

N. S. Rajagopalan

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

OF

SACHIVOTTAMA

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR,

K. C. S. I., K. C. I. E., LL. D.,

DEWAN OF TRAVANCORE

AT THE

21st All-India Educational Conference

HELD AT

MADRAS

On Friday, the 23th December, 1945.

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Presiding over the 21st All India Educational Conference at 11.0 A. M. on Friday, the 28th December 1945 at the Pachayappa's College, Chetput, Madras, Sachivottama Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore said :—

Your Excellency, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, President and Members of this Conference and the Federation, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I rise with feelings of great thankfulness as I am deeply sensible of the honour done to me by inviting me to participate in today's function and in the deliberations of this important Conference. I regard that honour as due mainly to my position as the Head of the Indian State of Travancore. Both Your Excellency and the Vice-Chancellor, to my great regret, skirted round the subject of Indian States (*laughter*) and were rather reluctant to say anything with reference to Indian States and I may therefore have done well to be hesitant and timorous. (*Renewed laughter*). But I shall surmount my timidity. I am glad that I am in a position to speak to you as one representing a country where education was started as a programme in 1817--53 years before England started on that programme, (*Cheers and laughter*), mainly on account of the stimulus and encouragement of a great Maharani-Parvati Bayi, who laid down that for every village there must be a school and for every three villages there must be a dispensary or a hospital. It was in pursuance of that programme carried out

during these hundred and odd years that today we are able to say that the literacy amongst men in Travancore is between 50 and 60 per cent. and amongst women, between 40 and 50 per cent. (*Cheers*). I see a distinguished administrator who was my predecessor, before me on the dais, and he, as a matter of fact, will bear me out when I say that it is not an uncommon thing to see an artisan, or a member of the fishing community—be it a man or woman—reading a book or newspaper in Travancore. I regard this honour granted to me as an honour due to the work that has been done in that State and can be done anywhere else, whether in an Indian State or in British India.

I have been connected with education for a considerable time and I entirely share the feelings and the ideas that have already been expressed by such eminent administrators and thinkers as have preceded me. But I am a lawyer first and foremost (*laughter*) and a lawyer, in arguing a case, generally consults authorities, cites precedents, fortifies himself from time to time so that he may not be tripped up. I therefore propose to keep certain essential sayings in the foreground. To teachers anywhere in India or outside, there is one essential saying that I wish to quote from the Taittiriya Upanishad which may be said to proclaim the ideal, the practice and the achievement of education. In the 8th anuvaka of the Taittiriya Upanishad, a preceptor speaking to the students who gathered round him, used these words :

युवा स्यात् साधु युवा

अध्यापकः आशिष्ठो बलिष्ठो दृढिष्ठः ।

Let me translate: "Let the student who comes for instruction be a good boy; let him be diligent in his studies; let him be disciplined; let him be strong of body and firm of mind." Thus the ideal of education which was enunciated in the various hermitages 3,000 years ago is as profoundly or as essentially true today as it ever was; the object of education, the aim of the educationist and the ideal of the teacher should be to bring into existence not only the diligent student, the one who can pass examinations with bated breath and who can do well in all literary matters, but one who is disciplined and strong of body, (because mental and spiritual strength is a function in mathematical terminology). If our education, whether as part of the post-war reconstruction scheme or otherwise, has to serve its purpose aright, it must proceed on these lines. I stress physical education first and foremost and I say so before this distinguished audience with all the greater alacrity, since I have recently attended a convocation of our own University. Boys and Girls, men and women, trooped past before the dais, and I say deliberately that year after year, the physical standard and the stamina of the products of secondary and University education are deteriorating. There is no doubt, and I take it that it will be the aim of every educationist to see to it that no promotions are allowed unless there is a certain physical standard kept up (*Cheers*), because it is not mercy but undiluted cruelty to allow a person who is not fit to stand the intellectual and the physical strain of higher education, to go from class to class.

Therefore it is that in those schemes in our State we are trying to bring forward one of the conditions—I hope the Vice-Chancellor will not think it is too much of an inroad on the part of the State upon the possibilities of the University (*laughter*) namely, that promotions will not be allowed from class to class unless the student has been duly certified by a Doctor as being physically fit to proceed to the next higher class. There ought to be special schools for defectives in which one or two years' preparatory training should be given, special schools where the children should be fed because we find that the main trouble with our elementary schools is that a child comes to the school half-starved, not having had enough to eat in the morning. The result is that the child merely gazes at the teacher in utter lassitude and so it proceeds from day to day. Therefore, the feeding of children as also the clothing of children, so as to maintain their self-respect when they sit side by side with others, should be the prime concern in rearing up the young students. The feeding and the clothing of children, the giving of proper moral as well as physical stamina to the children is the first thing that has to be cared for. Education, therefore, will be failing in its purpose unless it keeps that ideal in view.

