be faced: 'If you lived your own natural life, for a time, under the artificialities of your educational life, how would that, at the end of that time, serve you as a preparation for living your life again, under a *new* set of artificialities, namely, those peculiar to the appointment or profession concerned?' If you lived your life, for instance, say as a cobbler, for a number of years, would that stand you in good stead as any preparation at all, for continuing your life, at the end of that time, say as a goldsmith, or as a police officer or anything else? You might perhaps suggest that the artificialities of the educational life are very carefully compiled by selection from all departments of the ordinary life of civilised society. And that, therefore, they afford the necessary preliminary practice for most of the ordinary events of life. But, this is not true. Nor does it give a correct account of the actual structure, of the underlying idea, or purpose of education.

Even if the suggestion were true, or the description of education implied in it, correct, the answer to it is obvious. Why should any time or energy be wasted, and that, at enormous expense, both to the individual and the state, in going through what is, in that case, admittedly a mere duplication of a life that is going to be lived? If you want to be a swimmer, do you arrange for a preliminary course of practice, on dry land, of the mechanical movements of your body and its limbs, that must be brought into play in actual swimming? Would not that be a mere waste of time and energy? And a very stupid and mad waste? Would any one seek to justify it by pointing out that such a preliminary course would give plenty of very useful exercise generally to several of the muscles and limbs of the learner, which would stand him in good stead, not only in swimming, but also in numerous other ordinary activities of life? The truth is that, if you want to be a swimmer, you cannot do better than start swimming straightaway, rather than plan any preliminary course of exercises on dry land. Not only that, swimmers will tell you that, even in making such a start, it is very necessary and important that you should be careful to start your swimming exercises precisely where you wish to do your finished performances, after your training. For example, if you desire to be a river-swimmer, it is better to start practice in a river rather than in a pond. And, if you wish to be a sea-swimmer, you cannot do better than commence your practice straightaway in the sea. Then, why should you not let your life also start its practice, similarly, with life actually lived? That is, in normal life situations? How does any useless tomfoolery of a preliminary practice, in a

mere show of life, become necessary or desirable at all? Is that not an obviously absurd thing, to be avoided?

And what about the view taken of the whole matter, by the 'educands' themselves, to use an Americanism? Do *they* view it all in the same light as you? Or, with the same feelings? Or, with the same sense of appreciation of its usefulness to themselves, immediately, or in the near or distant future? If you left the matter entirely for them to decide, and if you further made it perfectly clear that your school, or university, or other education would not be taken into consideration at all, in the matter of the distribution of the loaves and fishes of appointments, or preference to any of the services, public or private, how many of your schools and colleges and universities, do you think, would remain open after such an announcement?

And then, what about the scheme of work itself? Let us see. First of all, there is the knowledge imparted through language. Practically the whole of this knowledge is ready-made and second-hand. Ready-made, in the sense that it is not the natural knowledge of the learner, come to him with his own experience of life, actually lived. And second-hand, not merely because it is the natural knowledge of somebody else, but also because it is imparted to the learner, not directly, but only through words. The difference between this kind of knowledge and natural knowledge, naturally gained, is all-important. And must never be overlooked. *Natural knowledge is, in a sense, the language in which nature speaks to the individual.* When everything is all right with him, naturally, that knowledge comes to him in company with a perfect peace and joy, which tells him

plainly that he must not do anything then, to disturb their continuance. On the other hand, as soon as anything has gone wrong, or is wanted, that fact is communicated to the individual in the shape of a pain and a definite specific craving of the organism, from within. The peace and joy of the individual having got disturbed in some definite specific manner, and to a definite specific extent, the organism prompts some definite specific activity on the part of the individual, to remedy the defect, whatever it may be, and recover or re-establish the correct condition of peace and joy. It is quite clear that this knowledge of something having gone wrong, which calls for correction, and this urge of the organism, to some specific activity which would remedy the defect, could come *only to the individual concerned*, and *to nobody else*. And natural knowledge, every time it occurs, permeates as it were, the entire fabric of the organism, into which it sinks, and, maturing in time, crystallises into wisdom. None of these things happen in any ready-made, second-hand knowledge. And, imparted through words, even that knowledge carries no guarantee that it has been conveyed or received with anything like precision. Such knowledge is a mere encumbrance to the mind, which it very often misleads, hampering, and even distorting, its natural activities. At best, it can only serve as information. But, what fraction of all the precious information driven into the learner, in education, does actually come in useful to him in his later life, for promoting any of his real life purposes?

In the practical classes, laboratories and manual workshops, the learner is enabled to reach knowledge through

his own activities, usually under instructions given in words. These instructions, though conveyed in words are, however, quite capable of being expressed and understood with precision, as they relate to mere artificialities. The inherent inability of language, even one's own mother-tongue, to convey knowledge with precision does not, therefore, matter here. And, the knowledge which the learner is enabled to capture, cannot be condemned either, as altogether second-hand. Obviously, it is first-hand knowledge, reached directly by the learner's own efforts. Still, it is very different from natural knowledge. Nor can it claim to be on a par with natural knowledge, in value. For, natural knowledge comes with each natural experience of natural life, naturally lived. But, here it is not natural knowledge, we have. It is only direct knowledge, reached directly, or at first-hand, and to that extent therefore, naturally, but under entirely artificial conditions. And, this knowledge is only some second-hand knowledge, already known, and only verified by first-hand experience, artificially experienced. It is, therefore, not the genuine natural knowledge of life's own experience. That knowledge is never reached, except through life's own natural experiences. Thus, the knowledge obtained through the activities we have noticed, may be often very interesting. And it certainly has its own value. But it has *not* that life value which it is supposed by the educational agencies to have.

In the industrial and vocational classes, there is no doubt an effort is made to introduce the learner to some of the ordinary industries and vocations of actual life. But, this effort is also marred by the general atmosphere of

artificiality, already referred to. And, apart from that, there is also the fact that the industries and vocations actually taught are practically forced on all and sundry, without any thought at all, of the requirements of the learner's organism, or of what occupation or profession he might actually take up in after-life. So that, the work in these classes also could, at best, have only a purely so-called educational value. And, we have seen what this educational value really means. Is this education intended to help the individual to earn his food easily? If it is thought that, everybody being enabled to produce anything and everything in the industrial line, or to follow any vocation in life, will help to remove the knotty problem of unemployment, that thought is obviously doomed to utter disappointment. For, when everybody is an efficient producer of anything and everything, who is to buy the produced article? And, when everybody knew every vocation, who is to engage his services? And, in this connection, we have the very good example of Japan before us. In less than half a century, she managed, to the utter amazement of an admiring world, to go up industrially and vocationally, like a rocket. But today, does the world have the same admiration for her advancement, when humanly, she is showing signs of coming down, like the stick? The problems of man's food and employment, are really his own making. For, each individual could easily obtain his own food, direct from nature, if our education had not led to the steady, wholesale destruction of all cultivable areas, by their being utilised for wholly artificial, unproductive purposes which made it impossible to obtain food material from them, directly, and if it had not further perverted the natural

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individual's natural taste for the truly wholesome natural food of man. As for employment, if each individual only had facilities for making or earning his own natural food, and minding his own business, listening simply, but reverentially, to the urges of his own life organism, and if he merely made careful, reverential efforts to understand, precisely, and carry out, the bidding of nature, that came to him through those urges, what more employment does he want? Live your own life. With or without, as the case may be, such artificialities as your own felt needs impel you to make or seek. Live in perfect harmony with nature, and in close touch with God, who is working through nature, constantly revealing Himself through every activity of nature. Is that not sufficient work and sufficiently good employment for every individual?

Those who try to base education on any productive activity of the learner seem to be wholly ignorant of the fact that their effort also, is an example of trying to put the cart before the horse. For, what happens in nature actually, is in this order, namely, first, life actually lived, then, natural knowledge forming its inseparable concomitant, and thirdly, this knowledge expressing itself in some appropriate natural productive activity. But, what the advocates of education through industrial and vocational training want to do, is the exact reverse of this. They want, first of all, to engage the learner in some productive activity, which *they* choose to prescribe for him. Then, they expect the learner will have learning through it. And, from that learning, last of all, will come some help for life to be lived! If this is not putting the cart before the horse, then, what is it?

The activities of the stage and the play-ground may be said to bear some real relation to life. They are, anyhow, more nearly correlated to life, in one sense. And, rightly used, it may be admitted, they could at least furnish some very nice opportunities for the natural growth of life, along certain directions. But, in the case of the stage, there is a possibility of the tragic danger of the feelings and emotions being twisted out of shape, and the learner being consequently artificialised more easily than otherwise. On the play-ground, this danger cannot be said to exist. Still, the artificialities inevitable to all organised arrangements are there. And, they detract from the value of the benefits which might have come to the learner without any of those artificialities hampering him.

There are numerous, and various, other educational activities which might be examined. For instance, picnics, parties, scouting, gardening, child-education activities, and so on, in which the initiative and creative instincts of the learner receive considerable attention and encouragement, generally under expert guidance. More especially, those wonderfully planned schemes of life activities, employed in certain advanced institutions for helping the growth of very young children. It must be admitted, without any hesitation, that all these activities, and all these schemes, are very carefully designed, or formulated. Nevertheless, they are, every one of them, essentially artificial, more or less. Very much less, perhaps, than more. But, even where they are themselves least artificial, and most akin to the ways and methods of natural life, it has to be remembered that the conditions under which these schemes are actually put into

operation, are wholly artificial, as, indeed, they cannot but be. So that, when the learner, at last, passes out of them, even after having received their full benefit, to enter real life, outside his school or college premises, he finds himself in a new world altogether. And finds that he has to begin everything there, over again. Or, to put it very pointedly, he finds himself very much in the same position as one who had undergone his complete course of training in swimming on dry land, and is now taken to the seashore, and asked to plunge into the roaring waters! The very sight of the sea makes him tremble literally from head to foot, and, of course, forget all the training he has received. And, he has, now, to make all his negotiations with the sea, just as if he had had no training at all for any swimming! All ideas that any natural power could be given a general training which would stand it in good stead under any circumstances in life, by providing opportunities and facilities for its proper exercise in any one specific department of life, or under specifically organised artificial circumstances, are vain. The habitual drunkard is notorious for his remarkable punctuality at the liquor shop, every day, at very regular intervals. And, from this, he would seem to have developed his sense of punctuality considerably. He should, therefore, be able quite easily, to transfer that precious sense to all his ordinary business activities as well, and indeed, to anything else in life! But, is he able to do it?

