

# *Whither* EDUCATION?



*Sarat*

# Whither Education ?

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE  
**SHASHTIABDAPURTHY**

OF

**SRI M. S. SABHESAN**

(President, The South India Teachers' Union)

PUBLISHED  
for the Prof. Sabhesan  
Shashtiabdapurthi Commemoration Committee

**B. G. PAUL & CO.**

FRANCIS JOSEPH ST., MADRAS



## FOREWORD

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This volume has been prepared as a token of our great appreciation of the valuable services rendered by Prof. Sabhesan during the last 28 years to the cause of Education and of Teachers.

Our thanks are due to the distinguished educationists who have enabled us to present a symposium on Education in Free India. We are thankful to the authorities of the South India Teachers' Union for their kind permission to reprint from 'The South Indian Teacher' and 'The Balar Kalvi', Sabhesan's articles and addresses. Messrs. B. G. Paul & Co., by undertaking the publication and Sri S. Viswanathan of the Central Art Press by getting the volume printed in such attractive style at very short notice have placed us in a deep debt of gratitude.

*Madras, 19—2—'48.*

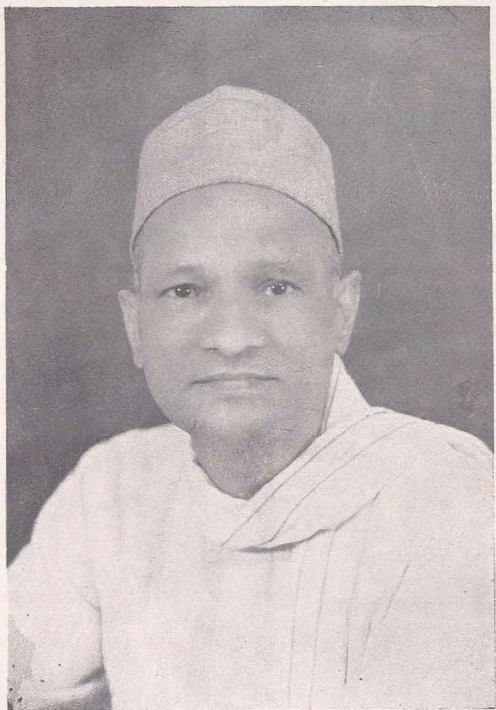
S. K. YEGNANARAYANA IYER,  
*For the Prof. Sabhesan Shashtiabdapurthy  
Commemoration Committee.*

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SRI M. S. SABHESAN



**ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீ சௌந்திர வரவ்யக் ஸ்ரீ வாடெடி:**

सर्वारिष्ट निवर्तिकया पण्ड्यद्पूर्तिं शान्त्या समाराधिताभिः शतमख प्रमुखा-  
भिस्तत्तद्देवताभिरनुगृहीतो भवान् श्रीचन्द्रमौळीशारूपया स्वश्रेयसपरम्परामधि-  
गच्छति॑ त्याशास्महे ॥

सर्वजित् सं०  
कृष्णपक्ष अमावास्या  
मखात्-पागूर

नारायणस्मृतिः ॥

## GREETINGS

**His Excellency Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, Governor of West Bengal.**

“ ..... I testify to Sabhesan's energy and loyalty to the cause of the teachers and of education in South India.”

**Hon'ble Sri T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar,**

*Minister for Education, Government of Madras.*

I am glad to know that Prof. M. S. Sabhesan will be completing his 60th year on 21.2.48. He is a public spirited gentleman devoted to the teaching profession. He has served the South India Teachers' Union for the last many years and I am glad that you are publishing a commemoration volume in honour of him on that occasion. I wish him a long and happy life of useful service to the country.

**Sir A. L. Mudaliar, M.D., LL.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.O.G., F.A.O.S.,**

*Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras,*

Professor M. S. Sabesan is well-known in University circles for the very active part he took as a member of various University Authorities. He was for long connected with the Board of Studies in Botany, and his valuable advice was greatly appreciated.

Besides the work that he has done for the University, he has devoted his life-time to the cause of the promotion and welfare of the teachers, and as President of the Madras Teacher's Guild, he has done work of an outstanding nature, which has rightly and deservedly been recognised as monumental by the teaching profession.

On the occasion of his Shashtiabdapurthy, there will be many who will offer him their felicitations and all good wishes, and I have great pleasure in associating myself with them on behalf of the University of Madras, of which he was a distinguished alumnus.

**Dr. Amaranatha Jha, M.A., F.R.S.L.**

*President. All India Federation of Educational Association*

I am very pleased to learn that the sixtyfirst birthday of Prof. M. S. Sabhesan is to be celebrated in February next. The great work that he has done in the cause of Education is entitled to our abiding gratitude. I regret I shall not be able to be present on the occasion, but I cordially associate myself with all the tributes that will naturally be paid to him, and I wish him many more years of useful activity.

**Rao Bahadur K. V. Krishnaswami Ayyar**

On this happy occasion of the Shashtiabdapurthy of Prof. M. S. Sabhesan the President and members of the Council of the Madras Library Association beg to acknowledge with gratitude the invaluable services rendered by the Professor to the cause of popular education by delivering series of popular lectures on scientific subjects under the auspices of the Association and in diverse other ways.

**Dr. B. V. Narayanaswami Naidu, M.A., Ph.D., B. Com., Bar-at-Law.,**  
*Member, Indian Tariff Board,*

Prof. M. S. Sabhesan is a veteran fighter for the rights and liberties of the teachers in South India and his dynamic personality and indefatigable energy and tireless work have been responsible for infusing courage in the minds of the teachers and imparting to them a high degree of esprit de corps. As a professor of great erudition, he has won the admiration of all the students who had the good fortune to learn at his feet. And as a leader of the Teachers in South India, his great services deserve to be remembered for ever with affection and gratitude by succeeding generations of teachers.

On this occasion I desire to convey through you to Prof. M. S. Sabhesan my heartiest congratulations and best wishes for a long and happy life.

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**Sri M. S. Sundaram, Education Department, India House, London.**

It is indeed a privilege to pay homage to a veteran educationalist like Professor M. S. Sabhesan, who has rendered untiring service to the cause of Education and to the teaching profession in India for over a generation. My personal contacts with Professor Sabhesan have been few and far between, but I have admired his tenacity and courage in shouldering responsibility, particularly on behalf of the thousands of timid and underpaid schoolmasters for whom his sympathies are unbounded. Professor Sabhesan built up solidarity in the teaching profession, and also contributed much to educational thought and practice, particularly in the Province of Madras. One, of his ability and initiative could easily have aspired and achieved a more prosperous station in life, but he has sacrificed his personal ambitions for the greater achievement of the good of the many. He is a great schoolmaster of whom all his countrymen may be legitimately proud. We in Madras produced the greatest of our schoolmasters, the late Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, who always regretted having to give up teaching for political affairs. Sastri once said that whenever his political adversaries called him an ex schoolmaster, his only regret was the prefix "ex". Fortunately Professor Sabhesan is still with us a great schoolmaster, and may he continue to render his undivided service to the cause of the noble profession of which he has been a devotee these many years.

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**Prof. Diwanchand Sharma,**  
*Vice President, All India Federation of Educational Associations.*

I do not remember when I met Shree M. S. Sabhesan, but today he seems to be very much an essential part of my professional life. He is one of the few teachers in India who has devoted his life to the cause of the uplift of his brother teachers. He himself worked in a college, but he has, by character and example, enabled us to realise the unity of our professionals. He has made us feel that there is no gulf between a primary school



teacher and a so-called college professor. Unconsciously he has promoted the feeling of brotherliness amongst all the various grades of teachers.

Whatever he has done for his brother teachers, he has done by being actuated by the highest moral motives. It is true he has worked for their economic betterment but more than this he has tried to restore to teachers their self-respect, prestige and self-confidence. He has himself reminded me always of the old gurus and has striven to invest every teacher with the qualities of a guru.

A quiet and unassuming man, a person of sterling character and a gentleman of integrity, he has been a model for all of us. Travelling about in India I have sometimes come across some of his old students and they have all borne testimony to his worth as a teacher and as a gentleman. Persons like him are the salt of our profession. May he live long to inspire and to guide us.

---

Sri Ramajayam

Sri Aravindajayam

Kulapathy Sri P. A. Subramania Iyer

Who that knows Mr. Sabhesan can withhold admiration and praise? For 30 years he has been whole-heartedly devoting himself to the cause of Education and the amelioration of the lot of teachers particularly in aided schools in this province. As such, he has done more work than any other member of the S. I. T. U.

He pushed himself into public notice in 1917 or so by his series of popular lectures in Botany freely and voluntarily given to supplement the knowledge of teachers in schools. It was only after this that government instituted similar courses in different subjects on a paid basis.

As Secretary to the Madras Teachers' Guild for some years and afterwards as its President, he made it very popular and the numbers on its rolls increased largely during his regime.

He was one of those who, with the help of the late Mr. P. V. Seshu Iyer (may the Teachers' Guild ever honour his name and memory) were responsible for the revival of the defunct Madras Teachers' Guild Cooperative Society and fostering it with such care that from the first it has been included by the Government Cooperative Department in Class 'A'. The most able and willing assistance rendered as Secretary by Mr. V. Rangaswamy Iyengar of the Tondamandalam High School, Georgetown, should never be forgotten.

The S. I. T. U. Protection Fund has received from Mr. M. S. Sabhesan years of close attention and vigilant care. It was during the period of his service as its President that a thorough change in its Articles of Association became imperative. On account of this some constituents here and there were seized with great fear as to its stability. Thanks, however, to Mr. Sabhesan's skill and the wise counsel he received from experts, the institution was soon placed on a most firm basis and it is now functioning quite satisfactorily.



The South Indian Teacher, the accredited organ of the S. I. T. U. owes its vigour and popularity very largely to him, In Mr. S. Natarajan he has a valuable coadjutor and together they have spared no pains in bringing before the Government and the public the legitimate grievances of the teaching profession and the needs of Education of all grades in this province.

On the Senate and the Academic Council of the Madras University Mr. Sabhesan has put in much useful service. In close cooperation with the late lamented Mahamahopadhyaya Kuppaswami Sastriar, who was on all hands accepted as the most accomplished Sanskrit Scholar of his time, he helped the Vice-Chancellor and the Syndicate in thoroughly overhauling the statutes, regulations, etc., of the University and bringing them up to date. Vice-Chancellor, Sir K. Ramunni Menon, has often spoken in praise of these.

As a result of some breakdown in health, Mr. Sabhesan has of late not been able to go about from place to place which his office as President of the S. I. T. U. demands. On such occasions energetic Secretary Mr. T. P. Srinivasavaradan very capably deputises him.

Stout and fearless champion as Mr. Sabhesan is, he now and then comes in for sharp criticism from the powers that be—one cannot forget the occasion when a former Prime Minister of the Madras Government who, as Sir S. Radhakrishnan once remarked, was so cocksure of his omniscience that he had no use for his colleagues on the Cabinet, openly declared that he could get on very well without the advice of the teaching profession. The way in which Mr. Sabhesan stood up to him then was admirable.

All honour to Mr. Sabhesan. May Sri Rama grant that he live many more years in good health doing beneficent work for teachers and the teaching profession he loves so much.

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**Sri S. R. Ranganathan, M.A., L.T., F.L.A.,**

*President, Indian Library Association, Professor of Library Science,  
University of Delhi.*

My heart-felt felicitations to Prof. M. S. Sabhesan and Mrs. Sabhesan on the occasion of his Shashtiabdapurti.

Though my feeling that I had out-grown any possible further use of my continuing in Madras has made me accept without bitterness the long-expected result of the long-planned political machinations which reached their culmination three years ago, the one thing that I then regretted was the snapping of the health-giving daily contact with Prof. Sabhesan. That regret gets intensified today when so much of physical space separates me from him and prevents me from being by his side and witnessing his being soaked in love and regard on the occasion of the public celebration of his Shashtibadapurti. But I am throwing off that regret since this physical handicap, as usual, re-doubles communion in spirit.

The life and work of Prof. Sabhesan is a modern demonstration of the well-known saying of popular Auvayar about the one good soul who brings down rain for the good of all. I claim to be in the front rank of those who benefited all through life by his example and good-wishes. My most fervent prayer to-day is that this good soul should continue to be in the present embodiment for a long, long time radiating benevolence on one and all.

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**Miss. K. N. Brockway**

I consider it an honour to be permitted to add my congratulations to those of Professor Sabhesan's many admirers and friends on the occasion of his Shashtibadapurthy in February 1948. It is more than twenty years ago that one of my women students assured me that the best teacher in Madras was Mr. Sabhesan. I remember being a little put out at the time as I was a great enthusiast for women teachers and I did not altogether welcome this tribute to a "mere man". But when I worked with Professor Sabhesan on Education Week Committees and particularly in connection with the visit to Madras of the New Education Fellowship Delegation, I realized his rare quality as leader of educationists in Madras City and beyond. I do most heartily congratulate Professor Sabhesan on this great day and thank him for all his devoted labours on behalf of teachers and pupils in South India.

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**Rev. Fr. Jerome De Souza, S. J.**

It would have been a very great pleasure for me to write in some detail in appreciation of Professor Sabhesan's work as Professor and Leader of the Teaching Profession. But your letter reaches me just when I am about to leave Madras for about 10 days and I can only write this very brief letter under these conditions. Professor Sabhesan has gained the respect and admiration of all both by his work as Professor of Science, the high standard of work and duty which he has always inculcated and also by his long and unremitting labours for bettering the status of the Teaching Profession. I have had the privilege of working on several committees with him and I have always been struck by his great courtesy, moderation in discussion combined with absolute firmness on essentials. I request you to convey to him my very warm wishes for many more years of happy and useful life.

---

**Rev. H. A. Popley, Coonoor.**

Prof. Sabhesan has not only rendered very valuable service as a professor for three decades but for many years he has rendered unique service to the South India Teachers' Union as its President. He has shown deep sympathy with all classes of teachers in their needs, both financial and otherwise, and has through his efforts made the South India Teachers' Union into a strong and useful body, knitting together into one brotherhood all the teachers of the Province. He has loyally stood up for the rights of

the teachers and no less earnestly done his best to help them to realise and carry out their responsibilities to the youth of the country. Through good and evil report he has unswervingly carried on these tasks and the teachers all owe to him a deep gratitude. I trust that the celebration of his Shashtiabdipurthy will be only one more milestone in his career of useful and honourable service.

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**Rev. T. R. Foulger, M.A.,** *Meston Training College.*

My colleagues and I greatly appreciate the opportunity of expressing our gratitude for the outstanding services of Professor M. S. Sabhesan to the cause of education and to the teaching profession for over a quarter of a century. As an officer of the South India Teacher's Union and of the Madras Teachers' Guild for many years he has done much to raise the status of the profession. As a founder-member of the Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society and of the South India Teachers' Union Protection Fund he has promoted their financial interests. Throughout he has shown a high sense of professional ideals; and thus encouraged us to think noble of our profession and to plan wisely for the progress of education in this Province. We offer him our hearty good wishes.

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**Eleanor D. Mason,** *Vice-Principal, Women's Christian College.*

In the early years of the Women's Christian College, Mr. Sabhesan was an enthusiastic and inspiring teacher of Botany. His former students and colleagues remember him with appreciation and are glad to join with his many friends in their felicitations at this time.

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**Sri V. Guruswami Sastri,** *Retired Head Master,*

*Sir Sivaswamy Ayyar High School, Tirukattupalli.*

I deem it a privilege to be asked to pay my tribute of admiration to Mr. Sabhesan on the occasion of his 60th birthday. Mr. Sabhesan is one of that small and noble band of college professors who have been identifying themselves with their brethren in the lower grades of the profession taking an active interest in the activities of the S. I. T. U. doing yeoman service to it by their wise guidance and correct leadership and giving off their best to raise the teachers to the status and dignity of an honourable profession. The creation of the College Lecturers' Union may deprive the S. I. T. U. of the services of educationists of the type of Mr. Sabhesan; but it is hoped that Mr. Sabhesan will continue to lead the S. I. T. U. as long as he has strength and energy to spare.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Iyer, who had the highest regard for Mr. Sabhesan and often discussed educational questions with him, once referred in very appreciative terms to the popular lectures in Elementary Botany delivered by Mr. Sabhesan and to the simple easy talks in Tamil given by Sir C. V. Raman on the latest inventions in Physical Science. It was at his instance I once invited Mr. Sabhesan to preside over an annual Founder's Day celebration at Tirukattupalli.



Mr. Sabhesan, as his name signifies, is truly the Lord of the Sabha. For over three decades either as Secretary or President, has he directed the activities of the Madras Teachers' Guild and its Cooperative Society, the S. I. T. U. and its Protection Fund. The ease and skill with which he conducts the meetings of the Executive Committee of the S.I.T.U. is truly characteristic of Mr. Sabhesan. After a prolonged and heated discussion the President rises and with exemplary coolness and serenity, summarises the pros and cons, clarifies the issues, rejects the non-essential, irrelevant matter and states his conclusions impartially to the satisfaction of all. He cannot stand obstructive tactics, has no patience with those who only talk without a thorough study and preparation of their arguments. He is a bold and clean fighter, yet by temperament essentially a man of compromise and will rather accept peace and settlement by negotiation and with dignity than sacrifice dignity for a mere show of temper and thereby spoil his cause.

In the grave crisis that confronts the teachers, the leadership of a dynamic person, like Mr. Sabhesan, is an invaluable asset to the teaching profession. May he live long to lead us to our goal!

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#### **Prof. J. P. Manickam**

I became acquainted with Prof. Sabhesan thirty-five years ago, and I still remember vividly those early days. He had joined the staff of the Madras Christian College as a brilliant young graduate from the Presidency College. It only needed a few days for me to realise that Prof. Sabhesan was a man of outstanding personality. These early impressions have been amply confirmed by the life and work of Prof. Sabhesan.

His transparent sincerity, his utter selflessness, and his keen intellect marked him out as a leader among men. We chose him unanimously as our representative to the first Academic Council. When the college council needed some one to guide them in those momentous days when arrangements were being made to shift the College to Tambaram, it was Prof. Sabhesan whom they chose. When we formed our cooperative building society at Tambaram, we again unanimously chose Prof. Sabhesan as our President. In every kind of work entrusted to him, he justified our selection.

In my personal relations to him how can I adequately express my gratitude? I count his life-long friendship as one of the greatest gifts that God has showered on me.

May God grant him long life and health, so that he may continue to be a source of blessing to his fellowmen.

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#### **Sri V. Rangaswamy Iyengar**

Prof. Sabhesan's services to the teaching profession have been unique and unrivalled. He became the Secretary of the Madras Teachers' Guild at a time when the earlier generation of teachers had made it grow but



left it weak and in a state of lethargy. A strong and powerful personality was wanted and the Guild found him in Mr. M. S. Sabhesan. His association with the Guild as one of its Secretaries marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the Madras Teachers' Guild. The year 1923 saw the formation of the Guild Cooperative Society. The Guild has ventured upon business as one of its new and benevolent activities and business requires proper talents. Mr. Sabhesan's continued membership of the Directorate of the Cooperative Society for an unbroken period of a quarter of a century speaks volumes of the qualities that must have endeared him to its members. Always fair and impartial, he needed no canvassing for any place and if now and then he did not top the election, it was because every one was sure of his election and cast their votes for the doubtful.

The year 1928 saw the starting of the Protection Fund and the publication of the 'South Indian Teacher'. Mr. Sabhesan had become well-known throughout the Presidency and his self-less devotion to the teachers' profession had been well established. He had his place on these two bodies and his articles in the 'South Indian Teacher' and his advocacy for the teachers' cause against powerful and vested interests earned for him the gratitude of the teaching profession.

As Professor of Botany in the Christian College he has made his mark; as the author of books on Elementary Science and Botany he has shown a rare discrimination in the choice of the material and in the treatment of the matter.

In short, his life has been a rich one. He has shown how it is possible to be an ideal professor and yet at the same time be of service to his profession.

May he live long and enjoy in full the remaining years of his life.

### Sri K. Kuruvila Jacob

I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Sabhesan for more than twenty years. When I was a student of the Madras Christian College, Mr. Sabhesan was the head of the Botany Department of the college and the Superintendent of one of the college hostels. I was not a botany student nor a member of his hostel, but no student in the college could fail to know the popular and efficient college lecturer and hostel Superintendent.

A few years later when I became headmaster, I saw Mr. Sabhesan on a new light. He was the President of the Madras Teachers' Guild and Secretary of the South India Teachers' Union. What impressed me most was that he was fighting for the teachers on two fronts, he was fighting on the one hand for better conditions of service for teachers and on the other for more efficient service by teachers. I believe that it is this balanced outlook that made him the leader of teachers for this long period.

I was able to see Mr. Sabhesan on a different angle when he served as a member of the Managing Committee of the Madras Christian College

School. His experience of the problems of schools and teachers, his honest outlook and profound common sense made him a very valuable member.

During the last year I have had the privilege of working with him on many educational committees where Mr. Sabhesan's mature judgment has been profitable in constructive work for the reorganization of education in this province.

I hope and pray that Mr. Sabhesan will be given many more years of useful life that he may continue to give his guidance in the proper growth of education in this country.

---

**Sri K. S. Chengalroya Iyer, Kaveripatnam.**

I am very happy to offer my heartiest felicitations on the occasion of the Shashtiabdaparthi of Sri M. S. Sabhesan, M.A. I have had the good fortune of associating myself with him for more than two decades in various fields of activity connected with the S.I.T.U. and the S.I.T.U. Protection Fund Ltd. I have always found him a gentleman to the core, who respects others' opinions, though different from his own. His highly selfless services for the cause of Education in general and of teachers in particular in this province is worthy of being written in letters of gold and emulated by others in the line. His is a beacon light shining in the horizon of the Educational World of South India. May God bless him with a long life of prosperity and peace !

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**Sri T. K. Sundararaja Rao, Retired Headmaster.**

It is always a delight to speak about the splendid and solid work of Mr. Sabhesan to the Madras Teachers' Guild and to the teaching profession; and it is particularly so, on the occasion of the celebration of his Shashtiabdaparthi festival. I offer him my felicitations.

I came to know him in 1920. Since then my admiration for the robust resourcefulness and the remarkable drive exhibited by him in all his work and particularly during the All-India Educational Conference of 1929, has been only on the increase. His ungrudging and untiring efforts to ameliorate the lot of teachers through talks, lectures, refresher-courses, excursions, camp-life, Educational Committees and deputations to concerned authorities are open secrets. It is, therefore, no surprise that there is hardly any teacher in the Madras Province who does not know him.

Having served the South India Teachers' Union for several years as Secretary, he has been for some years now its President. It is very pleasing to see that he still continues to labour for bettering the condition of the educational system, as a whole, in the province.

May God bless him with long life and good health and happiness !

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**Sri S. Srinivasa Aiyar, B.A., L.T. Matunga, Bombay, 19.**

My sense of duty hurries me to pay my tribute of praise to Sri M. S. Sabhesan, M.A. on the occasion of his Shastiabdapurthi for his work in the field of education. The year 1924 saw the beginning of my contact with him; and I found no small pleasure to work with him in the various fields of the South India Teachers' Union. I have had occasion to seek his help on many matters as the Secretary and the President of the North Arcot District Teachers' Guild and but for his co-operation and guidance the work of the Union through the District Guild could not have progressed so well. As one of the directors of the South India Teachers' Union Protection Fund for a long time, I cannot but bear testimony to his work as its President which has been always characterised by a thoroughly businesslike view and an impartial outlook and sobriety of judgment on various problems connected with its administration.

It is no exaggeration to say that but for his indefatigable and untiring zeal, the South India Teachers' Union and its twin creation, the South India Teachers' Union Protection Fund and the journal, the 'South Indian Teacher' could not occupy the proud position that they hold in the field of Education in India.

His views on the several educational problems of the country, both University and Secondary, have always been frank, broadbased and such as would promote National advancement. His deep knowledge of the system of Grant-in-Aid Code has made him one of the authorities on the subject. His genial temperament has won for him the love of those that came in contact with him.

May the Giver of all bestow on him long life and health to continue the good he has been doing in the field of Education.

---

**Sri M. J. Sargunam, Coimbatore.**

Two men have dominated the teaching fraternity since the twenties of the 20th century, viz., Prof. S. K. Yegnanarayana Aiyar and Prof. M. S. Sabhesan, intellectual stalwarts towering above their fellows, who have rendered yeomen service to the cause of the South India Teachers' Union. It has been my privilege to work with both these eminent educationists, on the Senate, Academic Council, S. I. T. U. and similar bodies for many years.

But claiming to know Prof. M. S. Sabhesan even more intimately as a colleague on the staff of one of the foremost educational institutions of India, the Madras Christian College, I value this opportunity to felicitate him on the happy occasion of his Shastiabdapurthi.

Life is measured not in years but in deeds; and very few have lived more strenuous and useful lives than Sri Sabhesan, who is richly endowed with powers of mind and body that enabled him to be so active, agile and alert in the service of the teaching fraternity.



An assiduous worker for three decades, he has been in the front rank, as a scientist, scholar and author as his text books on General Science and Botany do clearly manifest. The organizational efficiency, its solidarity, its services are mainly due to his drive, devotion and his extraordinary capabilities, which he so unstintedly and unselfishly placed at the disposal of the teachers of S. India.

May God grant him many years of happiness, health and service to his fellowmen!

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**Prof. S. Srinivasan, Alagappa College, Karaikudi.**

My contact with Sri Sabhesa Iyer began about twenty years back as a humble worker of the S. I. T. U. under his able and dynamic leadership. As a member of the S. I. T. U. Working Committee and as a member of the Board of Management of the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund for a number of years, I have had ample opportunities of following the great and unique services that Sri Sabhesa Iyer has rendered to the teachers of South India. It is my firm conviction that but for his single-minded devotion, consecrated service, bold and clear lead in times of stress and tension as in the recent crisis which was about to lead the teachers into direct action, the S. I. T. U. would not have attained that state of eminence and effectiveness which it has attained to-day. I have great admiration for his deep study of educational problems in theory and practice, his clear thinking and sobriety of expression and for his fine tact and firm handling of situations.

As President of the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund, Sri Sabhesa Iyer has not only piloted that institution through many difficulties with great care and circumspection but has also vindicated beyond doubt that a body of teachers in South India can and will successfully and efficiently manage a great business organisation for the mutual benefit of the teachers. The present financial soundness, strength, solidarity and high level of efficiency of management of the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund constitute the monumental achievement of Sri Sabhesa Aiyar. Its success bears an eloquent testimony to his great and sound leadership and his great spirit of devotion and service to the teaching profession. I pray that he may be spared for long years to continue to serve the cause of teachers and guide them to maintain the great and glorious traditions of the profession.

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**Sri G. Siva Rao, Kurnool.**

We gratefully remember how lovingly Sri Sabhesa Iyer has stood by us for the past three decades. Though a College professor, he has come down to us, school-masters, from his eminence and has cheerfully chosen to move with us. He has brought us together by starting for us a professional organisation which has done splendid work for over quarter of a century under his able guidance. It is through his marvellous efforts that teachers far and near in this Presidency are made to know and love each other, work for a common cause feeling self respect and professional pride. He has really laid the teaching profession under a debt of gratitude too deep to repay.



May God grant him many more years of happy life, sound health and energy to carry on his life's work and if he is to be born again, may He not leave him to wither again in this profession which has been the grave of one's worldly hopes and aspirations.

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**Sri C. V. Subramania Iyer,**

On the occasion of his Shashtiabdapurthi, let me offer Prof. M. S. Sabhesan my respectful felicitations. His is a name to conjure with in the teaching world of our province. His vibrant interest in the well-being of his comrades has impelled him to give of his best in their service for well over a quarter of a century. For many years he has become the moving spirit of the South India Teachers' Union which, under his capable and skilful leadership, has become the strong, united, enlightened and responsible body that it is today. One cannot think of it apart from him. It was small wonder that when illness prevented him from attending the provincial conference held at Rishi Valley in 1941, the delegates felt that they were enacting the play of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. We may not, however, forget that the edifice of his selfless labours for the betterment of his profession rests on the solid reputation for teaching, built up by him in the class room and the lecture hall. It is a matter for thankfulness that the veteran educationist and doughty champion of the members of his fraternity has completed the Hindu cycle of sixty summers. But Sri Sabhesan is the last person in the world to rest on his oars. Activity is the breath of his nostrils. God grant him many more years of health and strength to enable him to fulfil his Swadharma.

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**Sri R. V. Seshaiya, Professor of Zoology, Annamalai University.**

I am grateful to the South India Teachers' Union for extending to me the privilege of paying a tribute to Professor Sabhesan on the happy occasion of his Shashtiabdapurthi. My first acquaintance with Professor Sabhesan was about thirty-four years ago, when as a student of the Junior Intermediate class I was initiated into the study of Botany by his inspiring lectures. During my stay at the Madras Christian College as an undergraduate and later as a Tutor, my association with Professor Sabhesan developed into one of reverence and intimacy of friendship. Ever since, I have regarded the Professor as a '*Guru*', and as a true '*Guru*' he has bestowed on me a paternal affection. I know that every student of Professor Sabhesan will claim the same reverential relationship with him.

Professor Sabhesan was a source of inspiration to successive generations of students that passed through Madras Christian College for over three decades. In recent years the rapid expansion (*inflation!*) of education along with various other factors has affected adversely the practice and even the ideals of education in our country. Our academic halls have degenerated into a machinery of 'notes dictation' by an 'unconnected mouth' to 'several unconnected ears'. But those of us who had the

fortune to listen to the lectures of Professor Sabhesan at the Christian College can never forget that the role of the teacher is to kindle the love of knowledge in the student and emphasise permanent values. Professor Sabhesan's lectures gave us real education, and so did our contacts with him during excursions, or when we visited him in his house, or met him on his walks.

The service which Professor Sabhesan has rendered to the teaching profession is only too well known in South India. His has been a Herculean task, to lift the teaching world out of the rut of apathy and despondency. May Providence bestow on him sound health and many long years of life, to enable him to guide the chariot of the teaching profession on a smooth course to its goal in our Free India!

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**Sri K. N. Anantharaman, I.C.S., Bellary.**

I had the fortune of studying under Mr. Sabhesa Iyer 20 years back in the Christian College when it was located in a most crowded locality of the town. But Mr. Sabhesa Iyer had the unique gift of making us unaware of the noise and bustle. His clear silvery voice used to keep us spell-bound. He used to study the expression of the students and would not proceed till he was convinced that everyone had understood the subject. All his lectures were delivered extempore and it was an intellectual treat to listen to them. I offer with respect and love my best wishes on the occasion of his Shasthiadapurthy.

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**Rao Bahadur Capt. S. Thambiah, M.C., M.R.C.P., D.T.M. & H., F.D.S.**

Professor M. S. Sabhesan is a person of sterling qualities. I made his acquaintance in the Madras Christian College when he was a lecturer in Botany when the College was located in Madras during 1911-1913 and I was in the B.A. Class. He was gifted with the tact of handling students by his extreme kindness. In him was well-exemplified the adage "Qui Docet Discit". He had his lectures well prepared and the delivery was not monotonous. The practical classes were extremely interesting by his personal touch and his half-smiling face. If you have finished the work satisfactorily, he never insisted on your hanging about the place with nothing definite to do.

He played a great part in championing the cause of the teachers—a class of trodden down people. It was said in our Tamil "எழுத்தறிவித்தவன் இறைவனாவான்" which rendered in halting English will run "Instructor of words ranks equal to the Gods". Yet these hard-worked teachers could never get a fair hearing. Prof. Sabhesan thought their cause was well-worthy of attention and worked unceasingly to uplift them. I know perfectly well that he secured a great success in this line.

Self never got the mastery of him. He sacrificed all his spare hours for students and teachers alike. Though my sphere of work as a teacher lay in another professional field, I could appreciate and understand the

arduous nature of the work of a teacher, and the drudgery of preparing interesting, well-documented and carefully arranged lectures.

I pray that prof. Sabhesan may be spared many years of useful life to enrich the student world and by his mature experience guide the destiny of many young teachers so that they may well deserve the name of a teacher who is an ornament of his profession.

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**Sri R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Peelamedu.**

My first acquaintance began on the occasion of the Tinnevely Educational Conference in 1923 under the Presidentship of the late Mr. S. Satyamurthy. Since then, we have been agitators in the field of education. My views always coincided with his; and on occasions when I have differed from him, he took pains to explain to me his position and convince me of his standpoint. I may mention, for example, the G.O. on Discipline issued by the first Congress Ministry, and the resolution of the Calicut Educational Conference regarding the entire State control of education.

Mr. Sabhesan has moulded the educational policy of the S.I.T.U. for the past quarter of a century, so that Mr. Sabhesan is the S.I.T.U., and S.I.T.U. is Mr. Sabhesan. But it is not to be inferred that he is a dictator; for, after stormy meetings when some fresh enthusiasts organised and exhibited noisy demonstrations of their views and when some of us even apprehended his dethronement, the miracle would happen, *viz.* he would be unanimously elected to the office held by him.

The greatest service rendered by him to the cause of teachers was when he averted the teachers' strike, and saved the teachers of the province from the disaster that would have fallen to their lot. Not only the moral dignity of the profession was upheld; the teachers' organisations command the respect of the Government today to such an extent that their views are given respectful consideration. For this posture of affairs, the entire credit goes to Prof. Sabhesan and his valued colleagues of the S.I.T.U.

I wish him several happy annual returns of vigour and happiness.