The other point on which I may dwell for a few moments is this: The main trouble in India today and even in fairly well-educated countries outside India is the tremendous wastage of effort, the wastage involved in promoting pupils who have

no right to be promoted and in promoting such persons from the secondary stage to the University stage. Therefore, as a part of the reorientation of education, as a part of the new theories and practices of education, it must be made clear that at every stage there should be an alternative course; as soon as the primary stage is gone through by a boy who is quite good with his hands and eyes and brain, he should be given an opportunity to switch on to vocational instruction. The Middle school will also prepare everybody for some trade, vocation, industry or art, so that at that stage you can find out exactly where the boy will find his best choice for his future career, whether in a Technical school or in a high school or in the polytechnic or in the University. Stage after stage, therefore, there should be prevention of wastage and of stagnation. In order that what I say may not be regarded as the vapourings of an irresponsible politician turned into an Educationist overnight (*laughter*) I wish, as I have done in pursuing my general programme as a lawyer, to place before you certain great ideas which have recently been expressed, and with those as my thesis, I shall proceed with my remarks.

In the first place, this Conference itself is 20 years old now, and its inauguration was due to the initiative and the energy of Professor Seshadri along with two others. It has had the guidance of Professor Wadia and Professor Raman and I need hardly say of our friend who spoke earlier at this Conference. This All India Federation of Teachers' Associations was started in 1925 with the background of the

Hartog Committee's Report which said that "no child can become permanently literate who has not completed a course of at least four years. There is a want of adjustment between the curriculum and the environment of village life and there is a very low standard of teaching. Secondary education should not be dominated by the University and students should be diverted to commercial, industrial and agricultural walks of life." These remarks were made twenty years ago and they are as appropriate today as they were then. (*Laughter*). It is as imminent and urgent today as ever before. At the last Conference held in Madras, this Association expressed the opinion that schools of music and various varieties of art as well as intense and comprehensive physical training should be established. The All-India Session of 1942 at Indore, considered the importance of close relation being established between educational, industrial and commercial interests—rather vague, but very well-meant, and I presume sooner or later, that aspect will be borne in mind. It asks for the improvement in the salary and status of teachers. Your Excellency has reinforced it in Your Address. The Conference then insisted that teachers should be appointed solely on the basis of experience, personality and ability. That has been the background of this great Conference which has been meeting for the past 20 years and which has to a large extent dominated and influenced educational thought. But quite recently we have had a complete reorientation of the whole idea of education. The Sargent Report is before us and

the first thing that is notable in that Report is what it has said and very wisely said, that public instruction consistently applied can produce impressive results. We talk of totalitarianism. We talk of Nazism, of Fascist supermachinery or the Japanese method. The results of broad systems of training have exhibited themselves in these dreadful apparitions which have afflicted this world. There is no gainsaying the fact that the system of education, sedulously and continuously pursued in Germany, Italy and Japan produced a human product which was considered to be useful for certain particular purposes. To a certain extent, those systems justified themselves in their success and produced results contemplated by the originators and founders. I therefore take up Dr. Sargent's report at that point and re-emphasise what he said. He says: "Public instruction consistently applied can produce impressive results." Impressive results have been produced in particular directions in Germany, Italy and Japan. Why should not more impressive results and more beneficial and philanthropic results in the wider sense, and humanitarian results be achieved by wisely planned education consistently applied elsewhere? That is what we are here for.

At the same time, there is no getting away from the fact that only to the extent to which that mission is understood, appreciated, envisaged, shall success be ours.