Exercise and practice of a natural power, under any given specific conditions, can bring about only a specific form of development to that power. They cannot give it its own natural growth, which nature alone can give, and

without which, your exercised power does not acquire any *general* fitness, or attain any improvement in its own normal, natural tone. So that, all training for life, by affording life, facilities of growth or progress, under merely artificial conditions, of whatever value otherwise, and howsoever thoughtfully planned or carried out, is an absurd waste of precious time and energy, as well as of money. This stupendous absurdity of human education does not seem to be fully and clearly perceived. If it were, it would have been immediately dealt with, as one of the most costly, if also the most laughable, of ludicrous comedies. Unperceived, unappreciated and unavowed, it will continue to stare humanity fiercely in the face, as the most disastrous tragedy in the life of 'proud', 'rational', man!

UNNATURAL

If a thing is absurd, it is not bound to be therefore, also unnatural. But, our education is both absurd and unnatural. Life being a natural thing, the attempt of education to deal with it as if it were an artificial thing, or at any rate, could be enriched or improved upon, by merely artificial means, makes it, at once, absurd and unnatural. But, apart from that, there is another feature of education, which makes it almost hopelessly unnatural. In what we have described as natural education, nature deals with each individual separately. Not only each individual man, but each individual thing. Nature, it must never be forgotten, is, through and through, throbbing with eternal life. Not in a mere metaphorical sense, but quite literally. And, it is that life that is pulsating through the various individual things. Viewed only

from outside, and with only physical eyes, this play of life shows itself merely as what we have already described as a stimulus-response circuit of activity, something that might seem to be a purely mechanical activity. But, if it is to be understood, it has to be understood *from within*. It works in each individual thing, in a specific individual way, which must be allowed to take its own course. And must not be attempted to be interfered with, in any way. Indeed, it cannot be altered, or modified. Except in ways, and by methods, fully sanctioned by nature herself, separately in each individual case. But this sanction also, has to be sought, and obtained, by each individual concerned. According to his *own felt need* and possibilities. The process of natural growth, and natural education, is going on unceasingly, both in ourselves and round about us, without our being always aware of it. And, in that process, nature is very slowly but unceasingly, and in her own inscrutable, inimitable way, building up, and giving shape to each separate individual, developing each individual organism, with a charming skill and subtlety, which no artifice of man can ever hope to fabricate. It is that unseen, mysterious work of nature, — all-powerful nature, — that our education is trying to tamper with, in the fond hope, no doubt, of helping to make it a little better! With the result that *every possibility the individual has naturally, of understanding himself, nature and God, are completely destroyed* by this tampering, ignorant, audacious interference with the work of his life organism. Because, the line of approach taken, even in that work of tampering, is the exact opposite of natural. Clearly opposed to nature in two distinct ways. For, human education, first

of all, is for *mankind*. The class, man. *Not* the individual man. And further, it is given to the individual, not as a free individual but as a member of society. Or, to be quite precise, as a member of society, strictly subordinate to society. Society, in its different grades and phases, the family, community, nation, state, and so on, with their innumerable wheels within wheels. Nature deals with individuals as mere individuals. *Not* as belonging to any class, or as members or parts of any society or other organisation. Indeed, nature has no classes or societies or organisations, but only individuals and organisms. Each individual being has its own natural constitution, of course, which implies an infinite number of characteristic qualities. On the basis of these qualities *we* make classes. *We, not nature*. All the same, these classes are called natural classes. But, simply because the classification is based upon the natural qualities of the individuals concerned. The classes themselves are, however, not natural, or inviolable like the individuals. Each separate individual is a natural bit of an organic unit. The same individual may belong to a variety of classes. For example, an individual brought, for one purpose under the class 'man', may, for another, a different purpose, be brought under a larger class in the same scheme, for instance, 'animal', 'living being', or 'being', or again, a smaller class, for example, a 'negro', 'cannibal', and so on. Or, an altogether different class, under a totally different scheme, for example, an 'organism'. For, the boundaries of a so-called natural class are always variable, according to purpose. They have to be fixed up definitely, according to the requirement of the moment. So that,

though we are always cocksure of our statement when we are speaking of an individual as a '*man*', there is no guarantee that he belongs really to the particular class of which the boundaries stand defined in our own mind, but without, perhaps, our being able to define those boundaries precisely. All mankind is not one, any more than all beasts, or all birds, are one. There are monkeys, and wolves, and lions, and cows, and jackals, as also eagles, and hawks, and rooks, and gulls, and doves, and larks, and nightingales, and all manner of varieties among men, as among beasts and birds! But this undeniable truth stands concealed behind that very convenient, but rather treacherously misleading general term, '*man*'! What education, then, of any value at all, is ever possible for the general man? This heterogeneous conglomeration of all types and varieties of individuals? Is it possible to have an education, somewhat similar to our human education, for beasts and birds also? That is, if beasts and birds were also similarly educable? You would, perhaps, answer that it was possible. Not, however, you would add, for all beasts, or all birds, as a whole class, but, for each species of beasts, and birds, separately. But, if such a position be deemed admissible for each species, it must hold good equally for the numerous and various subspecies of beasts, and birds. And so, also, for the next successive smaller, and smaller groups that take their place in the scale of a gradual division. And finally, that would bring us down to the separate individuals, which must compel us to reject any theory of the possibility of a group education for all mankind. It is clear that anything, intended to touch the individual members of any group of beings, must be planned specifically for the

organism of each separate individual of that group. And applied, through that individual. So, human education, in so far as it is planned for the class man, is obviously unnatural. But, that is not all. The natural education for each separate individual comes to him, each moment of his actual life, in inseparable vital connection with his each actual life experience of the moment. But, human education seems to want, that education and actual life shall be brought out separately in two separate volumes! *Two, separate, hide-bound volumes!* *Volume One: Education.* And *Volume Two: Life.* And, herein lies the real secret of the sense of impatient restlessness and rebellious indiscipline, that has been almost characterising student life all over the world, with the rapid advance of our very effective education. The unfortunate students are blamed. But the responsibility for the sad situation seems to rest, really, with education itself. In the best part of the prime of life, when they are feeling the natural hunger and thirst for their own natural life, they find themselves prevented, and very effectively prevented, from satisfying those natural cravings. With the best of intentions, no doubt, they are shut up in their educational jails, for no sins of theirs, to serve considerable terms of hard labour! And, they are placed there on very hard, indigestible diet, being offered mere stone, and artificial loaves made of iron, when their inner natural life organisms are clamouring from within, for the real bread and wine of natural life, to which they are perfectly entitled! *They want life. Real, natural life,* for which nature has endowed them with a specific organism. But *they find themselves shut up,* and forced through massive, heavy mills, to be

turned into mere artificialities, which, even where they happen to be imitations of real life, are but ghostly shadows of life, frightful and repulsive in appearance, and most sickening, at least in their actual, immediate experience. Could anything be more absurdly unnatural than that? Yes, indeed! One thing could! Nay, one thing actually is! And that is, that education is given to the individual, *not* as an individual, but rather as a member of society. Now, this is a completely wrong thing to do, even with an absurd education. For, obviously, the natural thing to do, in regulating the relation between the individual and society, is to fit the society to the individuals, and not the reverse, to fit the individuals to society. Fitting the individuals to society is precisely similar to cutting the feet to fit the shoes! For, what is the individual? And what is society? For our immediate purpose it is not necessary to attempt or seek any definition of either of these two terms. It is enough to see clearly but one single aspect of the essential character of each. That aspect is the most relevant point of the matter. And of vital importance. And, it is this. *The individual is an organism, but society is not. Society is, at its best, only an organisation, and, not infrequently, only a simple aggregate of individuals.* Now, an organism may be, and, being natural it always is, in reality, a part of a greater organism. And, it may also be a part of an organisation. But, in these two instances, though, of course, a part, it is *not a part in the same sense.* When it is part of a greater organism, it is really one with that greater organism, and has no separate-ness, except in the abstract. The greater organism is the actual concrete reality. And the smaller one, which forms

a part of it, has really no separate existence as a piece of concrete reality. It is *only viewed* as separate by a purely mental abstraction. For some definite purpose. And, from a particular point of view. As a matter of fact, the part *is*, because the whole *is*. Not so, however, in the other instance. An individual is not a natural intrinsic part of any society. On the other hand, a society *is*, simply because the individuals who compose that society *are*. So, here, it is the part that is the actual piece of concrete reality. And the whole is the product of a purely mental act of abstraction. Not, indeed, the concrete aggregate of individuals, but that body considered as an *entity different from a mere sum* of its members, who are called its individual parts. For the individual man, nature is the greater organism, of which he, the smaller organism, is a part. He *is*, because nature *is*, and not because society *is*. On the contrary, society *is*, because he *is*. This difference, between the relations of the individual man to nature, and to society, is all-important. It is obviously all the difference in the world. And, it ought to make it perfectly clear that *no society has any right, naturally, to enforce* its will on any individual member thereof. Because, society has absolutely no justification for its existence, except as a purely co-operative body, *voluntarily* brought into being by the implicit *free* will of every *single individual* member who is supposed to form a part of it. An individual man, like any other individual being, is, through his own individual organism, an integral and *inviolable part of nature*. He has his origin and being in nature, lives and moves in nature, and merges at the end, into nature. Obviously, then, the one thing that he has to be careful about, throughout his life, is, not to get entangled

into anything that might, in any way, put him into the slightest disharmony with nature. But, if, in order to avoid this disharmony, he endeavoured to base his life on learning, the danger would be that he would be thereby living only a synthetic life. Which might very closely resemble natural life, but *is not* natural life. To put himself in true harmony with nature, he must live a real natural life. That is, in strict accordance with the natural promptings of his life organism, most reverentially received and carried out. And, to achieve this end, he has simply to listen to the dictates of nature, given to him continually through his own organism. And obey those dictates very carefully, and in a spirit of the utmost reverence for nature. Not infrequently, however, he finds that he could obey these dictates more satisfactorily to himself, with the help of some other individual. And then, if he should seek such help, that would be that other individual's opportunity to serve. The obvious duty of the individual approached for help, is, then, if he can afford it, and if it has the full approval of his own organism, to give him *just* that help which the other organism is asking for, give it in the true spirit of co-operative service, and without any attempt to force his own judgment or will on that other organism. That is, perhaps, the origin and the justification of society. No individual has any right to impose his own judgment or will on another. Each separate individual must have full liberty to follow the natural dictates of his own organism, without anybody obtruding. Father, mother, teacher, ruler, mahatma, — *none* has any right to substitute himself for the life organism of another individual. Where that organism really wants help, it will seek it. And, anybody who could, and was willing to, give that help, might