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**Prof. A. Rama Iyer, President, District Teachers' Guild, Trichinopoly.**

It is with the greatest pleasure that I send these respectful greetings, in my capacity as President of the Trichy District Teachers' Guild as well as in my personal capacity on the happy occasion of the Shashtiabdaparthi of our leader, Sri M. S. Sabhesan,

Ever since I had the privilege of making his acquaintance, Sri Sabhesan has impressed me as a true servant of the cause of education as well as a leader. His simplicity and affability and his single-minded devotion to duty are remarkable, and what is more he has the rare courage to uphold unpopular causes. I pray that he may be blessed with a long life and sound health to enable him to give us the benefit of his experience and judgment in the trying days ahead of us.



**Dr. K. R. Subramanyan, President, Vizag District Teachers' Guild**

The Vizag District Teachers' Guild expresses its heartfelt congratulations on his 61st birthday, thanks earnestly for his service to the profession and wishes him many more years of useful activity.

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**Sri V. Kumaraswamy, President, Madura Dt. Teachers' Guild, Madura.**

On behalf of myself and the members of the Madura District Teachers' Guild, I have great pleasure in sending this message of appreciation of the work of Sri M.S. Sabhesan as a Professor and in the cause of the Teaching profession, on the occasion of his Shastiabdapurthy Celebration and wish him LONG LIFE and PROSPERITY.

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**Sri Samuel Muthiah, President, Tinnevely Teachers' Guild.**

On this happy and auspicious occasion, I offer my heartiest felicitations and best wishes to Mr. M. S. Sabhesan, President of the South India Teachers' Union. The Union is just passing through one of the most critical periods in its history, and the manner in which the President has guided its affairs at this stage speaks volumes for his sagacity and statesmanship. His gentleness in the face of hostile criticism, his calmness at times of great excitement, his steadfastness in the midst of conflicting ideals, his firmness in dealing with difficult situations, his urbanity, tolerance and generosity—these have helped to raise the S.I.T.U. to the premier position it occupies among the teachers' organisations in the whole of India. May God grant him a long lease of life to serve the cause of the teaching profession in this province.

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**Sri M. S. Ekambara Rau, President, S. Kanara Teachers' Guild,**

All ranks of the teaching profession will hail with joy and reverence the Commemoration of the 61st Birthday of Prof. M. S. Sabhesan. He has been a doughty champion of their cause for over two decades, and has untiringly striven to uphold their social worth and dignity. As President of the South India Teachers' Union he has guided that premier organisation through thick and thin with patient faith, gentle firmness and wise far-sightedness. Simple and unostentatious, Prof. Sabhesan can look everyone in the face with an equal eye, and command the respectful attention of all by reason of his selfless devotion to a great cause. The members of the South Kanara Teachers' Guild deem it a pleasure and a privilege to join the teaching fraternity in offering Prof. Sabhesan their warmest and most respectful greetings, and pray for his long life and continued wise lead.

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**Sri N. Sundaresa Iyer, President, Kurnool Dist. Teachers' Guild.**

Prof. M. S. Sabhesan has been the Secretary and President of the South India Teachers' Union for many years and during all that time he has led the teaching profession in this province in a bold and dignified way. By his untruing efforts he has focussed the attention of the Government and

the public to the need for educational reform and the improvement of the conditions of service of teachers. To this end he has used the press and platform very effectively. Above all, he has taught the profession that the only way of raising itself is by building up professional solidarity and through its organisational strength.

It was under the inspiration of the Professor that the Kurnool District Teachers' Guild was organised about twenty years ago. Hence the Guild is particularly happy to associate itself with the commemoration of the Professor's services and to convey to him its hearty felicitations and greetings on the happy occasion of his Shashtiabdapurthy. May God grant Sri Sabhesan good health and good cheer, so that the benefit of his ripe experience may be available to the teaching profession for many years to come!

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**Sri S. Raghavachary, M.A., L.T., DIP. GEOG.**

*President Ramnad District Teachers Guild.*

It is with great pleasure that I send my warmest felicitations on the auspicious and happy occasion of the Shashtiabdapurthy of Prof. M. S. Sabhesan. Prof. Sabhesan ranks with those veteran elder members of the teaching profession who have indefatigably and successfully striven to win for it a recognition of its importance as the most fundamental of national building services. He is, so to say, an embodiment of enlightened conservatism which is so much in demand at the present day when every other person is a revolutionary and wants to break away abruptly with the past. All of us, teachers, need to be profoundly thankful to him for his sobriety and sense of caution and moderation which have had much to do in averting an unedifying situation that might have undermined the ancient dignity of the teaching profession.

May God bless him with a long and healthy life, so that he may continue to render selfless service to the world of teachers and through it to the world at large.

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**Sri S.R. Balasubramanya Iyer, President, Tanjore District Teachers' Guild.**

Professor M. S. Sabhesan holds an honoured place among the members of the teaching profession as its accredited leader. He is a great teacher. His knowledge of men and things is extensive and his interests wide. Even if his activities had been confined to the lecture room he would have carved for himself a niche in the temple of fame. Though a professor in a first grade college, he has all along been a friend of those in the lowest rungs of the ladder, taking an abiding interest in the welfare of teachers as a class and advanced their cause.

First as Secretary and later as President, Prof. Sabhesan has laid well and deeply the foundation of the organisation of the S.I.T.U. It was a pioneer movement and went far ahead of other provinces. If the S.I.T.U. is a well-organized and closely knit body with a good record of work to its

credit, it is largely due to the work of a band of honorary, devoted—nay even selfless—workers, who cheerfully took upon themselves the burden of the profession and guided its destiny in its early stages. Under Sabhesan's able and wise captaincy, the ship of the Union has had a smooth and safe voyage, through fair weather and foul. What could be done by constitutional methods has been done.

The adoption of the Provident Fund Scheme for aided schools, the planning of the Protection Fund, the organisation of Education Week every year, and the improvement of the Service condition of teachers to the extent that has been achieved, were largely the result of the ceaseless agitation of the S. I. T. U. under the able guidance and unstinted labours of Prof. Sabhesan and his co-workers. Alert in mind, sure of his facts, firm in his rulings, he has been an ideal president.

I came to know Prof. M. S. Sabhesan in 1921 soon after the formation of the South Arcot District Teachers' Guild, and I came into closer touch with him when I, along with fellow workers, organized the Madras Provincial Educational Conference at the Sri Minakshi College, Chidambaram, in 1928. Ever since there have been more opportunities of coming into closer contact with him. The more you see him, the greater is your love and regard. It is but fitting that the S. I. T. U. should undertake to issue a Souvenir on the occasion of his Shashtiabdhapurthi, for in honouring him the members are only honouring themselves. It is a happy occasion when a public worker gets the only reward he can ever hope for—the appreciation and gratitude of those for whom he has laboured so long.

May he be spared many more years in health and happiness to serve his fellowmen in the field of education!

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**Sri P. R. Subramania Iyer, Malabar District Teachers' Guild.**

Far back in June 1929 I sat, rather timidly and nervously in the common hall of the Madras Christian College, to answer the Intelligence Tests for admission into its Honours Courses. Professors and Lecturers moved about; but one figure, stooping a little, moved more briskly than the rest. He certainly dominated the scene. A little later, he was on the dais—ringing out instructions and giving out directions to the nervous group with a clarity and impressiveness that was unique and seemed to be his own. I knew then why they put him in there to do the job. Here was a dynamic man, who could organise, who could impress, and who could do a job well. Later I gathered he was Mr. Sabhesan.

While at College, Mr. Sabhesan had nothing to do with teaching for me. But I heard a great lot about him from his admirers and students who seemed to generate passion and eloquence while they talked about his dynamic qualities, his sincerity and more than anything else, the forthrightness and impressiveness of his teaching.

Mr. Sabhesan's contribution to the cause of education, to the betterment of the lot of the profession, shall be one of the most glorious chapter



in the history of the S. I. T. U. With a unique selfless spirit, he has identified himself with the cause of teachers in organising them together as a disciplined body and placing their case and grievances before the Government. A man of Science, a believer in the value of ordered ways, he has given the organisation a sense of discipline and a feeling of strength. May he live long with health and vigour to guide the interest of the profession and serve the cause of Education !

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**Sri P. Doraikannoo Mudaliar** M.A., L.T., DIP. EC.,  
*President, The Madras Teachers' Guild.*

Professor M. S. Sabhesan's Sashtiabdapurti gives us joy. An educationist of no mean repute, he has served the comrades of his profession these thirty years and has helped in raising their status and prestige. With his abundant experience of elementary, secondary and collegiate education, both in theory and practice, we look up to him for lead and guidance in remoulding and reshaping the educational policy of the Presidency of Madras in Free India. May he live long, long with energy and strength to continue to be of service as much to education as to educators !

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**Sri V. S. Veukatanarayana**, M.A., B.ED.,  
*Secretary, Nellore District Teachers' Guild.*

It is with great pleasure that I convey my best wishes and regards to that endearing personality, Prof. M. S. Sabhesan M.A. on the attainment of his sixtieth year. I deem it a great privilege to do so. I have known the Professor from 1941 only having entered the teachers' profession just then. I believe there is no one present in the teacher-world today who has not heard of him and his services. The teachers of our province owe their present improved position only to his correct lead. He has put his heart and soul into the task of ameliorating the condition of teachers. As the President of the South India Teachers' Union he has piloted the institution very effectively and successfully all along and I pray to God that he be blessed with a long life of service and happiness.

He is a perfect master of the Sabha as his name indicates. It is very rarely that a gentleman justifies his name. Even on stormy occasions he never lost his balance but shrewdly and smoothly tided over the situation. I will remember any day the animated appeal made by him at the Annual Conference in May 1947 at Madras when a little over fifty per cent of the Associations voted for strike. He literally shed tears at the folly of the teachers who, swayed by their momentary excitement and emotions, were misguided and voted for immediate strike. He wanted them to wait for a little while longer and get the strike carried out in August 1947. What happened subsequently bore ample testimony to his statement regarding organisational strength. Statistics asked for were not submitted by all the associations. The response from the associations for funds was not encouraging. Now no one thinks in terms of a strike,

I admire Prof. Sabhesan for the candour of his talk. He is quick and firm in his grasp of any subject. In the beginning I, being young, was aching for action and was downright critical of the Union and its apparent slowness of action. I felt that old men should never be at the helm of affairs. Now I am completely disillusioned and I feel that experience counts. We require such doughty champions and veterans like Prof. Sabhesan to guide us in times of storm and stress.

I feel Prof. Sabhesan is the Union and the Union is Prof. Sabhesan. I cannot think of him as an individual. It is difficult for me to think of him that way. To me he is an institution. The best tribute that we teachers can pay to him is to carry out what all he says with implicit faith and obedience. We must translate his cherished ideals into action. He is the Pole-star of the Teachers' world. Let us all join together in fervent prayer to the Almighty to spare him to us for many years to come and keep him in the best of health, wealth and spirits. On this sacred occasion of his Shashtiabdapurthi I offer my hearty felicitations to him on behalf of the teachers of my district.

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**Sri K. N. Pasupathi**, *Secretary, Kurnool District Teachers' Guild.*

It is a great pleasure to me to convey my hearty felicitations to Prof. M. S. Sabhesan, our Union President, on the joyous occasion of his 'Shash tiabdapurthy'—an event worthy of being suitably celebrated by the teaching profession in our province in general and the members of the South India Teachers' Union in particular. For about 25 years he has served the teachers' cause ably and unstintingly giving of his best, first as our Union Secretary and then as its President, and brought to bear on his work in these capacities his deep knowledge of and intimate acquaintance with educational problems, his balanced judgment and progressive outlook. If today the Union commands some weight and respect in the eyes of the authorities credit is mainly due to the untiring, unostentatious and selfless labours of Sri Sabhesan. He has also rendered invaluable services as President of the S.I.T.U. Protection Fund whose present sound position is not a little due to his able and watchful piloting.

A steady disinterested worker, simple and sincere, well-informed and capable, Sri M. S. Sabhesan has been a successful leader of teachers. During the critical days when universal unrest and discontent and much confusion and looseness of thought prevailed among teachers, I feel he gave us a correct lead by avoiding the extreme line of action and thus upholding the nobility and dignity of the profession, even at the risk of his popularity.

Sri Sabhesan has today become part and parcel of the Union. One cannot think of the Union without thinking of him. His services deserve to be fittingly commemorated by the teachers of our province. May he be spared for many years to come to guide and help us all.

On behalf of the Kurnool District Teachers' Guild and on my own behalf I wish him peace and long life.

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**Sri. N. R. Raghunathachari, Vizagapatam District Teachers' Guild.**

In July 1912, I first sat at the feet of Prof. Sabhesan as a Junior Intermediate student in the Madras Christian College. My reverence to him has grown with my association with him during these 35 years. In those days he was the only teacher in whom students found a human being behaving as normally in the class-room as outside. He had no pretensions from the very beginning. He learnt with the students and believed that students could make discoveries and do research as much as the learned professors. The genial and nonchalant manner in which he handled the plants and the students alike is the secret cause for the students clinging on affectionately to a real well-wisher who was more concerned with life's real battle than the surmounting of examination hurdles.

It is a wonder how a petty Botany teacher of the "Miller School" could take a broad, long-range and common-sense view of things. I know in those days he was a little figure who kept to himself and to his admiring students and never hob-nobbed with Bigwigs. But he had a buoyant and independent spirit. He was above party and clique. I know successive Principals sought his counsel on almost every matter.

It is all in the man. He prided in his profession. He would talk to His Excellency the Governor with the same freedom as he talked to his boys. He is largely responsible for raising the status of the teacher from its fallen level.

His life is one of dedication to students, to fellow-teachers, and to humanity at large. He was brought up in the old tradition. He soon read the signs of the times and made the transition from the old to the new happy and harmonious. May he be spared long till he has made every human being raise himself by his efforts.

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**Sri E. H. Parameswaran, M.A.L.T., Headmaster, Thirthapati High School.**

From Dec. 1929, I have had opportunities of coming into contact with Prof. Sabhesan and working as his humble colleague and lieutenant in the S.I.T.U. The more one knows him, the more one begins to love the man and appreciate his great qualities and his high idealism.

It is remarkable that Mr. Sabhesan has adorned everything that he touched and has been a success as a teacher, an author, a journalist and the president of the S.I.T.U. and allied organisations. As a professor he has won the esteem and admiration of the thousands of students who studied under him. Every teacher in South India knows what the S.I.T.U. has been able to achieve under his able captainship. If today, the S.I.T.U. has come to be a powerful organisation commanding the allegiance of the vast body of teachers in the province, the credit is in no small measure due to the untiring and selfless work of its president. He has been the president of the S.I.T.U. Protection Fund almost from its inception and has nursed it with parental care to the stage of adolescence. There is



today no other institution in India like the S.I.T.U. Protection Fund run by teachers for the benefit of teachers on efficient and up-to-date lines.

Mr. Sabhesan's success in varied walks of life is mainly a success of character. With love for all and prejudice towards none, he is noted for his uprightness of character. He is simple, affable and straightforward, calls a spade a spade and does his work without fear or favour. He has the rare capacity of choosing able lieutenants and trusting them. He is shrewd and highly practical. He is never fond of self-advertisement and works in his own quiet way never playing to the gallery. Had he cared to enter politics and joined the Congress, he would have easily risen to positions of distinction but he never wanted to be in the lime-light and has found satisfaction in the discharge of his duty without show or ostentation.

The teaching fraternity in South India rejoice on the happy occasion of their leader's SHASHTIABTHAPURTHI and offer him their cordial felicitations and respectful good wishes. And now it only remains for me to pray Almighty God that our leader Sabhesan may live for many more years with health and strength to carry on the noble work. May the S.I.T.U. under his able leadership grow from strength to strength and render greater service to the teaching profession and the Motherland.

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**Prof. E. N. Subrahmanyam.** *Madanapalli.*

I am delighted to join in the greetings and good wishes that will go to Sri. M. S. Sabhesan from all over South India on his completing sixty years. I have known Sri Sabhesan for nearly 20 years now and it has been my great privilege and pleasure to work with him on the S.I.T.U. Working Committee and on the Protection Fund Board.

I have several impressions in my mental bag but one memory will remain imperishable and that is the way Sri Sabhesan reacted to the proceedings of the last Provincial Educational Conference held in Madras. Under great provocation he kept his head cool and when any other would have left the scene in disgust and despair, he stuck to his post like a true leader. His selection as President of the S.I.T.U. was a reaffirmation of the profession's confidence in his leadership.

May Sri Sabhesan live to 100 years to serve the true interests of Education and the teaching profession in South India with vision and wisdom.

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**Sri T. M. Krishnachar,** *The Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Credit Society.*

I deem it a great privilege to pay my homage, and respects on the occasion of the 61st Birthday of Sri M. S. Sabhesan.

It is not given to many in the teaching Profession to occupy the unique position for such a length of time which Sri. M. S. Sabhesan occupies to-day. He became a member of the Madras Teachers' Guild in the

year 1920. In 1921, he became the Secretary of the Madras Teachers' Guild and the South India Teachers' Union. In 1923, the Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society was started and he was one of the Founder members. In 1927, at the Vellore Conference of the S. I. T. U. he was responsible for the actual working of the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund and the starting of the South Indian Teacher and later the Balar Kalvi, the Official organs of the Union. His enthusiasm and sympathy for the Teaching Profession is unrivalled and his energy for shouldering any amount of responsibility is unique.

My connection with these institutions began in 1926 as a clerk of the Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society. Ever since I have found in Mr. Sabhesan qualities which make up a born leader. Always kind and unassuming and benevolent to a fault, he never reminded us that our relationship was that of a master and servant. At the same time he would see that work was done efficiently and quickly. His own energy for work is phenomenal. His readiness in this regard of joining us and putting his shoulder to the wheel when pressure of work seemed to be too great, elicited from us more work and a more generous response.

He knew the difficulties of the staff and helped us suitably consistent with the resources available. His instructions to us were always clear cut. He always loved us and looked after us like a father. I am particularly indebted to him for many acts of kindness and sympathy and the great thing about his sympathies is that they permeate not only Sri M. S. Sabhesan but his entire family from whom, I, in particular have been the recipient of many acts of kindness. May God bless them.

To-day he is the soul, the flesh, the bone, the blood, the nerve and brain of all the organisations flourishing. The Teaching Profession of this Province and the Metropolis should feel proud that they have been lucky in having in Mr. Sabhesan a doughty champion of their cause in all their varied activities spreading over more than quarter of a century. His interest has never flagged. His counsel has always been sound. He always believed in the constitutional fight for the rights of the Profession. Even after retirement at the age of 61 he is still evincing the same interest in these organisations.

May God vouchsafe to Sri M. S. Sabhesan and his family many more years of happiness, health and affluence.

#### V. Jayaraman, *South Arcot Dt. Teachers Guild*

Sri M. S. Sabhesan, has been all these years guiding the destinies of the Teachers in this province with Zeal and energy worthy of the noble profession of teaching. It is the pride of teachers that they have in him a leader highly endowed with a thoughtful mind, a clear brain, a determined will and above all a single minded devotion to the cause of the uplift of the members of the profession. He has providentially survived two severe attacks of illness and it is our prayer that the benign God may bless him

with health and longevity to enable him to continue to lead the Profession to its goal of contentment of service and public esteem.

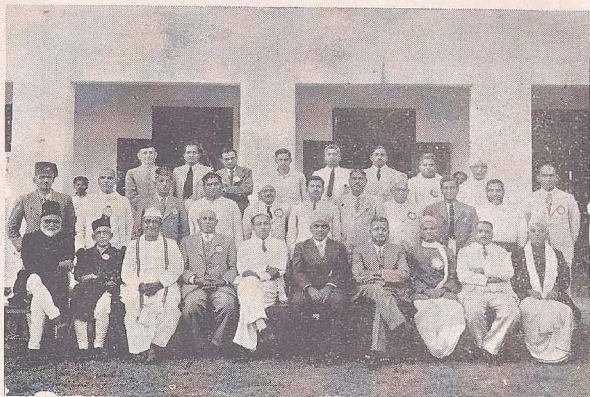
**Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam, Principal, Presidency College, Madras.**

It gives me really very great pleasure to felicitate Sri M. S. Sabesa Iyer on the completion of his sixtieth year. As one who had the privilege of being one of his first set of Intermediate students from the Madras Christian College, I always carried the impression of him as an able and effective teacher who made his subject lively and interesting. Later, as his colleague for over ten years, I had developed an admiration for him as a man and as one who felt he had a mission to perform. I quite remember his early efforts to organize the Madras Teachers Guild, of which he was Secretary for several years. The South India Teachers Union was an off shoot of it. Both the Institutions, one is happy to see, have reached a stage of importance, and become a factor to count in matters of school education in this Presidency. It must indeed be gratifying to Mr. Sabesa Iyer to see the fruits of his early labour in the well conducted organizations that now exist for the uplift and betterment of the profession to which he belonged. This is an achievement and well may Mr. Sabesa Iyer have the satisfaction that he has not lived for himself. May his service for the cause of education and for the teaching profession continue to be yet available for, after the attainment of independence, stabilising forces and a clearer vision are more than ever needed, in the country.

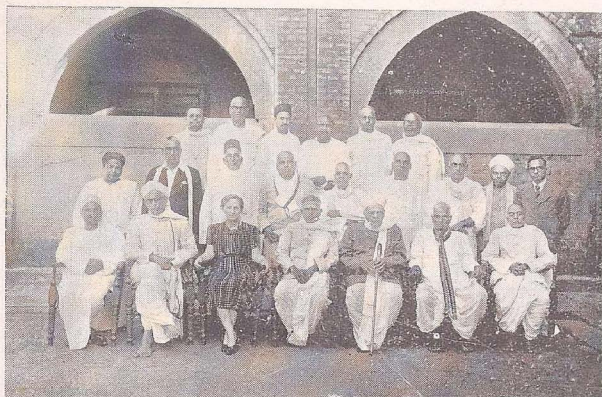
கோடைக் கான்ல் தாலூகா போர்டு ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர் யூனியன் காரியதரிசி, ஸ்ரீ ஏ. கே. வி. ஷண்முகம் அனுப்பிய வாழ்த்துச் செய்தி.

தென்னிந்திய ஆசிரியர் யூனியன் தலைவர் உயர் திரு M. S. சபேசன் அவர்கள் இன்னும் பல்லாண்டு திடீசுக்குடன் வாழ்ந்து, இதுகாறும் ஆசிரியர் நலனுக்காக அல்லும் பகலும் உழைத்துப்போல், திடீசுக்குடன் வாழ எல்லாம் வல்ல இறைவனைப் பிரார்த்திக்கிறோம்.





Sri M. S. Sabhesan and a group of All India Educationists.  
*(All India Education Conference, Madras 1945)*



Sri M. S. Sabhesan and some of his co-workers.  
*(taken on the occasion of the Shashtiabdapurtthy of Sri S. K. Y.)*



SRI M. S. SABHESAN  
1932



SRI M. S. SABHESAN  
1938

## "MY SECRETARY" SABHESAN

Among the many good things I have enjoyed in this life and for which I feel grateful to a merciful providence I give a high place to the opportunity I had of working for a long period with two good friends in the two fields of Education and Co-operation which have been the main fields of my activity. The late Mr. V. Venkatasubbiah of the Servants of India Society was more than a brother to me and a colleague to work with whom in the field of cooperation was a pleasure and a privilege. Sabhesan is to me in the field of Education what Subbiah (as we used to call Mr. Venkatasubbiah) was in the field of cooperation. Academically Subbiah and myself were contemporaries (though studying in different colleges) and Sabhesan was my junior by one year or so. Chronologically both these were my juniors, Subbiah by about 2½ years and Sabhesan by full five years. Yet I moved with those as brothers and we had much in common inspite of superficial differences.

I first met Sabhesan in 1922 when in July of that year I joined the Pachaiyappas College as the Head of the Department of English. I was living in Triplicane close to Sabhesan who was then living at 18, Nallathambi Street, Triplicane, an address sufficiently familiar to the Teaching Profession. Even when I was at Salem previous to my coming to Madras, I was taking a prominent part in the activities of the South India Teachers' Union. I was the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Provincial Educational Conference held at Salem in 1920 and I attended the subsequent conferences of 1921-1922 held at Palghat and Kumbakonam respectively. I do not remember to have met Sabhesan at any of these conferences; perhaps he attended them; perhaps not. I did not meet him at any of these three Provincial Educational Conferences.

Sabhesan came to me one morning a week or two after my coming to Madras and wanted me to join the Madras Teachers' Guild of which he had been elected Secretary a year or two earlier; I believe about that time the honour of being the Secretary of the S. I. T. U. also was conferred upon him; but he came to enlist my cooperation for the Guild in the first place.

As a matter of fact the Guild was a more vigorous body. It was showing signs of animation throughout the year unlike the S. I. T. U. which sprang into life before the annual conference and soon after lapsed back into undisturbed sleep. I found that many teachers in Madras did not care for the S. I. T. U. at all and were dimly aware of the existence of the Guild only. Some like the late Mr. J. D. Masilamani of the Kellett High School were even openly hostile to the S. I. T. U. as against the Guild. No wonder Sabhesan and I did not talk much about the S. I. T. U. in those early days.



It was at the Provincial Conference held at Tirunelveli in 1924 that I had the honour of being elected President of the S. I. T. U. Sabhesan continued to be its Secretary. We were thus thrown together in the service of the S. I. T. U. in May 1924.

But we did not set the Tambraparni or the Cooum on fire immediately. The fact that Srivilliputtur which had invited the Conference for 1925 was not able to hold the session at the proper time worried us; otherwise things went on as usual; nothing happened; nothing was done.

Srivilliputtur did stir itself at last and the Provincial Conference was held there in May 1926. I had the honour of presiding over the conference that year. I began to feel that I had a double responsibility to the S. I. T. U. as its permanent President and as the President of the year's conference.

In those days the activities of the S. I. T. U. were mostly confined to the Tamil districts of the Province. The Andhra Desa was practically *terra incognita* and the Ceded districts were not very much better. Sabhesan and myself planned an 'exploratory' tour in the Ceded Districts during the September holidays of the year 1926 and that is the beginning of our joint work in the service of the S. I. T. U.

The tour was a great success. We were received with great enthusiasm by the teachers of all the four districts (Chittoor was not then considered to be an integral part of the Royala Seema). Conferences were arranged and parties were given to us and the District of Kurnool was good enough to present us with a purse to meet the expenses of our tour. District Guilds were formed in all these four districts and were affiliated to the S. I. T. U. The enthusiasm roused was so great that Kurnool invited us for an extra Provincial Conference at Mahanandi during the Christmas of that year (1926) even though Srivilliputtur Conference was held only in May of the same year.

I have very pleasant recollections of our tour in the Royala Seema which I was seeing for the first time in my life. Hampi and Mahanandi were visited by us during the tour. I should like to record here how during our stay at Gooty in the house of our good host Ranganatha Aiyangar, Sabhesan and myself lay down in the verandah; but spent the whole night in talking upon Heaven knows what. There was a heavy downpour of rain and we went 'on and on talking' in the immortal words of the poet.

From 1926 to 1941 when I resigned my Presidentship (curiously enough this resignation was accepted at a Conference held at Ambasamudram in Tinnevely District as my first election was at Tirunelveli), Sabhesan and myself have been working together and dedicating ourselves to the service of the Profession. It is not for us to say how much we have accomplished. If today the S. I. T. U. is the accredited Provincial Organisation of the Profession whose views in educational and professional matters count, not a little of the credit (let me state with no false modesty) goes to

the work of organisation and consolidation which we were able to put in during this period. It is a matter of genuine pleasure to me to recall the hearty co-operation and the unstinted support we got from our co-workers throughout the Province. Sundaresan and later on Parameswaran (in Tinnevely), Aravamudan (Madura) the late lamented S. T. Ramanujam (Trichy), Guruswami Sastri and Raghava Aiyangar (Tanjore), "the Villupuram gang" as I used to call them, Rangaswami, Nagarajan and Jayaraman (South Arcot), S. Srinivasan now at Bombay, (North Arcot), Chengalroyan (Salem), Subbaraman, not now so prominent, (Coimbatore), Ranganathan (Gooty) and many others contributed whole-heartedly to the success of our work.

I must also publicly acknowledge the great facilities I had as a propagandist of the Provincial Co-operative Union to go about the Province and I used those opportunities to do work on behalf of the S. I. T. U. also. As a matter of fact, most of our coworkers in education were interested in Co-operation as well and I used to meet them on both the platforms.

What about Sabhesan? some impatient reader may very well ask; and I hasten to give my personal impressions about "my Secretary".

Sabhesan and myself differed in many things and yet we sank our differences and pulled on as a good team. Our philosophers teach us to see "Unity in Diversity". Ours was the task of seeking "agreement in Differences". Sometimes our differences became very vocal. I remember one such occasion. In 1927 when my nerves were over-strung owing to a family calamity, the death of a beloved daughter, I differed from Sabhesan on some point and bawled out in our office, 41, Singarachari St., Triplicane, in an unseemly manner. On going home I realised that I had behaved nastily towards a dear friend and esteemed colleague and wrote an apology and sent it on to Sabhesan. I wonder whether he remembers it at all; or others like Natarajan who were present remember it now. Again in 1931 at the time of the Second Palghat Conference we quarrelled though this time I was not the only person with whom Sabhesan quarrelled. Later on he explained the whole thing at the conference itself as being a case of "surface tension". The wonder is that we did not quarrel more often and that we forgot these minor incidents then and there and behaved as if nothing had disturbed our friendly relations. These left no rancour behind.

I realised sufficiently early that Sabhesan is a person of strong will (obstinate, shall I say?) and if there is to be accommodation and sinking of differences the initiative must come from me. I do not take much credit for it. I am a man of peace by temperament though by no means a "Yes-man". I was more inclined than Sabhesan to go more than the proverbial half-way to make up differences.

Compromise on my part was easy because I knew that Sabhesan was absolutely honest and sincere in all that he said and did and was ever actuated by the best of motives. There was no element of selfishness in

him. He never made use of his position for any advantage to himself and worked solely for the improvement of the Profession as a whole.

One peculiarity of Sabhesan is that he cares only for real work and shuns advertisement. It is a common weakness with most of us whenever we are elected to an office in a public institution to have new letter-heads printed blazoning forth our names and the exalted office to which we have been called. Sabhesan has been connected with the various Teachers' Organisations; but I have never seen a letter-head with his name as Secretary, President or whatever he was in that body.

Similarly in the running of the S. I. T. U. office with or without paid workers he would care only for essentials. The files may not be properly kept and very often his Joint Secretary, the late S. T. R. used to quarrel with him on this and other matters. These two good friends of mine, both sincere workers, often differed from each other violently and I had a hard task of it to make them go the same way and not pull in opposite directions. It is a matter of gratification for me to remember at this distance of time that the differences between them were confined to the committee stage and when it came to a question of implementing the resolutions of conferences or of the general body of the S. I. T. U., both of them worked harmoniously in the best interests of the profession.

The one thing for which I can never excuse him is his handwriting. It is positively bad. Execrable may be too strong, but I shall risk it.

That is "my Secretary" Sabhesan, simple, honest, straightforward, hardworking, but rather unpolished suffering no fools and occasionally short-tempered; but he is a gem. May God bless him with long life and full health so that he may continue to guide the S. I. T. U. for many years to come!



## 10,000 HOURS WITH Prof. SABHESAN

and

### 27 YEARS OF HIS DEDICATION TO EDUCATION

It was a pleasant night in December 1909; it was the eve of the first winter holidays after my entering the University; the Madras Express steamed into Saidapet station. My class-mates already in the train shouted out for me and showed me a seat. But I won't sit. Why? It was the way in which the Victorian tradition of my school had brought me up. It won't allow a young fellow to sit or talk or show activity of any kind in the immediate presence of a teacher and the opposite seat was occupied by Prof. M. S. Sabhesan who was already a teacher, though senior to me by only five years. But the geniality, the childlike openness and the persistence of Sabhesan not only rescued me from the grip of inhibition but made me forget myself in a very deep discussion with him which went on for nearly three hours. The agility which characterised not only his body but also his mind and the utter absence of any trace of ego made an impression which is still fresh in my mind.

During the next six years I had no contact with him except seeing him dart forth to and from the Botany Laboratory of my college. During the five years that followed, even this opportunity was absent, since I had completed my University course and migrated to teach in a mofussil college.

#### Re-union

It was in July 1921 that we were again brought together. It was our common residence in Triplicane and our common interest in education that brought us together in increasing intimacy. The Madras Teacher's Guild which elected him as its General Secretary and myself as a Sectional Secretary brought up many educational problems for discussion—formal as well as informal. The potency of the informal discussion was by far the greater. Its duration too was much longer and had extended to about 10,000 hours. Most of the evenings, we used to spend about two hours, apparently walking along the Marina, but actually in the pursuit of educational thought at different levels. In the mornings too, we used to walk for an hour on the self-same Marina, inhaling the oceanic ozone and our absorption in educational matters used to be of even a deeper kind, since we were often the only persons within sight. My change over to the library profession did not detract us in the least from our common pursuit of educational problems. On the other hand it added to enrichment, because it enabled us to continue our pursuit from more diverse angles. These informal discussions facilitated the formulation of proposals for the consideration of the Guild and for mobilising thought for presentation in other formal gatherings.

### Levels of Thought

Our discussion, taken over all the 10,000 hours of its incidence, covered all the stages of education: Elementary, secondary, collegiate, post-graduate and adult education. It was turned not only on the school, college and university which are the agencies for the formal education of the child and the adolescent but also on the library which is the agency for the informal education of adults all through life. There was hardly any educational problem which did not occupy the centre of attention at one time or another. It was the examination that came up first for examination. With the aid of several expert committees, the question papers set for the several examinations were critically examined. Some serious faults which came to light were brought to the notice of the authorities of the University and the S. S. L. C. Board; and these bodies, which had not yet then come under *de facto* dictatorship, made an appreciative response. The curriculum came in for a good deal of attention and many suggestions which emanated from the Madras Teachers' Guild were accepted by the authorities.