Quite recently I was reading a Report drawn up by a noted American psychologist who says: "If we wait until the child is three years old, it may

be too late to form those habits of physical, mental and moral health which are the foundation of character and citizenship. What can be done is to have a liberal provision in every locality of open-air nurseries as well as adult education." We are, therefore, face to face with thinkers who plunge boldly into the problem and face the situation aright and we realise that the character, the trend of thought and the emotional and the psychological impulses have already been described in the Upanishads and also in the Ithihasas. I am not referring to syncopathia or psychoanalysis but I am referring merely as an educationist that the sooner you take hold of the boy or the girl, the better would it be for the boy or the girl and for society at large, and therefore, although it may seem to be a very idealistic approach today, it appears to be inescapable that you must necessarily provide for those children who in their present environment cannot become useful or effective citizens of the future. Therefore, a system of primary education started by itself, without that aspect of the open-air nursery being kept in the fore-ground and sedulously worked for, will not be as useful as it would otherwise be.

At this juncture, I cannot omit to refer to the great and transcendental work done by Madame Montessori who is now, I understand, trying to start work on somewhat similar lines in Madras. At the present moment she has been taken away by Jaipur for the purpose of co-operating with similar efforts elsewhere but I trust that—though I am a retired Madrasi (laughter), she will give us her advice and

counsel. But at this moment, it may be useful for you to keep in memory what she has said in a recent pamphlet: "The child who has never learned to act alone, to direct his own actions, to govern his own will, grows into an adult who is easily led and must always lean upon others. The school child being continually discouraged and scolded, ends by acquiring that mixture of distrust of his own powers and of fear, which is called shyness and which later, in the grown man, takes the form of discouragement and submissiveness, of incapacity to put up the slightest moral resistance. The obedience which is expected of a child both in the home and in the school—an obedience admitting neither of reason nor of justice—prepares the man to be docile to blind forces." Fascism and Nazism led the child into pre-determined and pre-conceived methods of thought and action and that is why I desire to lay emphasis on that aspect. Our seers have stated

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ।

and they have emphasised that courage and fearlessness are fundamental; and the supreme is not attained by the weakling. The essence of manhood is fearlessness, the desire to investigate and be fearless. The punishment so common in schools which consists in subjecting the culprits to public reprimand, and is almost tantamount to the torture of the pillory, fills the soul with a crazy unreasoning fear of public opinion, even an opinion manifestly unjust and false.

Let me remind my listeners of what fell from Your Excellency. Politics and the work-a-day world make demands upon us. Slogans to the right and to the left we hear; and we shall frame a curriculum for our own conduct irrespective of those slogans, at the same time paying respects to those ideals which are behind the slogans. That is the attitude which is needed at the present time. 'In the midst of the adaptations and many others which set up a permanent inferiority complex, is born the spirit of devotion—not to say of idolatry to the *condottieri*, the leaders!' Dr. Montessori might have added that the inferiority complex often finds expression in compensatory brutality and cruelty.

Not many years ago I was reading one of the well-known works of probably the greatest universal mind that was born in Europe within the last two or three centuries. I am referring to Goethe. He talked and wrote much on most subjects that concern mankind. Like Leonardo Da Vinci he was a man with a universal mind. What he says on education is of interest here. With your permission I shall read it to you: "The modern educationist advocates a method of teaching which rests on the direct apprehension of the concrete world through the senses. By depending on their fingers and on their arms and legs rather than on their slates and pencils, their reasoning and memory, children will inevitably make mistakes; but mistakes which they can see and rectify for themselves. The eye of the body and the touch of the hand will convince in a way that a correction on an exercise can never do,

In this way they will gradually learn the 'No' which life so often opposes to our human efforts, but they will learn it, not through stupid, meaningless denial, but through surrender which is yet a satisfaction. Through the manipulation of a medium and the mastery of a technique the child will learn the importance of form and discipline." I pause here for a moment and will now in very rapid survey deal with what I consider to be the essentials of education—primary, secondary and university. I wholly agree with the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University that it is criminal folly on the part of any Government or any administration to say: "Thus far will it be our responsibility and there it will stop on educational matters." The State is responsible for primary education because it affects the largest number. It is responsible for primary education in that at that stage the deflection is made—the deflection of certain persons in the vocational and other aspects which may be called the learned aspects of education. The State is again responsible at the end of the secondary stage, *viz.*, to choose, to discriminate and to select so that the tremendous crowding into the universities may be counteracted. Nobody knows what is to be done unless it be to enter the University. There should be a certain definiteness about the ideals of every State. In other words every State should be able to do the best it can for every child, boy and adolescent and give him the fullest chance for self-expression. It must give him the fullest possible primary and secondary education and take him through a vocation. The whole trouble arises because we have all