give it, and stop there. Without ever pretending that he could be the other man's God. To force unwanted, unsought help on any person is *himsa*, pure and simple. Hurtful to the life organism of that person. And it is equally *himsa*, of a negative type, to refuse help to an individual whose life organism wants and seeks it, provided, such help is in your power to give, is not contrary to the clearly felt promptings of your own organism, and you are prepared to shoulder full responsibility in the matter, before God and man. All obtrusion, whatever the obtruder's intentions, is *himsa* or hurting. Perfect non-obtrusion ought to be the first and last maxim of every society as well as individual. Society is, thus, only an artificial means of helping the individual, whenever *he* wants that help, to respond to the call of *his own organism*, with greater effect. It is not, and can never be, a substitute for that organism. But, this great point is always ignored. Nor is that organism the same for all individuals. But, society blundered. Proceeding on the very simple fact that two is greater than one, it blundered into the idea that its numerical strength was enough to make it greater than any single individual. But, in view of the organic relation between each separate individual and nature, and the fact that society is a mere aggregate of individuals viewed as abstracted from nature, society is only an interesting example of the whole being really less than its each separate part! Failing to see this vital point, society, which was, in reality, only a means to an end, next stumbled into the common error of confusing the means for the end. And gladly constituted itself into an end in itself. This was a fatal somersault. Fatal in its

effect on the individual. For, today, it seems to be one of the most elementary principles of educated human life that every individual should, at all times, be prepared to sacrifice himself or, at least, to put up with any amount of sacrifice for society! For that society, be it remembered, which, as a separate entity, distinct from its several individual members, has *no existence at all*, except in the abstract. Its real existence is only as a *mere mechanical sum* of its individual members, *organised* into an *artificially unified aggregate*. Nothing more, and nothing less. The best society never gets transformed from an *organisation* into an *organism*. And that is our great point. Human education, viewing the individual man as a member of society, *subordinate* to that society, to which he does *not* belong naturally, naturally helps to make an unnatural being of him. So that, the inevitable result of an individual man being passed through the very best of our educational machinery, however dexterously and finely contrived, is that, from a wholly natural human being, he has been turned into a considerably artificialised product of human ingenuity! What more fatal to his destiny as a natural being?

It is simply shuddering to think how education and society are thus going on in a vicious circle, co-operating with each other for their mutual unnatural development. An artificial education, steadily made more and more artificial, to suit the purpose of an artificial society. And, an artificial society which has itself forgotten its own true origin and legitimate purpose, as a mere means to an end, and has ignorantly and arrogantly, constituted itself, by stealth as it were, as an end in itself, bringing about all manner of development and

consequent further hopeless intricacies in that artificial education!

USELESS

If the intended purpose of education is to convert the natural, plain man into an artificial piece of beautiful monstrosity, human education, it must be admitted, is a huge success. If it is simply to help the natural man to get hold of certain artificialities which, it is supposed, he might turn to advantage in helping the growth of his natural life; it can be easily established that it is, at best, only a glaring example of wasteful superfluity. Natural education is for the natural life of the individual. It works in real, actual, natural life. It is really merely an *aspect* of natural life itself. Preparing the organism each moment of its being, for the next. And producing the cumulative result, at each point of its progress, of fitting the organism for the life experience of the moment. And, to all human appearance, this life experience is often sprung upon the individual, without any notice. But his organism is quite prepared and ready for the surprise, although, indeed, he is not conscious of this fact. Not so, however, with the organism of your educated individual. He is prepared, artificially, for contingencies that might never arise at all, or, if they ever did arise, then, for those specific or kindred contingencies only. And surprises, which might of course, present themselves at any moment, prove always embarrassing, and even baffling. But, that is perhaps nothing. There is another point of far greater importance. Natural knowledge, we know, always *comes from* real life experience. You cannot go back on that knowledge, and reproduce the life experience that gave birth to it. If

you tried to get back that experience from that knowledge, what you really got would be, not the original real life experience, but only an artificial imitation of it. In actual life, it is *not* that natural *knowledge* that makes you fitter for your future. But it is the structural modification that has automatically come about, through your actual experience, in your organism, that actually adapts the organism, to the requirements of the future. The concomitant natural knowledge is only a mere recording in consciousness, of the live educational process involved. *It does not bear to life that relation which a seed bears to its tree.* If, then, natural knowledge, directly obtained from first-hand natural life, cannot, itself, help the natural growth of your natural life, how could anything less than that natural knowledge, ever hope to achieve anything more? Any life lived from mere knowledge, is bound to fall short of natural life, lived naturally. And, the knowledge imparted in education, such as we have already examined, is, from every point of view, very different from, and inferior to, even the simplest kind of natural knowledge coming from the plainest of the most ordinary incidents of anybody's actual, real life experience. Is there any use then really in trying to utilise such knowledge for the regulation of the natural course of your life?

But, the utter uselessness of education as a preparation for life, is very plainly revealed by yet another fact of the utmost importance. And that fact is a very plain fact, which none can deny. Not even the most educated would dare to deny. And it is this. The great thing for man is, to be good. A good man is an invaluable asset to the world.

Please note: 'A good man'. *Not* a clever man. Nor a learned man. Nor a strong-willed or influential man. But, a *plain good* man. And remember, *a man who is constantly making it his business to do, or get done, things that are bound to outrage the life organisms of others, is, by no means, a really good man.* A good man, the genuine good man, is an invaluable asset to the world. An *invaluable* asset. Now, can your education make a bad man good, or a good man better? On the other hand, it has succeeded, and succeeded enormously, in making hundreds of thousands of bad men much worse, and a similar number of good men, positively bad, by enabling them to utilise very well, every opportunity of turning bad. And, perhaps, there are also many very shocking examples of very good men having been brought by your education, dangerously near to the very brink of perdition. Instances could also be cited, certainly, of seeming examples of bad men having been enabled by education, to turn over a new leaf in their lives. But none of these instances would stand any close examination. A careful scrutiny of the circumstances of each case would help to prove, beyond doubt that, every apparent improvement, in the character of the man concerned, was either a mere clever varnish, or the inevitable result of some circumstance in his own *inner* natural life, *other than* his education, and had nothing whatever to do with that education. Any attempt to pursue this point further, for example, with illustrations from actual life, of men who are living today, or have lived in the past, would be, of course, extremely invidious.

But a question must arise here, as to what makes a *good* man. What is it to be good? And how could you

become good? That is, if you '*could become*' good, at all? These are not questions that can be answered in a few short sentences. But, there are a few things that could be stated in answer to them, in a few short sentences. For instance, *no education can make a man good.* You can never become good unless the seed of goodness was there in you already. And, what is goodness? *Goodness is goodness, that is all.* Many philosophers have attempted to analyse goodness, and have failed to reach any satisfactory result. On the other hand, hundreds of thousands of very plain, simple fellows, who have not even heard of any attempt by any philosophers to analyse the idea of good, have succeeded, and without their being aware of it, to *be good.* And that is not a wonder at all. For, what the philosophers have tried hard to do, in vain, is to *analyse the unanalysable.* But, what the other, simple fellows have done is, without any fuss, actually to *live the livable.* So, the simple fellows won, and the philosophers lost. It is artificial goodness alone, that can be pulled to pieces, into its various component parts, or elements, and set up again to be reformed into the original whole. But, artificial goodness is only an imitation, and an extremely poor imitation, of natural goodness. Natural goodness must not be attempted to be analysed at all. Because, all such attempts must prove a mere wild goose chase. *You can analyse nothing natural, thoroughly.* For, everything natural, is infinite in its aspects. So that, for instance, even when the greatest philosopher has done his very best to analyse the idea of good, and feels quite positive that his analysis has been thorough, it is really far from anything like thorough. And, the inevitable

consequence is that, when the elements into which the whole idea has been actually analysed, are put together again, the resulting product is *not* the original, but only an artificial imitation of it. And, between this artificial product and the original, genuine natural thing, of which it is an imitation, perhaps a very clever imitation, there is a great deal more difference really, than between synthetic gold and real gold. You can deceive with synthetic gold, and cleverly pass it off for real gold, but you can never make it real gold. That is why it has been stated, already in this section, that goodness is goodness, and nothing more or less. Fortunately for humanity the seed of goodness is there, naturally, in every single, separate individual. Nature has placed it there. And, nature, left to herself, would make it sprout, and grow, first, into a very delicate plant, and then, in due course of time, into a strong sturdy tree of very large dimensions, provided certain other qualities are also there in you naturally. Our educational efforts, being all very rough interferences with the natural growth of this extremely tender plant, and with this work of nature, this slow, steady, silent, imperceptibly subtle work of nature, is, therefore, really a great deal worse than utterly useless. It is positively ruinous. Ruinous immediately to the organism of the individual, and through it, secondarily, but equally directly, an unpardonable outrage on nature as a whole. For which, those responsible are surely answerable to God.

UNDESIRABLE

One does not want much discernment to see that an absurd, unnatural, useless thing ought to be, on the very

face of it, undesirable. But, when a universally adored thing like education, happens to be the branded object under consideration, this may not seem quite so obvious. Because, after all, when the worst has been said, it has still to be admitted that education in some of its aspects, has an artificial value. When education is said to be undesirable, it is not intended to eschew everything artificial. Or, to imply that nothing should be taught or learned. Each artificial thing has its own value. But this value, in its greatest intension, is far inferior to the value of the most ordinary natural features of natural life. Artificialities are rendered possible by natural life. They cannot come into being without natural life operating. And, their maintenance, development, improvement, everything, depends entirely on the working of natural life. Therefore, it is quite clear that the greatest of artificialities should never be permitted to tamper with, or hamper, natural life, in any way. *Natural life should, therefore, be kept up first, — and always first.* Kept up in its perfect purity, and greatest strength and goodness. Artificialities should not be made, or sought, or accepted, or adopted, except in strict accordance with the natural promptings of the life organism of the individual concerned. In any event an artificiality should never be accepted by any individual, if it is repulsive or abhorrent to his life organism. Hurting the life organism of any individual, is a direct assault on nature and a sin against God. This *extremely important* point would seem to be far too often overlooked. Artificialities — including even artificial good men — have, as a rule, the very interesting characteristic of obtruding on your attention, and that, with all the showy pomp that usually

goes with all clever emptiness, while natural life, without which none can give birth to any artificiality, or support or perfect any, has, like real, genuine, natural good men, the very opposite characteristic of *never* obtruding. But, of course, when nature is sought, by hardened, intractable fools, to be pushed down intolerably to the second place, she knows how to re-assert herself. When she is interfered with too much, and at every turn, she simply puts her foot down firmly on the impudent offender, rudely tearing up everything he has done to give her offence. And then, not even the united efforts of all the mighty emperors of the world could avert or face the consequent calamity! Nature, however, has an almost inexhaustible fund of patience. And, she does not always resist immediately, at any rate with any obvious indignation, even the worst acts of attempted suppression of her course by means of an artificiality. Albeit every such attempted suppression is really *very severely resented*. And, one consequence of nature's patience is, that every artificiality that is created, for some specific purpose or other, perfectly legitimate perhaps, in its origin, is enabled easily to assert itself as supreme. And supreme everywhere, and in all circumstances! At least, for the moment. But, this supremacy of the artificialities of life over natural life, is as unreal as the supremacy that society has managed to steal over the individual. Both are really, though not perhaps quite obviously, instances of acts of criminal misappropriation, which give natural life and the individual very good cause for real grievance, against their impudent, aggressive grabbers. The most unfortunate thing is that this grievance is often thoughtlessly permitted by mere power-loving clever men in authority, to assume dimensions and an

intensity, which compel the aggrieved to find their own legitimate natural redress by violent and revolutionary means. This violence and this revolution might take various forms. Such as, for instance, disease, pestilence, storm, flood, drought, famine, earthquake, &c., as well as social, religious or political upheavals or turmoils, including, of course, brutal bloodshed and anarchism. That the purely material side of each of these phenomena has its own scientific explanation does not make any difference.