Methods of teaching were of great interest to us. Prof. Sabhesan is a born teacher and I too can claim to be not without an innate flair for that vocation. Though the subjects professed by us were different, we had much to learn by comparison of class-room experience. Unfortunately the Training Colleges had not taken up educational experiments; nor had the schools and the colleges risen above the dull level of the mechanical transmission of select information by impersonal mass-methods. It is a matter of disappointment to me, and I am sure it is so to Prof. Sabhesan, that his enthusiasm for integrated and humanised teaching could not permeate widely and influence the teaching technique in the Province. And yet, it must be stated that several courses of talks were arranged by the Madras Teachers' Guild on methods of teaching. The formation of an Elementary Education Section was another evidence of an attempt to influence teaching technique. The series of text-books sponsored by Prof. Sabhesan is another substantial contribution in this direction.

### At the University Level

Prof. Sabhesan was returned to the Academic Council of the University of Madras and to its Senate for a couple of terms. Fortunately this happened at a time when the Laws of the University—academic, administrative and financial were in the melting pot. Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. S. Kuppaswamy Sastriar, Kulapathy Sri P. A. Subramania Ayyar, Prof. M. S. Sabhesan and myself used to meet for hours and hours shaping the draft laws tabled officially, which were often none too lucid or progressive or self-consistent. Certain important chapters of laws were even drafted and tabled by this group as a non-official measure. It was a matter for gratification that, though official prestige used to pull its voting strength against them, those very drafts of these chapters used to appear as official measures in the agenda of a later meeting! This type of work at the University level disclosed in a marked manner the unexampled aptitude of Prof. Sabhesan

for team work of even the extreme kind where the end-product is utterly anonymous.

### Teachers' Provident Fund

When the Government instituted a Provident Fund for the teachers' in aided institutions, the rules, in effect, penalised long service. This was brought to light by an article contributed by me to the *Educational review*. Prof. Sabhesan followed this up persistently and had the matter righted ultimately. Perhaps the teaching profession has not known how much it owes to Prof. Sabhesan in this matter.

### Teachers' Protection Fund

The ferment which started at the level of the Madras Teachers' Guild soon overflowed to the South India Teachers' Union and Prof. Sabhesan's sphere of educational service was extended over the entire Province. One of the first acts of the revitalised union was the institution of the Protection Fund, which has now proved its usefulness beyond doubt. Whenever I think of the unostentatious service of Prof. Sabhesan to the Provident and Protection Funds, the literary parallel that comes to mind is the part played by Viswamitra in the education and the marriage of Sri Rama. The devotion, the service and the detachment are in the same measure in both cases.

### Tenure of Service

The tenure of service of teachers in aided schools was another vital element in educational organisation which Prof. Sabhesan succeeded in interesting the Union. What little has been achieved in the matter is traceable not a little to the persistent effort of the Union. I describe it as 'little', since the ideal on which Prof. Sabesan's heart is set is the provincialisation of teaching service. The anomalous differentiation between service in government, local bodies and aided institutions is a bequeathal of the Victorian tradition introduced by an alien bureaucracy which became blind to the trend of the changes subsequently brought about in this matter in their own Motherland. Now that the sphere of the functions of the State has widened all the world over and has taken the whole field of education into itself and our own State has been transferred from foreigners into our own hands, our Education Minister should wipe out all these anachronisms and put into effect the ideals preached by Prof. Sabesan all through his life.

The *South Indian Teacher* and the *Balar Kalvi* are a tribute to the optimism of Prof. Sabasen and his co-workers. I am putting it in this way, since I was very sceptical about the wisdom of this venture when it was contemplated. Subsequent years have proved that they were right and I was wrong. Many of our Marina discussions used to be devoted to the pulling up of the *S. I. T.* to a higher level. It was our wish that its pages should not be filled either with extracts from foreign media or with unreal, theoretical or frothy stuff by vociferous demagogues. We used to feel fervently that our organ should be the medium of clearance for actual



lities in the educational experience and experiments of the creative members of the teaching profession of our Province. We used to contemplate on the enormous and well-balanced collection of educational books and periodicals assembled, organized and displayed in a helpful manner at the University Library; we felt on the need for the educational thought stored in them in a potential state to be transformed into creative thought in the younger generation of our teachers; and we used to plan ways and means for realising this wish. But the rank and file of the profession were years behind Prof. Sabhesan in realising either their responsibility or their opportunity for creative work. He would appeal to teachers to spend some of their leisure hours in the University Library and get their creative mood stimulated, rather than waste them all in playing cards or in gossiping. But the only person, who would come to the library note-book in hand and make friends with the occupants of its rich educational gangway, used to be Prof. Sabhesan and none else? Years have now rolled on and I do hope that these years have brought many teachers of Madras in line with Prof. Sabhesan in relation to published materials on education, creative variation of teaching technique and the making of the *South Indian Teacher* and the *Balar Kalvi* the media for exchange of actual experience gained in our own schools and colleges, and of the train of creative thought that can be released by it.

### Other Factors

Promotion of public relation through the annual celebration of the Education Week; participation of the teaching profession of Madras in the deliberations of the All-India Educational Conference; establishment of Teachers' Guilds in the districts not having them, occasional running of educational exhibitions, systematisation and simplification of work at educational conferences, revision of the Grant-in-Aid Code, vigilant watch over the attempts of the foreign bureaucracy to set back or stifle educational growth in the Province these are some of the other educational factors which had been continuously engaging the attention of Prof. Sabhesan and his co-workers in the South India Teacher's Union,

### An Analysis

Indeed there is hardly any aspect of education which has not had the benefit of the attention of Prof. Sabhesan and his co-workers during the last 27 years when he had dedicated himself to the cause of education in a spontaneous and informal way. Mr. S. Natarajan's letter of 24th Nov. 1947 announcing the constitution of Prof. Sabhesan's *Shashtisbdaparty* Commemoration Committee filled my heart with joy. I know that Prof. Sabhesan is quite unlike those who yearn and secretly engineer for commemorations, portraits and statues. The spontaneity of the urge to pay homage to Prof. Sabhesan on his *Shashtisbdaparty* is exactly like the spontaneity of his own dedication to education.

### Negative Results of Analysis

Having grown with him all through adulthood, I cannot resist the temptation to analyse the elements which have induced a spontaneous love

and affection towards him in his co-workers. First we get some negative results. He had none of the qualities or opportunities in life which coerce homage from others. For example, he never wielded power; I know that he did not have even a demonstrator to bow over, for several years; he was never on the executive of any examining body like the S.S.L.C. Board or the University and so had no patronage for distribution; he was not even on the Managing Committee of any school to make people look to him for favour. He had never been rich in worldly goods with which he could live a life of splendour, maintain a retinue of 'yes men', and attract homage thereby. His single-minded devotion to Education denied him opportunity to pursue botanical or biological research at great depths and thereby attain national or international glory—say like Ramanujan or Raman. He belongs to the first generation of his family which entered the University and devoted itself to public service and so he did not possess the advantage of reflected or inherited family glory to attract public homage. He was incapable of black-mail tactics which sometimes coerces cowardly self-seekers to an outward demonstration of homage.

### Positive Results of Analysis

It is not any of these *tamasic* or *rajasic* qualities that make us all think of Prof. Sabhesan with affection and love, and grasp his sixty-first birth day for an unprompted spontaneous demonstration of our affection and love. It is the *satvic* qualities in which his personality abounds which have endeared him to us.

### Enemy-less

To use an epithet which Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. S. Kuppaswamy Sastriar used to apply to his name quite often, the first quality of Prof. Sabhesan is that he is an *ajatasatru*—incapable of inducing enmity in any. This unusual quality stems from certain others. There was nothing in him to induce jealousy or envy in others. As already stated, he wielded neither power, nor wealth—not even a silvery tongue. In fact it can be stated—and it can be no offence to state it—that there was no brilliance of any sort which we can associate with Prof. Sabhesan's career and personality except the brilliance, if it can be so put, of naturalness and simplicity. Brilliance of any other sort is double-edged; it polarises one's contemporaries into two antagonistic groups—admirers and haters, friends and enemies, and followers and opponents. Absence of brilliance of this sort was, therefore, a good in disguise. But this may account for absence of enemies but cannot explain the high esteem in which Prof. Sabhesan is now held by one and all.

### Ambition-less

This makes me mention a second quality. It is utter absence of self-seeking tendency, which, alas, makes many a person sell the profession, the country or the world for a mess of pottage and thus bring immediate ruin on the profession, country or the world and ultimate ruin on himself. A man of Prof. Sabhesan's ability and industry could have achieved with ease any selfish ambition. But, no; he wouldn't; he had indeed no selfish



ambition of any kind—not even the one to secure the love and regard of co-workers. The motive-power of his life was not drawn from ambition of any kind.

### Work-chastity

I should think that the motive power was drawn from what I should call 'Chastity' of the most austere kind—using the term not in the sexual sense but to indicate single-minded dedication to a single cause and absolute avoidance of the glamour of any other cause—Chastity concerning field of work. No other cause, or opportunity to do well or gain glory or wealth could entice him away from his chosen field of work. Work-chastity as I would call it, is the third quality which has made him, in the long run, so respected and so beloved. Our premier poet Valmiki describes chastity to be omnipotent. We see it demonstrated in Prof. Sabhesan's life. Sita says that chastity has given her power to do anything—even to burn Ravana by a look—but that that very chastity stands in the way of her exercising it in that way or for that selfish purpose. So it is in the case of Prof. Sabhesan. The power, that he was progressively gathering by this Work—Chastity of his, could have been used to baser and selfish ends. But his Work-Chastity is of that pure and transcendental variety that he could never have used it in that way.

### God's Grace

This extreme form of self-effacement might have exposed him to great tribulation in life. Some of the biographies occurring in the *Periapuranam*, the *Bhaktavijayam*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* give a lurid and almost repulsive picture of the trials which Work-Chastity or Cause-chastity brings in its train. But, God has been comparatively kind to him. Ultimately, we must confess that it is God's Grace that has given our profession a Sabhesan and Prof. Sabhesan himself at least the minimum of comfort necessary in life at all levels—vital, mental and spiritual.

A few years ago, it looked as though God was bent on putting him too to the extreme trial possible. In spite of his regular habits, hygienic way of life, morning and evening walks and a temperament which would not give quarter to worry of any kind, a dire disease mysteriously attacked his body. But his mind was even then so calm, so unruffled that I used to wonder within myself at the fortitude he was capable of.

### Mrs. Sabhesan

The God, who put him to this extreme test, had also blessed him with a life-partner who could nurse him and cheer him up with an ever-smiling face. Any other lady in her plight would have betrayed her emotions of fear and despair in the presence of the patient and worsened the disease. But Mrs. Sabhesan had all the *satvic* qualities of her husband in an equal measure. She would not even attempt to persuade him to abstain from thinking about educational problems even when the disease was at its worst phase. God's grace is manifest also in the development of one and all of these qualities in each of his children. And towards this, the



example of their mother has contributed not a little. When we record our homage to Prof. Sabhesan on this auspicious occasion, we should not forget to record an equal homage to the contribution which Mrs. Sabhesan has made to make such a splendid life possible for her husband

### The Message of His Life

What is the message of Prof. Sabhesan's life to those of us who are younger than him and to the future generation of teachers? To my mind the one term that holds all that message in a seminal state is Work-Chastity. He has practised it, consciously or unconsciously, all through his life. It has produced results which no one could have anticipated by a mere acquaintance or even greater intimacy with the Sabhesan of 1909. It has brought in its train—as its concomitant—many other *satvic* qualities necessary to make oneself really beneficial to society. Work-Chastity is a highlight in our ancient heritage. The *Gita* proclaims it; the *Ramayana* illustrates it. Our seers have lived it and are still living it.

But during the last two or three centuries of its state of coma, our society has aberrated from it. A vicious circle went on confounding us and confirming us in that aberration: The foreign exploiter encouraged the superficiality, the insincerity and the national inefficiency which that aberration ensured him. But that exploiter has now left us. We find ourselves in a state of decrepitude. We have to recover rapidly. Recovery has to begin with the mind and the spirit in man. Our people's mind should be disciplined towards Work-Chastity. The work of the nation cannot otherwise be done properly and promptly. The discipline must be induced both by precept and by example. It is not politicians that can do this. It is the members of the teaching profession that should do this. The odds against their doing this are not more now than what they were in the dark days of foreign dominance and induced communal schism, through all of which Prof. Sabhesan practised it and demonstrated, incidentally, the high potency it has for ultimate success.

May God grant long life to Prof. M. S. Sabhesan! May God grant him strength and health!! May He grant him increasing opportunity to help the reforming of our educational system, so that in his life-time he can see Mother India rise to her fullest stature and her teeming millions unfold their personality to their fullest, themselves enjoy Ananda and radiate Ananda to the world at large!!!

## PROFESSOR SABHESAN, OUR LEADER

'A Bee-hive,' that was how Rector Zilliacus of Finland who, in 1937-38, came to Madras, leading the deputation of the New Education Fellowship of the World, characterised 41, Singarachari Street, Triplicane. That narrow hall of 20 feet by 10 feet was then the centre of the activities of the S. I. T. U. and the Madras Teacher's Guild. The names of the organisations humming with activity there are too well-known to need mention. Ever since his enrolment in 1920 as a member of the Madras Teachers' Guild, Professor M. S. Sabhesan has been an inseparable part of every one of the various organisations. I may even go the extent of saying that he has been the inspiration of every worker in the organisation.

The success of the S.I.T.U. the establishment of the *South Indian Teacher* and the Protection Fund and the inception of the Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society are in large measure due to Professor Sabhesan's indefatigable energy, contagious enthusiasm, clear foresight and practical wisdom. I have watched him climb up to the top of the ladder. Yet he is still the same modest, sincere, unaffected, considerate man today as he was when I first knew him.

As an ordinary member of the Guild he evinced such deep interest and informed enthusiasm in Professional and Educational matters that every one connected with the Guild very much wished that he took up its Secretaryship. Those were days when those who might render the best service, were, for some reason or other, not quite disposed to accept office. A certain amount of subordination of self is needed to render the best service to the life of any community and imagine the infinite patience needed to serve the ill-organised, highly individualistic, hyper-critical community of teachers. Sabhesan was a lucky find for the Guild, when in 1922 they singled him out for the Secretaryship. His connection with each of the organisations run under the protecting wings of the S.I.T.U. will be found dealt with elsewhere in this Souvenir. I shall therefore confine myself to a few traits of his leadership.

To-day he is the unchallenged leader of the Teaching Profession in South India. Through his connection with the All-India Federation of Educational Associations, he has earned a country-wide reputation for his organising capacity and sound views on Education. Leadership came to him; he accepted it cheerfully and addressed himself to the task quite seriously and earnestly. The free and familiar sort of way in which he moves with the rank and file, his strong memory for names and faces, his informal way of discussing vital problems with nearly every teacher that meets him, have all earned for him the love and respect of teachers. As Leader, therefore, he has won the personal loyalty of every one that counts for something in the organisation. His name has become something to

conjure with. Even a rumour that Sabhesan wants so and so to be the Secretary is the surest passport to the candidate's success.

The Madras Teachers' Guild till the time of Sabhesan's assumption of office was mainly a body of the elite of the profession. It was through Sabhesan's efforts that the present constitution embodying democratic principles came into being. True, the Council of the Guild is composed of representatives of the constituent institutions and of the office-bearers elected by the General Body on the principle of vote by ballot. If prestige ridden, powerful cliques still too often have their way, that is neither the fault of Sabhesan nor of the constitution, his offspring but that the rank and file have yet to develop organisational loyalty.

Throughout his long connection with the S. I. T. U. and the Madras Teachers' Guild he scrupulously avoided saying or doing anything calculated to mean 'canvassing' for retention of office. In 1937-38 he chose to retire from the Secretaryship of the Madras Teachers' Guild. He had made the post a coveted one. The Chronicler in the 'Golden Jubilee Souvenir' observes, "The election of office-bearers this year was marked by great activity." That in itself is a salutary feature.

'Sabhesan's success as leader chiefly lies in his instinct to find the right man for the job. He has always been ready to acknowledge merit in others. When there was objection to assigning a piece of work to one merely on the ground that one lacked 'status' as it is ordinarily understood Sabhesan was not the man to yield. He would disarm opposition through tactful persuasion. Instances in support will occur easily to every member.

His speeches and writings bear ample testimony to his clarity, of thought and soundness of views. L. P. Jacks some where says,—"going right in our thinking about Education is the beginning of going right in our thinking about politics, about economics and about the fortunes of civilization in general." That in a nutshell is Sabhesan's view on Education.

It has been his constant endeavour to see that every teacher no matter to which grade he belongs, should have the opportunity of thinking wisely, dispassionately and generously.

The Programmes of Conferences arranged directly by him show how very representative they were not only of grades of teachers but also of varied views.

The meetings over which he presided were always marked by orderliness. I cannot say that he never raised his voice but when he did, it had a chastening effect on the audience. He seldom lost his temper, though, when occasion demanded it, he was quite capable of righteous indignation. We can easily think of men who have a more expert knowledge in the fine art of human relations, but undoubtedly he has just enough of it for successful leadership.

He has laboured, not without some risk to his health, to make the Teachers' organisation the power that it is today in matters educational. He has done more: he has taught teachers to respect themselves and, by doing so, to command respect from the public. If teachers have shed their inferiority complex and risen in the esteem of others the credit is in no small measure due to Sabhesan, the guide, philosopher and friend of teachers. May he be spared for many more years to come that he might continue the good work he has been doing with such singular success.

G. SRINIVASACHARY,



## MR. SABHESAN AND EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES

Even since Sabhesan became Secretary of the South India Teachers' Union in 1923, and subsequently its President in 1940, he has been regularly attending the Provincial Educational Conferences. To my knowledge he was unable to be present only at two sessions, viz., Rishi Valley and Calicut, owing to extreme ill-health necessitating his being confined to bed. Those that came to these conferences felt great disappointment due to his absence. His contributions to discussions on many subjects that came up for consideration at the conferences in the form of resolutions was invaluable and raised the level of their outcome to a plane of enviable dignity garbed in polished and dignified language. His dynamic personality activated everyone around him. When engaged in serious considerations of any topic he was so much absorbed that nothing that was going on around could disturb him and the conclusion he arrived at was always to the satisfaction of the parties. His persistence in pursuing a topic to its logical conclusion was remarkable—a characteristic which has not changed in spite of his old age and declining health. Either as President of a conference or of an annual meeting of the Union, he was always a great success. His capacity to guide the proceedings and regulate them to the time limit was admirable. Though occasionally his own views came in conflict with the decision of the majority, he would abide by the verdict. He would never dictate his opinions, but when he found sharp difference of views between himself and the majority, he took his own time and cleverly managed to queer them to his own side, after allowing his opponents to have their full say.

Sabhesan is a man of quick understanding and hence was able to read men and motives even without allowing them much time for expression. This quality helped him therefore in successfully discharging his duties as chairman of a meeting. He has a memory which few possess and which is even enviable. Those that were present at the Provincial Educational Conference held at Mangalore could bear testimony to it. His Presidential Address delivered extempore, agreed word by word with the printed address distributed to the audience. When the address was over, a burst of loud and continued applause marked the appreciation of the audience of the remarkable memory of the gifted personality—Professor Sabhesan. Hence Sabhesan could not be easily deceived by wrong versions of minutes of meetings. Sometimes in the absence of written minutes, his memory came to the rescue when a wrong line was intended to be taken.

After Yegnanarayana Iyer, Sabhesan has been elected Vice-President of the All-India Federation of Educational Associations. Whenever he was able to attend any of these All-India Conferences, he made his presence felt and contributed usefully to the work of the conference. One cannot forget the great part he played in the All-India Conference at Trivendram. A number of draft resolutions relating to service conditions and salaries of

teachers most of them overlapping and some of them conflicting were entrusted to him by the Council to be redrafted into one resolution. The time given was very short, but he did the task splendidly. The draft put up by him was so cogent and comprehensive that none could say anything against it when it was moved in the open session.

As chairman of the moral and religious section of the conference at Trivandram, he gave a chance to every one of the speakers and yet concluded the session within the allotted time. Very lively discussions took place, but the Chairman directed them along relevant channels and brought them to happy confluence. The leading role he played in successfully organizing along with Yegnanarayana Iyer, the South Indian delegates' tour to the First All-Asia Educational Conference at Benares and the great guiding hand he offered for the conduct of the Madras Session of the All-India Educational Conference in 1945, these two alone stand out as monumental records of Sabhesan's ability to organise and conduct conferences.

Sabhesan is not one of those who take to conferences rather too seriously. People who come to conferences are of three kinds: those that are too serious, i.e., that hurry up to read a paper or papers or move resolutions and turn back as soon as their part is over; those that journey along happily, reach the venue of the conference a day or two before the opening session, spend a jolly good time with friends and acquaintances without caring much for the main programme of the conference and after a stay of three or four days feasting and merry-making, return to their home in a leisurely way; and those who, besides playing a vital and important role in the conference proceedings, participate in the social amenities mixing freely with people gathered from different parts of the country and joining in the excursion and other entertainments provided. Sabhesan belongs to this class of people. He is full of humour and radiates cheer and brightness around him. He is not gloomy even in the midst of disappointments. Friends of Sabhesan who attended the Srivilliputtur conference will bear witness to this. What great expectations were held of the conference, how the delegates were 'switched off' from Sattur to Srivilliputtur and what disappointment encountered the delegates when they arrived at Srivilliputtur. The trio of veteran educationists, S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer, S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar and M. S. Sabhesan, met there only to find a Barmecide feast. Still this session of the Conference is momentous in more sense than one. The excursion to Trivandram and Cape Comorin and places around compensated for the disappointment. At every conference he attended Sabhesan enjoyed the company of his friends and acquaintances and brightened them with his wit and humour. It is this feature of his character I think, that enables him to possess that clarity of vision and soundness of health which, thank God, he has even to this day—in his old age.

## **SRI M. S. SABHESAN AND THE SOUTH INDIA TEACHERS' UNION**

The origin and the growth of the South India Teachers' Union are too well-known to need any repetition. When it was founded, little might the founders have thought of the great and complex problems—educational and professional—that we are facing to-day, as a result of political changes that have happened in succession during the last thirty years, culminating in the freedom of our country. Some of the aims of the pioneers who started the Union were to focus the opinion of the public on educational matters and to improve the status, pay and prospects of teachers. For some years since the starting of the Union, the Provincial Educational Conferences were more or less appendages to the Provincial Political and Social Reform Conferences. By such association, the Union lost what little influence it had on the Department of Education, and also lost the membership of some of the officers of the Department of Education.

### **Sri Sabhesan's Entry As Secretary**

The teaching profession which expected much from the Union, the central organization, was disappointed at its inactivity and were piously hoping for the day when it would function energetically and fulfil the aims of the Union. It was in 1923 that the Central organization had its rebirth when Sri M. S. Sabhesan was elected Secretary. The gentlemen who held the Secretaryship before Sri M. S. Sabhesan were all able men and great educationists, but they lacked one thing, the fervour which Sri M. S. Sabhesan had and has in abundance. In 1920 Sri M. S. Sabhesan was elected Secretary of the Madras Teachers' Guild. From 1920 to 1923, he infused life into the activities of the Guild and made it once more the mouthpiece of the teaching profession. It was no wonder therefore that in 1923 when elections to the Union took place, the teaching profession—especially teachers in Madras, could not think of any person for the Secretaryship other than Sri M. S. Sabhesan. For over 17 years he was the Secretary of the Union without interruption. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who were responsible for putting him in office as the Secretary of the Union.

Ever since he assumed charge, he used his organizing skill to strengthen the Union by necessary changes in its constitution. He has held before the teachers the ideal that they are the torch bearers of knowledge and upholders of all that is good and worthy to be emulated by others. In his career as a teacher, he has not deviated from that high ideal. He has been ably assisted in his endeavours by Upadhyaya Sangha Karya praveena S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer and Sri S Natarajan. This triumvirate with the late Sri S. T. Ramanujam by their loyal and continuous work for over twenty years has placed the Union in its present strong position as the accredited mouthpiece of the teaching profession. The



late S. T. R. was an unrelenting critic of the Government and a champion of the teaching profession. He was associated with Sri M. S. Sabhesan both as a member of the Executive and working committee of the Union for over 25 years.

### Strengthening the Organization

According to the original constitution only local Associations of teachers could become direct members of the Union. For several years the local associations scattered in different taluk stations in a district had no definite bond of union among themselves. The Union recognized the need for the organization of District Teachers' Guilds. The principle of local associations in a district constituting themselves into District Teachers' Guilds which were affiliated in their turn to the Central Organisation was largely a conception favoured by Sri M. S. Sabhesan. For the past quarter of a century the underlying principle of the S. I. T. U. organization has been the acceptance of Federation as the essential basis of the Central organisation. There were times when many of us doubted the usefulness of such a constitution and wanted to do away with this federation type and replace it by a constitution recognizing only individual membership. On all those occasions Sri M. S. Sabhesan pointed out the various advantages of the Federal type. Events that have taken place during the last ten years have amply proved that the present constitution is the best under the circumstances, for (i) it seeks to bring the humblest teacher in the remotest corner into touch with the latest developments in education in and outside India; (ii) it encourages the growth and development of District Teachers' Guilds and (iii) it gauges the opinion of local teachers' associations on all important matters—educational, professional and organisational. There are no doubt individual members in the Union but in this set up they have little influence in directing the policy of the Union. It is the organizing skill of Sri M. S. Sabhesan that has made the present constitution work efficiently, swiftly and smoothly. The recent events have clearly borne out that it is the federal type that has given strength to the Union to steer clear of all difficulties, for the federating units exercise a healthy influence upon each other and upon the Central Organization too.

### Professional Efficiency

His gospel has been that good teachers should endeavour to become better teachers and he has been striving his best since he became Secretary to impress upon the members of the teaching profession that they should keep in touch with the latest trends in the methods of teaching and also do research work, if possible. He early conceived that the responsibility of the Union would be ever increasing and that it was the mission of the teaching profession to provide the driving force for education. It was with this view that the *South Indian Teacher*, the Official Organ of the South India Teachers' Union was started. It contributed to the development of the Union and its affiliated guilds and to the improvement of Public Education and of the teaching profession. It has become a constructive force in the profession to-day. From the small beginnings of

almost two decades ago, it has grown to be the articulate force of the profession. It has served as the circulatory system of the S. I. T. U. It has been a vital, significant and creative factor in the development of our profession and has ably reflected our educational needs, objectives and accomplishments, not only to the teaching profession, but to the large public too. It is no exaggeration to say that the *South Indian Teacher* has wielded and is still wielding a great influence both on the teaching profession and on the authorities. It has been a powerful agent in promoting unity in all branches of the profession. It has made the individual teacher feel that he is a part of a vast wonderful enterprise. The *Balar Kalvi* which was started later has been serving the same purpose in respect of Elementary school teachers.

### A champion of the profession

Both on the platform and in the press, he has ably advocated and is advocating the cause of the profession. His speeches and writings are typical of his gallant and loyal educational and professional spirit. The logical and the matter of fact way in which he marshalls his facts leaves no room for doubt. The way in which he develops his argument is an intellectual treat which can be given only by a person of profound study. Very often both in conferences and in executive board meetings, his opponents at the end were converted to his views. His way of studying a problem is unique. As each problem has a number of aspects and as all the aspects cannot be satisfactorily studied by one, he would advise his friends to take up one aspect and study it thoroughly and later on give the benefit of his study to others. When the Wardha scheme was published, a study circle was formed which met a number of times before arriving at its own conclusions. The scheme of the Central Advisory Board of Education (better known as the Sargent Report) was discussed by the Madras study circle at about a dozen meetings of members interested in the subject.

Sri M. S. Sabhesan is not content with merely pleading for the redress of teachers' grievances. He is anxious that teachers should explore all possible ways of helping each other. The profession should stand on its own legs. His constructive and administrative skill has been revealed in the working of the Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society, of the South Indian Teachers' Union Protection Fund, and of the Profession Trust Fund, and in the organizing of big conferences. The meticulous care with which he examines every minute detail reveals his love for efficiency, thoroughness and orderliness. The way in which he conducts business meetings—sometimes stormy ones—amply proves his intimate acquaintance with the rules and procedure of business.

### His work in the Union

Twenty-five years may be an infinitesimal portion in the history of a nation but it is quite a chunk out of the lifetime of an individual who

has done continuous useful service. All these years he has been content to work steadily and earnestly so that the causes to which he has endeared himself are allowed to progress. The ideals which he has advocated for the improvement of teaching and his persistent demand for the improvement of the conditions of service have created confidence, loyalty and enthusiasm among the members of the teaching profession. His great quality is his courage which is an indispensable attribute for a leader. He has been telling the members of the profession that they should strive to do better teaching, keep their pupils happy, preserve their own sense of humour and to be sympathetic towards them. In his treatment of his colleagues he has been generous to a fault. He trusts them and gives them all support in their work. Always he is their guide and friend. He stimulates in them enthusiasm for work and efficiency and impresses upon them the necessity of being unbiassed, fair and just. He is not a mob orator. He is not of the type "awake, arise, or be for ever fallen" or "Follow me, I shall get you all you want." He never goes to any meeting of teachers or public men to give a beautiful speech about ultimate ideals in education. He knows that it is the best way to dodge difficulties. He faces them and faces the teachers too. By participating in discussions and debates he clears many misunderstandings and difficulties. He is a thinker and a realist. In all his debates he places both sides of the question under discussion and he leaves the audience to draw their conclusions. During the last two critical years the teaching profession has had in him a very safe shepherd who carefully tended his flock which often strove to go astray. Of course there were criticisms of his advice and lead but that is inevitable in a large organization at this exciting period.

May he live long to guide us is our prayer. The institutions—the Madras Teachers' Guild Cooperative Society, the South India Teachers' Union Protection Fund and the Profession Trust Fund—of which he is one of the founder-members are progressing satisfactorily and this must gladden his heart, for they are really helping the teachers. The voice of the South India Teachers' Union which now commands the attention of the Government is the one he has created. The teaching profession on his 61st birthday pays its homage to him and prays that he may be enabled to guide it for many many years to come.

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## PROVISION FOR OLD AGE OF TEACHERS AND SRI SABHESAN

It was a happy coincidence that Sri Sabhesan's association with the Executive of the Teachers' organisation in this province began at a time when Education became a transferred subject under the control of popular Ministers who initiated a policy of expansion. Till then the number of schools had been few, most of which being under private management, and they were just enough in number to satisfy the needs of a small class that had had long literary traditions. The masses mostly remained outside the school system.

Sri Sabhesan was quick to understand the nature of the problems that would arise from the new policy. He believed that though the Government might spend large sums of money in the building and equipment of new schools, teachers were the real life-centres of the schools and adequate returns would depend on the honest and efficient work of teachers. He also realised that so long as teachers were obliged to discharge their duties under discouraging conditions, on low salaries, without security of tenure, with no provision for sickness or old age, their efficiency would suffer. So it was natural that he should have taken up the two-fold task of organising the teachers to enable them to study educational problems and of strenuously working towards bettering their salaries and service conditions. How Sri Sabhesan transformed the S. I. T. U., of which he was then the Secretary, into a living body, and what he did to improve the service conditions of teachers have been described by others, but I shall confine myself to one aspect of his work, namely, the starting of an Insurance Institution for teachers, which not only brings out his organising skill but shows his deep interest in the material well-being of the teaching profession.

It is well known that even today teachers' families are living on the margin of subsistence. In the difficult period of the Twenties after the First World War, a large number of teachers' families were left in distress due to unemployment or sickness or death of the chief bread winners. Some of the leading members of the S. I. T. U. like Sri C. S. Rangaswamy Ayengar began to discuss plans for starting a benefit fund to give relief to such distressed families by raising subscriptions. But nothing could be done till Sri Sabhesan took up the question. His brother, the late Sri M. S. Sundareswaran, who had started a fund on the 'Dividing plan' for the benefit of the Non-Gazetted Officers, was invited to explain the principles of the scheme at the Provincial Education Conference at Vellore in December, 1927. Soon after, in January, 1928, a similar scheme, called the S.I.T.U. Protection Fund, was formed to help teachers.

It is to be noted that Sri Sabhesan's name was not found in the first Board of Directors, though he was the real originator of the scheme and was constantly guiding it in the early stages. This is an indication of the right

spirit in which members should show their interest in the Fund. In 1930 he was elected its Vice-President and the next year its President.

By 1932 the Protection Fund had 1000 members on its rolls. So far it had paid about Rs. 3000 to the destitute families of teachers. Seeing the good work it was doing, there was a heavy rush for admissions; but according to the rules then in force no more than a thousand members could be admitted. So it was clear to the Board that a stage had been reached when they should either open another branch or content themselves with admitting only a limited number of members as vacancies arose through deaths or withdrawals. At the same time some of the members including Sri S. T. R. began to express doubts about the workability of the scheme.

Sri Sabhesan, with his instinct for gauging the opinion of the members, proposed that an Actuary should be consulted and his opinion obtained before any scheme of expansion was thought of. Sri K. B. Madhava, M.A., A.I.A. who was consulted was of opinion that the 'Dividing Plan' was not sound and that the Fund should at once be reorganised. He was kind enough to bear in mind the following principles enunciated by the Board when suggesting lines of reorganisation. The principles were these;

- (i) that benefits were to be payable on (a) death, (b) retirement, and (c) the withdrawal from the fund earlier.
- (ii) that these may be graded in accordance with the duration of membership,
- (iii) that the monthly contribution (Premium) should be a level sum irrespective of the entry age of the member.
- (iv) that admission be made on a certificate of health and fitness not necessarily on medical examination.