been black-coated until yesterday (*laughter*). Today I understand that the home spun and hand woven things are likely to supersede the black-coated tendency. We have discarded the black coats in Travancore (*laughter*). What I make bold to say is that as soon as a child is born, the parent plans somehow to cram him into a school and get him out at the other end—the University—with “P. A.”, or “B. L.”, so that he might at once apply to His Excellency the Governor of Madras (*laughter*) or to his advisers and officers and try to secure an appointment. The whole position is this. As one who has had some experience of Government service, of administration both in British India and in the Indian States, I may say that University education is by no means the prime requisite in most Government offices. What is wanted in Government offices is ability to write simple understandable English without rhetoric (*Laughter.*) What is next wanted is ability to compress a certain file into a few words which the harassed and unleisured adviser to His Excellency can read through in a limited time. (*Laughter*). I make bold to dogmatise. While University education today has its undoubted advantages—I am the last man to deny that the University education during the last 70 years has made the modern India, has made for the idea of unity without which India will perish and has made for those ideals which are going to enrich this country—it has not fitted the person for the job for which he applies. It should be made clear—I am not sermonising Your Excellency—that in all Governments, the fact that a man is a B. A. will not be

a passport to any Government employment. You must, for that purpose, have a separate test for entry into Government service. For instance, a double-graduate wanted to be entertained in service recently in Travancore, and I asked him how long he had stayed in Travancore. He said it was four years. Then I put it to him : "Do you know where aluminium is produced in Travancore?" He answered it was in Alwaye. It is not so, because it comes from Bihar (*Laughter*). The point is that there is so much of unawareness and getting away from one's surroundings or environments, so much wrongly directed idealism, so much unpracticality. That is what is wanted in the work-a-day world, you do not get in the University. But that does not mean that University training is valueless. What I am urging upon this gathering is that there should be a complete divorce between what may be called the University and the great callings or avocations. A University may be an advantageous training ground. It may be a corridor but it should not be the drawing room. That is the aspect which I am very anxious to emphasise before you. For that purpose, it is necessary to bring into existence as part of the educational system, first of all as many primary schools as possible. I hold the view that it would be criminal folly on the part of any Government to abdicate the responsibility of giving primary and compulsory education to every child, boy or girl between the ages of 5 and 12 or 14. To the extent to which that work is done by other agencies, to the extent to which that work has been done in the past, our thanks, our congratulations

and our gratitude are lively and are forthcoming. But, for the future, I hold that the State cannot abdicate individual and personal responsibility for seeing to it that in the next five or six years there will be no boy or no girl who could say that he or she does not know how to read or write. Side by side it is necessary that there should be a well-designed system of secondary education, which will have two departments, one department providing vocational education according to the circumstances and aptitude of each boy deflected into it, and the other, leading on to the University. That Vocation depends upon the surroundings of the student. Suppose a person is living in a locality where basket-making or coir-making or weaving is the main occupation. Then he must be made fit to follow that profession; in other words, you must make every boy and girl able to earn his or her living. Those who display greater talents should be allowed to go to the Secondary School and then from the Secondary School to the University. Napoleon used the phrase "La carrière ouverte aux talents." All careers must be opened to deserving talent.

I may boldly say that there is no distinction between one community and another, at all events in certain localities like Cochin and Travancore. I assure my friend Sir Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, that "backward" communities are as forward as other "forward" communities in the matter of education and it shows how much can be done if education is brought to their doors and if they are

paid all the subventions and scholarships that are necessary. I may also say that a member of the backward communities not only passed first in the highest examination in the State last year but one-fifth of the candidates selected for higher training in England and America are members of the backward communities. It is possible, therefore, that if there is a definite scheme taking up everybody and giving them all the help that could be given, there need not, should not and would not be any difference between "backward" and "forward" communities.

I do not wish to anticipate the debates and the discussions that will take place. There are, however, one or two observations of my own, which may be placed before you so that you might see that the troubles and handicaps afflicting us are not peculiar to India but are found in Britain and even in America which is considered the last word on all matters. (*Laughter*). The New York State recently conducted an enquiry for three years into the character and the cost of public education in that State. Let me read the findings of that Committee: "The primary school curriculum is entirely on the wrong lines and needs complete revision." (*Laughter*). Curricula in high schools and Colleges are too narrow. "Universities are less centres of research and learning than of mass production of uneducated graduates." (*Renewed laughter*).