We have said that each artificiality has its own value. This value is, first of all, for the creator of the artificiality, himself. An individual has a life experience. This life experience produces, among other things, a certain specific natural knowledge, characteristic of the experience. And this knowledge, wanting naturally to find self-expression, impels the organism, in its turn, to some productive activity, which results in the creation of some artificial thing for which the organism concerned felt an urge from within. The artificial thing is made, and re-made, and touched up, and improved upon, until, at last, the inner urge of the organism is fully satisfied. But, when the creation of such an artificial thing has been completed, other individuals than its creator, frequently feel enamoured of it. And, many such take the ready-made artificial object, or idea, freely into use, just as if it had been a natural thing. To its creator, however, it is an inevitable expression of his own natural growth. And, to that extent, a wholly natural necessity. But to the others, it is a mere, often superfluous, artificial acquisition, at best only a luxury, and not infrequently, a not really wanted, and very easily avoidable, encumbrance. Every artificiality of

life will, on examination, be found to be, thus, not by any means, indispensable to life, at any rate, in general. And there are many of them, which are not only not indispensable, but are even undesirable as possessions of any value at all to life in general.

If you took a man, for instance, to the top of the top-most pinnacle of the highest sky-scraper in the world, have you made him thereby, the tallest of men? While he remained there, on that giddy height, perhaps you have, in a certain sense, and to a certain extent, helped him to have something like the shadows of some of the feelings of the tallest man. But, the artificial tower has its day. And even the material parts of the man, have theirs. Those days are necessarily numbered. And, the tower of the sky-scraper and the physical body of the man, must crumble. Not so, however, the life that has operated in the man. *As part of nature, it shall endure as long as nature endures.* By lifting it up to the artificial height of the pinnacle of the sky-scraper, have you succeeded in making that natural life taller even to the millionth part of the thickness of a single hair on his body? And why could you not? Simply because, none of your artificialities could possibly touch his natural life. If that life had been permitted freely to take its own course, who knows to what height it could not have grown? The handicaps placed on it by the innumerable artificialities of education, could certainly have done nothing but place extremely undesirable obstacles in the way of its natural growth.

The artificialities of life relate ordinarily to the natural requirements of life. Namely, food and drink, activity, rest, light, air, locomotion, satisfaction of feelings and emotions,

and reproduction. In every one of these matters, each individual organism, unless it has been blinded by artificial perversion, knows precisely what should be done to satisfy its own each felt want. But your education, with its preposterously obtruding, pretentious nose, interferes with everything that is really the business of that organism, and of nobody else. And, pushful, learned reformers, aggressive philanthropists, pious God-seekers, — made-up as well as genuine, — and even virtuous governments, are *trying incessantly to substitute themselves for the life organisms of others*, whether they really wanted or did not want any of those proffered attentions. In fact, there is no end or limit to the number of these blind men persisting in their audacious attempts to force their 'guidance' and 'leadership' into totally unwanted quarters, without ever realising that it is, very often, these 'guides' and 'leaders' themselves who must have their eyes opened, first! With the most undesirable result, that natural life is everywhere heavily sat upon, or its natural course hopelessly perverted, or perhaps, both evils happen. The inevitable consequence being failure, disappointment, dissatisfaction, disease and suffering of all kinds, almost everywhere. And, to relieve or mitigate this condition, new and newer artificialities are invented, which, in their turn, have the one effect of multiplying the very type of trouble they are intended to remedy. Because, each fresh artificiality only helps to take you further away from the natural course which your natural life naturally wants to run. Do you want any greater reason to prove that your education is a very undesirable thing?

Perhaps a few trifling details might help to clarify, and strengthen, the point. In his early history, man was, of

course, naked. Somebody actually felt a need to protect himself from the inclemencies of the weather and the seasons, and invented a covering for the purpose. That was blindly imitated by others, whether they felt a similar need or not. Soon, it came to be the fashion to cover the body with garments. And, today we are more or less, purely tailor-made men and women! And, the fashion has even got into the moral code! Also developed into fads, and fads into crazes. So that we have, now at last, in certain parts of the world, the bewilderingly comic spectacle of even city-fathers, and other exalted officers, occasionally parading the streets, dressed somewhat in the manner of strolling players or street buffoons! The result of the natural body being kept covered, is that the absence of direct contact with sunlight and fresh air brings on innumerable diseases. And, these diseases are sought to be met with artificial remedies, which again very frequently lead to other troubles. The thought of removing their real original cause never occurs to us, because we are educated, and have built up an artificial moral code out of that education, which shocks us even to think of removing that original cause! All the same, the angels are ordinarily represented as naked!

In the matter of food and drink, similarly, nature has plenty of edible fruits and roots, and many other things, and beautiful fresh water, for any number of those who are hungry and thirsty. You have not even to cultivate fruit trees. If you ate the fruit and simply threw away the seeds, they might grow into trees without any special attention from you. But your education and civilisation have destroyed nature over extensive areas in order to build your wholly

unproductive, unbeautiful private and public edifices and other similar extensive artificial structures, so that you have hardly any room in nature where you could even throw away those seeds! You have to let them rot and perish in the public dust-bin. And, you have ready developed, vocations and industries, which cannot themselves directly supply you with the necessary natural food required for the sustenance of your natural life. So, artificial 'foods' are made to take the place of natural food. And your natural life organism being outraged by these artificial things, in numerous ways, diseases are caused, for which your educated experts find artificial remedies, which work wonders, also, as explained already.

Again, as natural beings, we must live in close contact with nature. Some organisms felt the need of sometimes resting under a covered roof. And soon, blind imitation set to work, and dwelling houses came into fashion. Light and air were first shut out. And then, means had to be invented of letting them in, of course, in small measured doses. In many instances all that is left in the vicinity of dwelling houses in the shape of visible living nature is perhaps a few cluster of flower plants right in front of them. All the rest of the surroundings being nature terribly outraged with artificialities invented by your education.

The work of this ruthless destruction of nature has been confined, so far, to very large cities and towns. But, here in India, our educated men do not seem to be contented with that. And they are threatening to make very serious, organised efforts to carry their fire and sword into the rural areas, and even into the forests, — perhaps the only vestige of

those sacred spots that gave nurture to our ancient venerable *rishis* of blessed memory. Woe to the course of peaceful natural life in hidden retirement in secret India, if they should be able to carry out this heartless, unholy threat!

The natural knowledge arising from the experiences of natural life, has a natural way of leading to a very interesting effect, as already pointed out. It seeks self-expression, and impels you to make inventions, or produce some work of art, all, of course wholly artificial but self-fulfilling. The danger here is that you are often carried away, and sometimes too far, by these impulses. With the very undesirable result that the further course of your natural life is, not infrequently, either obstructed or perverted. Thus, for instance, the numerous easy and even luxurious vehicles invented for your convenient transport from place to place, often prevent the healthy development of your natural powers of vigorous locomotion. And the electric trains and steamships and aeroplanes have, in spite of the innumerable, undoubted benefits they can claim to have brought with them, really tended to dwarf many of the powers that natural life had always open for you. Your artificial aeroplane enables you, indeed, to ride in a machine that could be caused to move through the air at great speed. And the vanity of human wishes makes you say, not without some pardonable pride, that your science has enabled you to fly! But has it? Just look at the position. Are you really flying in an aeroplane, any more than you are swimming in a boat, or running in a car? Nor is your aeroplane itself flying, any more than a boat is swimming across the sea, or your car is running along the road, except in a strictly metaphorical

sense. But, even putting this mere joke aside, what aeroplane could compete with an eagle or a lark or even a small swallow, which natural life is helping to fly, without any science or any engineering? And why should not that same, natural life, of which, you know very well, your own natural life is an integral part, enable your own life organism to fly too? You would, of course, answer with a very loud snort, and ask: 'But where are the wings?' The counter-answer would, however, make you stare, with rounded eyes. Wings are not indispensable for flight. They are really there, of course, in the birds. But life has the power of making other things than birds, fly without wings. Do you swim in water because you have fins? Then, you can also fly in the air without wings. Do not the sun and moon, and earth itself, and all the heavenly spheres, take their flight through space, without wings? But, that is not a subject into which we need attempt to go any further, just here. The point here is simply that the invention and use of the aeroplane has at least smothered the idea of natural life wanting to make man fly. And boats, likewise, make it unnecessary for natural life to urge him to walk on water. In this connection many relevant stories to be found in the scriptures of all ancient religions, as also all scriptural authority for holding that man could, both walk on water, and move through the air, are here purposely put away on one side, so that no obviously disputable points may be dragged into the discussion. But they might very well be pondered over. And then, you might ponder the further interesting question: 'Is it really an advantage to have your life made too easy for you? Or, filled with too many luxuries?'

POSITIVELY DANGEROUS

From all that has been said so far it must be quite clear that education generally tends, in some way or other, to suppress our natural life, and substitute for it a more or less artificial one. We have just touched upon a few of the most prominent aspects of this artificial life. On the whole, the artificialities that have found such permanent place in our life that they fail even to be recognised as mere artificialities, are so numerous and ordinary, that most people have a great difficulty even in understanding what exactly is meant by natural life. And, educated men would seem to be among the first to define natural life as savage life! This is a very important misunderstanding. The great *rishis* of India, Jesus Christ, the prophets of Palestine, Arabia and other lands, Gautama Buddha, Sri Rama in exile, King Bharata during the same period, the great ancient *fakirs* of Islam, the earliest Buddhist *bikkus*, ever so many hermits and monks, philosophers like Socrates, the ancient Hindu *acharyas*, all the simple good folk all over the world, amidst all peoples, getting on very well either without, or in spite of, your education, — were they all, or, are they, savages? There are savages, no doubt, in nature. But, they are savages *by nature*, and *not because of their being natural*. Naturalness and savageness are not synonyms. There are, of course, no natural university men! But does that imply that natural life is savage? There are more savages, really, among the so-called educated, than among those who are still able to live their own natural life naturally. Now, this qualification has particular significance. For, there are those who are making much-advertised artificial efforts

to live their own natural lives, wherever possible, in the lime-light, and in ways that could hardly be described with any degree of correctness, as natural. And, it is interesting that these men are often more educated than not educated. They are apparently, to put it most fairly to them, only making experiments with their own natural lives, perhaps to find out their possibilities. Nobody has any right to object to any of these experiments as long as they are only experiments on the lives of the experimenters concerned. But, it were well that they thought very seriously, and more than twice, before they dragged whole countries with them. You need not object to a man coolly lighting his cigarette, seated on the top of a leaky magazine, situated in the heart of a desert, if he felt a fancy for doing so, and insisted on his having his own way. But, nature run amuck and let loose, is a far more disastrous catastrophe than the largest magazine exploding by ignition from a spark of your thoughtless creation. Experiments with your natural life *may* lead to infinite prospects of artificial, purely material gain. But, 'what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his own soul?' And, just try to imagine what must be the extent of the calamity of a whole people standing to lose the soul of every individual involved, through being made a mere tool of somebody's thoughtlessness or cunning.