These principles form the bedrock on which the Protection Fund Ltd. stands even today.

At an Extraordinary Meeting held on 26th February, 1933, the Actuary's report was discussed. It was a stormy meeting, and a number of members rose up and raised all kinds of doubts and advocated the winding up of the whole affair. Sri Sabhesan, who presided over the meeting, allowed time for full discussion; and after carefully observing the temper of the speakers, he summed up the various points raised and said in his forthright way that the best course they could adopt was to pass the resolutions for the reorganisation and permit those who were not willing to continue their membership to withdraw from the Fund and they would be paid all the moneys they had so far subscribed. He had struck the right note at the right time; his statement seemed to bring full satisfaction to all the sections in the meeting and in no time the necessary resolutions were passed unanimously.

As a result of this reorganisation, 237 members withdrew from the Fund and nearly Rs. 4000 had to be paid back to them. But the Fund had been placed on a stable basis on insurance principles, though it was not yet registered as a company. However, it had been registered in 1930 under

the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860. It continued to make good progress and in 1937, as a result of actuarial valuation, a bonus of 3 annas in the rupee was declared for the quinquennium 1933-37. But shortly after this the Fund had to undergo another reorganisation.

In September 1939, the Board was confronted with a difficult situation. The new Insurance Act of 1938 forbade the transaction of insurance business by companies not registered under the Insurance Act. The Superintendent of Insurance intimated to the Board that as the Fund was doing insurance business it should get itself registered at once under the Insurance Act. The Protection Fund was not even a company. Its reorganisation to meet the requirements of the Act seemed to be a long and tedious affair. But Sri Sabhesan's resourcefulness saved the situation. He persuaded the Board to take steps to reorganise the Fund; for he welcomed the opportunity for stabilising the Fund which had been built up so laboriously and carefully for many years. It was resolved to recommend to the General Body to register the Fund under Part IV of the Insurance Act as a Mutual Insurance Company and as a preliminary to it to get the Fund incorporated as an unlimited liability company under Part VIII of the Indian Companies Act.

At the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 5-11-1939, the Board's recommendation was accepted by the General Body. The Fund was incorporated as a Company with unlimited liability. Immediately the Board sent Government of India securities to the face value of Rs. 33,000 to the Reserve Bank, Calcutta, according to Sec. 7 and made an application to the Superintendent of Insurance to register the Fund as a Mutual Insurance Co. The certificate of registration was received on 16-1-1940. Then, on 12th of December 1940, it was registered as a Limited Liability Company.

It is not easy to recount the services rendered by Sri Sabhesan and Sri V. Srinivasan the then Secretary during this period of nearly fifteen months. The crisis had passed and the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund Ltd. which emerged from it was far stronger and better organised to render lasting service to the members of the teaching profession.

Even before this, the Fund had purchased and reconstructed a building at a cost of Rs. 13,000 in the Triplicane High Road. The office of the Fund is situated in the second floor while the first floor is occupied by the S. I. T. U. offices. That the finances of the Fund were in sound condition was revealed by the actuarial valuation in 1942 when a second bonus of two annas in the rupee was declared for the quinquennium 1938-42.

There was great expansion of business between 1943 and 1947 during which period the number of policy holders had more than doubled. It is clear that teachers are now coming to appreciate the facilities afforded by the Fund to make provision for their families if anything untoward should happen to them. To meet the wishes of many teachers, new tables of benefit for 10, 15 and 20 years were drawn up by the Actuary and the Superintendent of Insurance in 1944.



But this period was not by any means a smooth sailing one and Sri Sabhesan's guidance again became necessary when the Insurance Act was amended in 1946 forbidding insurance companies from issuing policies for amounts below Rs. 1,000.

It seemed that our Fund which was purposely started to help teachers with low salaries to take policies for small amounts would be hard hit. If the Protection Fund stopped issuing policies for Rs. 250, 500 and 750, most of the teachers in elementary schools would be denied the benefits offered by insurance and the object with which the Fund was started would be defeated.

Sri Sabhesan gave valuable guidance in this situation. An application for exemption from the operation of the amended section was made to the Superintendent of Insurance stating the special conditions of the class of people for whom our scheme was intended. Our plea was so convincing that the Department was willing to consider our application if the Memorandum and the Articles were suitably amended to the effect that the benefits would be available only to a homogenous class of people. The Board recommended such an amendment to the General Body, got it unanimously approved and confirmed by the High Court and secured the necessary exemption to carry on business as before.

The S. I. T. U. Protection Fund Ltd. has today attained a stability and legal position of which the most ardent of its early members would not have dreamed. It has become a pucca Mutual Insurance Company managed by teachers. All the profits of the concern accrue only to teachers who are members of it. Moreover the members indirectly contribute to the consolidation of the teaching profession under the leadership of the S.I.T.U.

The following table will serve to show the progress of the Fund in recent years :—

Years	1943	1948	1944	1945	1946	1947
No. of policies ...	1371	1581	1832	2088	2343	2767
No. of units ...	2585	3052	3685	4295	4946	6036
First year premium ...	2,761	4,699	10,284	11,263	13,882	17,500
Renewal premium ...	30,153	31,343	34,462	41,924	50,569	61,900
Interest, rent, etc. ...	9,240	11,000	12,283	13,152	14,129	19,200
Addition to Insurance Fund ...	28,307	32,000	34,440	47,554	61,553	76,400
Claims paid ...	8,760	8,400	15,900	11,700	11,900	12,183
Expenses of Management ...	4,200	4,900	5,100	5,800	6,900	8,300
Life Insurance Fund ...	2,47,115	2,79,745	3,14,191	3,61,744	4,23,297	5,00,000

The Actuary in his report in 1938 said that 'the Fund is financially sound and that that satisfactory position is in the main due to three causes: favourable mortality experience, wise husbanding of resources, and economical management'. It is true that in recent years, owing to the low rate of interest on Government and approved securities, our Fund, like all other Insurance companies, is facing a difficult problem and has not yet put up its rates though most Insurance companies have revised their tables

increasing the premium rates. Yet it is hoped that a decent bonus will be recommended by our Actuary after he finishes his valuation for the quinquennium 1943—47.

The S. I. T. U. Protection Fund Ltd., it must be borne in mind, has been registered for All-India and the States. In 1946 the All-India Federation of Education Associations at its conference passed a resolution recommending our Fund as a suitable institution for the insurance of teachers all over India.

Well may Sri Sabhesan be proud of this Protection Fund which he has so carefully fostered. But in his modesty he thinks that it is only a first step in making provision for old age—that through the efforts of teachers an Insurance Company has been built up. It is his view that the Government should help the Fund to bring under its protection all the eligible teachers till the time when the Government may deem it necessary to have a comprehensive scheme of insurance for all teachers and take over the Protection Fund and fit it into a social security plan.

According to Prof. Sabhesan, the teaching profession will be able to attract large numbers of young men and women to make the programme of educational expansion successful only if the State ensures fair service conditions to teachers and guarantees to them decent maintenance allowances in old age or to their widows and children in the event of their death and during periods of sickness or unemployment or disablement by a contributory scheme of social insurance. By starting and placing the Protection Fund on a stable basis, Sri Sabhesan has shown himself that he is a great friend of the teachers. He has frequently given expression to the valuable co-operation and support extended to him by the Board of Directors right through. Let me on behalf of the Board of Directors and policy-holders offer my humble felicitations to him on the occasion of his Shastibhathipathi celebrations and pray that he may be blessed with a long and happy life to serve the cause of teachers.

## THE MADRAS TEACHERS' GUILD AND M. S. S.

A Sashtiabdapurti is a span of human existence to reckon with more for a teacher than for anybody else. The reason is that the life of a teacher is unfortunately right through one of inhibition restraining the freedom of his mind and disabling the growth of his social stature and status. If it had been possible for one to contend against these odds and if he, besides enabling his growth, has also chosen to devote himself to the service of the comrades of his profession for well-nigh a generation, no occasion can be more appropriate than that of the celebration of his Sashtiabdapurti for commending his services.

Prof. M. S. Sabhesan of the Madras Christian College was every inch of him full of trim, system and decorum, when he excited the admiration of a few astute members of the Guild even as early as 1920. The latter soon resolved to rope all that was potential in him for the association of teachers who were temperamentally or otherwise given to isolation to such an extent as to create domains and little worlds of their own, neither with an impetus to raise themselves by their own efforts nor with an inclination to be led by those who could drag them out of their cabins and show them to the world what they were in times gone by, what great service at great self-sacrifice they have been rendering to the nation and what they can yet do. Prof. Sabhesan's assumption of office as Joint Secretary marked a distinct turn in the affairs of the Guild. His dynamic personality galvanised the dormant members and infused into them fresh energy and roused them up to activity. The toiling pioneers were able to find in him an enthusiastic cooperator and received not a little assistance from him in the realisation of the aims and objects of the guild.

Prof. Sabhesan addressed himself to the task of Secretary with an energy that was all his own; his talks at periodical meetings dispelled the wonted indifference of the members to men and matters of the Guild and his exhortations from time to time to stand united always had their desired results.

On the resignation of Sri V. Subbiah in the middle of the year 1920, Prof. Sabhesan had to be the sole Secretary for the rest of the year 1920. From 1921 for fifteen long years as the Secretary and for two consecutive years thereafter as President, his toils with a single-minded devotion to strengthen the Association with a view to influence public opinion for the improvement of the appalling economic condition of teachers not only of the City but of the whole presidency, were enormous. The starting of the Co-operative Society of the Madras Teachers' Guild was also part of his endeavours. His association with it as Director or President successively has not left it to function as a mere bank; but, by his personal influence, he has been able to temper its administration by human considerations by reason of the fact that its constituents are from first to last teachers in the clutches of



poverty. The Guild grew stronger and stronger in number and in prestige and the members were given opportunities to improve their professional efficiency, thanks to the courses of lectures arranged to be delivered year after year by experts and the formation of study-circles. His successive annual reports teem with a variety of activities, all of which reflect his enormous exertions to raise the prestige and independence of the profession. If to-day the Guild has established certain healthy conventions and has imperceptibly gained a status and recognition, it is not a little due to the great powers of organisation which he was able to bring to bear on the responsibilities which he realised and discharged as a member of the Guild.

Prof. Sabhesan is an example of a virile personality. His powers of argumentation are far beyond the common and his impromptu speeches on professional or academic topics have always come as from an inexhaustible source. He is full of the courage of his convictions and has never been known to have failed to speak out the truth. He has fought for the cause of teachers both in individual cases and collectively. Consistency in him is an extraordinary virtue; never has he fashioned his doctrines to serve the hour or to pander to personalities. He stands to-day as the doughty champion of the rights of the teachers whose contentment and happiness are dear to his heart and a delight to his mind, and his great longing is that the teacher should strive to be a model to the society which he has chosen to serve.

## THE MAN WITH A MISSION—SRI M. S. SABHESAN

### Three decades of dedicated life

Teachers who are proud of their profession and take interest in their professional organization will rejoice on this great occasion when their leader and one of their foremost workers finishes 60 years of life just half of which was given to promoting the cause of education and of the teaching profession.

Looking back across the 40 years of S.I.T.U.'s existence, it is difficult to find any one who has played a steadier game than Sri M.S. Sabhesan. The younger generation of teachers may not know his career from its start; but the older ones, who have watched with any care the progress of our organization know well and can appreciate the great part which he has played in the moulding of Educational Opinion in our province and in building up the S.I.T.U. into a respectable organization based on sound principles.

### A Man of Vision

Workers in the field of education and for the cause of teachers are men with vision of a distant ideal invisible to the eye of the work-a day world. They have no immediate fruits of their labour which they can grasp and the 'travail of their soul is often a tragic and a lonely affair.' But who can deny that it is the inspiration of such men that sustains us in our toils and trials? Sri M. S. S. is a man of vision. Those who move with him intimately know how much he feels that teachers, instead of devoting their time and energy to their calling, should have to agitate for adequate salary. His recent writings in which he asked teachers to think many times before launching upon a strike, reveal a high order of mind which can see the distant truth through the immediate realities.

### His devotion to the professional cause

When Mr. M. S. S. took the Secretaryship of the Madras Teachers' Guild in 1920, the guild was at its lowest ebb both in regard to its membership roll and its activities. Sri M. S. S.'s entry quickened the tempo. The personal example of his own devotion to the cause of teachers was a clarion call to teachers to organise. Continuously for 15 years without any break, he held that office and what a force he was all those years in the field of education will be recorded in the History of education of our province. "His dynamic energy, his impatience with apathy and indifference, his ardent desire to raise teaching to the status of a profession and his firm faith that that object could be achieved only by effective organization"—all these noble traits in his character combined to produce a new atmosphere in the teaching world and a fresh chapter in its history began.

## Changes in the S.I.T.U.'s Constitution

The S.I.T.U. which is now its 'father' was once the 'child' of the Madras Teachers' Guild. The child was born with the intention of making it the eventual father. The educationists of the early years of this century laboured hard towards this end. Though the Madras Teachers' Guild sacrificed its provincial character in favour of the S.I.T.U. the latter did not attain the status of a parent for many years. It was a slow growth. It was only after 1919, the year in which the annual conference of the S.I.T.U. was held for the first time at Trichy independently of the Annual Provincial Political Conference, it became widely known and gained in status. A few years later Sri S.K.Y. and M.S.S. had become members of the Madras Teachers' Guild. Soon they were both, by dint of their selfless service, at the head of the S.I.T.U. as President and Secretary respectively. The S.I.T.U. Team—that happy band of stalwart workers, inspired and led by these two great teachers at the head, transformed the original S.I.T.U. into a completely new organization representative of the whole teaching profession in South India.

The organization of District Guilds, the affiliation of Local Associations to the Union *through the Guilds*, the direct representation of each Guild on the Executive Board, the formation of the working committee through election by the Executive Board from among themselves, the election of the President of the Annual Conference by the Local Associations, and the holding of the conference itself under the auspices and the management of the District guilds, were some of the more important changes embodied in the constitution during the years when M.S.S. was the Secretary of the Union. The federal basis of the S.I.T.U. was broadened and strengthened by making the District Guilds, the link between the local Associations and the Union. The Policy of the Union and its management gradually shifted from the hands of a few at the centre to the Executive Board representing the District Guilds. The charge is sometimes levelled that the S.I.T.U. is after all in the hands of a 'ruling clique.' If that is so, the members of the S.I.T.U. have to thank themselves for it; for the constitution is quite flexible and the responsibility of stopping any holes in it is a matter resting entirely with the members. It will be a happy day when they begin to think of the constitution, instead of passing casual remark betraying lack of understanding.

## Sri M.S.S. as a Writer and Speaker

Sri M.S.S.'s services to the teaching profession as Editor of the 'South Indian Teacher' is no less important and valuable than his services either as President or Secretary of the S.I.T.U. It is a silent work, but none the less promotive of our cause. His editorials in the S.I.T. and his articles on education have the merit of clearness and thorough grasp of the subject. For nearly 30 years now, he has written and spoken in a style and in a voice which have neither fumbled nor faltered. They have been a quiet force in the shaping of educational opinion. The S.I.T. has made our organization



widely known and respected not only in India but also in other parts of the world.

The high standard of our journals—the 'S.I.T.' and the 'Balar Kalvi' and the efficient management of our Insurance Fund are both our moral assets of incalculable value. Their present position is largely due to the efforts of Sri S.K.Y. and M.S.S. The masterly way in which Sri M.S.S. replied in the S.I.T. to the criticism of the 'Hindu' on the recent report of the Secondary Education Board is a feast in realism. Very few of us know what great part he played for many years as a member of the Academic Council and Boards of Studies of the Madras University. It often happens that men of action quietly shape the decision of a body while the other members go on indulging in a hell of talk. Sri M.S.S. knows this art very well. He has of late become impatient of flabby thinking and shallow criticism. Many a speaker indulging in mere fire-works of words, has felt mauled by his mordant wit, and been silenced into speechless wisdom.

### Sri M.S.S. as a Leader

He had to face a veritable emotional storm at the last Provincial Conference at Madras. The strike fever was at its zenith. There was confusion in everybody's mind. The younger elements wanted to sweep the rest off their feet. They wanted to make grave decisions the significance and practicability of which was little understood. There was a feverish canvassing of votes and for hours all was in a pell-mell. There seemed to be no end to the hot discussions. Sri M.S.S. sat quiet allowing time for the cathartic action and appeasing, in the meanwhile, his own hunger with a few biscuits and a cup of water. A final appeal by him, born of his courage and self-confidence, restored balance and an anomalous situation in which the S.I.T.U. and the committee of Action found themselves, was happily averted much to the relief of all those present.

I wish Sri M.S.S. many happy returns of the day and earnestly pray he may be given the health and strength to guide us for many more years.

**PROF. M. S. SABHESAN AND  
THE MADRAS GEOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION**

Geography was long the 'Cindrella' of school subjects and, if today, it holds some status in the S.S.L.C. Curriculum it is entirely due to the untiring efforts of the late N. Subrahmanyam who had strained every nerve to raise the subject from the most neglected state of a 'B-Group' one to the position it now occupies as an 'A-Group' subject in the S.S.L.C. Scheme. In his noble work the late Subrahmanyam was ably assisted and rightly guided by his co-worker Prof. Sabhesan who contributed his best to the growth of geographical education in South India. The 'Seed of Geography' was sown by the late Subrahmanyam in the 'Soil of S.S.L.C. Curriculum' and Prof. Sabhesan—an able Botanist that he is—rightly guided his friend in fostering the growth of the 'Plant' Geography. One might wonder how the Professor in Botany interested himself in the field of Geography. Two things attracted him to the subject. One was his great admiration and affection towards his 'chum'—the late Subrahmanyam and the other was the relationship which his subject 'Botany' bears towards its sister science Geography. Being an enthusiast in his subject—Botany—Prof. Sabhesan enriched the subject of Geography by his valuable contribution to the study of that aspect of Geography—namely 'Plant Geography' which is indeed an 'Applied Science' to the pure science of Botany.

If the late Subrahmanyam is to be called the 'Foundation Stone' of the 'Madras Geographical Association' (now called 'The Indian Geographical Society') it is but appropriate to call Prof. Sabhesan as the 'Central Pillar' of that organisation. Mr. Sabhesan was one of the few friends who helped the late Subrahmanyam in successfully starting the 'Madras Geographical Association' in the year 1926. For the first five years, or so, he held office as its Vice-President, later as a member of the Council, etc., and retired from active work of the Association only when he found that it had taken deep roots in the Madras soil. He contributed his best to the spread of Geographical education by reading valuable papers at meetings of the Association and at Geographical Conferences held annually under the 'protecting wings of the S. I. T. U.' along with the Provincial Educational Conferences. Some of the important Papers read were—'The Plants of the Madras Regions', 'The Flora of Madras and its Environs', 'Plant Types and their distributions' etc.

Prof. Sabhesan came into actual contact with teachers of Geography when he rendered his active co-operation to the late Subrahmanyam in conducting Summer Schools and Refresher Courses in Geography organised under the auspices of the Madras Geographical Association. He delivered his specialised lecture on 'Plant Geography' at every course. At those courses he had also conducted excursions to the Horticultural Gardens, Madras.

M. P. RAJAGOPAL

## THE MADRAS TEACHERS' GUILD CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

### Early History:

The origin and early history of the Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society are not sufficiently known to many, much less the services rendered by Sri M. S. Sabhesan to it. The present society was born out of the Madras Elementary Teachers' Co-operative Society which had been founded in 1914. The late Raghavulu Naidu was its first President, the late M. C. Rajah, the Secretary and the late Ramaswamy Iyer the Treasurer. Unfortunately this society ceased to work by about 1921. At the suggestion of the then City Inspector of Co-operative Societies, the society was completely overhauled and its name itself was changed into Madras Teachers' Guild Co-operative Society. The membership was now restricted only to the Members of the Madras Teachers' Guild. The first Directors of the newly organized society were Sri S. K. Yegnanarayana Ayyer, Sri T. V. Subba Rao, Sri T. J. Kumaraswami and Sri M. S. Sabhesan. Sri M. S. Sabhesan has been associated with the society from its very inception. He with Sri S. K. Yegnanarayana Ayyer and Sri P. A. Subramania Ayyer formed a triumvirate and these have made the society what it is to-day. At the time when the society was re-organized, there were not wanting pessimistic utterances that their venture would not succeed as teachers had not sufficient capacity to run a concern of this nature. It is a matter of great pride that from the beginning the society has proved a great success and that in the working of the society, the successive Boards of Directors belied the baseless fears of a few members. A perusal of the Annual Reports will show the steady growth and progress of the Society from year to year. All these twenty-five years it has been classed 'A'.

### Sri M. S. Sabhesan and the Board of Directors

Sri M. S. Sabhesan has been elected year after year to the Directorate without opposition. It is a sign of the appreciation of his outstanding characteristics—his high sense of loyalty and professional ethics, his willingness to stand up courageously for what he believes to be right and to work cooperatively—that have made the members unhesitatingly return him to the Directorate. He was for over 15 years the President of the Society, guiding the society in its investments and in the sanctioning of loans. There are those who thought that he was too cautious during the period of evacuation in 1942. Those who criticised are the first to say "How wise and far seeing was he!". He has fought to safeguard the society often in the face of great opposition. He has fought it just as a man fights to save his own house, because he knows that however rosy the present, security for the future is the important thing. He has never been known to hesitate between duty and popularity and never has this fact been better illustrated than in the society's financial position which attracts deposits not only from members but from non-members too, to run its business without taking loans



from its financing banks. One of the great benefits that the society has bestowed upon the teachers in Madras is that it has saved many a teacher from the clutches of unscrupulous money-lenders. It has created a spirit of brotherhood among teachers. It has demonstrated that teachers can run a business organisation efficiently.

For any organization to grow and progress, we need a man who possesses the qualities that will see that efficiency is secured and the rights and privileges of its members are maintained. We need a man who can be firm when firmness is necessary, who has vision, energy, courage and professional integrity. Sri M. S. Sabhesan possesses in a large measure all these qualities.

When we think of the steady growth of the Co-operative Society and the sphere of its usefulness, we cannot but recall to our minds the services that Sri M. S. Sabhesan has done and is doing. May the Giver of All Good give him long life, peace, happiness, good health and energy to continue to do service to Education and to the teaching profession for which cause he has dedicated his life!

## PROF. SABHESAN AND THE MADRAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Mr. M. S. Sabhesan served on the staff of the Madras Christian College for over thirty years, and when he retired he left an honoured name behind him. He was loved and admired both by his colleagues and by his students, and he was the trusted adviser of a succession of Principals.

Mr. Sabhesan joined the staff in 1910, and to the teaching of Botany he brought an energy and enthusiasm which were an inspiration to all who came in contact with him. I joined the staff when he had fifteen years of service behind him, and soon realised that he was one of the big personalities of the College. Students spoke of him with affection and admiration tempered with a little healthy fear, for he was not only a worker himself but a terror to anybody who seemed to him too fond of a tranquil carefree life. Colleagues looked to him as a wise elder brother, and sought his advice in many matters. And from the conversation of Dr. Meston who was then Principal, it soon became apparent that a word from Mr. Sabhesan carried very special weight. Dr. Hogg, who followed Dr. Meston, had the same high regard for him, and when my turn came to take over the task of administration, I had learned from my predecessors to take it for granted that one could always depend on Mr. Sabhesan for helpful counsel and ungrudging support. Experience amply confirmed that, and I rejoice to have the opportunity now of expressing my sense of personal indebtedness to a wise and generous colleague.

An account of thirty-four years of service in one college ought to proceed on chronological lines, but I find it difficult to point to particular landmarks in Mr. Sabhesan's career. By 1925 when I came on the scene, he was already in full charge of the Botany Department, and already in the full exercise of those gifts which made him so distinguished a teacher and leader. It was but natural that, a few years later, he should be among the first to receive the title of Associate Professor, for that was no more than a recognition of the position which he had already won for himself by the quality of his work. He retired in 1943 and his departure left a gap which could not easily be filled. It was characteristic of him that, in the course of the next academic year, he unhesitatingly responded to an urgent call for assistance, and returned to help the College in a sudden emergency.

Looking back on Mr. Sabhesan's career among us, it seems to me that two outstanding qualities were his loyalty and his disinterestedness. He belonged to a generation of teachers who were notable for their loyalty to the institutions which they served, and he was himself a fine representative of the type; it would have been impossible to conceive of him accepting low standards of duty, or treating lightly his obligations to the institutions to which he was pledged. And he never played for his own hand. I remember well the remark of a colleague who was a very shrewd judge of men, that "Sabhesan never asks for things for himself"—and it was true. With many opportunities of pushing his own interests, or pressing the interests of his department, he consistently took a higher line, and set an admirable example to all of us who were privileged to serve along with him, of broadminded and unselfish devotion to the interests of the college as a whole.

DR. REV. A. J. BOYD

## PROFESSOR SABHESAN—AN APPRECIATION

When I was appointed to the staff of the Madras Christian College in 1927, I went to report the matter to my esteemed Guru Mahamahopadhyaya Professor S. Kuppuswami Sastriar who always took a more than paternal interest in the welfare of his old students. He at once remarked "you are safe with Professor Sabhesan. Follow him implicitly," My Professor weighed his words very carefully as he was brought up in the Mimamsaka tradition which demands the highest exactness or precision in the sentences used. His remark about Professor Sabhesan has been amply borne out by his later career.

Professor Sabhesan has done more than any individual teacher to bring the lot of the poor teacher very prominently before the public. The South Indian Teachers' Union is a standing monument to his untiring efforts. It is no exaggeration to say that its prominence today is in no small measure the result of his personal and selfless devotion. Like the proverbial fruit tree planter in Aesop's fables, he has not had the good fortune of reaping the fruits himself, but he is in no way perturbed on that account. He will be happy in the thought that his younger brethren or their successors will reap the fruits and proclaim the dignity of their calling.

Thorough-going discipline was and ever will be his watchword in life. Permeated through and through with a scientific bent of mind, he would put up with any amount of labour in getting a thing done in the right way at the right time and in the right place. When the Christian College was faced with the problem of teaching Part II Tamil for the College classes in 1928, he voluntarily offered his services to the authorities, and almost overnight, miraculously mastered sufficient scholarship in the language to satisfy the exacting qualifications for a Tamil Pandit necessary according to the rules of the University. It was a really remarkable feat that he could combine a profound knowledge of the flora and fauna of Tamil literature along with an equally profound knowledge of Botany as Dr. Meston, the then Principal put it in his own flowery language in the College Report at the end of the year.

This thorough-going discipline was only matched by another equally remarkable quality, his willing readiness to step into a breach so that the existing order of things should continue without any hitch. Full four months after retirement, when the college was in an awkward corner by the sudden resignation of his successor, he readily agreed to come to its rescue and enabled it to tide over the crisis despite the strain on his health and even at the risk of upsetting his pre-arranged plans.

The Madras Government has recognised his work for the teacher, by appointing him a member of the S. S. L. C. Board recently. It will be no exaggeration to say that every teacher in all the High Schools of the presidency knows his name and his toil for the amelioration of the hard lot of his brother teachers. As editor of the General science Text-books series, his services to the cause of the propagation of scientific knowledge among the boys who will be the citizens of to-morrow are really inestimable. Thus his work for more than thirty years both as a Professor in an Honours College and as an editor of scientific treatises is such as must be remembered by posterity with gratitude. May the Almighty grant him long life and prosperity to enjoy his well-earned rest in the Company of his dutiful children and ever-growing circle of admirers!

U. VENKATAKRISHNA RAO.



## M. S. SABHESAN AS PROFESSOR

I heartily congratulate Prof. Sabhesan's Shastiabdapurthi Celebration Committee and its Secretary on their decision to celebrate his 61st birthday on a grand scale. This is a fitting recognition of his many-sided activities in the sphere of education. On this happy occasion, I consider it my pleasant privilege and duty to tender my humble tribute to the illustrious Professor. I feel that I can speak of him with some personal knowledge. Even as a student of Annamalai University, I came to know him as early as 1936 and was immediately attracted towards him by his inspiring personality. Since then, I have had frequent contacts with him. But the opportunity for my closest intimacy with him presented itself to me in 1943 when I was for one year his colleague in the Botany Department of the Madras Christian College. I deem myself exceptionally fortunate to have worked with him as a Botany teacher in that institution. For, it was a genuine pleasure to work with him. He had nothing of the boss in him without prejudice to the maintenance of discipline, both amongst his colleagues and students. He won their esteem, affection, and respect by the sheer force and charm of his personality, geniality of temper and impressiveness in teaching.

While it would be rather presumptuous for me to attempt to assess his qualities as a teacher, I beg leave to say that he was and continues to be one of the best teachers of Botany. All his students and all those teachers who have had the slightest contact with him would bear ample testimony to this fact. His capacity for popular and intelligible exposition of the subject has become a legend. There are very few professors who are both scholars in science and good teachers also. It is almost a truism to say that profundity of scholarship and a capacity for popular expression rarely go hand in hand together. But Professor Sabhesan is a wholesome exception. While his teaching of Botany is impressive, interesting and intelligible, he does not neglect the essential details which in the hands of his less gifted brethren would become flagging and even tiresome. I have often wondered at his capacious brain which could marshal facts with punctilious exactitude and at the same time present them in a lucid and enjoyable manner. It used to be said that Thomas Henry Huxley, the famous English Professor of Zoology and Natural History, would go on lecturing for hours on end and yet his pupils would never slacken in their attention. That is what happens when Professor Sabhesan delivers his lectures. He possesses the inimitable knack of unravelling and resolving the intricacies of an abstruse problem and rendering it easy for understanding. His description of plants and their mode of living is so real and popular with pointed references to the close analogies between plants and animals including man, that for the moment, the seemingly wide gulf between them ceases to exist.

Professor Sabhesan's activities did not confine themselves to the narrow sphere of botanical teaching in the Madras Christian College, where, it must be said to his abundant credit, that he adorned the Chair of Botany for well nigh 30 years. His contributions, particularly to the Secondary and Elementary side of the teaching world are too well known to need comment. He has been and is still the redoubtable champion of the teachers and has done yeoman service for their well-being. The celebration of his Shastiabdapurthi by the teachers is highly eloquent of their admiration and gratitude for him.

In conclusion, I submit, that Professor Sabhesan is essentially human in every inch of his being. None who have ever met him would have failed to be impressed by his humanity. He is all benevolence and always bears a cheerful countenance. His face beams with an attractive smile which is almost contagious. He is hearty in his appreciation of even the smallest good in others and is ever ready to exhort his friends in times of need and infuse enthusiasm in them. Above all, he is a man of integrity and sterling character. If a succession of Principals of the Madras Christian College loved, respected and adored him, it was certainly because of his moral rectitude. Gentle, generous, candid and honest, yet imbued with a sense of discipline, he has all the qualities which answer to the definition of man. I may adopt the words of Shakespeare and say, 'the elements so mix in him that nature may stand up and say to all his friends "this is a man"'.  
 While it would be rather unbecoming for

May God in his bounteous grace confer upon him a long life of health and happiness and useful service to the cause of education which is so dear to his heart.

## OUR PRESIDENT

Our President Professor Sabhesan has three great passions—for seeing the class room teacher becoming an educational expert, for so working out the organisation as to make it an efficient instrument for safe-guarding the professional interests of teachers and for creating amongst the public a proper realisation of the values of Education so that every child will have the education suited to its needs and aptitudes, without in any way being limited by the purse of its parent.

To these ends he has been working consistently for the past thirty years. By his steadfast devotion and patient perseverance, he may well claim to have achieved a commendable measure of success and it will not be wrong to say that he has placed the Union on the right road.

He possesses a keen insight and can easily visualise the future trends and with his characteristic passion for method, forms his plans and executes them with vigour. His whole conduct being governed by well-defined principles, and his motive being disinterested and unselfish service to the cause of education and teachers, he has been able to secure not merely acceptance of his plans but whole-hearted cooperation from his colleagues. He hates disrupting tendencies and selfishness and when he finds sometimes unreasoning opposition, he is worried. But this is only temporary and confined only to the subject of discussion.

The Union owes a great deal to the late Sri S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar. At meetings of the Executive and Working Committees these two friends would often present opposite points of view and the passionate ardour of Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar would sometimes irritate Mr. M. S. Sabhesan. But in the end Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar would see Mr. Sabhesan's way and these two friends would sit together and talk of many details of work in the most cordial manner. Perfect harmony would prevail. Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar was a good cooperator and Professor Sabhesan respects all men.

In his work Prof. Sabhesan never allowed any temptation or fear to make him deviate from his principles. This disinterested devotion to his work has compelled the admiration of all teachers and non-teachers. Any one watching his conduct at meetings would clearly see his scientific attitude to the problems under discussion. This has been in a large measure responsible for his success.

It is a unique characteristic of Prof. Sabhesan that he is able to enthuse every one in his cause. It is a pleasure to work with him. Without appearing to direct, by skilful conversation, he guides the worker and is very generous in his praise. Those who have had and are having the privi-



lege of working with him in the Co-operative Society, the Protection Fund, the Union and the Guilds would bear testimony to this.

To our Upadhyaya Sangha Karya Praveena S. K. Yegnanarayana Iyer we owe the motto 'Raise yourself by your own effort' and Prof. Sabhesan was quick to realise the importance of this motto. While the co-operative Society and the Protection Fund show what teachers can do, Sabhesan made full use of the Journals to leaven up the teaching profession. So great was his ardour, that when the Executive Board hesitated to undertake the financial responsibility of conducting 'Balar Kalvi', Mr. Sabhesan ordered its starting on his own responsibility. His voracious reading of every available book and periodical on education and his suggestions for the monthly fare to be provided by the Journals. The South Indian Teacher and Balar Kalvi have all helped in making the Journals useful organs in strengthening the South India Teachers' Union and in creating among teachers a faith in the organisation and a great sense of brotherhood.