Let us for a moment turn to the other side of the Atlantic. There was what is called the Spens Report. The report of the Consultative

Committee of the English Board of Education, commonly known as the Spens Report, says "Secondary Education must be freed from its past traditions and must be based on the requirements of a realistic youth psychology which has to be made by a new system of technical education." We were saying that cricket and football, rugby and association foot-ball including, had taught the average English youth all that has to be known of corporate life whereas the dissipated Indian community is nowhere. Unfortunately, the Spens Report seems to have had the same trouble in England also (*Laughter*). It says that the Tutorial system in schools and the value of corporate life are completely neglected. All educationists will agree that perhaps the most noteworthy of educationists today is Prof. Dewey. He says "The individualisation of instruction will follow the Montessori method for the young children or the Dalton plan for the older pupils, the motto being, in the words of Caldwell Cook: "Not here they teach but here we learn. Self-reliance of the pupil is the main thing to be sought." Through self-expression, through mutual debate and mutual living together and rubbing down of angles and differences, they learnt the great lessons of life—academic and others. He says that in the present system of education it was the absence of intellectual control through significant subject matter which stimulates the deplorable egotism, impertinence and disregard for the rights of others apparently considered by some persons to be the inevitable accompaniment if not the essence of freedom.

I have sought to show that the troubles and the handicaps from which we suffer and by which we are afflicted are not singular and are not confined to this country alone. At the same time, I suppose it would be clear from the extracts to which I have invited your attention that from the beginning there have been seers and thinkers who have felt that a great deal more is involved in education than is generally connoted by that term. From the point of view of character and from mental and physical training, it is an integrated effort and not a series of isolated attempts. So envisaged, so thought, education must proceed on an absolute universal primary basis in order to enable the whole body politic to be fitted as the result of and by virtue of the impact of that education to determine for each individual what he or she is best fitted for. Some may be fit for a vocation; some may be dowered with the gift of art and artistic appreciation. Some may be academically inclined; some may be philosophical and others may be realistic, but you cannot dissect; you cannot discriminate, you cannot distinguish unless the foundations of primary education are laid. The middle school will be a logical continuation of the primary school and will develop the same tendencies and the same possibilities a little further. Then will come the secondary school in which tuition should embrace the background, the environment, the history and the geography of one's own locality and the ideals of one's country, and at the same time give a practical bias so that at the end of the secondary period, you would be able to say whether a person is fit

for being sent to the vocational side or to the University side. In the University, we have two great ideals. One is that of humanistic studies—those great topics of history, economics and philosophy which can never be neglected for the things that “see the eye and catch the prize” in the language of Browning. The other is that of realistic ideals. We must go forward, intensify our agriculture, increase our productivity, enhance our industrial output and compete with the rest of the world sooner or later—sooner, I trust, rather than later—on equal terms in those things that matter for industrial and manufacturing progress or processes. In order to do that, for the time being, perhaps, a certain amount of neglect of the usual curricula may be an inevitable concomitant, but nobody is going to wait for us to finish our education in our own leisurely way. We must work against time. I have said elsewhere that Australia and Canada within the last seven years have become great industrial nations through the one-pointed efforts of their national Governments. We have done deplorably little. Canada which had no aeroplane factory is now exporting aeroplanes to England. Australia has built up a shipping industry. We have been dreaming and thinking of it for the last 30 years. I am not concerned about whether this Government or the next Government or any other Government will do this, but we have been remiss. We have been shortsighted. We have thought only of the things that mattered most for today and tomorrow. We have been tied round, like the great Nero by the coils of the python, by the coils

of red-tape. Tomorrow needs a different programme, a different pace; but that pace cannot be won, that programme cannot be achieved without a diversified, variegated and at the same time definitely one-pointed scheme of education integrated from first to last, carefully watched, supervised by the State but not ruled by the State (*Cheers*). I hold with you, Sir, that no intellectual freedom, no great intellectual gift or accomplishment is possible where the human mind is cabined and confined. The University must be completely free but in earlier stages the shepherding and watchful and guiding care of the State may be the *sine qua non* at this juncture. So proceeding, let us trust that we shall be worthy of our charge and work for the great India for which we are all yearning, dreaming, hoping and expecting. (*Prolonged Cheers.*)

President's concluding speech.