The attempt to suppress nature, and substitute an artificial life for our natural life, is fraught with very grave danger. Nature is not a thing to be trifled with. She is an extremely kind mother to all. But she is always sternly unrelenting to her erring children. Within certain limits she

even permits you to have your own way with her. But, even then, you have to take the inevitable, natural consequences of that freedom, along with that freedom. *Natural life is, after all, the least difficult to live.* All that you want to enable you to live your own natural life perfectly, are just enough food and drink, plenty of light and air, and complete freedom to respond, without encroaching upon anybody else's similar freedom, to every natural call of your own natural organism. And every one of these things, you can get from nature, for the mere asking. Ask nature for food, not, of course, for any cooked food, but natural food that will appease your hunger, and sustain your life. And, if your felt need was strong enough, you would approach nature with sufficient earnestness, and nature would grant you abundant supplies of the most acceptable kind. But who could do what for you, if you went and first destroyed all cultivable areas of nature? Do you want a cool drink? There is enough excellent water ready on the earth's surface, wherewith to quench your thirst. Or, dig anywhere, and if you only dug deep enough, you would come upon the most refreshing supplies of spring water. And light and air, she will give you in any quantity without anything to pay. And then, *freedom to respond to the demands of your own individual organism is yours, the moment you allowed the same freedom to everybody else.* Do not go and meddle with the natural course of the life organism of any individual. Desist from *himsa*. In common language it simply amounts to this: 'Live and let live'. Or, 'Mind your own business, and let everybody else mind his own'. These principles, however, would seem to be duly recognised

now only by beasts and birds, and other lower animals. But it is amazing,—is it not?—how the lower animals, whose numbers are certainly very much greater than the number of living human beings, are able to carry on perfectly well, without any school or college, or any law-court or hospital or any legislative council or government, or any audacious body of fools who want to be reformers,—*of others!* The educated, artificial man would, of course, pooh-pooh the very thought as simply ridiculous, and say with a very superior air of learning: 'Oh, but the lower animals are guided by mere instinct. We human beings have reason! We can think and reason! That is the difference. And that difference makes us infinitely superior to the lower animals'. Oh, does it? Yes, indeed! You can think and reason. And anything else? Yes, certainly,—and make blunders! At almost every step! Occasionally, even Himalayan blunders! And in very important matters of life and death! Then, where is the superiority of your thinking and reasoning, over the unthinking and unreasoning instinct of the lower animals? The proper question to be asked of a man is not: 'Can he think and reason?'—but 'Can he think right, and reason correctly? So, it is not mere thinking and reasoning that gives man his boasted superiority over the lower animals, but only *right thinking and correct reasoning.* And, *right thinking and correct reasoning can come only when a natural being is naturally good, and is living its own free natural life in a perfectly natural manner.* Thought and reason are really, precisely like knowledge, *mere power.* And their goodness or badness depends entirely on the individual who uses them. Every individual's every life activity has, among its

innumerable, inseparable concomitants, thinking, reasoning, and knowledge. They are there in every life experience. And there, they are in their right place. But, you cannot get back from them to the actual life experience of which they are inextricable aspects or parts. So that, when you seize them, separated from any particular, actual life experience of which they are inevitable accompaniments, and employ them deliberately for the purpose of furthering life, you are really putting the cart before the horse. *Knowledge, thinking, reasoning*, — each one of them, *utilised deliberately* for reproductive purposes, could give you only mere artificialities. Only synthetic lives, never the real natural life. And, while *real natural life is a real joy in itself, even the most glorious of synthetic lives could*, at its best, *only bring you an imitation joy*. So that, we have the joys (plural) of an artificial or a synthetic life, but only the joy (singular) of life, real natural life itself being that joy. Live that life, without foolishly seeking to hamper it in any way. Live naturally. In the true spirit of the utmost reverence for nature and everything natural. In intimate contact with nature, realising, not only yourself, but also nature and God as well, — *all three at once*. That will enable you to realise the joy of life. And, the joy of life being realised, you would not seek the plural, the joys of an artificial life, any more. And, that is neither epicurism nor stoicism to be sure, but the very opposite of either, or a special combination of both, and perhaps the best antidote against either. This does not mean, however, that man does not require any artificialities at all to enable him to live his own natural life. He does require a great many. But, each individual organism will invent, or seek and find, each

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artificial thing that it really wants as indispensable for the satisfaction of its own felt needs. The great trouble with education is that it makes ready-made knowledge and thinking and reasoning, available for purchase and general use, in the educational market. With the terrible, disastrous result that anybody is enabled to obtain them in any quantity, and utilise them for the purpose of manufacturing with their help, wholly artificial or synthetic lives which are totally different from the natural life of man. And, while many governments lay down very severe, and at times even totally meaningless restrictions on the possession and use of so-called dangerous weapons, poisonous drugs and intoxicating drinks, they are at the same time also making vigorous and expensive efforts for the universal spread of knowledge of all kinds, without any thought of the natural character of the persons who are enabled to get possession of it. Is that not a case of straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel? Is it not a very well known fact that, ordinarily, it is *not the best natural lives, but the cleverest of them*, that are eager, and actually manage, to seize the full advantage of the benefit of all knowledge and artificial education? For the mere sake of gaining temporal power? And purely selfish material supremacy?

The danger of this indiscriminate, universal spread of knowledge was evidently fully recognised in the early history of the growth of knowledge. For, there was a time when, everywhere in the world, the wise men who had the sole possession of all knowledge, took special care to hold it in very safe custody, preventing all access to it by any one who could not be trusted with it. But cunning men

managed to thrust themselves in, very cleverly, among these wise custodians of knowledge. And, they made purely selfish arrangements for the cunning organisation of artificial communities, to the members of which they confined the right of gaining, using and distributing all knowledge. And, it happened, most unfortunately, that these artificial communities, in course of time, came to be filled, and filled to overflowing, with individuals of the very type, from which knowledge ought to be most rigorously safeguarded.

The scriptures of all the ancient religions are really revelations, in the sense that they embody the natural knowledge of really good, holy men, godmen, who lived their natural lives quite naturally. That is to say, the natural knowledge that came to them with their free natural life experiences resulting from the inward urge, and consequent outward activities, of their life organisms. This knowledge, and this urge, were certainly nature speaking to them, directly, through their own individual organisms. And, nature is thus able to talk to individuals through their life organisms just because,—but you must not throw away this book when I say it,—*just because God is in nature*. To know that God, you have to live your own natural life, quite naturally. And honestly. And most reverentially. For, that life is the eternal life manifested through the individual, in space and time. And that God is God. The true God, whom the educated alone would think of describing as mythical. That God cannot be equated to anything less. Nor to any thing greater as, of course, there is nothing greater, to which he could be attempted to be equated. It is now the fashion in certain quarters to equate God to *truth*.

Whatever may be the relation between truth and God, it must be quite obvious to any one that this is nothing short of rank blasphemy. Let none who has any real regard for God ever dare to *identify* God with truth, or anything else which must be on the very face of it clearly less than God. God is no more identical with truth than, for example, *gold* is identical with *yellowness*. The ancient dictum that God is *The Truth* means, of course, a *very different* thing. So also the ancient scriptural statement that God is the *Paramartha* does not mean that God is *satya*. *Paramartha* and *satya* really connote very different things except in mere trivial language. To a disinterested, impartial, humble observer, it looks as if this deliberate identification of God with truth was a subtle act of ingenious exploitation of the common religiosity and simple goodness of the various peoples of India, for merely political purposes. With a view to giving a quasi-religious, pseudo-virtuous, blessing to that newfangled political shibboleth, *satyagraha*. If this surmise be correct, then, the departed spirits of the mighty *maharshis* of ancient India must be writhing in agony to think how the spiritual glory of India has gone into woeful decay in educated India so madly hungering for mere temporal power, and prepared to barter its soul in exchange for the tinsel of artificial grandeur!

These matters cannot be more than merely mentioned here. They may have to be considered a little in a later discussion. For the present we must confine ourselves to our immediate point, which is this. The scriptures of all ancient religions are records of the natural knowledge of good men who lived their natural lives naturally. But the

purpose of these scriptures is often very seriously misunderstood. It would seem to be generally thought that men could make themselves good by basing their lives on these scriptures. But the fact is very different. And sometimes even exactly the contrary. For, the scriptures are like mere light-houses which are intended to guide and warn the honest sea-farer, but could be easily taken advantage of, equally, if not more, by the plundering pirate. The good simply live their own natural lives as good men. And, they will find full ratification of their lives in the scriptures. Those who are not perfectly good, but are still eager carefully to cultivate the seeds of goodness in them, without any extraneous thoughts, at any rate to the contrary, will find that the scriptures are really helpful to make them good. But there is unfortunately always, a third class of people who are full of other seeds than these of goodness. If they learned the scriptures, and got themselves scripturally educated, the result would be that, while their own natural qualities got immensely strengthened, they would, at the same time, have secured a beautiful coating of a saintly life hardly distinguishable from the outward appearance of a real saint. The *Sudra* whom Sri Rama is said to have slain, at the bidding of his Brahmin advisers, was one who belonged to this type of men. He was *not* a member of the artificial community named *Sudra*, but a real *kshudra*, a savage barbarian by nature. If he had been permitted to complete his *tapas*, that would have helped him to develop his own natural wickedness to such an extent that he would have become formidable. So, Sri Rama, who was God incarnated in order to destroy the wicked *Rakshasas*, slew also this *Rakshasa*