If to-day are noticed tendencies for the formation of separate organisations, like the College Teachers' Union, the Secondary Grade Teachers' Union, the Elementary Teachers' Federation, the Headmasters' Association, the Language Teachers' Association, and the Music Teachers' Association, Mr. Sabhesan is not perturbed but on the other hand feels happy. For though apparently these organisations might have come into existence out of a feeling of impatience, he sees in them the faith in organisation and believes that these organisations, instead of weakening the Union would add to its strength.

Sri Sabhesan never cared for popularity. Work is his main objective. He is ready to alter his decision if he is convinced that by so doing he would serve the cause.

Sri Sabhesan has given ungrudgingly his time, energy and even money to the cause of education and the teachers, and nothing would gladden his heart more than the feeling that success is at hand.

During the difficult days of evacuation when schools were facing a crisis he was sick and his health was causing anxiety. But news of our activity acted as a tonic. Mrs. Sabhesan, who has been generously helping him in his work for the cause of Education, wanted us to be meeting him often and to talk to him on Union, Teachers and Education, for she found, they were his very breath.

May God give our Leader long life, health and strength and enable him to achieve his objectives.

# ADDRESSES AND WRITINGS

OF

Prof. M. S. SABHESAN

## THE VERNACULAR AND ITS PLACE IN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The place of vernaculars in our educational system is an old vexed question. No appreciable improvement has been made all these years in spite of the agitation in the press and on the platform. The position of the vernacular in our presidency finds a close parallel to that of Welsh, and I should like to commend to the notice of teachers the small but valuable book of "Welsh in Education and Life" published recently by His Majesty's Stationery Office. This book is a report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Board of Education "to enquire into the position of the Welsh language and to advise as to its promotion in the educational system of Wales." This report gives the proper answer to those who refuse to look into the future and will never allow anything to be done which is likely to improve the position of the vernacular. The prejudicial effect of this continued neglect of vernaculars has come to be clearly perceived since the introduction of the Montford reforms and the inauguration of the Non-Co-operation movement. The politicians who have till recently been indifferent to the vernacular have begun to realise what an extraordinarily efficient instrument the vernacular is in respect of the education of the people at large. If the place of the vernacular happens to be kept in the forefront at the present day, the credit should go to the politicians. Now that the hands of the politician are too full, it is the duty of teachers to understand the situation aright and to give the proper lead to the country.

The unnatural position of the vernacular was once pithily expressed by a distinguished educational officer. On the occasion of the conference of the Madras Teachers' Guild when the subject of "the Vernaculars as the media of Instruction" was taken up for discussion, this educational officer stated with good deal of warmth that the question to be considered should strictly speaking, be not "whether vernaculars should be the media of instruction, but whether anything else can ever be the medium." It should be interesting to find out how this topsyturvydom has been brought about. Is it due to political reasons or is it due to a mentality which prefers to consider education solely in relation to a place in the public service?

Before this question can be answered, it is necessary that we should know what attention the vernacular has received in our presidency and what the attitude of the Government has been all along. Under the old regulations of the University of Madras, which were in force till 1909 the pupils in schools and colleges were required to undergo a course in a second language which in the case of the majority proved to be the vernacular. It was thus possible for a large number of graduates turned out every year to acquire some knowledge of the vernacular though the progress made came



to be regarded as not quite satisfactory. The position of the vernacular is being gradually undermined consciously or unconsciously since the western system of education was introduced. The Indian University Act of 1904 along with the S.S.L.C., scheme has tended to operate effectively against the study of the vernacular. The vernacular happened to be thrown into the background, and under the altered conditions which provided only for a paper on composition, students could hardly be expected to make any progress. That the knowledge of the vernacular gained by students under such conditions is negligible is admitted by all. The slight changes that have recently been made in the matter of the second language do not count for much and it is obvious that the pupils do not have an opportunity of studying the masterpieces in the vernacular literature.

It does not seem to have been the intention of those who were responsible for the introduction of western system of education to allow the vernaculars to be neglected. The sum of one lakh of rupees set apart by the East India Company was no doubt devoted to the encouragement of the study of Sanskrit and Arabic. The point of discussion centred in those days round the desirability of making the knowledge of the sciences accessible to the people of this country through English. The decision that was finally arrived at by Lord Macaulay and Sir Charles Trevelyan did not affect the position of the vernacular. On the other hand, the importance of the vernacular in respect of the progress of the country seemed to have been distinctly understood. The despatch of 1854 makes the position clear. "It is indispensable, therefore, that, in any general system of education, the study of vernaculars should be assiduously attended to and any acquaintance with the improved European knowledge which is to be communicated to the great mass of the people, can be conveyed through one or other of the vernacular languages." The institution of universities in 1857 proved a serious disturbing element. The universities made, at first, some provision for the study of the vernacular, and at one time the Calcutta University permitted the candidates for the Matriculation Examination to answer some of the papers in the vernacular. But unfortunately this concession was soon withdrawn, and all the universities vied with one another in laying undue stress on the study of English. The degrees awarded by the universities were regarded as passports for government service and western education in schools and colleges became in a sense "*vocational*." The struggle to secure a place in the public service enhanced the market value of the university degree, and the university degree depended upon acquiring a decent proficiency in English. It appeared legitimate to all concerned that the efforts of the student should be directed to the careful study of English. The study of the vernacular "does not pay" and it is no wonder that the vernacular far from becoming the vehicle of modern thought has been fast losing its ground. The danger resulting from the influence of the universities did not remain unnoticed and the Government pointed out again and again the importance of the vernacular. The Government of India Resolution of 1904 states "that, in the pursuit of English education, the cultivation of verna-

culars is neglected with the result that the hope expressed in the despatch of 1854 that they could become the vehicle for diffusing western knowledge among the masses is as far as ever from realisation." It further points out that "it has never been the policy of the Government to substitute the English language for the vernacular dialects of the country." It is an irony of fate that the pious wish expressed in the despatch of 1854 should remain unrealised partly owing to the indifference of the universities and partly owing to the undue importance attached to a place in the public service.

The question of the vernacular may, for convenience, be considered under two aspects: (1) the study of its literature, and (2) its use as the medium of instruction. As regards the former, it is necessary to have a clear idea as to the degree of proficiency in the vernacular that can be expected of pupils while leaving the school or college. A sound knowledge of the vernacular necessarily involves a study of standard works and adequate provision should be made in the time-table. It should be possible for a student who is leaving the school to understand any unseen passage in such works as *Nalavenba*, *Naladiar* and *Bharatham*. He should also be in a position to explain to ordinary men the facts of interest in history and science. A student who has passed the intermediate stage should, under proper training, have acquired a capacity to appreciate works of literary merit and to express his ideas in his mother-tongue correctly and with ease. If qualified persons be appointed to teach the vernacular and if they are placed on the same footing as the teachers giving instruction in other subjects, it is possible for a student to cover a fairly large field by the time he completes the intermediate stage. Opinion may differ with regard to the provision for a compulsory study of the vernacular in the courses for the B.A. Degree and B.A. Hons. degree examinations. It is admitted on all hands that the post-intermediate stage should provide for specialisation of the courses. A compulsory study of the vernacular in the higher classes of the university must affect the standard in the optional groups. The idea underlying the compulsory study of the vernacular seems to be to enable a student to appreciate vernacular literature and to communicate his ideas freely to his fellowmen. It cannot be said that a student will not attain this degree of proficiency during the stay of six years in the secondary school and two years in the college. The interest of the vernacular will be safeguarded if it be given a place in the optional groups in the degree courses.

Now for the vernacular as the medium of instruction. As soon as the use of vernacular as the medium is mentioned, some persons raise up their hands in horror and cry out that English will be thrown out. Such hysterical statements are usually made to cloud the issue. It may be stated at once and without any reservation that the advocates of the vernacular do not intend to displace English. Nor is it their desire to minimise the importance of its study. They advocate the claims of the vernacular primarily on pedagogic grounds. Bi-lingualism has come to stay and there is



the undoubted advantage in having within our reach "the mastery of a second language, a second literature, a second culture." What is required is that the educational system should be so designed as to enable the student to get the benefit of both vernacular and English. As matters stand at present, vernacular is a "mere subject" and the time of the pupils is taken up with the drill in the foreign tongue. "All their ideas will suffer in precision and clarity if they first reach them through the (foreign) medium." Progress is necessarily slow and a large number of boys have to be declared unfit. The following are the chief points in the minds of the opponents of the vernacular and it is necessary to examine them carefully.

- (1) English alone has a chance of becoming the *lingua franca*.
- (2) It promotes political unity.
- (3) It is the key to modern knowledge.
- (4) There are no suitable books in the vernacular and there is the difficulty of technical terms.
- (5) There are several vernaculars in our presidency, and the case of districts where more than one vernacular is spoken presents special difficulty.
- (6) There will be difficulty in securing the service of qualified teachers and
- (7) Students who receive instruction through the vernacular are likely to be inferior in point of mental equipment.

Granting for a moment that English is likely to become the common language which will promote political unity and make the modern knowledge accessible to the people of this country, the opponents of the vernacular cannot maintain that the present situation with regard to English is going to be materially changed. English will and must continue to hold a prominent place in the educational system and our opponents need not be alarmed. The inherent market value which the possession of a knowledge of English can always command will always act as a strong inducement to pupils to study English with care. Several distinguished educationists who have bestowed some thought on the subject of the vernacular medium are of opinion that a change from the present system will make it possible for teachers to pay special attention to the teaching of English on approved methods. Members of the committee who reported on "Welsh in Education and Life" would "wish to place on record the fact that in those schools where generous provision of time is made for the study of Welsh, the general level of scholarship attained by the pupils in other subjects studied, is, without exception, at least as high as in schools in the same districts making little or no provision for the study of Welsh. In particular we were impressed by the fact that English, far from suffering by competition with Welsh, was generally better taught in those schools where Welsh was also a subject. One objection that may be levelled against the using of the



vernacular as the medium of instruction in all non-language subjects is that it will reduce English to a "mere subject." The decision of the Director of Public Instruction which has been also supported by the Academic Council that half the number of hours of school work might be devoted to the teaching of the non-language subjects in the vernacular suggests a way out of the difficulty. Each School will thus be free to choose for itself the subjects in which the vernacular may be conveniently employed. As for text-books and technical terms, it is the demand that should create a supply. The market will be flooded with books if it be known that most of the schools have taken advantage of the rule permitting candidates to answer the S. S. L. C. Examination papers in the vernacular. The plurality of vernaculars is no great objection since several of the districts contain population speaking only one vernacular. In the case of districts like Chittoor, North Arcot, Madras, etc., the difficulty is got over by opening different sections, and a generous attitude in the matter of the grant-in-aid will help the management in undertaking the duplication of the staff if necessary. As for the Muhammadans, separate sections or schools may be started when the strength warrants it. The interest of the largest number should be borne in mind and it must be remembered that even in the case of Muhammadans and others who may happen to be in districts where their mother-tongue is not spoken, the vernacular of the district is not so foreign to them as English nor are they really ignorant of the vernacular of the district. The problem of competent teachers may no doubt appear as a serious one since the existing teachers have been trained under old methods. But special arrangements should be made to equip them for the special task. Instances of schools where teachers have begun to adopt the vernacular medium are not wanting. The Vernacular is freely employed in the lower classes in many schools and in some schools teachers find it necessary to use vernacular terms now and then in the upper classes. Teachers may be trusted to rise equal to the occasion since this question of the vernacular is frequently coming up for discussion at the conferences of Teachers' Guilds.

Now for the last point of inferiority. Sir Harcourt Butler speaking on the motion of the Hon. Mr. Rama Rayaningar (now Raja of Panagal) in 1915 in the Imperial Legislative Council said that "in his own experience and that of many competent educationists there was markedly greater intelligence in the boy whose education had been conducted through the medium of the vernacular until the highest classes of the school were reached than in the boy who had his education conducted in English." The Government of India resolution of 1913 records that "there is much evidence to the effect that scholars who have been through a complete vernacular course are exceptionally efficient mentally."

The advocates of the vernacular are on firmer ground when there is overwhelming evidence to show that, in spite of such extraordinary attention paid to English and in spite of the strenuous efforts made on behalf of the study of English, the proficiency in English and other subjects is far

from being satisfactory. A perusal of the evidence of some eminent persons before the Calcutta University Commission will leave no doubt in the mind of any unprejudiced person. Mr. J. R. Barrow says "The experiment is in itself, a daring one, since at best it means that boys are having their foundations insecurely laid while at the worst, as in Bengal, not only are the foundations imperfect but the whole superstructure is rickety. This surely would be an unconscionable price to pay even if at the end of the school course all students had at least learnt English really well. But if we find, as we do, that the system to which so much is sacrificed does not even teach them English, it seems to me ruinous to stick to it." The Hon. Mr. Monohan of the Civil Service has in his evidence dealt at length with the question of the medium and made out a strong case against the present system. He goes further and maintains that this system results in the loss of efficiency in administration.

It is clear therefore that, judged from any standpoint, the adoption of the vernacular as the medium of instruction in many, if not all, of the non-language subjects is necessary and desirable. We cannot expect students to take advantage of the provision regarding the answering of the question papers in the vernacular if the subjects be not taught in the vernacular. Those who advocate the claims of vernaculars are alive to the difficulties in the way. But "the real difficulty is that...lip-service is paid to the larger and newer ideas".....and this attitude is not confined to teachers alone. The responsibility of the government with regard to this question is very great. It should appoint a Committee of competent teachers to prepare suitable text-books and to compile a list of necessary standard technical terms. The Committee should consist of members who know the business. Such a Committee will be able to issue books which will secure uniformity at the outset. It may be that the books may not be up to the mark but when the scheme is put into force, the defects that will be noticed may be removed. It is also essential that the Training Colleges should deal with this question of the vernacular medium in right earnest. Why should not the teachers under training be given facilities to improve their knowledge of the vernacular and also to employ the vernacular as the medium? It is a matter for surprise that in the army of specialists in Training Colleges there should be none who can guide the graduates properly in using the vernacular medium. The Universities can also do a great deal for the vernacular. It is not enough to pass regulations making the vernacular compulsory. The University of Madras will not be doing its duty if it does not take steps to place in the hands of a large number of scholars, passing through its portals, suitable books in vernacular dealing with topics in History, Science, etc. If the University should really feel serious about making the vernacular the vehicle of modern thought, it should undertake the publication of books in the vernacular. A motion that a sum of ten thousand rupees be set apart for the publication of books in the vernacular to be used as non-detailed texts in the university classes was placed before the Senate of the Madras University and an assurance

was given that the Syndicate would consider the suggestion at an early date. Let us hope that the Syndicate will find it possible to get the books ready before the next annual meeting.

It is to the teacher that all will look forward for the improvement of the vernacular. It rests with him to make or mar the scheme. Let it not be said that the teaching profession has been tried and found wanting. It is to be hoped that the South India Teachers' Union will with its official organ "The South Indian Teacher" be able to rouse the enthusiasm of the overworked and underpaid profession. It is worthwhile for the authorities and teachers to understand the significance of the recommendations of the committee on "Welsh in Education and Life" so as to see whether action on the lines suggested cannot be taken.

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## GENERAL SCIENCE IN OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

"More potatoes to carry but a smaller basket to put them in". This is how Prof. Miall describes the prevailing tendency in the sphere of secondary education. The exacting and complex conditions of modern life make new demands upon schools; and much more is expected of them at the present day. It is no wonder that the public should happen to be dissatisfied with the programme of schools. This dissatisfaction is world-wide. But the situation which the schools in our country have to face is found to be more trying since they cannot count upon the active co-operation of the *home and the community*. With the majority of pupils, the classroom is the only place for learning; and the value of school clubs and excursions as educational instruments has yet to be appreciated. Those who are called upon to formulate a curriculum which will enable our secondary schools to pay their varied *role* efficiently cannot shut their eyes to the peculiar conditions in our presidency.

Prof. Miall has put in a nutshell the position in respect of the curriculum. The educator has to decide what subjects should be included in the courses of study in secondary schools. Very few will be found to question the claims of Science for a place in the curriculum. Thanks to the vigorous campaign carried on in the nineteenth century by Prof. Huxley and his friends, Science has found a place in the curriculum and come to stay. As a matter of fact, the feeling is growing strong that science is receiving undue prominence to the detriment of humanities. The true educator is not interested in this controversy of Science versus Humanities. He prefers to look at the question not as a partisan but as a well-wisher of the pupil. Day after day he realises that science and humanities should not be pitted one against the other and that the two branches are really complementary. The Committee appointed by the British Association for the advancement of Science with Prof. Gregory as Chairman have reported upon the method and substance of "Science Teaching" in secondary schools. Their observations which are contained in the Report of the Association for 1917 should receive our earnest attention. They maintain that science should be made to form part of the educational course of *every boy* in the secondary school. The same view is presented later on with greater force by the Haldane Committee appointed by the Prime Minister to enquire into the position of Natural Science in the educational system of Great Britain. They argue that the general science course should be made obligatory on all children between 12 and 16.

While discussing the place and scope of a general science course, we may be called upon to state our aim in prescribing such a course. According to the Gregory Committee, a general science course seeks (1) to train the powers of accurate observation of natural facts and phenomena

and of clear description of what is observed (2) to impart knowledge of the method of experimental inquiry (3) to provide a broad basis of fact as to man's environment and his relation to it and (4) to give an acquaintance with scientific ideas now common in progressive life and thought. Apart from these general considerations, there is much to be said about the educational value of a course in Science. "It can arouse and satisfy the element of wonder in our natures . . . It quickens and cultivates directly the faculty of observation. It teaches the learner to reason from facts which have come under his own notice." There is one point which the Gregory Committee have taken care to emphasise and it will be good for teachers in Science to bear it in mind. They want them to remember that the object of the general science course in schools is not to train physicists or chemists. The remarks of the Haldane Committee are equally clear: "Again, in many schools the *course is planned as if its sole object were to lay the foundation for specialised study in science at a later period.*"

Now for the subjects to be included in the general science course. It is seen from the reports referred to above that for many years the science course followed in English schools included only the elements of Physics and Chemistry. The study of biology did not find a place in several boys' schools and even Nature study was dealt with in a perfunctory manner in elementary schools. The time allotted to the teaching of science was on the average two hours a week and the laboratory work did not receive proper attention. It was reserved to school clubs to afford facilities for the study of plants and animals. The observations of the Haldane Committee regarding the principles that should underlie the science course are quoted here in full for obvious reasons:

"In framing a course in science for boys up to the age of 16, it should be recognised that for many this will be the main, for some the only, opportunity of obtaining a knowledge of science, and that the course should therefore be self-contained and designed so as to give special attention to those natural phenomena which are matters of everybody experience, in fine, that the science taught in it should be kept as closely connected with human interests as possible. The keen interest which many boys feel at this age in the application of science, such as aeroplanes, steam engines, wireless telegraphy, motor cars and the like should be utilised to the fullest extent." The same committee have recorded that "in very few boys' schools is there any attempt to give a knowledge of the main facts of the life of plants and animals" and they have seen fit to observe that "no boy should leave school with the idea that science consists of Chemistry and Physics alone". It is easy to mention the reasons which should have prompted the committee to put in a strong plea for the inclusion of the study of animals and plants (elementary biology in a general sense) in the general science course. All that has been said about stimulating curiosity and observation applies with equal force to biology. The study of animals and plants should find a place in the science course for more than one reason. In the first place, animals and plants are easily available in every

locality and a lesson on animals or plants will not degenerate into mere book-learning. Secondly, children are naturally interested in animals and plants and they will form suitable materials for cultivating the faculty of observation. Our boys are not ordinarily trained to keep their eyes open and several things which they meet on the way are left unnoticed. A regular study of animals and plants will remedy this defect and make them alert. This study also affords opportunities for boys to go out and to observe plants in their own homes. Anything that encourages our boys to go out into the open and to see for themselves should be welcomed in our presidency. The study of plants and animals creates an intelligent and sympathetic interest in the living forms around them and the softening influences of such an association cannot be ignored. Further, there is the likelihood of boys being interested in plants and animals as hobbies which in their after-life will help them to enjoy life and to appreciate the sublime and the beautiful.

The ground that can be covered in biology in the secondary school will to a great extent depend upon the preliminary course in Nature study undergone by the pupil in the elementary school. A good training in Nature study accompanied by a regular work in the school garden should certainly prove valuable. The scope of biology is roughly indicated as follows in the report of the Haldane Committee : " We have already laid stress on the point that some knowledge of the main facts of the life of plants and animals should form a regular part of the teaching in every secondary school. Systematic work in Zoology, including dissection of animals and the use of the compound microscope, belongs to a later stage of school life, but the main facts as to the relation of plants and animals to their surroundings, the changes in material and in energy involved in their life and growth should form part of a well-balanced school course. There is a considerable measure of agreement among our witnesses to the effect that the course might include the main anatomical features of the higher plants, the elementary physiology of plants, especially their relation to the soil and to the atmosphere together with some quite general knowledge of animal metabolism." The Gregory Report of the British Association for the advancement of Science contains draft outlines of topics in the different subjects proposed to be included in the Science course and teachers may peruse the same with advantage. Some time back the topics in Natural Science included in the syllabus in Bulgarian secondary schools appeared in the columns of this journal. A perusal of these courses will show that our course cannot be regarded as heavy or ambitious. But the fact remains that " the poor boys are reported to be overworked". Why?

Teachers frequently complain that the course in Elementary Science is unduly heavy and Teachers' organisations recommend the deletion of subjects such as animal life from the course. The findings of Expert Committees like the Gregory and Haldane Committees are clear with regard to animal life and plant-life and one would not like to treat their recommendations in a light-hearted manner. The heaviness of the course is attributed by a number of teachers to the difficulty of the foreign



medium. It is admitted that a much wider ground can be traversed with greater ease if the medium of the mother-tongue be employed for instruction and examination. Does not the remedy lie in adopting without any delay the medium of the mother-tongue?

One reason why every course is criticised as being oppressively heavy is the system of the common external examination which by the common consent of teachers has been allowed to occupy an eminent position and to influence their work at every step. Time was when Elementary Science and Geography found a place along with History in the list of subjects to be studied by all pupils. These subjects were deliberately excluded from the list of subjects for the public examination and it was hoped that teachers would give each subject its due recognition and plan their course so as to suit the needs of the pupils in the locality. Now that all subjects are, as the result of our agitation, included in the list of subjects for the public examination, the complaint is made that the course is heavy and relief is sought to be obtained by doing away with subjects of real value to the pupil. Is it not better to retain the existing course in Elementary Science and to make it a non-examination subject than to cut away subjects on account of the imaginary strain? Should not a teacher change his mentality in respect of examinations?

Another factor which has been responsible for the persistence of the complaining habit is the overworking of teachers in secondary schools. More subjects mean more work and more note-books. In the case of Science it involves additional work in connection with demonstration experiments. Teachers are not given necessary help by way of laboratory assistants and they have to arrange for experiments during the few periods of leisure. The less said about library facilities, the better. If boys find science teaching uninteresting, it may be because the teacher finds it physically impossible to cope with the work however conscientious he may be. The salary that he gets is low and conditions in the school sap his energy and make him indifferent. The Gregory Committee have been constrained to observe that the "standard of education rises or falls with teachers and is largely influenced by the conditions under which their services are rendered." The Haldane Committee are still more emphatic on this question of status and salaries of teachers. If only the managing bodies and authorities would care to understand the significance of their remarks, it may be possible to expect a more satisfactory return for the expenditure on education.

We sometimes hear that teachers do not feel competent to teach all the subjects included in the general science course. The course has been devised on the assumption that the graduate teachers in Physics and Chemistry who are generally teaching biology should be in a position to handle animal and plant life. From my knowledge of the conditions obtaining in schools, I am led to think that such teachers are able to teach biology without difficulty. Extension courses conducted under the auspices of the University and the Training Colleges will enable them to teach biology with greater confidence and interest. Such teachers are in a position

to take a comprehensive view of the syllabuses in the different subjects under elementary science and they can remove the impression that the different subjects ought to be necessarily treated in all stages separately as distinct watertight compartments. There is vast scope for the application of the principle of correlation and I venture to suggest that an experiment should be made of entrusting the entire teaching of Elementary Science in a school to one teacher so that he may be able to find out the extent to which the principle of correlation may be profitably applied. Out of 300 and more high schools, at least a few schools may work on such lines and their experience will be very useful in recasting the courses.

It remains for me to refer to one more point and that is a very important one. Very often teachers represent that definite syllabuses for the different subjects should be prescribed. It is a well-nigh impossible task to devise a syllabus that will be found acceptable to all. A rigid cast-iron syllabus will defeat the very purpose for which the inclusion of the subject in the curriculum has been proposed. All that can be expected from the expert bodies is a general outline of the topics along with the principles that should be kept in view. Schools are scattered throughout the Presidency and they work under very dissimilar conditions. If our object be to stimulate interest, the teacher should be free to adopt a method or plan suited to the locality, and to the needs of the pupils in that locality. A scheme that will be suitable for Madras cannot be applied in its entirety at Anthiyur or Pattamadai. It is not beyond the wit of any teacher to fill up the details himself and to make the course complete. The Haldane Committee also feels that it is neither possible nor desirable to enforce a rigid syllabus. This demand for a uniform detailed syllabus is closely associated with the unnatural cry for a uniform public examination. A rigid syllabus and an external public examination are two factors which are sure to encourage cramming and kill initiative. Far from bringing about a sound dissemination of scientific knowledge, this plan will make teaching stereotyped and mechanical. We do not think just now of those schools that look only to the scoring in the eligibility list and subordinate all real interest to the results in the public examination. Our concern is really for those schools which are anxious to follow the true path and give sound education to their pupils. Should they not be allowed to enjoy freedom to plan their work according to their conception?

If the science course be condemned today in our presidency, it is not because of any serious inherent defects in it. Is the course to be condemned because teachers are unwilling to adopt the medium of the mother-tongue? Is the life-long interest of the youth to be sacrificed to satisfy the unnatural craving for an unreliable public examination? Should the standard that we should aim at be determined by an ill-equipped, under-staffed school? Let the teacher stick to his true ideal and jealously maintain his freedom to plan his course, and the course in Science as well as the teaching profession will rise in the esteem of the public.

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## PUBLIC EDUCATION—A GREAT INVESTMENT

A politician is apt to take credit to himself when his country should happen to show a marked material progress. He may call our attention to the outstanding features of his financial or foreign policy and tell us that, but for his skilful handling of the problems, the country could not have made any progress. But he will not feel quite happy when, in a sudden crisis like the Great War, he finds his country overmatched at every turn. He cannot shut his ears to the cry raised everywhere that there is something rotten in the educational system. In times of peace, the busy politician does not choose to heed the warnings of competent educationists. Much of the money spent on public education appears to him a waste. He is inclined to hold that there is vast scope for retrenchment in the sphere of Education. Men of courage and conviction who keep their heads cool in critical times are rare to find. Luckily for England, the danger of adopting the short-sighted policy of starving the nation-building department of Education was averted by the statesmanship of the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher. He dinned into the ears of the members of the House of Commons that the expenditure on Public Education was neither adequate nor proportionate to the total income. It was shown to be only "one and one-third times the value of the annual expenditure on tobacco and almost one-fourth the value of the annual expenditure on alcohol." From the figures given in the Research Bulletin of the National Education Association of America and referred to in the columns of "The South Indian Teacher" by Mr. G. Srinivasachari (April 1931), it is seen that "for each dollar expended for public schools, the Americans spend \$1.28 for life insurance, \$2.89 in building construction, \$2.61 for candy, chewing gum... .." The expenditure on Public Education compares unfavourably with that on different luxuries, though the necessity for Public Education is nowhere questioned. Various enactments regarding compulsory attendance, medical inspection, and so on, can be justly interpreted as an admission by the public of the principle that the State is, and should be, responsible for Public Education. One would like to know why this State responsibility for Public Education has come to be more or less universally accepted by all countries, advanced or backward. "Free public schools are the boast of the orator, the satisfaction of the public and the hope of the new world."

Dr. Briggs of the Teachers' College, Columbia University, took up this topic of Public Education as his theme for the "Inglis Lecture" in 1930 and it is necessary that teachers should become acquainted with the main ideas in this lecture. It seems to be his feeling that the citizens support Public Education not always because of the realisation of its importance. "The public believes in Education almost regardless of what it is. It has appropriated generously for it without demanding an accounting." In



support of this view he cites the different types of answers to the question as to why the public should support Public Education. The following are some of the answers: "It is a good thing and so I boost it; "To make men free"; "I have sometimes wondered but never like to oppose the majority"; "We have an obligation to pass on the inheritance of the ages"; "Every child has a right to the development of his powers." These answers show that people have no clear notions of the scope and implications of Public Education. It is more on traditional catchwords that Public Education rests at the present moment and these will prove shaky in course of time. Dr. Briggs anticipates a crisis or a serious setback in respect of Public Education if the public be kept ignorant of the real objectives in Public Education. "Not just any kind of education is justifiable. A firm foundation of informed public intelligence should carry Public Education."

"Does Education pay?" is the question which Dr. Briggs wants teachers and educational agencies to ask themselves. Every citizen who accepts the principle of Public Education may, at the back of his mind, have this idea of investment though in an ill-defined form. That Public Education should be regarded as a *long-term investment* is the thesis which Dr. Briggs seeks to establish in his "Inglis Lecture." He is convinced that this is the only ground on which the increasing expenditure from State funds can be attempted to be justified. Dr. Briggs does not advocate the idea of investment out of expediency or with a view to throw dust into the eyes of the public. He takes care to examine at length this conception of Public Education as a long-term investment and carries his rigorous analysis to a logical conclusion. The central idea of the lecture may be expressed in his own words: "The State supports free public schools to perpetuate itself and to promote its own interests. Education is a long-term investment that the State may be a better place in which to live and a better place in which to make a living." This idea of investment is of American origin though it may find occasional expression in other countries. For instance, the Rt. Hon. Fisher was able to produce an effect when he stated that "steps should be taken now if the fruit of the investment is to be reaped after the war." With Dr. Briggs, the idea of investment is central and fundamental. He does not shrink from applying business standards to the study of the problem of Public Education. What is needed is a "clear understanding that Education is a serious vital business, a great public investment and it should be made to pay assured dividends. If this is seriously admitted, everything else will follow." The dividend that is to be expected in this case is "*a citizenry better able and better disposed to contribute to the progress of the State.*"

A question may perhaps be raised at this stage whether Education admits of being employed as an instrument to secure a definite end. Dr. Briggs makes a rapid survey of the educational systems of Germany, France, Italy and Soviet Russia and points out how in each of the above-mentioned countries Education has been successfully directed towards

securing definite objectives. Speaking of Germany before the Great War, he says: "France, humbled and despoiled, very properly gave the credit of Prussian successes, not to German statesmen or military leaders but to the German schoolmaster. If the schoolmaster in two generations could change the home-loving, good-natured, individualistic German who had been fought and fought over for centuries by every war-lord of Europe, into the fighting machine that France found in 1870 and that the rest of the world fears to-day; if the schoolmaster could develop loyalty to a cause, obedience to authority, cultivate the arts and sciences, develop industry, direct trade and commerce, *it is time that we learnt how it was done.* We want to know, not to imitate the methods or to attain the results but chiefly *to gain confidence in our ability to use other methods in order that we may attain results worthy of American ideals.*" A strong case is therefore made out for consciously directing the educational activities towards securing a definite end. It is the conviction of Dr. Briggs that, far from cutting down expenditure on Public Education, the public will be willing to appropriate a much larger amount if it be convinced of the 'payingness' of Public Education. He therefore sets about examining more fully the implications of the conception of long-term investment.

One implication that is of far-reaching importance is that the State should acquire more or less exclusive rights in respect of the determination of the Education programme. The State that is called upon to provide funds for Public Education with the object of perpetuating itself must, it is contended, be entitled to have a direct hand in the formulation of the programme. The next implication which is closely connected with the foregoing one is the power which the State can claim to make laws and regulations necessary for carrying out the programme. It also follows from the conception of Public Education as an investment that the State should be in a position to direct, control and supervise effectively institutions and to frame a curriculum in consonance with the new view-point. "The chief means of such elevation (to the highest plane) is of course, Education; consequently the society or State organises and supports schools and even enforces attendance in order that it may protect itself and promote its own interests. This concept is of greater importance than at first it appears, because it leads to the inevitable conclusion that the State, to protect its investment and to issue dividends on it, be concerned that the curriculum be formulated and administered primarily with this end in view."

One serious objection may be immediately raised to what may appear to be the extravagant claims advanced by the State. It may be held that this all-powerful State will necessarily come into conflict with the rights of the individual and will tend to stifle the individual initiative. Dr. Briggs argues that this alleged conflict is only an apparent one. It is not likely to be a matter of any consequence in a society where the representatives chosen by the public are keen on safeguarding the interests of the State as well as of the individual. "The State can profit only as it

recognises whatever is unique, whatever is distinctive in each boy and girl and develops that as far as it promises to be profitable to do so."

What about the position of the numerous private schools under this claim for State interference?