It now devolves upon me before this conference concludes, to make what is termed the concluding speech. I do not, however, feel called upon to detain you for any considerable time, especially as so many resolutions have been debated, discussed, different points of view indicated, analysed and opposed, and the results embodied in a series of very valuable motions and resolutions. This Conference meets, as I already indicated, at a very difficult juncture in this country's history. A great deal was said in the course of one of the discussions about the necessity for fostering in boys and girls

ideals of internationalism, and regarding the homogeneity and the universality of culture. The task of the teacher is getting to be more onerous and more exacting day after day. But this Conference would have done well if it had concentrated on no other subject excepting this one, namely, the bettering of the emoluments and the status of the teacher from the school to the University. (*Applause*). There is no use of asking the teacher to be the torchbearer if the torch which he carries is not supplied with the necessary oil or if the bearer himself is hovering between suspended and active animation. (*Cheers and laughter*). I say this after having a profound personal experience of the lot of the teachers not only of the primary and secondary schools but also of the University. Unless the emoluments of the teacher are assimilated to the remuneration derived by persons who are carrying on an equally valuable work, there is no hope for the future. Indeed it has been put to me by a very illustrious teacher, and it is also recognised in some countries, that perhaps the most poorly paid personage in the teaching hierarchy is the one who is to be the most highly paid. After all, in the University, a teacher, a professor or a lecturer is dealing with persons who have advanced intellectually and psychologically to a large extent. The work of the teacher is that of stimulation, of encouragement, of gentle admonition or regulation according to specified paths, but the work of the primary school teacher, the work of the child's teacher is something more fundamental, onerous and difficult, in as much as he has to evolve the whole of the conscience and thoughts of the

child and to integrate them on the right lines. The lot of the primary school teacher is therefore the first charge and the primary concern of every Government and every Conference like this (*Cheers*) and I trust before we meet next all Governments in India would have paid adequate attention to this matter because there is no point in postwar educational reconstruction until three problems are dealt with. The first problem is that of the emoluments and status of the teacher, the second is that of keeping alive the student during the period of nonage and study by giving him such nutriment as will enable him to take advantage of the tuition that is given to him. In dealing therefore with a question of primary education, at least mid-day feeding of the pupils should be the first charge upon the State's finances. (*Cheers*) I hold the view strongly that there is no point in embarking on a system of primary education whether compulsory or not, unless the child is able to make something of that education. The third point is that which was debated not fully perhaps, namely the physical examination of the children.

We then come to secondary education and there it is that stress has been laid on the technical aspect of education. I hold the view which was already expressed that the place that the technically educated man occupies is as lofty, as distinctive and as full of promise for the future as that of the purely academically instructed man. Indeed, later creative thought has been emphasising and enforcing this theory, namely, that properly conducted, adequately envisaged, technical education can be made

the apt instrument of the highest variety of culture in the right sense of the word culture (*Cheers*). I am, therefore, of opinion that properly conducted technical institutions which do not obscure or eliminate those humanistic strains of education which are as important to keep in mind as anything else, will serve an equally important purpose. The polytechnic for which Charlottenburg in the deceased Germany was very famous was a great exemplar. I look forward to the period when educational reformers pausing at the stage of secondary education will strive to build up polytechnics which will take some students in one direction and deflect other students to what may be called the abstract or more intellectually barren (*laughter*) aspects of certain types of university education. Here there is a great deal of spade-work to be done. We are already suffering from the fact that technical education has not had its proportionate share in the general education of India. The war has made a lot of difference. I can tell you, my friends, that today, the technically educated man or indeed the labourer is much better paid than either the teacher or the lower grade clerk in any public office. (*Cheers*.) I know from my own experience that about 55,000 people went from Travancore to build the roads between Assam and Burma during the Burmese campaign recently. Each of them was paid Re. 1 to Re. 1/8 per day and was fed and was given clothing and medical assistance and radio and cinema. (*Laughter*.) I should like to know how many labourers before the war could have dreamed of such a state of things.

How many teachers today enjoy such amenities? (*Laughter.*) What I was going to say was that the war and the aftermath of the war have taught us that technical education and even manual labour are not to be despised. I trust that that consciousness will spread and that we shall not drift back into the old bad ways. Similar is the case with regard to university education. I do hope that more practical training will come into vogue in the education of the future. I am myself a student of history and economics and philosophy, but for the time being, until we catch up with the other countries of the world, we would like to concentrate a bit on the things which are needed for the education of the hand besides the education of the eye and the brain. I trust that the practical methods of education and the practical sides of education will receive larger and larger encouragement in the hands of the State. I am saying this because I find that we are now face to face with a tremendous dilemma. My good friend, Sir Joseph Bhore, has started a modest scheme for rendering us all healthy at a cost of a thousand crores, another friend of mine has started a road programme for Rs. 450 crores, and Dr. Sargent has been very modest as his budget is only Rs. 280 crores and between the various postwar reconstruction Committees that have been recently functioning, we have distributed to our own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of the readers of those reports (*laughter*) about 2,500 crores of rupees. The question, therefore, will be raised almost immediately, namely how are we to choose between all these? How shall we spend our money