in embryo, this *kshudra*. The Brahmans who advised Sri Rama to take this action, were perfectly right. They were real *brahmajnas*, or those who *knew Brahma*. And not merely members of an artificial community bearing a traditional name by mere convention. Those who base their lives on the scriptures make themselves only artificially good. They may be more correctly described as synthetic good men. So we may have many a synthetic *bhaktha*, synthetic *yogi*, synthetic *rishi*, even *maharshi*, and perhaps even synthetic *avatar*! These are persons who are trying to live the lives of the genuine commodities mentioned, but are really succeeding only to produce mere imitations thereof. They deliberately, and perhaps also very piously, imitate the real characters named, trying hard to adopt their dress and outward features, food, habits, language, and even prayers and forms of worship, but in the end discover, alas to their own utter dismay and the chagrin of their simple, credulous worshippers, that they had, after all, attained only a sort of synthetic holiness. An unconscious life process, very similar probably to the chemical process of producing mere synthetic gold, being responsible for this psychological necromancy. They might *look* very much the genuine articles of which they happen to wear the labels. But it is obvious that their real intrinsic value is not necessarily the same as their face value. And, nothing would be so dangerous and disastrous to humanity as to confuse the one for the other. It is not suggested that they are necessarily knaves or fools. They *may* be either or both, or neither. Or, they may be very good men. *That depends entirely on their own intrinsic natural qualities as natural*

men, apart from their adopted artificial or synthetic lives. Neither are they all, as a class, lacking in earnestness or sincerity. On the contrary, they are, as a rule, remarkably earnest and sincere. For, it is just because they have these qualities naturally in abundance, that they set about to regulate their lives in strict accordance with the scriptures. Their fault is that *they are always deluded!* Deluded with a mad belief that God intended them to help Him in the work of giving the final finishing touches to His creatures! They fail completely to realise that they have unconsciously converted themselves into a unique kind of artificial good men. Their artificial lives constitute themselves each into a kingdom unto himself. They could never get into harmony with nature. And always, consequently, try to put nature into harmony with them! If it rained, for instance, and they were consequently unable to go out, they would think of all manner of impossible schemes for the construction of a water-proof aerial canopy for the whole area over which rain fell, sooner than think of securing a good umbrella for themselves to protect their own persons from getting wet! *They feel everything wrong in the world, except their own good selves!* So, their thoughts are busily active trying to discover effective means of subverting the existing order of things. That is why, in all religions, among those who artificialise their lives by regulating them strictly in accordance with the scriptures, there have been, at all times, and in all countries, very many extremely dangerous persons. Many have thought them to be mere fanatics. And many have looked upon them as holy, inspired men. Really they seem to have been, as a rule, neither the one nor the other, but only ex-

ceptionally clever madmen, gifted with keen observation and great determination, readily exploiting every folly of every fool, and each weakness of every one of their intended victims. History is not without very remarkable examples of such men, and perhaps, even women, who have brought about revolutions, and upset powerful governments. They have been great causes that have disrupted and devastated society and nations. Their religiousness and piety are no guarantee of their innocuousness. Similar other experts read them best!

Apart from these synthetic good men, there is also another dangerous set of persons, whom your education helps to produce. These are mere pretenders, however, masquerading as good men, helpers, reformers, saviours, and so on. All featherless bipeds are not, of course, really human, although they are usually brought under the denomination, '*man*', and have, more or less, a general similarity of appearance. Left entirely to themselves, to live and develop along their own natural lines, the differences between individual men, even in their outward physical appearance and general characteristics and character, would get emphasised and brought into easily distinguishable prominence, by nature herself. So that, the knave and the fool, and the really good man, could all be recognised, and told at a glance. For instance, the *rishis* of the *Ramayana*, as also the *Rakshasas*, were human beings. The difference between them was in their qualities and character, which, of course, however, brought about characteristic differences in their physical features as well. And they could be readily made out at sight. But, your education provides all human beings with a very easily obtained uniform *mask, which would help*

the sinner to look precisely the same as the saint. And you can see how this aspect of, education and knowledge, is readily taken full advantage of, by everybody who wished to get himself clandestinely promoted to the rank of a saint! Men who might be really superhuman, or human, or sub-human, or unhuman, or even inhuman, are all enabled, by your educational mask, to fall in, and form a line of mutually indistinguishable good men, even godmen, who could easily cut one another's throats, and suck up one another's life-blood, all the while hugging one another most affectionately, and calling one another 'brother', or 'comrade', or some such other very good name that anybody could think of!

Just imagine a fanciful, hypothetical analogy. Suppose the beast world had an education analogous to ours, and the beasts had schools and colleges, and universities, and all that sort of arrangements, open to all beasts, without any distinction of 'caste, creed or colour', or, of course, sex! And suppose that this education was intended to serve as a preparation for beast life, and also to make beasts generally better qualified to hold positions of trust and power, in the beast world. Suppose, also, that this education really generated among its ardent recipients, a general desire to bring about reforms, with a view to making organisations for the establishment of a new order of things, to improve the mutual relations between the various individuals and communities among beasts, to introduce new forms of government, with arrangements, of course, for the systematisation of governmental elections, to prescribe diets and habits of life, to introduce a common compulsory style of vociferation, peremp-

torily forbidding, by regular legislation, the use, thereafter, of any howling or bellowing or roaring or barking, all for the purpose of tightening the bonds of natural brotherhood among them! And so on. And suppose, further, that the more enthusiastic workers, determined not to rest contented with any half-way methods or operations, made thorough-going arrangements to carry their good work to every nook and corner of the beast world. Could you muster up sufficient imagination to picture to yourself all the possible consequences, more especially to the poor, meek, simple, unsophisticated, harmless individuals of the beast world, from this beastly renaissance? And, who would seize all the power, and all the advantages arising from this general awakening, and unusual arrangement for enriching the lives of beasts as a class, by making them educated and civilised? But, it is not necessary to attempt to tax your imagination to its furthest limit, in order to make you see the point of our hypothetical analogy. Mankind, today, is really in the agony of a precisely similar situation. And, it was to prevent this dire calamity that the first man and woman, according to the Bible story, were forbidden to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Remember that knowledge itself was not forbidden. The tree of knowledge *was given* by nature herself. What *was forbidden* was the fruit of the tree of knowledge. And it was forbidden to be *eaten*. In other words, man was *forbidden to live on the fruit of knowledge*. And what is the fruit of knowledge, if it is not the reproductive power of knowledge? The reproductive power of knowledge could give you only artificialities. Mere artificialities of life, or a merely synthetic life, neither

of which is the natural life from which alone you can get the joy of life. To complete the reference to the Bible story, Adam and Eve were permitted to live in the garden of Eden, that is to say, to realise the joy of life, (the term 'Eden' meant in ancient Hebrew, 'joy') as long as they kept the command of God not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, that is, not to base their life on knowledge, but to live naturally. They disobeyed the command, and out they had to go, beyond the gates of Eden. In other words, they ceased to realise the joy of life.

Turn your attention to any part of the educated, civilised world, look at anything produced by your wonderful education and civilisation. And you are sure to find something or other, which must have come, indeed, out of some very good life experience of somebody, most diabolically turned to effective use for some atrocious, destructive, evil purpose. That is the practical consequence of knowledge, compounded with thought and reason, for reproductive purposes, being left to be used by men who did not care to be first and foremost, good men.

The earliest part of the individual's life is required by our education, to be spent for many years, as a student. Amidst wholly artificial surroundings, in artificial mutual relations with other individuals, and in the very artificial task of acquiring knowledge through words, or through activities aroused and brought into play by artificial means, in artificial circumstances which are completely shorn of that refreshing, joyful, invigorating principle of the real life experiences of natural life. At the end of this student career the successful student finds himself prepared, after all, only for cramming

up books or other records, carrying on wordy wars, making researches by gathering information regarding the mere outside of facts or nature, or if he ever got into their inside, then, as has been already remarked elsewhere, only the outside of that inside, making vigorous efforts to increase the artificialities of life. And, the failure runs away from his educational prison-house with a sigh of relief that he has, after all, escaped from an unwanted life of impossible training for his own natural life, which he has, during that whole period been severely forbidden to live! But this failure has failed only to receive the education planned for him by the authorities. He has, however, succeeded eminently in developing with a wonderful vigour, characteristic of all resisted forces of nature, qualities which neither he nor his educational directors had ever bargained for, at any rate consciously. He has developed a life-long spirit of resistance to all enforced improvement, a stout defiance and total contempt of authority, hatred of all artificial rules of discipline, and a supreme contempt for all manner of so-called general knowledge-seeking. The success, and the failure, both go out into the world, to try their luck there. And, there is no guarantee that the successfully educated one will succeed there, or the failure will fail again. On the other hand, it often happens that the success fails miserably, while the most hopeless of the failures become superlatively distinguished, perhaps as a genius! As a rule, both feel equally helpless, and have to struggle equally hard to keep themselves floating! Unfortunately, however, the life outside the educational world is not the natural life of man, either. It is also, in every department of it, supremely artificialised.

For example, after passing out of his educational career, a person often finds that he has to enter a trade, profession, service, or the government. All have been artificialised beyond recognition. The real purpose of each seems to have been completely forgotten. And, each is now only a means of making money and gaining some purely temporal artificial advantage. Trade is no longer a means of distributing the necessities of life. The professions have forgotten to make themselves really useful according to their original humane intentions, to self and others. How many, for instance, of our modern educated teachers, lawyers, doctors, etc., can claim to have had the benefit of direct natural knowledge, due to actual life experience, of the basic principles of their own respective professions? The veriest tyro among them would, doubtless, be able to produce a most fascinating prize-essay, or a grandiloquent platform speech on 'The Nobility of Our Profession'! But alas! how many of the experts are really working in the true spirit of that nobility! The very idea of true service, namely, of rendering help where help is wanted, without the slightest show or trace or touch of obtrusiveness, has completely disappeared. And, government has become, in many instances, an intolerable medley of arrogant folly, self-assertive tyranny and contemptible self-imposing exercise of mere authority. And, little wonder that, almost everywhere, the knaves succeed. And, with the easy co-operation and voluminous, noisy support of fools whom the knaves, of course, know how to utilise to their own best advantage! The wise and the good have evidently no room anywhere in this fierce struggle for existence! And they have consequently to hide themselves somewhere, where they will not be seized and victimised.

And have to steal opportunities, as best they might, for living their own natural lives unmolested, and in peace. How the ancient *rishis* of India lived in caves and in the depths of forests, preferring solitude or the company of wild beasts to that of the ordinary human beings!

Some clever politicians seem even to go to the extent of pitching governments against the people. As if they represented opposite interests, and had to pull in opposite directions for their very existence! Such clever men have sometimes, even declared publicly that, as an individual man has the right of self-preservation, a government also must have its own right of self-preservation. Nothing could be farther from the truth than such a belief. The individual man is an organism. A natural organism. Forming an integral, inextricable part of the infinite organism of nature. He has a natural right to exist, he cannot but exist, as long as nature wills that he shall exist. Indeed, the individual is clearly informed of this from within his organism by what is known as the instinct of self-preservation. But a *government is not an organism. Nor a part of nature.* It is a mere human artificial arrangement. A wholly artificial arrangement, brought into existence, under very definite, specific conditions, for the purpose of enabling each separate individual, living under that arrangement, to live his own free life without let or hindrance from any other individual, or body of individuals. A government has, therefore, obviously no right whatever to preserve itself *against* the interests of even one single individual man who comes under its operation. In fact, the state itself, which makes it's own governmental arrangements, is only a huge society. And is consequently a mere ag-

gregate of individuals. A mere total. Could any total claim an existence apart from the various separate individual items that went to make up that total? Take away one single item from the list, and the total must disappear automatically. Or, if it must still persist, it could exist only as a fresh total of the remaining items only. On the other hand, each separate individual item that goes to compose a total, has a self-sufficing existence of its own. It is just the same relation that holds good between the individual members of a state, and the state as a big political society. And, government is only an artificial arrangement for conducting some of the business of the state. The state itself being an artificial organisation, this artificial governmental arrangement of it is, therefore, merely *an artificial arrangement of an artificial arrangement*. It has no self, in the first place, for it to claim any fancied right of self-preservation!