They may happen to be hit hard and even their existence may be questioned. Dr. Briggs is not unaware of this effect and he does not consider it safe that a few good private institutions should be allowed to shield a very large number of indifferent institutions. He considers it unwise to entrust the Education programme into the hands of private schools which are not subject to adequate supervision and control. In our presidency, private bodies play a dominant part in respect of higher Education and the valuable service they have been rendering is admitted by all. That the administration of institutions under their control leaves considerable room for improvement only emphasises the soundness of the view of Dr. Briggs regarding private schools. Dr. Briggs does not admit the validity of the claim advanced by the advocates of private schools that they are valuable agents for carrying on experiments in Education. He insists that this task of experimentation must be done by public institutions which are better equipped. However, we are afraid that the case of private schools cannot be summarily disposed of.

Dr. Briggs finally proceeds to consider whether any trace of this idea of long-term investment can be recognised in our present Public Education. He fears that the public will be tempted to withhold support if Public Education does not promise to pay any dividend. He confines his attention chiefly to Secondary Education but it is clear that the criticism applies equally well to other grades of Education. He thinks that these charges can be levelled against the present system: (1) That the authorities have made no serious effort to formulate a curriculum for Secondary Schools promising maximum good to the State. (2) That there is no respectable achievement even in the subjects offered in Secondary curricula; and (3) That no effort has been made sufficient to establish in students appreciation of the value of the subjects in the curriculum such as to insure continued study either in higher schools or independently after compulsion ceases.

Perhaps there is nothing new under the sun. One would feel that Dr. Briggs was perhaps having our educational system in his mind. If Dr. Briggs should speak of American schools in this strain, I am unable to imagine how he will deal with our schools. Teachers may know from their own experience that there is no exaggeration in these charges. For the benefit of the readers of this journal, I shall refer to instances from American schools mentioned by Dr. Briggs in his lecture.

As regards the first charge, it is stated that the curriculum followed in schools is usually of the old traditional classical type. This curriculum does not show sufficient diversity so as to be suited to individuals on every level of culture. "The present task of the attempted fitting of all to the



Procrustean bed is destruction of the vital assets of society." The "dump heap of ejected failures" is a challenge to our schools and teachers. Dr. Briggs laments that the Secondary Schools are handicapped since they labour under unwholesome traditions. They are supposed to be respectable only when they prepare pupils for institutions of higher learning. There is also the serious aversion to vocational courses and the authorities as well as teachers are held responsible for this neglect of vocational guidance. "The ship of State cannot move steadily or comfortably with a cargo of inactive and non-contributory passengers."

The second charge of unsatisfactory achievement is easily borne out by tests and statistics. The American experience does not seem to be different from what we are accustomed to see in our country. It is stated that half the number of students were unable to tell who Solon was or to define "Monroe doctrine" after a year of Ancient and American History. 43.5% of students who took French dropped it after one year and 79.5% after two years. "When 900 fresh men at Indiana University were tested on an assigned passage of English prose on which they had two days for study, only 27% of boys and 39% of girls could give the title of the chapter or formulate in any terms the chief problem discussed by the author. The results in written English are in a large fraction of the cases shocking in their evidence of inadequate achievement."

Now for the third charge. Dr. Briggs refers to the repeated shifting of subjects in higher stages to prove that no interest has been acquired in the subjects. The retention by adults of what they had learnt at the school seems to reflect no credit upon their capacity for assimilation. Dr. Briggs feels that subjects seem to be studied more under compulsion and that there is no evidence of interest in subjects being generally kept up after the school or college stage. Are we not complaining that a large number of our honours graduates in science rush to seek admission into law colleges? The phenomenon of "lapse into illiteracy" which forms a sad feature of our Elementary Education finds a parallel in a modified form in higher levels and the money spent on the education of such men and women should be regarded as a waste.

It will be agreed that the foregoing charges are not unfounded. Nothing is gained by trying to apportion the blame. Dr. Briggs is anxious that the point of view should be changed. The present system is indefensible if it should be judged from the standpoint of a long-term investment. It does not promote the interest of either the individual or the State. On the one hand there are the thousands of pupils and parents who have spent time and money in the hope that Public Education would fit the pupils for life. The increasing number of the unemployed is likely to cast doubts upon the usefulness of Public Education. On the other hand, there are mutterings among ratepayers that the cost of Education is rapidly mounting up. It is possible that the different hostile

elements may join hands on this occasion of financial depression and shake the position of Public Education. It is imperative that teachers and authorities should move quickly and try to reform the system suitably from within. The public will then consider it worthwhile to make further sacrifices and begin to realise that the schools are working towards a definite objective, viz.; the betterment of the State in the wide sense. Dr. Briggs is conscious that his views may be open to criticism here and there. He holds that this conception of a long-term investment is the only stable basis on which public education can safely rest.

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## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND THE GOVERNMENT POLICY\*

His Excellency the Governor of Madras addressed the Madras Legislative Council on the 3rd December and on the eve of prorogation, stated that the Government policy in regard to Elementary Education would be announced shortly. He made the members understand that the policy would make an important departure and prove effective in eliminating wastage and improving efficiency all round. On the same day the members of the Council were considering a demand for a supplementary grant for about four lakhs and a half under education. The speakers were many and the speeches also were long; but very few showed a grasp of the details of the question which would disturb the Hon'ble Minister for Education. Sir A. P. Patro was able to contribute valuable points to the discussion but unfortunately he was not given the attention he deserved. The Hon'ble Minister for Education deserves to be congratulated for the tactful manner in which he handled the question. Some of his observations should make one hope that Elementary Education may not suffer.

The press communique formulating the policy of the Government has been issued. It is really an elaborate discussion of the problem of *wastage* in Elementary Education. Facts and figures are quoted to prove that wastage due to stagnation and premature withdrawal of pupils is inherent in the present system of Elementary Education and certain measures are suggested for remedying the defects. It is stated in the communique that the number of uneconomical, ineffective, and in many cases, superfluous Elementary schools is large. It refers to the fact that there are only 7,000 and odd complete Elementary schools with five standards against 8,000 and odd incomplete Elementary schools with standards 1—3. It is also stated in the communique that as many as 18,600 Elementary schools are working with only one teacher and that about 12,000 schools have less than 30 pupils on their rolls. The holding capacity or duration of school life is reported to be very low, the strength of the upper standards 4 and 5 being disproportionately small. The communique takes it for granted that wastage should be attributed to the incomplete nature of Elementary schools and to the existence of a large number of single teacher schools. The Government point out that the question they have to face is one of weeding out the uneconomical and ineffective schools so that it may be possible for them to encourage efficient schools. Several remedial measures which are expected to prevent the waste of public funds are suggested such as (1) the greater provision in the budget under teaching grants, (2) the improvement of the conditions of service of teachers in aided schools, (3) the revision of courses, and (4) 'considerable increase' of the inspecting staff. The policy adumbrated in the communique is put in a nutshell by His Excellency the Governor in

\*An article first contributed to the 'Hindu', Madras, December 1936.



his speech as follows: "Summarised briefly, that policy is to withdraw support to schools which are inefficient, incomplete, and uneconomical and at the same time to give increased support to schools which are up to the required standard. In order to see that the rules which have been framed are properly enforced, the inspecting staff will be considerably strengthened and hand in hand with these measures will go real endeavour to improve the conditions of service of Elementary teachers, which will immediately reflect in a rise in the pay of higher and secondary grade teachers in aided schools."

The press communique should be welcomed because this is the first time that a serious attempt is made to deal with the problem of Mass Education. Whether this communique should be regarded as a general policy regarding Elementary Education will be a matter for controversy. There is only one idea in the communique, namely wastage, and it is not to be wondered at that the members of the Council and many public men are impressed with the colossal waste of public funds. Let one think for a moment calmly and he will realise that "Wastage" is after all a symptom and should never be lifted to a major issue. The communique is therefore open to the serious objection that it is narrowly conceived and that it deals exclusively with only one aspect. There is the danger that it is likely to divert the attention of the public from the real problem, namely the expansion and improvement of Mass Education. There is not even one word mentioned about the expansion of Elementary education throughout the communique and it is natural that the public should form the impression that the real problem on which the Government should concentrate its attention is that of wastage in Elementary education. Is it necessary to assume that expansion or improvement in quantity as it used to be officially described should not go hand in hand with improvement in quality?

One can easily reconcile oneself to the situation if wastage be peculiar to our country or be a sudden unnatural phenomenon that cannot be brought under control. Mr. Frank Smith has pointed out in his book "History of Elementary Education in England" that the most serious difficulties with which the schools had to contend were irregular attendance and the early leaving age. In the Madras Quinquennial Report, 1911-12 — 1916-17, there is a distinct reference to the duration of school life and the following noteworthy observation is made:—"There is some controversy among experts as to the correct method of calculating the duration of school life, particularly in a country where compulsory education does not obtain. But there is unanimity in their conclusion that *it has a tendency to fall*. The latest calculations give in years for the last six years the following figures for the duration of school days in public Elementary schools for boys:—2.41, 2.36, 2.22, 2.19, 2.17 and 2.15. In Europe legislation has been necessary to prevent this premature withdrawal. In India legislation would be equally necessary. Without it we cannot eradicate the evil. We can only supply palliatives." The Com-

mission that conducted a survey of education in the Philippine Islands makes mention of wastage, but instead of adopting a panicky attitude, it suggests the improvement of the quality of teachers and the adoption of the modern methods of testing. Once the public get accustomed to think that expansion is neither necessary nor urgent, it will be an uphill work later on to introduce compulsion. It is clear that thousands of schools will have to be closed if the proposed amendments to the rules under the Madras Elementary Education Act be given effect to. Where will Madras be among the provinces of India in regard to Elementary education?

The communique is silent on the question of the provision of facilities for the education of the children who are now receiving instruction in thousands of incomplete or single teacher schools. The closure should be a matter of great concern to parents but it is surprising to see that the communique does not show any indication of the way in which the children now attending some school or other can continue to receive instruction. There runs through the whole communique a feverish desire to find money somehow by the manipulation of the existing system and it is not clear why encouragement of the efficient school should be always associated with the elimination of the incomplete or single teacher schools.

The third objection to the policy outlined in the communique is that the view entertained by the Government regarding the cause of wastage cannot be easily defended. One can show that the wastage is due not so much to the existence of incomplete schools or single teacher schools as to the short-sighted policy uniformly adopted by the Government all these years in regard to the financing of Elementary education. Efficiency, it should be remembered, is not possible unless one is prepared to spend the necessary amount at the right moment. It is stated in the communique a sum of 7 lakhs is needed to bridge the gap between the total of the assessed grant and the allotment in the budget if the *pro rata* cut in the teaching grant should be lifted. None can say that the rate of teaching grant is generous in this Province and what will be the consequence if even this small provision be not available year after year? Even now the communique promises to find only two lakhs out of the four lakhs and a half that will be required to meet the needs of aided schools and it is amusing that the elimination of inefficient schools should come to the rescue of the Government. The Administration Report for 1916-17 refers to the ephemeral, ill-staffed, ill-used and ill-equipped character of the teacher-manager schools and emphasises the need for the improvement of the pay and prospects of teachers. If that advice had been heeded, public funds would not have been wasted and the problem of wastage would not have become so serious. Who is to blame for the situation?

That the single teacher school is not the real cause of wastage is evident from the investigations carried on by an enthusiastic Educational Officer. His study shows that "the large *one-teacher-to-each-class*

*school* is as inefficient as the single-teacher-plural class' school. The average boy who leaves after a full course of 4th or 5th standard from the former is no more truly literate than the boy who finishes from the latter type." This experience is cited not with the object of holding a brief for single teacher schools. But it has a direct bearing on the great issue dealt with in the communique where it is assumed that the large number of single teacher schools is responsible for the wastage. If one should turn to administration reports, one will be surprised to find that out of nearly 15,000 teacher-manager schools about 5,000 schools alone are unable to earn grant owing to inefficiency, whereas nearly 5,000 are able to earn extra grant on the grounds of efficiency. But the statistics referred to in the communique and official reports in relation to stagnation give a different impression and certain points are inexplicable. For instance, the communique states that over 7,00,000 pupils do not choose to stay beyond the 1st standard, and comment is made on the general tendency for premature withdrawal. But in the next line it is found that as many as 5,00,000 over-aged pupils are reading or stagnating in the lower standards.

It is clear, therefore, that the wastage 'cannot be attributed to any one factor and that it can be avoided not by closing schools or refusing to aid incomplete schools but by improving the quality of teachers and applying compulsion and adopting such other measures, which will make the schools economical and efficient. Even in the proposed scheme, a good number of incomplete Elementary schools approved by the Educational Officer as feeder schools will exist and one fails to see how the pupils of such schools will of their own accord choose to attend the adjoining complete school. Time alone will show that wastage will not be avoided. The Champion Scheme proposed the abolition of a large number of smaller schools and the encouragement of a small number of large schools. The scheme met with a mixed reception but the communique seeks to secure the abolition of smaller schools through the amendment to the rules, while it discreetly leaves aside the allied question of consolidation which is not even mentioned. Is it because that consideration is more expensive?

Another serious objection to the position taken up by the Government in the communique is its disinclination to accept direct responsibility for Elementary education. Whenever the subject of teaching grant is discussed, it seems to be assuming that the teacher-manager or the private committee is in possession of inexhaustible resources which it is unwilling to utilise for education. Does the Government really hold the view that the teacher-manager is running the school for the love of it and that he considers it a great privilege to be given the opportunity to serve the public? Even among committees it is difficult to see many that are keen on the management of the school out of the compelling sense of public service quite irrespective of the aid. These managers are certainly anxious to do their best and the public should be grateful. But it is a



short sighted policy for the Government to expect the major burden to be borne by the manager. Any attempt at reducing or withholding grants will really amount to hampering the education of children and it is a pity that a cheese-paring policy has been adhered to in regard to its relation with the manager. Who will step in if the manager leaves the field?

The time seems to be inopportune for a considerable strengthening of the inspectorate. It cannot be said that the abuses in the existing system had not been brought to the notice of the Government by the inspecting officers. They are placed in a difficult and delicate situation and very often they are gently made to realise that they should deal tactfully with non-officials in power and position. It is not certain that the divisional inspectors and the proposed additional staff will ever be given an opportunity to study the many problems of Elementary education and to suggest suitable proposals for its improvement. The Central Advisory Board is considering the reorganisation of education and the question could be satisfactorily handled after receiving its report.

The public may not be slow to appreciate the financial difficulty which should necessarily preclude any rapid rate of progress in Elementary education. But it will not be inclined to take the press communique as anything in the nature of a comprehensive policy. It should very much like to have a clear programme of Elementary education. An estimate of the cost of efficient and good Elementary education which will be accessible to every child of school-going age should be given and the sources from which funds may be secured may have to be mentioned. If Ministers who have been at the helm of affairs for several years be not in a position to give any indication, it will be impossible for the Ministers under the new constitution to take any initiative and there will be great waste. One would have wished the communique to explain the attitude of the Government in regard to compulsion. The public will welcome a proposal for the introduction of compulsion, at least in certain districts so that it may be possible to proceed further in the light of the experience gained in them. While adverse criticism has been frequently levelled against District Educational Councils, nothing is said about them in the communique. Considering that they have not been able to take any initiative in this thing, it is a matter for consideration whether the idea of statutory school committees suggested in a previous amending bill cannot be revived so that Elementary schools may be freed from the disturbing influences of party politics. There is again that dual control in respect of schools under local bodies and much of the time of the inspecting officers and the Department is taken up with the correspondence relating to the irregularities and deviations from the rule. When the school-leaving certificate holders are easily available it should be the endeavour of the Department to attract Secondary trained teachers and thus to replace gradually the lower grade trained teachers. The Director of Public Instruction may have under contemplation proposals for the reorganisation of training schools and it is essential that ample facilities

should be afforded for teacher-in-service training. One would expect the communique to be more communicative.

While it is not my view that the problem of wastage should not be considered seriously, I hold that it is absolutely essential for the Government to formulate a general comprehensive policy indicating in broad outline the programme of expansion of sound Elementary education. Every child has a right to a free Elementary education which is in all civilised countries treated as the first charge on public revenues. The policy outlined in the communique is sure to affect the facilities for education in rural areas and the gulf between the rural and urban areas will become still wider. It will be no consolation to the inhabitants in the rural area to be told that what they may be losing may be a gain to other areas where schools will become very efficient. An argument of this kind will meet with stout opposition if it be mentioned in connection with any other sphere of public activity, such as public health and public works. If it be unwise to go headlong with compulsion, it is equally unwise to exaggerate the evil of wastage. Let there be no room for the complaint that this over-emphasis on the wastage is an attempt to evade the expenditure of additional funds of Elementary education. The speech of the Hon'ble Minister holds out some hope and it is hoped that the policy will be revised and made acceptable to the public. The Hon'ble Kumara Raja, Minister for Education, said, "The suggestions made by Sir A. P. Patro who had experience in policies connected with education, would receive the Government's best consideration. Regarding the consolidation and concentration of schools, the Government do not propose to adopt the proposals wholesale. They were only attempting to improve and encourage efficient schools and to some extent discourage inefficient schools, care being taken to induce the less efficient to rise to the required level of efficiency. While adopting that view, the Government did not want to restrict expansion and the opening of additional schools where required."

## REORGANISATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Reorganisation of Education has become imperative owing to the rapidly changing conditions of modern life all the world over. What is expected of school is not so much to make the pupil a store-house of information as to train him to use his intelligence. The Government of India has done well in calling upon local Governments and public bodies to face the situation and to suggest suitable remedies. They draw pointed attention to the following unsatisfactory features of our present system : (1) The ineffectiveness of elementary education to promote permanent literacy ; (2) the utter unsuitability of Secondary education to fit the pupil for his occupation or future career ; (3) the rush of students to the colleges though unable to profit by the literary course ; and (4) the unemployment among educated youth. The Central Government urges that while education should be considered as a whole with due regard to the interrelationship among the several grades, each grade should be regarded as being self-contained. It seems to be the idea of the Central Government that it should be a normal procedure for each pupil to proceed either to higher education or to be fit to enter life at the end of each stage.

With this end in view the Central Advisory Board of Education accepted in principle the scheme of the Board of Inter-Universities and this scheme has become the basis for discussion in all quarters. It contemplates the division of the education system into four sections, namely (1) Primary of 5 years. (2) Middle or Lower Secondary of 4 years ; (3) Higher Secondary of 3 years ; and (4) the University of 3 years. The primary stage is to promote permanent literacy while the secondary stage of 7 years is to prepare a pupil for the University or to fit him to take up a job. While the Inter-Universities conference have suggested that many pupils should at the end of the secondary stage be enabled to enter life or to join separate vocational institutions, the Central Advisory Board recommends that students who are not fit for a literary course should be required to join separate vocational schools at the end of IV form. At the same time, the Board cannot help facing the real facts and make the suggestion that alternative courses may be offered side by side in high schools if separate vocational institutions are not in existence. The points round which the reorganisation of Secondary Education, outlined in the Madras Government communique, centres are (1) the duration of seven years, the first four being common to all ; (2) a bifurcation at the end of IV form leading to the pre-university education or vocational lines and (3) an external public examination at the end of IV form to weed out the sheep from the goat. The dominant idea in the reorganisation is declared to be the diversion of a large number of pupils from the literary type for which they have no aptitude to courses that will fit them for some occupation. There will be no objection to such a procedure and the idea is certainly laudable. Much will depend upon how this diversion is proposed to be effected.



It is essential that the public should leave aside for the time being the rhetoric and platitudes in the documents and face the issues raised squarely. The first question is "should it be our object to attempt at a definite restriction in the number of students reading in secondary schools." In considering this question one should not forget the unique and strategic position the secondary system occupies in the national well-being. There is an unfounded impression that the number of secondary school pupils is unduly high and that something should be done to check the increasing number. For a population of 46 millions in our province there are only two hundred thousand pupils in secondary schools and this means that the secondary school population amounts to only half a per cent. It is out of this half a per cent that the University should get its quota and that various utility services, industries, public service, and public life should hope to get recruits. In advanced countries it is seen that the secondary school population amounts to nearly 15 per cent of the total population. The Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University has done a great service to the country by maintaining that there should be no attempt at restriction in any arbitrary manner of the facilities for higher education. It is a short-sighted policy if any one should have in view a restriction of the number of pupils in secondary schools either because of unemployment or of a spirit of class consciousness. Consolidation or concentration of secondary schools is another idea which tries to effectively reduce the number of pupils. One should think calmly of the serious consequences in the future if facilities for higher education be restricted in an arbitrary manner.

The second point that arises for special consideration is the suggestion of an external public examination at the end of IV form. The significance of this proposal becomes plain if restriction in number should be deliberately aimed at. Is the IV form stage the proper stage for weeding out the sheep from the goat? It will be a violent breach of all principles of educational theory and practice if the public examination be used at such a tender age to determine once for all the future of thousands of pupils. An external public examination is unreliable and it will be difficult to defend the idea of this examination on any ground other than it is expected to be convenient to put down numbers. Those who are interested in education would think it a calamity if thousands of pupils be subjected to a public examination which in view of the purpose it is expected to serve must necessarily be a common and uniform one.

How and when to effect diversion in the secondary stage is the next important question. The official proposal is to divert students at the end of IV form. It is unfortunate that no attempt is made to give any indication of the lines on which bifurcation can be attempted and the documents abound in vague generalities. In the resolution of the Madras Government, there is more anxiety to make things safe for the University while there is very little guidance to parents whose poverty is referred to in a fearless manner. What should be done with the existing framework of secondary schools is not explained anywhere. The documents seem to be

more anxious to weed out a large number of pupils under some pretext or other and under such circumstances diversion is doomed to failure. The suggestion of dual standards proposed by the Madras Government implies that a lower standard is enough for technical lines and thus emphasises the prevailing notion that a technical line is inferior. In view of these facts and also in view of the fact that technical schools take a long time to come into existence, diversion will exist in name. A large number of pupils will continue to be in the pre-university course or if prevented by the rigour of public examination the education they had for 4 years upto IV form will be a waste. Wastage in secondary education is no less serious than wastage in elementary education. It is essential that in the larger interests of the country diversion should be considered more carefully and it should not be attempted in a half-hearted manner.

The South India Teachers' Union has before it the results of the investigations of this problem of reorganisation of secondary education carried on by the Madras Teachers' Guild and the Coimbatore District Teachers' Guild. These were already published in these columns. These are coming up with a few alterations made by the working committee of the Union for discussion before the provincial educational conference. The scheme of the Union is to let the present duration of six years continue in view of the depressed economic condition of parents. The Middle School course is uniform for all pupils and mother-tongue is the first language. A public examination of any kind is considered undesirable at the end of this period since a wider diffusion of secondary education is necessary. But with a view to avoid waste and to fit pupils for life a bifurcation is suggested which will find place for alternative courses. The existing schools are permitted to offer these courses and thus the existing resources are utilised. Diversion is likely to be real and easy since all courses in the secondary schools are placed on the same footing, and all students are to get the same secondary school certificate. An important feature in the scheme is the difference in emphasis on the different subjects suited to the needs of the pupils though the load in the technical as well as the pre-university line is the same. Thus the student is free to make his own choice without running the risk of being considered a pupil of an inferior group. It is through a provision of well-balanced courses suited to the aptitudes and needs of pupils that diversion is attempted to be secured. It is the absence of such facilities that compels all and sundry to proceed to the University. The provision of such facilities means additional expenditure and the Union has no doubt that no reorganisation can be thought of if funds be not available. One other point in the Union scheme as against the official proposals is the distinct recognition of the objectives of secondary education. The subjects to be taught, the importance to be attached to subjects etc., will vary with the objectives. In the official documents, the question of occupation is mentioned frequently but little reference is made to education for citizenship. It is for this purpose that the Union is keen on making a maximum provision for liberal course throughout the

high school stage even for students on the technical line. On practical considerations and out of great anxiety to take a definite step the Union desires that the existing secondary schools should be utilised as far as possible and that through refresher and vacation courses qualified teachers with technical qualifications be made available. Reorganisation must mean a distinct change in outlook and a spirit of determination is essential. The teaching profession is anxious that the public men should not any longer indulge in meaningless statements that educational system is defective and that schools are no good. Here is the opportunity for public men to do their bit to place education on a sound basis.

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## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION: THE DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL

The Y.M.C.A. of Madras arranged some days back for a discussion on the District Educational Council. It appeared to some that such a discussion would be a *post mortem* business since the bill for the abolition of the District Educational Council had already been passed by the Madras Legislative Assembly. Ever since the *interim* Ministry recommended the abolition of this Council, a discussion had been going on in the press and on the platform for several months. The necessity for abolition was frequently pointed out by the Hon'ble Dr. Subbaroyan in his interviews and talks. It might be said that opinion was more or less evenly divided. But during the discussion on the amending bill for the abolition of the Council moved by the Hon'ble Sri C. J. Varkey, no serious attempt was made by the Opposition to present the case for retention. Fortunately the Government has not suggested a substitute and a general consideration of the topic of Educational Council may still serve some purpose by indicating to the authorities the points to be borne in mind in devising a new machinery.

The public should recall to itself the circumstances under which the creation of an *ad hoc* body like the Educational Council happened to be suggested. Before the Montford Reforms, the department was practically all in all in the sphere of Elementary Education. In addition to the control it exercised in regard to curriculum, it had the power to grant recognition and to disburse grants. The then Government felt that, in the coming years, the public would be showing great interest in Elementary Education and that it would be necessary to pay due regard to local needs in respect of expansion. Further, there were several agencies in the field such as taluk boards, municipalities, mission bodies, non-mission committees and teacher-managers; and the strain on the department was found to be great. The Government realised that it was necessary to introduce the principle of decentralisation and to relieve the department of some of its duties. Such a process of decentralisation would, it was thought, make it possible for the authorities to understand the local needs and to secure the co-operation of public men in regard to the expansion of Elementary Education. Another important consideration which weighed with the Government was the need for co-ordinating the efforts of all agencies in each district. The Government sought to gain these objects by creating District Educational Councils. This is clear from the following passage in the statement of objects and reasons appended to the Elementary Education Bill of 1920:—"Further, if universal Elementary Education is to be attained, the activities of the various agencies engaged in supplying it must be coordinated and directed. The Bill accordingly provides for the creation in each district of an Educational Council which will be an independent *ad hoc* body and not a statutory Committee of any existing local bodies."

A perusal of the proceedings of the Legislature when the Elementary Education Bill was under discussion is very interesting. The chapter relating to the District Educational Council took up considerable time. Among those who urged the deletion of this chapter or suggested radical alternatives were distinguished public men such as Hon'ble Mr. Venkata-pathi Raju, the Hon'ble Mr. B. V. Narasimha Iyer, the Hon'ble Mr. Narasimha Raju and the Hon'ble Mr. Madhava Raja. On the side of the Government were found equally distinguished men like the Hon'ble Mr. N. Subba Rao, the Hon'ble Mr. V. K. Ramanujachariar, the Hon'ble Mr. D. Devadoss, the Hon'ble Mr. Macphail and the Hon'ble Mr. T. Arumainatham Pillai. The opponents of the District Educational Council contended that there was a distrust of democratic local bodies, that the local bodies could be certainly trusted to carry out all the duties satisfactorily and that the official element was dominant in the proposed District Council owing to the presence of the Collector and inspecting officers in it. They also maintained that many of the duties assigned to the District Council were not so important as to require deliberation in the council and that duplication of bodies was unnecessary. The case for the District Educational Council was ably presented and His Excellency Lord Willingdon put the case in a nutshell when the Legislature was asked to record its vote. His Excellency stated that the matter was considered very carefully by experts and that the Council was deemed necessary to unify the whole of education in each district and to bring together all agencies engaged in education under one body in the district so that the educational system would be completely coordinated and united. His Excellency made the members realise that the District Educational Council formed the bed-rock-principle of the Bill. It is clear that the Government and many distinguished men set high hopes on the District Educational Council and the amendment of the opponents was thrown out by a large majority.

The District Educational Council constituted under the Elementary Education Act of 1920 consisted of (1) ex-officio members like the Collector, the President of the District Board and the District Educational Officer and (2) ordinary members. The local bodies had the privilege of sending a prescribed number of representatives and the Government reserved to itself the power to nominate representatives for varied interest and to call upon associations of managers to elect representatives. There was no provision for the representation of Teachers' Associations nor was the teaching profession regarded as having any interest to be safeguarded in the District Educational Council. This omission may, perhaps, be defended on the narrow view that the District Educational Council had nothing to do with the courses or curriculum. But the presence of the representatives of Teachers' Association will be necessary in a Council which has the duty of recognising schools and disbursing teaching grants to managers. In the absence of the representatives of the profession, the abuses to which reference is constantly made in administration reports will continue to persist. The duties of the District Educational Council were of

a varied nature. They were expected to maintain a register of Elementary Schools and a list of teachers, to tabulate information and prepare maps, and to make proposals for the supply of teachers. More important duties are (1) the preparation of schemes for the extension of elementary education in consultation with the authorities, (2) the recognition of schools, and (3) the distribution of grants to schools under private management from the funds placed at their disposal by the Government.

The Councils were in existence for eighteen years. Have they promoted the cause of education? Have they come up to the expectations of the Government? Have they succeeded in unifying the whole of education in the respective districts? Questions of this kind may naturally be asked to-day and the public should know the real position. That the Councils have not been a success is the view that prevails in many quarters. Many who have been connected with the working of the council feel that the councils have given a good account of themselves if one should bear in mind the scope of the different sections of the Act and the Rules framed thereunder by the Government. The impression which one can gain from the statements of our public men is that the councils have unfortunately proved a failure. No one can maintain that any one view is the correct view and it is likely that there may be a basis for each of these views. If we should avoid mistakes in the future, it is essential that we should examine the question from all aspects carefully and find out the defects.

The criticism against the District Educational Council centres round the three following points. (1) It was a fifth wheel of the coach. (2) It was inefficient. (3) It did not serve the purpose for which it was created. One finds it difficult to understand how an institution which was regarded as the bed rock principle of Elementary Education in 1920 by authorities and experts could be found to be a fifth wheel of the coach in 1939. Does it mean that decentralisation was a short-sighted measure? Is it seriously maintained that there is no need for any ad hoc body in connection with elementary education? We are told that the Government contemplate the creation of advisory boards in the place of councils. This is an admission of the soundness of the view that there is no escape from ad hoc bodies. To question the very need for an ad hoc body is quite different from suggesting changes in its constitution and duties. The speeches of our public men in this controversy are very confusing and it will be a pity if the idea of an ad hoc body be dropped altogether without going into the question carefully.

The charge of inefficiency of the District Educational Council should be examined with a sense of responsibility. We are told that due care was not taken in regard to recognition of schools. It is also stated that the distribution of grants was not satisfactory and that there is ground for believing that objectionable practices have become common. Did not the Government have ample powers then to check the abuses, if any? It is not necessary for the present purpose to examine the charges and to apportion the blame. Such charges used to be levelled and continue



to be levelled even against honest inspecting officers. As a matter of fact, the argument advanced just now against the abolition of Councils is that it will be undesirable to entrust the work of distribution of grants to departmental officers. It is to be regretted that statements are made in a light-hearted manner against hard-working officers of the department. The criticism of inefficiency due to corruption and patronage, if any, may be a good reason for a change in the administrative procedure but it can never rule out the need for an ad hoc body. Those who condemn the District Educational Council do not care to understand the serious handicaps. It was required to distribute grants to aided schools on the basis of the rules prescribed by the Government but the amount provided in the budget for distribution to aided schools was generally much less than what was needed according to the rules. Towards the end of every official year the District Educational Council had been compelled to make a pro-rata cut and to face the music year after year. We do not know whether the Councils had pointed out to Government the confusion and hardship caused by its eleventh hour announcement of a reduction in the allotment. They cannot be blamed if, under such circumstances, stagnation and wastage did not happen to engage their attention seriously.

Now for the neglect of duty in regard to the preparation of suitable schemes for the expansion of elementary education. It is unfortunate that few District Educational Councils prepared schemes. For any scheme to be prepared, the concerned body should enjoy the confidence and co-operation of the various agencies. The District Educational Council had no control over Local Bodies running schools from their own EDUCATION FUND. Owing to the cuts in grants, it was impossible for the Educational Councils to enlist the co-operation and sympathy of the aided agencies. In fairness to the Council, it should also be stated that the preparation of a scheme was expected to be done in consultation with the authorities. There is nothing to show that the Council did not take advantage of the facilities afforded by the authorities towards the preparation of schemes. That the preparation of a scheme is not a simple matter is shown by the fact that even the Government has not given any cut and dry scheme in their proposals for the reorganisation of education published in 1937. Some years back an attempt was made to give powers to the Government to send its own scheme to a District Educational Council and to compel it to adopt the same under certain contingencies. We do not know whether the Government had taken any such action. It is doubtful if any District Educational Council could have enthusiasm enough to push forward schemes when it was not in a position to give schools the grants due to them.

The abolition of the District Educational Council will be legally found necessary before any substitute is provided. It is hoped that the Government is not against an ad hoc agency in connection with elementary

education under existing conditions. The question of success or failure of the Educational Council in the past is not a matter of importance for the moment, and discussion on that point can serve no purpose. How far our experience of the working of the council may help us in devising a new machinery is the question.

Whatever judgment may be passed on the working of the council, it should be admitted that the council was seriously handicapped in two respects: (1) Financial resources and (2) the *personnel*.

The Council could not make its voice felt because it had no resources at all. Any ad hoc body that is called upon to undertake the duties mentioned in the Act should be in possession of the entire education fund. A pooling of all the resources is indispensable and some such proposal was suggested by Mr. Statham in 1925. His "School Committee" may be considered seriously, especially because the question of agency ought to engage the immediate and serious attention of the Government.