and how best shall we utilise our resources? I hold the view strongly that perhaps the best way of implementing these recommendations is to make our University products capable of those great and immense developments which have made all the difference in the war and which made all the difference before the war which led to the better aspects of the war and its results, not the atomic bomb, but the brain that went to make the atomic bomb, not the radar but the discipline and the intellectual organisation that were able to produce the radar. I, therefore, hold the view that in the conditions of this country the production of the best type of researcher, the technical student, the man who would create new things, as well as new ideas, is first and foremost the *sine qua non* of the State. Therefore, in no part of India, in no portion of the curriculum or the programme of postwar reconstruction should the urgent necessity of bringing into effect those trained intellects, those trained hands and minds be forgotten, ignored or obscured. I am sure that the deliberations and the resolutions of this Conference will prove of great use to those who are engaged in the solution of such problems. I wish you all godspeed and congratulate you on the work that has been done. (*Cheers.*)

President's remarks at the General Session (Concluding session) of the All-India Educational Conference on the evening of Sunday, the 30th December 1945, at Pachaiyappa's College, Chetput, Madras.

I had not intended to take part in the intermediate stages of this Conference but a fairly

important question has been raised incidentally and the matter is before this Conference for decision. It appears to me that the last speaker has been trying to cross or jump a hurdle which is not there. (*Laughter*). The point that is sought to be made by the resolution is this : that steps should be taken for adequate physical training of the students so as to find out whether the students are fit for the courses of studies ; whether they enjoy in practice and not merely in theory, all possible facilities for physical education and physical betterment. It may be true that as pointed out by the last speaker, no ready-made tests are now available. More-over, without a fairly well-developed system of medical inspection, it may not be possible to implement such a resolution. The object of the resolution, I take it, is merely to focus the attention of educationists and of parents on this subject of paramount importance, namely sooner or later, to evolve a system of physical education suited to every physique and to every possible type of students. The physical education imparted to the women students cannot be the same as that imparted to the men students. To those in certain localities, you may have to impart different varieties. For instance, in Travancore, having had experience myself, the system of physical education, namely, athletics according to the European standards, was found too expensive. Cricket fields could not always be provided for. Lawn Tennis is an expensive game. Football is popular in some places and is not so in many other places. It was, therefore, resolved that there should be at least a certain type of culture

which is known as Yoga exercises, pranayama or breathing exercises, and we have brought into existence a Professor on a salary of Rs. 500 per mensem to teach the breathing exercises—pranayama, asanas and all the rest of it, as it is a cheap form of exercise which will make the body of the person supple. It has nothing to do with Hinduism or any other religion. Those who are Christians know that in the medieval ages, these breathing exercises were practised by many saints and all men of eminence. There are many other systems of exercises evolved by specialists.

The question for discussion before this Conference is whether they are agreed that having regard to the present condition of the physique of the Indian student, male and female, it is not well at some stage or other to insist upon proper wetting before further education is forced upon them or forced into them, and I put it to vote on that basis. Those in favour of insisting, under proper safeguards and subject to proper tests, physical education as a *sine qua non* from stage to stage for academic studies will kindly signify their assent in the usual manner.

Resolution put and carried by a large majority.

I see that the amendment is supported by a fairly large section of the audience. I notice it from the applause, but it is my duty to find out how far it is cognate to the main resolution and can be moved as an amendment. It will be noticed that the resolution deals not with individual teachers but with teachers' associations. It asks that teachers'

associations of various provinces should be adequately represented on important bodies of the respective provinces and States. In other words, it is a request that certain organised bodies or corporations should be given representation. What the teachers' function should be, does not come within the scope of this resolution. I do not wish for a moment to express an opinion on the subject matter of the amendment moved, but I take it that if properly brought forward at this Conference or at the next Conference, it can be well discussed and the opinion of the Conference taken and implemented. But as an amendment to this resolution, very reluctantly I am afraid as a lawyer, which fact was indirectly referred to earlier (*Laughter*)— I shall have to hold it out of order.