And democracy, in these days, is a mere mockery. Democracy is fashionably claimed to be government *of* the people, *by* the people, *for* the people. It is difficult to see how this meaning has been arrived at. There is no need of any government *of* a people unless they were all alike unable to take care of themselves! Each individual ought to govern himself. That is the individual's natural government. The best government. Self-government, pure and simple. And, if each separate individual governed himself where is the need of a government *of* a whole people? (Please remember here that we are trying to determine the real function of democracy.) Then, government *by* the people is an impossibility. For, the best so-called government *by* the people could be only a government *by* the majority of

the people. Now, granting that that majority is not a majority of fools and knaves, whatever that majority might condescend to do for the minority, that government could only be a government *by that majority*, and *not by the people*, who must, of course, include both the majority *and* the minority. Thus, the ideas of a government *of* the people, and *by* the people, are respectively, unnecessary and impossible. The only idea that remains is that of a government *for* the people. And this is apparently the correct meaning of democracy. It is *demo-cracy*, not '*demo-archy*.' '*Demarchy*' might, perhaps, mean *government by the people*. But there is no such word as '*demarchy*.' And, for a very good reason. Namely, that there is no such *thing* as what might have been indicated by such a word. And, the best government *for* the people could only be *by the wise and good*. Not by the most popular, or the most learned, or the most cunning. Certainly it is quite clear that the best government, for instance, for a lunatic asylum is *not* one carried on by a few of the lunatics themselves, elected by a majority of the lunatic inmates of the asylum. The best government of a state is obviously one carried on by a council of only *wise and good* men. And their election should not, of course, be made to depend on the votes of the majority of fools and knaves in the country. But, as, in any council, there must be now and then, differences which called for adjustment, there ought to be naturally one above this council, and apart from this council, to make that adjustment, in a wholly detached, impartial spirit, always acting with the one object of enabling *each individual* subject of the state, to obtain whatever that subject's individual life organism demanded. Without himself daring, or letting

anyone else dare, to pose as one competent to sit in judgment over the organism concerned. The only condition he has a right to demand from each individual subject of the state is that *there shall be no manner of mutual obtrusiveness* among the subjects. Not even in the matter of help and service. *Non-obtrusiveness, not non-violence*, is obviously the one golden rule that nature and God approve, and want everybody to follow. Perfect non-obtrusiveness is an essential element of true *ahimsa*. And if anybody insisted on obtruding himself, or his ideas, — good, bad, or indifferent — on you, you have naturally every right to resist him. And if that resistance could not be made effective except by using violence, that would be an occasion when *non-violence*, if resorted to, as a mere *fad*, would spell precisely *non-sense*. If each individual subject of the state had this perfect liberty given to him by the state, as a matter of natural right, the government of that state, far from being driven to any embarrassment on that account, would have its responsibilities and difficulties very greatly reduced!

The best form of true democracy, that is, government for the people is, strange as it may sound, a wise, good, god-fearing *monarchy*! In which the king is king by birth, by his family tradition, and by his own natural qualities, *not* by any of his adopted, artificial or assumed qualities. And *not* a dictator, whether self-constituted or elected, as such a dictator's greatest vested interests in the country could never equal those of a whole ancient royal house, or be sufficient to serve as a guarantee of permanent good faith on his part. And, he must be like a God to his subjects, always ready to enable each one of them to live his own natural life,

seeking and obtaining such artificialities as that organism might dictate, impelled by its own felt needs. And this democratic king must have two councils to help him to carry on the government. One, a body of the *wisest of the good* men available, for the actual work of governing. And another, a larger one, a representative body of *elderly good men*, one from each definite small area, with intimate personal knowledge of the requirements of each individual of that area. The duties of this second body being strictly confined to mere true representation of the actual requirements of the people, to the governing body. Without any right of any disputation, criticism or argument. Each member of this body being *only a faithful reporter of the needs* of each individual resident of his area.

But, our blessed education and civilisation have always delighted in putting the cart before the horse. And the inevitable consequence is, that the duties and powers of governments have been thoroughly artificialised and remoulded in the most arbitrary manner possible, and the natural rights of individuals, totally and absolutely denied to them, and trampled under foot, in the guise of kindly and even paternal service rendered to them! From the mere common-sense point of view, every individual living under a really good government, should be able to enjoy his own natural life precisely as in the unartificial economy of nature, *and* without being put to the necessity of having to bother himself about his self-preservation or protection, that responsibility being transferred to the government. And, a really good government, which troubled at all to understand its own correct position and function, could certainly find out

means of arranging to dispense altogether with that greatest bugbear of all politicians and statesmen, namely, direct taxation! Why should not governments, for instance, make all the money required for public purposes, by engaging, like ordinary individuals, in profitable trade, agriculture, industry, and so on? Why should not useful trading firms, agricultural farms, industrial factories, etc., be established all over the country and run on regular commercial lines, under the direct management of governments, side by side with similar private undertakings? Some of the trades and industries could even be monopolised by governments. And in others, as well as in agriculture, very large profits could be made certainly, without entering into any unhealthy competition at all with private individuals, or companies. Provided, of course, only men of proved integrity are put in charge of the work. And such ordinary competition as might be unavoidable, would serve as a very useful stimulant to the private agencies concerned. Certainly no competition could be so unwelcome as direct taxation which is felt, at its best, only as an irksome burden. At all events, any necessity to increase or multiply taxes to the embarrassment of the subjects, only demonstrates the incapacity or inefficiency of those responsible. Even the lightest of taxes would seem to be *felt* as a mere extortion! For example, just think of the hue and cry raised over own salt tax! But these are matters which ought to be dealt with separately. And that would take a fairly big volume. Here they are just referred to in order to draw attention to the extremely dangerous results of our education.

It is hoped that what has been said up to this, will make it quite clear that human education, far from being a prepara-

tion for life, can only serve to force wrong ideas and ideals of life, into the growing mind of the individual, and mislead him into forgetting altogether that there is such a thing as a natural life to be lived, and believing that the artificialities of life are the principal things that deserve his chief attention. Adam and Eve only ate the forbidden fruit, themselves. And, between them, perhaps, only one single fruit! We, to-day, are, besides eating it ourselves, also compelling everybody else to eat it too! And in enormous quantities! Thus earning thereby, our full title to the utmost regard and never-dying gratitude of the fallen archangel. There is, certainly, plenty of time yet, to turn back from the wrong road, provided there is the necessary good sense to shake off our intoxication. Human education is one huge mess of the most disastrous of misadventures. Our lives really have simply to be lived. That is the best preparation for life. The best preparation for running a race is just running it. You cannot learn to swim except by swimming. Neither have you any way of preparing for life, except living it. Let our children start their lives forthwith by living it straightaway. Living it, at each stage, suitably to that age and condition, and always in the company of good and wise persons who can love them with natural love. Not under the guidance or tuition of artificialised men and women who are groaning under the weight of their own learning, but have not yet learned, perhaps, to live their own lives properly! It is interesting that, in many of the civilised countries of the ancient world, there was no education of the kind we have to day. Not that there was no teaching or learning of any kind. For, teaching and learning, in some form or other, must have existed

even in the earliest of times. But there was no such nonsense as preparing an individual for the later stages of his natural life, by completely artificialising it in its earlier stages! The only education recognised as necessary for the individual, being natural education, got from actual life lived under actual life conditions. In ancient India, for instance, in the place of our so-called general education, there was only the *guru-sishya* life lived. The *guru* did teach, indeed, and the *sishya* did learn, many things. But formal teaching and learning were not the main bonds of relationship between the *guru* and the *sishya*. The *guru* was a mighty power for good or evil, according to his own natural qualities, which had been developed enormously by his own natural life lived naturally. He was strongly fortified in the wisdom he had gained from his life, and could easily afford any one invaluable guidance in almost any matter of life. People chose their *gurus*, according to their own natural inclinations. And sent their children also to them. All who had natural leanings to a good life, naturally chose a good *guru*. He was not, of course, an L.T., or a B. Ed., but only,—if you rejoice in the mystic juxtaposition of charming letters,—just the extreme opposite of B. A. D! He was a model of goodness, and wisdom, and love. And, the *sishya* lived with him, as a mere servant of the *guru*. As a mere, unaggressive, non-dictatorial, unobtrusive, meek, obedient, respectful servant. The *guru* loved him, and treated him as his own son. And they lived their lives together in the *guru's* home, which, it may be added, was kept as a little simple paradise by the *guru's* wife, who was, above all, a woman of women! They all lived to-

gether like good, simple, human beings. And this actual life enabled the *sishya* to acquire a lot of natural knowledge of love and reverence for life, age, nature and everything natural. And God revealed Himself to him in this natural life naturally lived. The *sishya* also learned, from this life, such great truths as that independence is only a word, the real *thing* being only interdependence, that, to put yourself in harmony with nature is very much easier than to put nature into harmony with you, that this infinitesimal dot of a human fool is certainly not the mainspring of the inscrutable mechanism of this infinite universe, that, meddling with the life organism of any individual is a most dangerous game, for which you are certain to be called to account in due course of time, whatever your intentions may have been, and so on. The *sishya* was enabled to learn all these things from his actual life. And this learning was supported and strengthened by a careful study of the scriptures and other similar teachings, under the *guru*. The *guru* himself, however, taught nothing of which he had no natural knowledge. Nor yet, anything to any *sishya* whose life organism did not have an irresistible craving for learning the thing taught. The function and position of the *guru* will be clear from the well known Sanskrit verse, which may be translated thus: 'Adoration to that holy *guru*, by whom are gently opened, with the very fine lancet of wisdom, eyes that are blinded with the cataract of ignorance!'. Another verse even identifies the *guru* with God and nature. This *guru* was adored by the *sishya* as his God. And to-day, our poor, unfortunate schoolboys are severely taken to task for not naturally developing this proverbial reverence for the *guru*, for their own university-decorated schoolmaster who is labouring hard to

push down their crawling throats, with the help of mighty ramrods, encyclopaedic information relating to many things of which the teacher himself has often but very glimmering ideas. Those glimmering ideas being themselves, in most cases, laboriously gathered from books and oral teaching! The mother, as nature's nearest to the child, could help it best. But, our mothers are being taught systematically to entrust their own children and homes, to the care of mere mercenaries, so that they themselves may have more time to attend to their adopted, more important, club and association affairs, including, perhaps, practical preparation for the more vigorous and exciting of the next Olympic games! How the sacred motherly instinct is being sought to be smothered, perverted, suppressed and ruined in the woman of the educated, civilised world! Perhaps, on this matter, as indeed, in many other matters, man might take very useful practical lessons from the lower animals. Is not the human being also an animal? Then why should he not prove himself to be, at least, the very best of all animals rather than so recklessly drop into ways that might even be described as disgraceful even to the lower animals. The only thing that he has to do, to fulfil his destiny, seems to be simply to desist from doing anything that might outrage his own natural organism. But why does he not do so? What is wrong with man? That question, God will answer. I will endeavour to answer in the next instalment of this discussion.