The question of *personnel* is a delicate one. It will be difficult to make an institution fool-proof but it should be possible to minimise the chances for patronage and corruption. In the planning of a machinery we should ask ourselves at every stage whether any point suggested for consideration is conducive to the interest of sound elementary education. To swear by catchwords or to exaggerate the mistakes very often leads to ineffectiveness and confusion. The history of the Elementary Education Act of 1920 shows how progress was hampered by mistaken emphasis on catchwords. For instance, the District Educational Council was regarded in 1920 as an officialised body and its creation was taken to involve a distrust of the *democratic* district boards. Now when the Councils are proposed to be abolished, the complaint is made by politicians that power is transferred from popular district educational Councils to departmental officers. While in 1920 our political leaders claimed that the entire field of Elementary Education should be left in the hands of popular local bodies, the Parliamentary Sub-Committee of the Congress party has along with other leaders suggested the transfer of control of the elementary schools under local bodies to the Government on grounds of efficiency. The word "corruption" is unfortunately everywhere in the air and leaders begin to lose their faith in representative institutions owing to the mistakes of the representatives. It may be that, in a developing democracy which has come suddenly into power, there may be lapses here and there. It will be sensationalism to unduly exaggerate the shortcomings. Let us turn to the bright side and see how some local bodies and councils have done good work. It is the personnel that matters. An ad hoc body that has to deal with education can have and should have no place for communal interests as such. It must, on the other hand, find a place for all interests directly associated with education either as an agency or as a teacher or as an educational association. The managing agency may be a municipality or a District Board or a mission body or a non-mission committee or a teacher-manager. The teachers' organisation of the district should have a

place to represent the view of the teaching profession and it is a mistake to suppose that the manager can represent the teaching profession. It will be good if each interest be called upon to suggest a panel of names from which the Government may be free to choose the prescribed number of representatives. While ensuring direct representation of the different interests, this scheme gives a wide field for choice to the Government and minimises the vagaries of elections. It is reported that in the ad hoc body proposed to be constituted by the Government, the members of the legislature may find a place. This proposal has to be examined carefully and in an impersonal manner. Members of the legislature are, in the first place, busy men and their hands are full. It is not possible for them to give such close attention to the work of ad hoc educational bodies as may be necessary. We cannot overlook the feeling that is gaining ground in political circles that the members of the legislature should not seek election to local bodies. There is one aspect which has to be considered in this connection by the Government and the public. Institutions depend for their success upon opportunities for frank and free expressions of views. Members of the legislature are men of influence. They represent the electorate, the sovereign body and they should always be free to review and discuss problems and policies in a detached manner. This will become impossible if members of the legislature should themselves be in the administrative ad hoc bodies. Either they will dominate these ad hoc bodies or the shortcomings of these bodies will not see the light of day. The local bodies consist of public men and their representatives in the ad hoc bodies will have ample scope for placing the view of the public and influencing the policy of the ad hoc body. A properly constituted ad hoc body with adequate financial resources can do a great deal by whatever name it may be called. In any event an efficient band of departmental officers who will not be easily influenced by petty local considerations but will give proper guidance is necessary to maintain high standards. Constant vigilance and timely help are expected from educational officers; They must, therefore, be men of status and grit and the Government will have to come to a decision with regard to the appointment of officers of such type.

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## THE CONGRESS MINISTER OF EDUCATION—WHAT THE PEOPLE EXPECT HIM TO DO

The recent elections will be an eye-opener to all of us for more than one reason. The idea of mass contact is not a mere conventional one and those who have witnessed the enthusiasm of the masses will not complain hereafter about lack of public sympathy or feeling. It is now for leaders to turn to good account this responsiveness of the masses. They should devote their attention to the consolidation of their gains so as to pave the way for further progress. A question which many persons are naturally inclined to ask one another is what the new Minister for Education will do and how he will set about his work. All eyes will be turning to him because the feeling is general that the backwardness of our Province is not a little due to the defects in our educational system. The present system may have served us fairly well but it is undeniable that it has to be overhauled if it should help our children to do to our Province what the children of other countries have been able to do for theirs. The problem is undoubtedly very difficult and intricate and no one will be justified in expecting the Minister to work miracles. But he can work wonders if he should have a clear idea of the objectives of education and formulate the policy of the Government after consulting the persons and bodies that are competent and willing to express an opinion on the subject.

### The Immediate Problem

The outstanding question which should engage his attention is the "Reorganisation of Education". This is the talk of the day and it is an encouraging sign that the Government of India has itself taken the initiative. The Central Advisory Board of Education which has been constituted by the Government of India has considered the problem as presented by the Universities' Conference and has chosen to invite the attention of the Local Governments and the public to the disquieting conditions in the present system of education. The points which all bodies have been urged to consider seriously are : 1. the ineffectiveness of elementary education and the appalling illiteracy ; 2. the inadequacy and unsuitability of the course in secondary schools ; 3. the congestion in colleges due to the presence of an increasingly large number of pupils who are not in a position to profit by the instruction ; and 4. the unemployment of a large number of young men. Each of these four questions is a serious problem in itself and it is unfortunate that we have to face all of them together at the same time.

### Elementary Education

It is well known that the percentage of literacy is low in our Province, while conditions are distinctly better in the adjoining States of Cochin and Travancore. We are frequently told that no progress in

elementary education can be expected so long as the public do not evince any enthusiasm. Official reports refer to the colossal wastage and suggest measures which are necessary to reduce it and to ensure permanent literacy. The Minister for Education should begin to view the problem of elementary education as a whole and appreciate the inter-relationship among the different factors. A ten-year programme of universal, free and compulsory elementary education should be drawn up so that the public may know what is proposed to be done. The Director may be requested to come forward with proposals which will not attempt to deal piecemeal with the problem. He will be expected to indicate the steps to be adopted which will ere long result in the expansion and improvement of elementary education.

### Secondary Education

The Minister for Education should understand the strategic position that secondary education occupies with regard to national well-being. He should use his influence to dispel the erroneous notion that one grade of education should be mutilated to make improvements in another grade possible. Another wrong impression in high quarters is that there are too many pupils proceeding to secondary schools and that a weeding out process has become necessary. There is a real need for a still wider diffusion of secondary education. The wide range of variation among pupils in aptitude and skill makes the secondary school population heterogeneous. It is essential that secondary education should no longer be of the traditional literary type which takes no note of individual differences and which gives undue predominance to preparation for the University. The Government of India endorsed the views of the Central Advisory Board and feel strongly that a sound and diversified scheme of courses should be attempted at the secondary stage to divert pupils to lines which will give them ample scope for being trained for definite vocations. While considering the several proposals for the reform of secondary education, the Minister for Education should pause for a moment to consider whether a scheme of reorganization should necessarily and deliberately aim at restricting definitely the facilities for higher education. He should invite the training colleges through the Director of Public Instruction to suggest measurement tests which will give reliable objective data and help the authorities to give proper guidance to pupils.

### Congestion in Colleges

A reform of secondary education which directly aims at diverting students to suitable technical courses for which provision is proposed to be made, should relieve congestion in colleges and students who may be admitted to the University will certainly be in a position to take advantage of the facilities afforded by the University. A formal entrance examination may be conducted by the University if it should desire to satisfy itself that the entrants have reached the University standards. It should be our object to try to determine what line is suitable for a pupil. A restriction of numbers in an arbitrary manner has made it impossible for a number of

deserving students to get admission in Engineering, Medical and Agricultural Colleges and all of them are compelled to continue their education in Arts Colleges. While they are anxious to follow their inclinations for a technical line, they are shocked to find the doors of professional colleges closed against them. These are the students who are the hope of the nation which means to have a large programme of industrial and agricultural expansion. The Minister for Education should see that no student possessing the prescribed qualifications is denied opportunities for advanced study by reason of caste or district or religion. The High Commissioner for India has been pointing out year after year that there is unnecessary crowding at the foreign Universities and that adequate provision should be made in India itself.

### Unemployment

The Minister of Education may not be directly concerned with the adoption of measures which will immediately relieve the grave situation due to unemployment. He will certainly co-operate with the Minister for Development in any scheme of relief. But a permanent solution for unemployment should be found and the country can be considered safe for further rapid progress only when the educational system has been re-organized so as to fulfil the three-fold objects of education, namely education for citizenship, for a vocation and for personality.

The Minister for Education who is certainly a shrewd politician will perceive that his attempt at reorganization of education can never be an arm-chair business. He will have to take into account the several factors relating to it and apparently coming into conflict with one another. The more important are ; 1. Finance ; 2. Departmental Personnel ; 3. Management ; 4. Teaching Personnel and 5. the Public.

### Finance

At bottom educational progress depends on finance. In the words of Mr. Bolton King, "Finance comes up importunate on every question of education, and never more so than at the present moment." In past years many branches of educational activity have been starved. Administration reports mention freely that the salaries of teachers are miserably low and that equipment is poor ; but nothing has been done to revise the Grant-in-aid Code so as to place an adequate amount at the disposal of the Department. The Local Government admit the need for the revision of the Grant-in-aid Code and Mr. Statham made a pointed reference in his special report on secondary education to the urgency of doing something to enable the aided schools to build up a reserve. There is the usual plea of financial stringency, though our Province has been enjoying the reputation of being a surplus province. The present generation has to suffer for the stinginess and lack of foresight of those responsible for shaping the policy in the past. Additional funds are needed to cope with the several new but legitimate demands for equipment, buildings, staff, play-grounds, medical inspection, radio, visual education and so on. There is also the important movement for nursery schools to look after the pre-school child



The institutes for the backward and defective children also deserve great encouragement. It is very unfortunate that no attention has been paid to the improvement of the school libraries. There is also the supply of milk or midday meal to poor children in elementary schools, and a demand for maintenance allowance may be made by poor parents if compulsion be introduced. The financing of education should be considered from a new angle with due regard to the various legitimate demands, and though it may not be possible to find the resources all at once, the Cabinet will have to arrive at a satisfactory solution and decide upon a convenient formula of allocation so that no branch will be starved and rural areas will have scope for development.

### **Departmental Personnel**

The Director of Public Instruction should be more properly designated Director of Public Education and it will be good to give effect to the suggestion of the Calcutta University Commission that the Director should be also Secretary to the Government. The Minister can then come into intimate contact with the head of the Department and acquaint him with the nature of the measures he is intending to adopt for the progress of the country. Without meaning any disparagement to the existing incumbents, it may be mentioned as the general feeling of the people that District Educational Officers should be of an altogether different type. They have neither experience nor scholarship and lack the push and the driving spirit so necessary for enabling schools to maintain their efficiency. Nor are they in a position to do very much to help institutions which appear to them to be doing splendid work. They are also human beings and they lose their enthusiasm for work when their remarks in the inspection report regarding low salaries, lack of playgrounds and insanitary surroundings have no appreciable effect either on the authorities or on the management. Further, the Minister for Education will be well advised to follow in respect of recruitment the wholesome principle adopted in the judicial department, namely the recruitment to the inspectorate of a certain percentage of competent practising teachers who have a good record of work behind them. This principle will, apart from introducing fresh blood to the inspectorate, hold out a promising career which will be a real incentive to teachers in non-Government schools.

### **Management**

The role which the private management has been playing in the sphere of education is very remarkable. The policy of State-aided education has borne fruit in this Province and the expenditure from public funds will be far more considerable if the Government does not have the willing and ready co-operation of the private management. Next in importance to private managements are the District Boards and Municipalities which receive subsidies from the Government. Considering the limited resources at the disposal of the Government for education and considering the numerous demands upon their purse, it is essential that the Minister should

adhere both as a matter of policy and necessity to the time-honoured principle of State-aid. *But the policy of State-aid does not and should not mean that the responsibility for education is not the immediate concern of the Government.* It is good that this wholesome principle is clearly understood so that there may be no misunderstanding between the Government and the management. The management is anxious to associate itself with the Government in the nation-building work in a whole-hearted manner, and it is by no means unwilling to collect funds and make a financial contribution. This help is really a saving to the Government, but the Government should not continue to hold the view that the maintenance of aided schools in an efficient condition is primarily and exclusively the look-out of the management. *It is this attitude that has crippled the aided institutions and given room to several serious objectionable practices.* It is no doubt necessary for the Government to take the utmost care as the custodian of public funds while making grants to institutions, but in the case of institutions of established reputation which are admitted to be doing efficient work it will be unwise to point to the yard-stick of the illiberal Grant-in-Aid Code. The Grant-in-aid Code is admitted to be illiberal and a good deal of confusion and disappointment prevails in the actual application of the provisions of the Code. The management should know definitely in advance what it can expect by way of grant and should also have the confidence that it can count upon generous help in case it sees fit to adopt certain measures of reform with the approval of the Government. It may be necessary at this stage to reiterate that service in an aided school is a national service as was pointed out by the Right Hon'ble H. A. L. Fisher. There are certain implications of this State-aided policy which it is necessary for the Government and management to bear in mind if the present anarchy in school administration should be ended. With some honourable exceptions the conditions of service of teachers in aided elementary and secondary schools are very unsatisfactory. A deputation of the Union placed the facts before the Director Public Instruction and yet nothing has been done. The Minister for Education should adopt immediately steps to ensure security of tenure of service. Till recently teachers in Board Schools and Municipalities were getting fairly decent salaries and also considering their interests to be safe. The existence of factions and the play of political and communal feelings has given a rude shock. The revised standardised scales have damped the enthusiasm of a large number of teachers and the Government orders (issued later) are not strictly followed in all Local Bodies.

### Teaching Personnel

It is not enough for the teacher to be paid a reasonable salary and to be protected against the vagaries of the management. The Calcutta University Commission took care to point out the importance of a well-informed and independent educational opinion. The teaching profession composed of "yes" teachers is a great danger to society and the Minister can hope for no improvement so long as the teaching profession feels it has



and can have no place in the educational system. It is not in the public interest that teachers should either be indifferent or smart under the feeling that they are hewers of wood and drawers of water. Let the South India Teachers' Union with its record of good work to its credit be officially recognized. The presence of its representatives in the Legislative Council may be advantageous in several respects and it will be good statesmanship if His Excellency the Governor be pleased to nominate two representatives of the Union to the Upper House.

### Public Opinion

In regard to every question excuse is usually offered that the parents and the public show no interest in the school. Now that mass contact is established, it is necessary for the Minister to appoint a publicity board consisting of officials and non-officials and to entrust it with the task of preparing leaflets in the South Indian languages for distribution to the public. These leaflets should contain an account of the several steps adopted or intended to be adopted by the Government regarding education and other branches of social service.

### Conclusion

To sum up the work before the Minister: He has to throw himself heart and soul into the work of reorganization of education. He has to take a comprehensive view of the whole situation and to see that the different aspects do not come into conflict with one another. His chief aim should be to formulate in the first place a programme of universal elementary education and to build up a separate fund for that purpose. He has to reform secondary education on such lines as will enable secondary schools to serve not only as preparatory institutions of the University but as institutions fitting pupils for different walks of life. It is equally necessary to see that the facilities for professional training in technological colleges should be improved so that the future needs of the country may be met. Thirdly, a reconsideration of the financing of education is essential since no reform can be thought of unless additional funds are made available. The success of the educational system depends upon the efficiency of the inspectorate, recruitment to which should be made partly from the practising teachers of approved service. The Government should take the management into their confidence and while liberal aid should be offered in no grudging manner, it should enact service regulations to prevent abuses, to ensure security of tenure and to build up a body of teachers animated by professional spirit and loyalty. Side by side with the improvement in the conditions of service, it should be made possible for teachers to take their legitimate place in boards, committees and legislatures and offer their expert opinion as representatives of the South India Teachers' Union.

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## EDUCATION 1895-1945

The Golden Jubilee of the Madras Teachers' Guild is an appropriate occasion for a general review of the progress of education in our province. The present system of education is primarily the outcome of Wood's education despatch of 1854 wherein the advantage of the state-aided policy in education is clearly pointed. While this policy still continues to be in force, the Government have deemed it necessary to run some institutions themselves and to allow local bodies to start and maintain schools. One may be curious to know what changes have taken place in the sphere of education during this period of one hundred years. There have been indeed noteworthy changes. Just think of the increase in the number of institutions, scholars and teachers! There is a change in the nomenclature of courses and administrative posts. There is some progress in respect of the education of women and backward classes. People do not, however, seem to be impressed with these changes. A feeling of dissatisfaction with the system of education prevails everywhere. That this feeling is justifiable should be obvious from the following observation in the report on Post-war Educational development in India issued by the Central Advisory Board: "Apart from the extremely slow progress which had been made before the war, the present system does not provide the foundations on which an effective structure can be erected; in fact, much of the present rambling edifice will have to be scraped in order that something better may be substituted." The Russia of 1945 is altogether different from the Russia of 1913, and the progress of education in Russia is considered remarkable. Even in England which is rather conservative in matters educational, the State has been evincing direct interest in education; and committee after committee has been studying the several aspects of education and urging the necessity for the adoption of suitable reforms. The recently enacted Butler Education Act marks a silent revolution in education and the willingness of the State to do its utmost is emphasised. We in India have been talking about reforms but have not chosen to make any move. Why is there this stagnation in the system of education which has not been keeping pace with the times? I shall examine the causes of this stagnation in the first place and then deal with the change in elementary and secondary education.

The stagnation in education can be traced to the disinclination on the part of the Government to admit its responsibility for public education. There are some inherent defects in the state-aided policy of education which have stood in the way of educational progress. The state-aided policy makes an admission that the State with its limited resources cannot hope to undertake the expansion of education. How can a work which the State itself does not feel competent to undertake, be successfully carried on by private bodies and individuals? This state-aided policy can have a

chance of success if the community be resourceful and also willing to bear the burden. As a matter of fact, successive administration reports refer to the poverty of managers of schools and their inability to pay teachers and provide equipment. With the introduction of new educational methods and laboratory work which have become necessary in modern times, expenditure is mounting up and the attitude of the Government in regard to grant-in-aid is unhelpful. Far from taking the initiative in regard to any line of improvement and assuring liberal help to aided schools, the Government has been taking a pedantic view of the term "grant-in-aid" and adhering to the pie for the pie aspect of the Grant-in-aid Code irrespective of the special circumstances to be faced by good institutions. We are constantly told that the Government cannot be expected to take any initiative in view of the Grant-in-aid Code. Nor does it choose to interfere even when the situation is unsatisfactory. Managers have begun to realise the serious implications of the state-aided policy in dealing with the dearness allowance question. Teachers in aided schools are perhaps the only class of employees who are yet to get dearness allowance at Government rates. Their representations have not evoked a prompt and favourable response from the Government even though this expenditure should be treated as an emergency expenditure. The managers plead lack of funds and hesitate to raise the fee-rate which is already higher than the standard rate. While the granting of dearness allowance is made obligatory on local bodies, teachers are unable to understand why a different attitude should be adopted towards private managements. The state-aided policy as it is interpreted today is absolving the State of responsibility for public education. But experience all over the world points to the desirability and necessity for the State to admit its responsibility. The stagnation in education is undoubtedly due to the defects of state-aided policy and teachers are definitely of the view that progress in education is impossible unless the State admits its responsibility and revises its policy suitably. It will be worthwhile to see what progress has been made in elementary and secondary education under the existing policy of aids and subsidies.

That the percentage of literacy is as low as 15 is enough to show that progress in elementary education is not satisfactory. The Government of India itself tells that elementary education is ineffective and that there is appreciable lapse into illiteracy. The educational drive that was attempted for some years in our province would have been more successful if the department had more funds at its disposal. How can a drive prove fruitful and real if you attempt to enforce anomalous rules and adopt pro rata cuts in grants? Compulsion is yet to become universal and the conditions of service of teachers are unsatisfactory. Closure of schools on the ground that the required number of girls and depressed class pupils were not attending caused a good deal of confusion. An earnest attempt was made to define the scope of higher elementary schools. But the action of the department was not properly understood and the



tendency to treat higher elementary schools as cheap secondary schools is still noticeable among the managers. The Wardha Scheme which has been admitted to be sound is yet to be officially tried. It is a pity that training schools were not reorganised on the lines required for basic education. Nothing is gained by harping on the difficulties in regard to the expansion of elementary education. It is understood that the Madras Government has got a scheme of compulsory elementary education and it will be good if the scheme be based on the essential features of the Sargent Scheme. The Madras Teachers' Guild has taken a keen interest in the study of educational questions and it will be able to make a useful contribution if the Government should send a copy of its report and programme to the Guild and secure its co-operation.

As regards secondary education, the opinion of the Government of India that it is stereotyped, literary and unrelated to life will not be questioned. The slaughter of the innocents which was a constant feature of the matriculation examination was prevented by the introduction of the S. S. L. C. This scheme which is based on sound principles require for its success, competent headmasters, efficient and scholarly educational officers and enthusiastic teachers. The scheme unfortunately did not meet with a favourable reception and the plea for the transfer of B group subjects to the list of examination subjects was frequently urged. While the framers of the scheme hoped that more subjects would be taken away from the S.S.L.C. examination test, the tendency has been to make the S. S. L. C. revert to the old matriculation examination. There were frequent attempts at changes in the number of optional subjects to be offered for the examination and the percentage of marks. Only one optional subject is now offered by students and the science subjects have become popular owing to the facilities for laboratory work. The Government of India expressed the view that secondary education should not be exclusively literary and that diversified courses should be offered so as to enable students desiring to enter life on leaving schools to become qualified. All over the world a change of this nature is deemed necessary and the local Governments were called upon to consider the question. The Madras Teachers' Guild and the South India Teachers' Union paid special attention to the reorganisation of secondary education and formulated a scheme. Publicity on a large scale was undertaken and the educational conference approved of the general principles. The Government of Madras published a reorganisation scheme, but it suggested a public examination in the third form stage and expressed the view that students securing a lower percentage of marks should be diverted to vocational courses. The Guild was opposed to the public examination and was also of the view that vocational courses and literary courses should be of the same status. No action was taken in respect of reorganisation even though a conference was convened at the instance of the Congress minister to discuss the reorganisation of secondary education. An attempt was made to introduce secretarial courses under the general scheme of technical courses. The



Guild, however, was feeling that liberal financial help should be forthcoming and that a number of real technical courses should also be introduced. The public have till recently been slow to realise the value of diversified courses. Even under the S.S.L.C. scheme a number of subjects like agriculture could be taught. If schools should prefer to stick to the traditional type, it is due to their inability to introduce technical courses. The Sargent scheme contains recommendations which members of the Guild may be glad to support. The press and the platform now feel that a good case has been made out for diversified courses in secondary education and that there is no antipathy between vocational and cultural education. The question is how soon the reforms will be introduced.

A review of these fifty years of education makes it clear that the stagnation in education is due to the tendency for drift. What is needed today is a planned system of education. The state-aided policy which at the time of formulation appeared sound was given a narrow interpretation in course of time and the step-motherly treatment given to aided schools resulted in a denial of opportunities to teachers and pupils. Schools under local bodies which were at one time in a favourable position are now passing through difficult times partly on account of lack of funds and partly on account of party politics. We should not be thinking of the past but shall look forward to the future. The post-war education programme is a call to teachers and leaders. Success of the post-war education programme depends upon undivided responsibility and adequate funds. Teachers will be failing in their duty if they do not make it known to the authorities that their experience with local bodies and private managements has not been happy and that the State should take upon itself the control and maintenance of all schools at least during the planning period. The observation in the British White Paper that "Upon the education of the people of this country, the fate of this country depends", is thousand times more applicable to our country and the authorities, leaders, parents and teachers will each of them do well to keep this in mind.

—*From the Golden Jubilee Souvenir of The Madras Teachers' Guild, Nov. 1945.*

## POST-WAR EDUCATION AND MADRAS RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations of the Central Advisory Board have been before the public and are being considered by the several Local Governments. The Central Advisory Board is to meet by the end of this month to consider the replies of the Local Governments. No one can say how the Central Advisory Board will view the proposals of the Madras Committee. The proposals of the Madras Committee which have been recently published seem to have been prepared in splendid isolation and quite independently of the scheme of the Central Advisory Board. The South India Teachers' Union has expressed its view in regard to the general points in the Madras Committee proposals that they are vague, disappointing and unsatisfactory.

While considering any proposals for post-war education, one will do well to have a clear idea of the background. In a period of 25 years after the last world war, England appointed two special Committees (Hadow Committee; Spens Committee) for careful study of the vital problems of education. Right in the midst of war very recently it has placed on the Statute Book the Butler's Education Act which is to give to the English youth the type of education enabling him to realise his responsibilities as a citizen in the empire. The spirit in which this Act was placed in the Statute Book is clearly indicated in the significant observation in the White Paper. "upon the education of the people of this country, the fate of this country depends". Other countries have also been overhauling the system of education so that they may be able to maintain their position among the civilised countries of the world. The Central Advisory Board of the Government of India which consists of distinguished men of experience deemed it its duty to take into consideration the post-war educational needs of India. Several Committees were studying several aspects and finally a comprehensive report on the post-war education of India was issued in 1943. The proposals of the Committee are being discussed in Educational Conferences and on public platforms and it can be said that a good measure of support has been accorded to the general principle of the scheme. The Central Advisory Board approaches the problem of post-war education in the proper spirit. It regrets that what should have been done in the past was left undone. It feels that India in the post-war period should be in a position to take her legitimate place among the civilised countries of the world. It therefore realises that a comprehensive national scheme of education should be prepared and worked out without delay. In placing its scheme before the public it makes it clear that the proposals in the scheme are fairly definite and that nobody can say hereafter that there is no practical scheme for consideration and adoption. The Committee wants us to know that any delay in the carrying out of the scheme as

outlined by the Board will mean that India will not be able to take her place or to maintain her position. The scheme leaves no one in doubt with regard to the objective of national education. The pupils leaving schools and colleges are expected to become able-bodied, healthy, independent, cultured, self-reliant and co-operating citizens. The Committee suggests a framework of national education comprising a basic education of 8 years for school-going pupils, between 6 and 14, a high school education of 6 years with ample provision for free places, a collegiate education of three years for an ordinary degree, and last by technological colleges and polytechnics for different grades and types of industrial education. The Committee feels that the present deplorable position is due to a kind of notion in high circles that education is not a service of any public importance, and hence it emphasises that special attention should be devoted to important essential improvements. It is definitely for a marked improvement in the qualifications of teachers and in the conditions of service of teachers in schools and therefore suggests minimum scales of salaries in addition to allowances for special duties and special areas. It also gives detailed proposals for the starting of training colleges and schools to supply the large number of trained teachers. It is distinctly of the view that the financial responsibility should in a very large measure be borne by the State and that there should be a drastic reconsideration of the present method of paying for education and for redistribution of the burden between the Central and provincial Governments.

The proposals of the Madras Reconstruction Committee appear to cover the whole ground of education but make no mention of the recommendations of the Advisory Board. Those who are familiar with the views of the late Sir R. M. Statham, the Director of Public Instruction, who had done such good work in the cause of education in this presidency, will easily see that the proposals of the Madras Committee are no more than a continuation of the existing practice and system with a small change here and a small change there. No reasons are given as to why the Madras Committee should take no serious note of certain very important recommendations of the Central Advisory Board. It would be convenient if we study side by side the chief points in the schemes of the Central Advisory Board and the Madras Reconstruction Committee. The Central Advisory Board is definitely in favour of a universal free compulsory basic or elementary education for all children between 6 and 14 while the Madras scheme would prefer restricting compulsion up to the 5th standard and to think of introducing compulsion later on standard by standard. The Central Board has pointed out the limitations of a restricted scheme of compulsory education and recommends a full period of 8 years since the objective of the basic education is to enable the pupils in basic schools to take their place as citizens and workers in the community. Unfortunately the Madras scheme takes a narrow view and seems to be content with mere literacy. The Central Board is in favour of a definite programme of adult education while the Madras Committee seems to feel



that the situation can be met by encouraging existing institutions. The Central Advisory Board pays special attention to the provision of technical education to suit different pupils and makes the interesting suggestion that certain technical colleges and polytechnics which have to cater to the needs of students from different provinces and to work in close association with factories and workshops, should be on an All-India basis. The Madras report deals perfunctorily with the provisions for technical education. The uplift of teachers and improvement in the conditions of service receive better attention in the scheme of the Central Advisory Board. Really the Board is inclined to recruit to the teaching profession persons of a distinctly better type. The Madras Committee is recommending a distinctly lower scale of salary which will fail to recruit the right type of teachers. Apart from the recruitment of teachers and conditions of service, the Madras scheme is distinctly for continuing the existing agency. It knows full well that the local bodies and private managements have been tried for a sufficiently long time and cannot be relied upon to play their part effectively in a planned post-war education. The view of the Madras Committee that the Government may start institutions when other agencies fail to appear on the scene, makes it clear that expansion and progress of education in any direction will be impossible. This question of managing agency has not received due attention even of the Central Advisory Board and the S. I. T. U. feels very strongly after bitter experience of education in South India that a proper solution of the managing agency should precede the working of a planned educational programme. So long as the responsibility is divided, the Government and the Department may always find an excuse for slow progress. It will be good if at least in the period of planning, the State should administer and run the institutions. The Madras Committee has lip sympathy for a number of things like technical education, women's education, physical education etc. but the provision that is to be made by the Government is left very vague. If the existing resourceless agency should continue to function, there will be very little scope for any substantial help or improvement. The Madras Committee seems to pay an exaggerated importance to the facilities for the backward classes, returned soldiers, while the Central Advisory Board has as its central theme provision for liberal help to all talented poor pupils.

Certain simple tests may be conveniently applied to find out whether any post-war education scheme deserves to be seriously considered in the interests of the country. Any post war education scheme which is being urged for adoption should stand for (a) the education of the whole nation boys and girls, rich and poor, forward and backward, normal and abnormal, children and adults. (b) education of the whole man; (c) equality of opportunity in a wide and liberal sense so that every pupil may be enabled to get the type of education from which he can derive adequate benefit; (d) efficient, well-equipped, and properly trained teaching profession which should be able to realise its responsibilities. Judged by these standards, the Madras scheme must be deemed to be very disappointing. It is

unfortunate that Madras which is very favourably situated as against other provinces in regard to the supply of trained teachers and earnestness of parents to give educational opportunities to their children should formulate proposals which will be considered retrograde even in 1935. Madras must have an opportunity to move with other provinces. Given necessary help and finances, Madras can go ahead. The Madras Committee has not unfortunately clearly understood the needs of the province in the post-war period. It has approached the problem in a narrow manner without taking into consideration the great changes going on all over the world. What is needed is a thorough overhauling of the educational system. The proposals of the Madras Committee represent mere patchwork. The suggestion that extra taxation may be imposed and that the medical inspection cost be met by the pupil and the management show clearly that the Madras Committee is unable to take a comprehensive view of the modern problem. Is not this suggestion amazing when the Government of India has not even announced its decision regarding the financing of the postwar education scheme? Will it not be better for the Madras Government to indicate what is needed for the successful working of the scheme of the Central Advisory Board?

It seems to me that the post-war education should be viewed as an all India problem by the Central Government and a general programme should be suggested by the Central Body; and the provincial Governments may be left to adopt such steps as may be necessary to work out the programme in a manner suited to the respective localities. So far as the Madras province is concerned, the outstanding problem is the managing agency. It does not mean that local bodies and private managements have not done good work. The local bodies have been severely condemned officially. As for aided schools and colleges the war has brought into prominent relief the serious defects in the state-aided policy of education. Whether Dearness allowance should be given or not to teachers in aided schools is yet under discussion, while this allowance is being paid even at enhanced rates to teachers in Government schools and in schools under local bodies. Till now there was no plan, and progress in education was lamentably slow. Aided schools do not have the resources needed to pay decent salaries to teachers, to equip schools properly and to secure adequate playing fields for pupils. Hence it is necessary that the recommendations of the Madras Committee that Government may step in when other agencies fail should be reconsidered. The proper solution will be for the Government to take the initiative and run and administer schools while it may permit managers with resources to run schools on conditions laid down by the Government with regard to the salaries of teachers and so on. Everything depends upon how the Government of India views this problem. Unless the Government of India lays down certain broad principles of policy and gives financial help, it is not possible for any post-war scheme as outlined in the Central Advisory Board to bear any fruit. We hope that the Central Advisory Board will impress upon the Government of India the necessity for an all-India approach to the problem and for necessary financial help.



## EDUCATION AND THE MADRAS CABINET DECISION\*

People are aware of the serious discontent among teachers in non-Government schools owing to the unsatisfactory conditions of service in schools and the indifference of the Government to do the right thing at the right moment. The Director of Public Instruction and the inspecting officers who have frequently to deal with teachers are convinced of the justness of their demands for improvement in their status and salaries. There is, however, no change in the indifferent attitude of the Ministry and the increasing discontent and distrust create a feeling of tension prejudicial to sound and efficient work in schools.

Earnest appeals were made to the Government on behalf of teachers by the South India Teachers' Union and the Press for the adoption of suitable measures. There were assurances from responsible men including the Minister for Education, and teachers were told that the question would be examined by the Cabinet Committee and a solution would be found. The Executive of the Union thought it proper to wait and see and chose to exercise its wholesome influence on the thousands of its members throughout the Province. During my tour in Coimbatore district, I was constantly heckled by teachers and called upon to indicate what line of effective action the Union would suggest if the Minister should fail to rise to the occasion. Rightly or wrongly there was a general feeling that the authorities would not be inclined to give due and proper consideration to the needs of teachers and that no worthwhile improvement could be expected in the service conditions.

The Report of the Cabinet Committee is now before us and the fears of teachers seem to be well-founded. The Government may perhaps take credit to itself that it has succeeded in adopting a consistently illiberal policy in regard to education. But any one who is sincerely interested in education will be as sorry for the Government as for the large number of teachers in non-Government schools. To use the oftquoted expression with which the ministerial party should be familiar, the recommendations relating to teachers in schools under local bodies and private managements are disappointing, inadequate and unsatisfactory.