SUMMARY AND COMMENTS

1. The human being is a live organism, and an integral part of the immense organism of nature. The coming

into being, progress through life, and going out of being, of the individual, are all determined and regulated solely by nature. Artificialities are, indeed, often necessary for life. But only those artificialities are indispensable to each individual, for which his own life organism has a natural craving, others being more a handicap than help, to him in the growth of his natural life.

2. Each individual must have complete freedom to live his own life, in strict accordance with the promptings of his own life organism, without any obtrusion from any one. Neither should he obtrude himself on anybody. Perfect non-obtrusiveness is the one maxim required to be observed by individuals in the regulation of their mutual relations. If only all meddlesomeness, whether by helper, reformer, philanthropist, leader or godman, were treated by the state as a capital (!) offence, there would be no necessity for any other law, civil or criminal, in that state! That one law would keep the state entirely free from all crimes and troubles!

3. Even service and help rendered, should be limited strictly to the satisfaction of the felt needs of the person to whom such service or help is given. To force more, and to give less, are equally hurtful to his life organism, both being equally *himsa*. And all *himsa* is violence to the life organism of the individual victimised, an outrage on nature, and a sin against God.

4. The felt needs of children unable to express them in words, are best understood naturally by their mothers. Such children should, therefore, be looked after directly by their own mothers. Other persons who may be unable, for any reason whatsoever, to state their felt needs in words, or

seek or obtain satisfaction of those needs, may be looked after by persons who could enter into full sympathy with them, and understand those needs as if they had been their own felt needs. But, in every such case, the danger of the helper substituting himself for the life organism of the real sufferer should be very carefully guarded against.

5. Society is a mere co-operative aggregation of individuals, and is only a means of strengthening each individual member thereof, to live his own life with greater effect. Society should never attempt, it has no right, to lord it over any individual belonging to it, or expect any of its individual members to put up with any sacrifice at all, for its upkeep. Its duty is merely to serve the individual.

6. The family, except under strictly natural conditions, community, race, nation, state, — are all merely society in its different aspects, the state being the complete aggregate of all the societies of a country. Its executive is the government of that country. So, the government ought to be the most obedient and faithful servant of the state. And the state ought to be, likewise, the most obedient and faithful servant of each individual member of the state. Neither government nor society has any right to suppress the individual.

7. Society, government, and the so-called public workers and leaders of to-day, however, do not seem to understand their own position, or status, or function, and all seem to have set for themselves the task of making humanity virtuous! Universally and uniformly. And bringing about a delightful, universal equality among individuals! A very noble task, indeed! But as continued attention paid to one

single, solitary task, however noble and magnificent, is likely to make life rather monotonous and irksome, it may be advantageous, perhaps, to add one or two items more to this programme. Two more similar tasks might be suggested. *One*, brightening the world by the immediate abolition of all shadows and darkness, and the night. This would certainly make the earth a much happier place than now, to live in! And, — *Two*, re-adjusting the position of the earth in space, so as to put the axis of the earth at right angles to the plane of its orbit. This would help to abolish innumerable, present varieties and inequalities of natural phenomena! Is it not amazing that those who are unable to see the absurd stupidity of these ideas, should still look upon themselves as wise men fit to be leaders of humanity?

8. Governments and society seem to be ever ready to substitute themselves for the natural organisms of individuals. And, unlike King Canute the Great, who said that there was only One who could tell the waves of the ocean: 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther', these self-sufficing authorities issue commands to the life organisms of individuals, laying down peremptorily, what appetites they might have, and at what ages, and how and to what extent those appetites might be satisfied, and what appetites shall not arise at all, and so on. When will they see that rules and regulations can bind only the artificialities of life, and cannot touch natural life? When commandments are laid down, with penalties for their non-observance, restricting or regulating the natural course of people's life organisms, *seeming outward obedience* may be enforced by the sheer might of power, but as no one can really go against the trend of one's own natural organism, the

ultimate result could only be *free satisfaction of all forbidden natural cravings in secret, by clandestine means, and enforced cultivation of universal hypocrisy openly developed into a fine art!* Thus, the virtuous edicts of virtuous governments directly tend to produce *vices that blacken the soul!*

9. If my life organism has a natural craving for an intoxicant, for example, who are you to tell me that I shall not have it? Dare you say that my cravings are depraved, and your own are saintly? What made Sri Krishna's elder brother, Balarama, drink freely? Why are the Hindu *devas* called *suras*? Were not the *asuras* all total abstainers? What is the property of the juice of the *soma* plant used in certain *yagas*? Why is liquor one of the indispensable elements in almost all ancient forms of worship? What makes many a *yogi* indulge in the habitual use of intoxicants? Do you know that, for certain life organisms, intoxicants have a deeply spiritual, besides their ordinary spirituous, value? If your milk will make a saint, can you explain why a viper, fed exclusively on rich cow's milk, develops deadly venom? Could any of your scientists calculate the precise effect of each article used as food or drink, or for smoking, on each life organism? And, do you know that every single hair on your body knows exactly what it wants, far better than your greatest scientist could find out by a whole life-time's research? Don't be a fool, sir. You are quite welcome to flatter yourself that you are living the life of a holy saint. Few, indeed, are concerned to inquire whether that is really so, or you are only rushing headlong into the mouth of hell. But you will do well to remember that if, either directly or

indirectly, you are deliberately and callously causing *himsa* to the life organisms of others, you are doing so really at your peril, and are heading to disaster. Your virtuous intentions will not matter a whit. Does not the old adage say: 'The road to hell is paved with good intentions'?

10. And, all private property earned by the individual, or by the family for its individual members, ought to be held sacred, as acquired by the promptings of the life organism of the individual or the individuals concerned. But, what does statutory abolition of private debts mean? How does it differ from arbitrary socialisation of private individual property?

11. 'Live and let live.' And, 'Mind your own business'. If you have no business of your own, worth minding, do have the goodness to let other people mind their own in peace. The only maxim to be observed for the free life of every individual, and for the peace of humanity, is strict mutual non-obtrusiveness. Do not seek by force, or trick, or stratagem, to poke your nose into another man's business.

12. Natural education is the only education worth having. All human education is artificial, and is at once absurd, unnatural, useless, undesirable, and positively dangerous. This does not mean, however, that teaching and learning have no place in life. But, never teach anything of which you have no natural knowledge. And, never force any learning on anyone whose life organism does not feel a natural craving for it. No teaching or learning can be of any real use to life unless it is firmly based on actual life experience, gathered under real life conditions. And the

medium of instruction is, of course, always very important. For all practical work, conduct etc., action, example, is the most effective medium as well as method. For ideas, the best medium for all native ideas is the learner's own mother-tongue. But, for all classical or foreign ideas, the most suitable is the classical or foreign language concerned. Used very carefully, with a judicious employment of the learner's mother-tongue. Occasionally, also, the *teacher's mother-tongue* might prove the most effective medium. Any indiscreet compulsory employment of a particular medium of instruction, without due regard to the full circumstances of the case, is bound to mar the teaching, and even render it wholly ineffectual. For, translations almost invariably, at least modify ideas. The golden-rule of medium of instruction may be stated somewhat enigmatically thus:—*Always the mother-tongue, for all teaching and learning.* Whether it be an idea, or an activity, or a concrete object that has to be dealt with. Always the mother-tongue. But,—the mother-tongue of that particular idea, activity or object! *Not necessarily* that of the learner or teacher. And, the mother-tongue of an idea is the tongue which has helped to develop it to that shape or form. The mother-tongue of an activity is the clearest, precise demonstration of that activity. And the mother-tongue of anything concrete is direct intimate touch with that thing itself!

13. It is mere nonsense to think that an individual could be prepared for the later stages of his natural life by artificialising its earlier stages. Life does not want any preparation, except living it. But we must all prepare for death. Prepare in a sense very different from our absurd educa-

tional idea of preparing for life. To prepare for death is simply to live a good life. That is, a good life lived strictly in accordance with the natural promptings of one's own life organism, in perfect harmony with nature, and in a spirit of true reverence for nature and everything natural, and to God. Death is the sinking back of your natural life into the universal source from which it emerged into its individual manifestation. And, it has to go back alone, and perfectly naked. Completely shorn of all artificialities in the midst of which it might have lived. 'Sceptre and crown must tumble down'. Father, mother, wife, and children, and all relations and friends, and learned doctors and priests, all must stand sorrowing and bewildered, and wholly helpless, as the natural life of the individual sinks back into its source. 'Alone, alone,—all, all alone'! Does it go back richer or poorer than when it entered the physical world? That is the one question that will matter at the moment. Can it merge into the universal reservoir of life without fouling it? Will it have a hearty welcome back home? Or, will it be kicked back as unfit? These questions none can evade, and their answers must be unbearable hell to every one who has failed to do his best to live a good life.

14. Here, in India, the condition of things is most disheartening, and seems to go steadily from bad to worse. The ancient boasted spirituality of the country is fast disappearing. And greed for material power at any cost, is sedulously cultivated. Unprincipled efforts to seize and wield temporal power are vigorously encouraged. And these efforts are camouflaged by the most disgraceful pseudo-religious cunning that must naturally tend to make India, on

the whole, soulless and Godless. The proverbial religiosity of the people is exploited in such a way, that truly religious men have begun to look upon all religious movements with grave suspicion. The masses have been trained to be wild masses of uncontrollable politicians. And they are sowing the fields and factories, preparing themselves against windmills. The wind has been sown everywhere. And, the whirlwind is getting ready to be harvested. Everybody seems to have any serious business of his own. Almost everybody is consequently prepared to poke his nose into other people's affairs. True spirituality is being pushed out by masqueraders, whose mouths are full of learned, ringing show of spiritual words, but who seem to be ever willing to practise the most unspiritual humbug. And, it is alarming that mighty powers are, to all outward appearance, gradually passing into the hands of groups among whom there seem to be many persons who not only do not know but also, do not know that they do not know!