The South India Teachers' Union has time and again been pressing upon the attention of the Government the following important measures for the improvement of education: 1. Uniform scales of salaries for the different categories of teachers irrespective of the management under which they happen to work; 2. Parity of conditions of service; 3. Adequate provision for old age through provident fund and compulsory insurance; 4. Security of tenure of service; 5. Recruitment of teachers of approved service to the inspectorate and 6. Representation of teachers

\* With Acknowledgment to the Swatantra, December 1946.



in official boards and committees dealing with educational questions. It may appear strange to teachers outside India that we should still be agitating for these elementary needs in 1947. The Department and the Minister have no doubt begun to move with regard to some of the items but the movement is clumsy and slow.

Along with the large body of the non-gazetted services, the teachers in schools under local bodies and private managements have received with mixed feeling the Report of the Cabinet Committee. It may be said in general that the Committee has been profuse in platitudes and high sounding sentiments while the substance is negligible. Pious sentiments cannot be a substitute for material improvement and education has not received the support it deserves. History has repeated itself and the real sufferers are the lakhs of school-going children whose welfare is supposed to be uppermost in the minds of the ministers. The recommendations of the Committee regarding the salaries of teachers of different grades in schools under Government, local bodies and the private managements should by now be familiar to all.

In the first place the most objectionable feature of the recommendations of the Committee is the utter disregard of the demand of the Union that the scales of salary for teachers of similar grades should be uniform in all schools whether under Government or other management. For years we have been protesting against inequality but the Committee sees no harm in perpetuating this invidious distinction. This is not in accord with the following sentiment expressed elsewhere in the Report, "For raising the standard of efficiency of the municipal and local board services, the Committee suggested that in future only persons who possessed the qualifications and came up to the standard which Government would fix for their own services should be selected for the municipal and local board services and that the scale of pay to be allowed to such servants should be the same as that fixed for Government servants of the similar class". The extension and application of this principle in respect of all nation-building services are what one may expect from a Ministry which is keen on removing the anomalies. Considering that similar qualifications are demanded in regard to a particular category of teacher in all schools regardless of the agency, is it not reasonable and just that the scale of salary should be uniform? It is difficult to think of a different principle since the education of children in every school should be a matter of equal concern to the Ministry.

This distinction in salary is indefensible especially when the same standard of work is expected in all cases. The scales prescribed for teachers in Government schools, though not generous, are certainly better than those prescribed for schools under local bodies. As for aided secondary schools, the Committee is content with merely recommending the scales prescribed for schools under local bodies but leaves the adoption of the scale to the option of the management. The existing anomalies will therefore continue as before and the quality of instruction cannot but suffer.

The scales now prescribed for teachers under local bodies compare very unfavourably with those for teachers in Government schools. There are two grades for L. T. in Government schools—Grade II with 80-5-120-10-170 and grade I with 160-5-200-10-240. Only one grade is provided for L. T. in schools under local bodies and this is the scale 70-5-140. This grade is not even as good as the L. T. II Grade in Government schools. The perpetuation of the invidious distinction is a serious blow to the cause of sound education in our Province. A valuable opportunity to set things right has been lost by the Ministry in spite of its loud profession that it is opposed to any objectionable distinction. Unless this injustice is removed, it may be futile to expect enthusiastic co-operation from teachers. We appeal to the Government to act justly and wisely and recommend the Government scales of pay for adoption in all schools.

Equally serious is the short-sighted recommendation relating to the salaries of teachers in aided elementary schools. We wish the Government had acted in the spirit in which the preamble regarding the condition of teachers in aided schools is worded. It is stated that the teachers were extremely poorly paid and that if their services were to be maintained at that level which the importance of the subject demanded, it was necessary to see that they are put on better pay scales." Good sentiment indeed if it be followed up in action! But the Government is suddenly reminded of the state of Provincial finances and is ready to overlook the importance of the subject. A lower scale of salary which can never attract competent teachers is recommended. Why should not the Government adopt Government scales for all and approach the Central Government for adequate help? It is only through a satisfactory and promising programme, the Ministry can enlist the support of the Central Government for the expansion of elementary education. The Ministry has not shown the grit to face up the situation but has stooped to find arguments to justify the introduction of a lower scale. We are afraid that the Government has not judged aright the temper and mind of thousands of teachers who have been eagerly expecting it to assume direct responsibility for elementary education. A uniform scale is necessary to induce teachers in all elementary schools to pull together and act with one mind.

The spirit in which the salary problem in regard to education has been approached by the Committee is narrow and it reminds us of the idea expressed by a former Minister of Education some years back that Government schools are their own children, the board schools their step-children and aided schools nobody's children. The time has come to knock out this irrational and pernicious notion and treat all schools as the Nation's schools entitled to equal and generous consideration. It will be good if the Ministry reads the signs of the times and understands the unwillingness on the part of qualified persons to join training schools in spite of the wide official publicity. One may not be surprised if a counter propaganda that school service means starvation and forms a death trap should become common in the coming months.



There are over 350 aided secondary schools and it is natural that the Committee should pay some attention to these poor relations. The existing scales in these schools vary widely but some well intentioned and far-sighted managements appreciate the value of paying even higher salaries. Recently a deputation of the managers of aided secondary schools waited on the Minister for Education, discussed with him the desirability of meeting the reasonable demands of teachers in respect of the salary revision and appealed to him to revise the Grant-in-aid Code so as to enable them to pay their teachers well. But a large number are indifferent and the Government which is itself slow to move knows that they will never move of their own accord in the matter of enhancing the salaries. Why the Committee has not chosen to recommend the Government scale in view of the large size and high standard of aided schools is not known. We shall perhaps be told that the proposed scales in non-Government schools are somewhat better than the existing ones. Can this ever be a satisfaction to those who have been complaining bitterly about the deplorably low salaries all these years and expecting a radical change. The Committee should have also taken into consideration the fact that G. O. 4619 effected in a sudden and arbitrary manner a serious reduction in the then decent scales in board schools twelve years back and that the existing scales are still there to remind us of the gross injustice done to teachers. On a consideration of all the facts of the case and in view of the general opinion of the public and educational committees that a substantial all-round improvement of the salary scale is essential, the adoption of the Government scale uniformly in all schools is very necessary. Otherwise the teaching profession may have to act in the principle "Equal pay : Equal work ; Less pay : Less work."

More irritating than the salary recommendation is the difference in the procedure suggested for giving effect to it. There is no recognition of the principle that service in any recognised school is national service and that teachers should not suffer whatever may be the type of management. The Government which has its own doubts about the earnestness of local bodies insists on the adoption of the scales immediately and even offers financial accommodation to them. But in the case of aided secondary schools the Ministry, which cannot be ignorant of the attitude and resources of private managements, wants to be courteous at the expense of teachers and can only think of advising managements to adopt the Government scales. It also expresses its desire to help them on the lines of its pet and fanciful formula associated with the dearness allowance. So far as aided secondary schools are concerned even the unattractive new scale will remain a paper scale owing to the non-intervention theory of the Government and this is well-known to the Minister for Education who is officially in possession of information about the managers. What should one think of the complacent attitude of the Cabinet when with the full knowledge of the attitude of managers it becomes a party to the following statement in the Report: The Government expect that with the help of the enhanced



grants the management will be able to contribute from their own funds amounts sufficiently to bring the scales of pay of their teachers up to the level of those recommended for the local fund services'. Should this round-about method continue even at this critical moment? What national purpose is served by leaving the adoption of the scale to the sweet will and pleasure of the management? Does the Government think that there is no urgency in regard to the revision of the salary scale of teachers in aided schools? Apart from the great disparity in the scales of salaries the difference in procedure holds out no immediate hope for teachers in aided schools and a conflict between the staff and the management is inevitable. This mode of approach is a measure of the incapacity or disinclination on both on the part of our public men to do what is right and necessary at the right moment. Salary revision will not be undertaken frequently and it is essential that a uniform principle is followed now to allay discontent among teachers. The Ministry has not the foresight and imagination to look at the problem from the broader national standpoint.

The recommendations of the Committee on which the Government orders are based do not take into consideration the essential needs of education. The Committee attempted to do some patch-work and the anomalies which they profess to abolish continue as before in the field of education. This is clearly seen in their eagerness to fix the salary scales of aided schools not in relation to the qualifications, cost of living and standard as stated in the preamble but with an eye to the existing system of private management and the official non-intervention theory. Their imperfect appreciation of educational services is clear not only from the scant consideration to the salary of college lecturer, but also from a comparison of the salary prescribed for an S. S. L. C. as a lower division clerk with that of a teacher. The former is placed in the scale 45-3-60-2-90 against 40-3-55-2-85 for the S. S. L. C. teacher in Government schools who has undergone training for two years. Perhaps the Committee imagines that the S.S.L.C. loses some of his ability by undergoing training for school service. The contrast will be more striking if we take the S. S. L. C. teacher in a board or aided school.

What possible reaction may be expected from the teaching profession is a natural question. The All-India Educational Conference held in Trivandrum in December 1946 was really an occasion for observing the intensity of feeling and the spirit of revolt among teachers when the omnibus resolution on "Service Conditions" in aided schools was discussed. The Madras delegates along with those from other provinces opened their minds and would have pressed for a radical alteration of the official resolution but for the touching appeal of the President of the Conference to the delegates to give their trusted friends a chance to negotiate for them. Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar speaking on the strike of Delhi teachers complained that teachers precipitated the crisis just because of a few grievances and appealed to them to have trust in Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Here in our province, the Cabinet has not gone into the merits of the salary ques-

ation and has failed to consider education as a national service with all its implications. It is not perhaps for the Cabinet to bother itself with complex questions. It has perpetuated the old serious anomalies and has thus precipitated a crisis. It is for the public to judge how national education is being tackled by the Ministry. It is surprising that a broader and more forward policy has not been formulated by the Ministry especially when the Central Government is expected to meet a fair percentage of the cost of the post-war education plan. Teachers will have certainly their own say and plan to meet the situation. Much will depend upon the intelligent attitude of the public which should no longer remain silent when a national service like education is not approached in the proper spirit by the Ministry. Teachers expect the public to come to definite and independent conclusions. If it should convince them that the policy of the Ministry is sound and they can have no reason to complain, they will be prepared to accept its verdict. If it feels otherwise, it should discountenance the habit of the Ministers to indulge in platitudes like sacrifice and discipline and add insult to injury. It should make the Ministry realise that if education be bad it can be improved only by the adoption of those methods which have proved successful in other countries or in other spheres. Whatever may be the line of action which teachers may be ultimately constrained to adopt to maintain their self-respect and the ideals of the profession, I am confident that under no circumstances will they ever subordinate the call of the country for education to their self-interest and forget their duty to the children entrusted to their care. Nor will they even in the midst of their struggle allow the healthy and natural relationship between the teacher and the taught to be spoiled. What the future of education should be in our province is to be decided now by the public and the Ministry.

What possible resolution may be expected from the teaching profession is a natural question. The All-India Educational Conference held in Trivandrum in December 1949 was really an occasion for observing the intensity of feeling and the spirit of revolt among teachers when the omnibus resolution on "Service Conditions" in aided schools was discussed. The Madras delegates along with those from other provinces opened their minds and would have pressed for a radical alteration of the official resolution but for the leading agents of the President of the Conference to the delegates to give their friends a chance to negotiate for them. Mr. C. J. Rajagopalachari speaking on the topic of Delhi Teachers complained that teachers presented the other side because of a few grievances and appealed to them to have respect in Madras. And K. J. Somaiyaji, who is one of the members of the Cabinet, has not gone into the merits of the various ques-

## THE WORK AHEAD OF US\*

I propose to speak this evening on the work ahead of us. You would at once ask me to state what new situation has arisen which requires us to re-consider our plan of work. Has the teaching profession been getting worse? Is it possible for the profession to play its part efficiently? Has the profession to face any crisis just now? These are the questions which are likely to rise uppermost in your mind. It is not my intention to speak about the teaching profession in Ancient India. If tradition be true we gather that the teacher in Ancient India had certain compensating advantages and enjoyed the good will and esteem of the public in a generous measure. What about the teacher of to-day? The teaching profession, as ordinarily understood by us, has come in the wake of Western education in this country. It is nearly 80 years since this system has been introduced, and it is true an increase in the number of schools and scholars is noticeable. Expenditure on education has also been increasing but I wish it could be said that our efforts all these years have made for some improvement in quality. No one who knows intimately the conditions in our province at the present moment will ever venture to say that the progress which it is supposed to have made in the sphere of education is one of which anybody can be proud.

What is the condition of teachers just now? To put it, plainly, they are in a deplorable state. In view of the increase in the cost of living, a representation was made by the S. I. T. U. to the authorities that steps should be taken to raise the salaries of teachers in non-Government schools. It was hoped that the relief which was given to all classes of public servants would also be extended to teachers. But, owing to the indifference of the authorities who can never be prevailed upon to revise the Grant-in-aid Code, the managing bodies have been compelled to stop increments and in several other cases to order a general reduction in the salaries of teachers. I need not refer to the well-known questionable devices which some of the managing bodies frequently employ to bring down expenditure. Teachers are sent away before the holidays and in some cases senior teachers are gently reminded that they have overstayed. The salaries are admitted to be low and there is hardly any scale worth mentioning. Even the low salary is kept in arrear in some schools and teachers are put to the necessity of borrowing money at high rates of interest. The words "probation, permanent, temporary etc." are not intended to be interpreted in their real sense. There is no security of tenure of service and conditions of service are as bad in schools under local bodies as in those under private management. The teaching profession has no place in the educational administration. It is not expected that the profession should advise the authorities.

\*A lecture delivered at the Annual Conference of the Coimbatore District Teachers' Guild held at Pollachi.



as to the lines on which the educational system requires to be modified. It has been made to believe that it is merely expected to carry out instructions. Boards and committees have been appointed from time to time to consider educational questions and it has never struck the authorities that the profession should be directly represented in these bodies. It is true that the teaching profession has from the very beginning been an unorganised heterogeneous body which is temperamentally disinclined to assert itself and to demand its proper place. "How is it then," I may be asked, "that the profession should come to feel its condition unbearable at the present moment?"

Of the various factors which are influencing in a definite manner, the profession, I should like to refer to only two, the Montford Reforms and the general world-awakening in respect of social service.

In the pre-reform days, power was centred in the hands of a few persons who really constituted the Government and it was found possible to prevail upon the authorities now and then to take steps to improve the conditions of service. That was how the special grant of one lakh of rupees was obtained, and the equipment grant raised from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3}$ . But with introduction of reforms, the situation has been changed. Education is now a transferred subject administered by a minister supposed to be responsible to the legislature. It is expected of the minister to anticipate and understand the requirements of the department of education and to place before the Legislative Council definite proposals. A Legislative Council that is anxious to promote the progress of a country will not allow the minister to rest in peace until all the needs of the department are honestly attempted to be met. It will have no consideration for a minister if it finds him unable to find a solution to the problems on hand. If unfortunately the Minister and the Legislative Council take their work easy and do not feel called upon to study the needs of the department of education, no improvement can ever be effected. The new system introduced in our country can work satisfactorily only if there be complete responsibility. Can we say that the ministers of the reformed Government have been always anxious to abide by the decision of the Council? Can it be said that the members of the Council care to treat the election pledges seriously? Has any minister or leader or any party cared to make known to the electorate in definite term what his or its views are on general outstanding questions? Has the electorate had any chance of knowing what the programme of a party is? Can we say that any member or party has cared to study the different aspects of the educational problem and to tell the electorate what definite steps are intended to be taken when the party comes into power? Is it not lamentable that matters relating to Education do not receive the attention they deserve in the Legislative Council? Is it not a fact that even the few questions asked in the Council relate to routine administration and rarely serve to elicit information which will throw light on the policy? Why should not those members of the Legislative Council, who are directly associated with the management of schools and colleges, heckle the Minister

for Education and bring pressure to bear upon him? The few who put inconvenient questions are kept off by the cold reply that a Committee has been appointed or that the matter is being considered. What about the Grant-in-aid Code? Which member of the Legislative Council felt it his duty to study the memorial submitted by the Union with regard to the revision of the Grant-in-aid Code? In no other country in the world will Ministers be allowed to exercise power if on important questions like the Grant-in-aid Code, reform of secondary education and expansion of elementary education, such a lethargy be shown. It may be that new universities have been instituted but even the man in the street knows that no satisfactory progress has been made either in Elementary or in Secondary Education.

There is stagnation everywhere and a feeling of discontent and depression is clearly perceptible in the rank and file of the teaching profession. It has come to realise that its representations are not likely to receive any attention at the hands of the minister or of the members of the Legislative Council under the existing circumstances. That the condition of the profession is very unsatisfactory is admitted even by men in power. It is at this depressed moment when the profession has been fast losing its hopes, that it is becoming conscious of the great stir all over the world in the field of education. Experience in advanced countries has shown that the educational system requires radical changes if it should fulfil its purpose. It has come to be realised that the existing system cannot meet the demands of modern life since it has been designed to serve the needs of a society presumed to remain in a static state. Conditions of modern life are changing rapidly and are becoming more complex. It is becoming increasingly clear that the society is in a dynamic state, and new demands are made upon our educational system. Education cannot continue to be a mere rule of thumb affair and it is felt that the work of the school-master cannot be confined to his school-room. The teacher is expected to find out why certain boys do not show signs of progress. It is his business to understand the mind of the pupil aright and to adopt suitable methods. He is required to see the parents at home and seek their co-operation so that the influence of the home may not undo the work done at the school. The view is gaining ground that education is not for the leisured class alone. Nor is it only for those who are fit. The work which falls to the lot of the teacher is more exacting to-day and the present-day teachers are expected to be a band of trained social workers. The teaching profession in this Presidency cannot remain uninfluenced by this new wider outlook. But the successful performance of the teacher's task requires on his part "a remarkable combination of intellectual ability, knowledge, artistic power, patience, moral insight, and intense sympathy with child life". How is this condition to be secured? The one thing which brings unfailing encouragement to any student of education is the knowledge that all over the country unknown to fame, but loved by their pupils, and trusted by all who know their work, there are teachers who are working in this



spirit, often in the teeth of stupid prejudice, often without any adequate recognition but with a devotion which is beyond praise and is indeed sustained by the highest of motives.

Who will say that we have such an atmosphere here? It is natural that teachers should feel keenly just now that the environment is not favourable for them to play their part properly and do their bit towards national development. The future may be bright if the reports be true. A decided improvement in the political outlook is not unlikely and it is for teachers to reconsider their plan of work. A well instructed public is the *sine qua non* of a successful democratic Government and if the work of teachers does not meet with recognition, it may be because they have not all these years given the pupils passing through the schools and colleges those valuable elements of culture which would fit them for their work as responsible citizens. We should "educate our masters" present and future, and that is the only way in which we can give a chance to democracy in India. The teaching profession will be helping itself and promoting its interests if it should take a long view of things and show its preparedness to bear its share of responsibility with regard to the building up of the nation.

What is the immediate work ahead of us? Now that the general elections are fast approaching, the profession should call upon the candidates standing for election to the Legislative Council to express their views on educational matters and to explain the steps they intend to adopt if elected. They should be made to understand clearly that the votes of teachers and the votes of all persons whom they can honestly influence shall be recorded in favour of those who are willing to pledge themselves to support the demands of the S.I.T.U. The union will be well advised in preparing a memorandum for distribution among the candidates, and the affiliated guilds should convene meetings whereat the candidates of all parties should be given an opportunity to explain their position. Whatever may be the individual view of the teacher in respect of political questions, it should be his duty to support candidates who are willing to stand by the Union. I consider it necessary that steps should be taken to bring about a change in the mentality of the politicians. They should be made to realise the necessity for formulating in respect of education a programme more or less on the following lines: "Allow teachers freedom in the practise of their art; relieve them from the fret of endless worry and from the harassing anxieties which arise from unduly straitened means; place them in conditions favourable to healthy and active work; entrust them with sufficiently small classes; secure for them the leisure necessary for private study and for the fresh preparation of each lesson; give them access to the books, pictures, instruments, works of reference and materials of various sorts which are needed by all who try to teach in a really interesting way the elements of a large number of different subjects; above all, make them realise that the nation appreciates the far-reaching value of their work and its almost sacred importance; see that these teachers supported by the sympathy and



confidence of the children and guided by the growth and developing natures of the children themselves, feel their way from point to point in this fascinating art of teaching, valuing tradition and yet able at need to discard it, helped by theory but always testing theory by practice, and calling into the service of their schools each of the essentials of true culture—Nature studies and literary interests, manual training and artistic expression, physical training and moral discipline, according to the different needs of their pupils and their own quick sense of the needs of the place and time."

Another direction in which our energies must be directed is the strengthening of our organisation. Thanks to the co-operation and earnestness of a number of teachers in this Presidency, the S.I.T.U. has been developing rapidly and been expanding its activities. Membership of the Union is open to all Teachers' Associations in our Presidency whether in the North or in the South. It is a federation of Teachers' Associations and it can reflect truly the opinion of the entire profession if every locality or school organises an association and if all the Associations in a district be constituted into a district guild. These District Guilds should become affiliated to the S. I. T. U. and the ways and means of providing the resources necessary for the efficient working of the Union should be carefully explored.

The S.I.T.U. should be to us in South India what the N.U.T. is to the teaching profession in England. It is not in the interest of the profession that teachers of different grades should make much of minor differences and should be parties to any action which is likely to hinder the development of the Union. I am sure the influence which the Union can wield will be more marked if teachers work in a spirit of harmony and make up their minds to promote a spirit of professional consciousness. We have in our official journal an instrument whereby we can influence public opinion. It will also prove an excellent medium of communication especially when every secondary school as well as college subscribes to at least one copy. May I appeal to headmasters and other teachers to help the Union in the running of the South Indian Teacher. There is the other institution of the Union, the Protection Fund which is making a slow but steady progress. Let not teachers go on discussing the rules of the fund and find excuses for not joining the fund. They will be doing their duty if they should join the fund and bring round people to their way of thinking.

Another line of work which the Union should immediately undertake is the provision of facilities to teachers for the further acquisition of knowledge. A revision of the S. S. L. C. courses of study is expected and new aspects of the different subjects are intended to be presented to pupils in an intelligent manner. The Union should arrange for a course of special lectures on different topics for the benefit of teachers and secure the services of competent professors. There is a strong complaint that the masters who are asked to adopt up-to-date methods cannot always command the use of suitable books of reference. The Union will do well to urge upon the Government and the management the necessity for providing a sum of not less than Rs. 200 earmarked for the purchase of reference books for the use of masters in each school. The teaching profession can hope to make an impression on the public only when it is properly equipped for the task entrusted to it.

*June, 1929.*

## AROUND US AND ABOUT US\*

This is the first time that I am having the privilege of addressing the Madura District Teachers' Guild and I need not say I am really glad to have this opportunity. Under ordinary circumstances I should have preferred to speak on an academic subject but in the stirring times in which we are living I deem it necessary to place before you a few points affecting our profession and to enlist your support for 'the programme' of work to be undertaken by the Union.

Look round and see how rapidly conditions are changing here in the political field. We are witnessing a great national struggle for self-government. It may not be possible for any one to say just now what form the future constitution of India may take. But if the reports of interviews and impressions in the press be true, we may take it that the future constitution may contain two important provisions, namely responsibility at the centre and complete provincial autonomy. This is not the occasion for me to deal at length with the implications of the term provincial autonomy. You realise that this reform means the transfer of power to the chosen representatives of the people and it rests with them to make or mar the teaching profession. We have been familiar with the methods of administration by many public men who happen to pass for chosen representatives in the local bodies and in the legislatures. It will not do for us to express any doubt about the contemplated reforms for it will amount to cutting the face to spite the nose. Education happens to be a subject in which the state, the public men, the public and the private bodies are interested and we cannot remain indifferent when powers are going to be transferred to democratic bodies subject to popular control. As was pointed out by Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar in his address at Chidambaram, democracy is deaf and dumb and we have to shout that it may hear. It will be a long time before we can say to ourselves that we "educated our masters" and it is necessary that we prepare ourselves against any situation that may develop in the actual working of the system.

The changes in the educational sphere all over the world are no less serious. There are currents and cross-currents in the world of education which make great demands upon the time and resources of the profession. The old time-worn methods and ideas in education are found to be unsuitable and inadequate to meet the needs of a society in a dynamic state. I shall just refer to a few tendencies in modern educational movement so as to indicate how the problems before the profession are becoming complex. First of all there is the great demand for extended facilities for public education. The Bill for raising the school-leaving age to 15 that is now

\*An address delivered at the annual meeting of the Madura District Teachers' Guild held on the 7th February, '31.

under consideration in the House of Commons is an indication of the importance which public men have come to attach to public education. Education is to be no longer for any particular class ; it is for all, rich and poor, boys and girls, the patrician and the plebian, the endowed and the backward. In advanced countries an appeal is made by thoughtful educationists that the methods of education should not be uniform but should be such as to overcome the defects of the backward or defective pupils. We have a section that believes that the demand for mass education is not based on sound facts or real needs and that extended facilities will prove a huge waste. Persons who hold this view argue that all pupils are not educable to the same extent and that the majority of pupils who cannot secure jobs in higher grades of employment will find no occasion for using the knowledge gained at the school.

This view takes us to the second tendency in modern education movement, namely the correlation of school instruction to employment. The complaint is becoming too common that the school instruction is very formal and bears no relation to the future occupational needs of the pupils. The courses of study are severely criticised and the extreme advocates would go so far as to allow the school instruction to be dominated by the kind of jobs open to pupils. A compromise which is acceptable to all has yet to be devised.

While the environment around us is in this disturbed condition, we should like to recall to our minds what our public men think of us. We have, first of all, persons of the conventional type. They profess they expect great things from teachers since they are entrusted with the responsible task of training the future citizen. They point to the nobility of our profession and appeal to us to make the country safe for democracy. Secondly, we have our administrators who take great credit to themselves for strong common sense. The only point which they mean to emphasise every moment is the want of funds and they do not want to be reminded that there has not been even a single occasion all these 70 years when they could say that money was available and representations could be considered. This plea of want of funds naturally leads them to make the heroic statement that teachers should be prepared for sacrifice since teachers of old subsisted on much less. Some among them who are artless blurt out that teachers enjoy holidays and cannot expect members of the managing bodies to pay from their pockets. Far more serious is the opinion which our public men hold about our attainments. They all agree amongst themselves that teachers will not be in a position to study educational questions and to offer opinion of any value. There are swollen-headed people in this group who will even maintain that teachers are not competent to express any opinion even on educational questions.

The changes around us and the impressions about us to which, I have referred have a direct bearing on the status and work of the teaching profession. This is not the time for us to be replying to our critics. The situation is serious enough to call for a definite action on our part. Is it in



the interest of our country that the teaching profession should continue to be like dumb-driven cattle? Can we be indifferent to the responsibilities which pertain to us as members of a learned profession? Our goal should be the attainment of Swaraj in the sphere of education.

How is this possible if we are not prepared to understand aright the obligations imposed upon the members of a learned profession and to adopt a line of conduct in consonance with the best traditions of a learned profession. What then are the characteristics of a learned profession? I shall just mention a few important characteristics of a learned profession:

- (1) Expertness,
- (2) Professional solidarity.
- (3) Hope of a career.
- (4) Preparedness to take part in work of public or national importance.

Let me examine for a moment how our profession compares with other learned professions in regard to these characteristics. If it be found that my comparison is not much in our favour. I request you to bear in mind that I am speaking of the conditions in general.

*Expertness:* The lawyer or the doctor is accepted as an expert in his respective sphere and great credit is given to his opinion. Few will be found to consider the opinion of a teacher as expert opinion on educational matters. His opinion is seldom sought and it is treated with scant courtesy when it happens to come into conflict with the opinion of the lay administrator. The doctor or lawyer studies the case before him, listens to the history of the case and finally comes to a conclusion. This conclusion, once arrived at, is not allowed to be altered by extraneous considerations and very often he considers it his duty to stick to his opinion. It is this tenacity on his part that wins for his opinion public esteem, and the opinion is treated as expert opinion. Any question of reconsideration will be thought of only when fresh facts are brought to the expert's notice. If his opinion be challenged, he is up in arms and argument after argument will be advanced to maintain the original position even against tremendous opposition. The teacher also makes a careful study of the case, whether it be promotion, or selection, or aptitude for a special course and comes to a conclusion. But he is too often pressed by extraneous considerations to modify the original opinion. The line of least resistance, which most of us consider it expedient to adopt, is quite different from the firmness to be noted in a lawyer or a doctor. The public have been led to believe that a letter from a high official or from the chairman of the municipality or committee could go a great way in gaining their ends. It is not for me to go into the causes which have led to the abdication of the expert position but the fact remains that through a long period of inaction our faculties have become atrophied and we have ceased to consider ourselves experts. Have we not been talking all these years about Vernacularisation, Vocational bias, Reorganisation of

secondary education curriculums? These are still continuing to be the questions for endless discussion on our platform, and this does not certainly enhance our reputation as a body of experts. As a matter of fact, we do not take a long view of things and suggest what is educationally sound. We agitated for the inclusion of the B-group in the examination subjects. Now we begin to cry that the examination will be a serious strain. We are beginning to support the idea of an examination at the middle school stage. It should be possible for us to judge each question on its merits and to suggest, not what will satisfy the men in power, but what is educationally sound.

*Professional Solidarity*: We often find the lawyers or doctors closely bound together by professional ties and determined to safeguard the professional interest. They are very jealous of the reputation of the profession and even the services of the top men are available to give the needed relief to their brethren in trouble. Think of the power and influence which the General Medical Council is able to wield? The opinion of even the apothecary at the bottom will in the majority of cases be backed up and his words will be treated with consideration. What about the Bar Council recently instituted? Does it not statutorily bring all advocates together into one body which is to decide questions of professional conduct? But with us there is considerable hesitation in joining an association and the few who are willing to join are frightened by the frown, real or imaginary, of the District Educational Officer or Manager. Apart from promoting the material interests of the members and protecting them against meaningless attacks of the public, the spirit of professional solidarity will always exercise a healthy moral influence by setting before the members high professional ideals. But conditions have not been quite favourable. There are the different managing bodies, the Government, the local bodies and private committees. The teachers in Government institutions are not ordinarily inclined to join the Teachers' organisations. They take a narrow view of the objects of Teachers' organizations and think that the organisations are more for the teachers in private institutions whose conditions of services require to be improved. Teachers in the service of local bodies or private management have vague fears that by joining associations they offend the managers. We cannot also overlook the unreasonable and meaningless suspicion that prevails among the different grades of teachers. Consequently teachers have few opportunities of meeting one another and the spirit of professional solidarity can hardly be expected to grow under such conditions. The North Indian Tour organised by the S. I. T. U. showed clearly the advantage of meeting teachers from different parts of the country. But such occasions are few and far between. The inertia in the profession is something astounding. Take the Protection Fund started by the S. I. T. U. with the object of giving relief to the teachers' families left in a destitute condition or to the poor teacher on his retirement. This scheme offers a common organisation where teachers of all grades can meet one another on equal terms and help one another. A large amount has



been spent on propaganda through leaflets, bulletins and advertisements. It is nearly 3 years and yet the strength of 1,000 is not yet reached. The surprising thing is that many are still ignorant of the existence of the fund. A few who are not keen on joining the fund go on saying that the comma should be replaced by a full stop and they even make sneering remarks questioning the business capacity of teachers. It does not strike teachers that the Fund is the teachers' fund and that it rests with them to work it in such a manner as to promote brotherly feeling in the profession. I invite the attention of the doubting Thomases to the working of the Madras Teachers' Guild Cooperative Society. This society is classed under A.I. by the department and this should be enough to dispel any loathed melancholy or imaginary fear on the part of teachers. The Union has also been running a monthly journal with the object of promoting professional solidarity and of providing opportunities to teachers for discussing educational and professional questions and arriving at decisions. This is the official organ of the profession. In a well-organised profession no extra propaganda should be necessary to induce teachers and schools to enrol themselves as subscribers. A professional journal which has the sole interests of the profession at heart, should never be allowed to suffer for want of funds. It should be placed on such a basis as will enable it to voice forth the feelings of the profession fearlessly. How can an assured position be secured? Is it impossible for every school to subscribe for a copy? Will any management refuse to pay if the teachers in the school place the matter before the management? Is it beyond the resources of Headmasters to subscribe individually for copies? Should not every Teachers' Association have a copy of its own? Cannot the teachers in a locality induce the reading rooms to subscribe for copies so that the public may understand our viewpoint. Is it not the duty of every teacher to do his best for the journal? Let us take a lesson from other bodies which raise funds through Poppy Days, Fancy Sale and so on. Our publications have been well reviewed by other journals in India, England and America. The proceeds of the sales go to the journal account and every teacher or school that cares to purchase a copy of the Proceedings of the 5th Conference of the A.I.F.T.A. held at Madras or "On Teaching" by Mr. Venkateswaran will not only get an adequate return for the money, but will also help the journal. Letters which are now and then received show that teachers have no idea of the circumstances under which the work of the Union and the Journal is carried on. They seem to think that the Union is in possession of unlimited resources and that the Office-bearers are unwilling to let the rank and file have the benefit. Our unlimited resource lies in a potential form in the large number of teachers in our presidency and it will be really great if they can be mobilised.

This inertia is highly prejudicial to the interest of the profession and of education. There are few journals devoted to education and it is lamentable to find that in a presidency which professes to contain the largest number of duly qualified teachers very few are found willing to think of



educational questions and to express their opinion. Is it an indication of the professional spirit that little advantage is taken of the official journal though the existence of acute discontent is widely talked about. The teaching profession is to day a heterogeneous group of individuals who do not happen to be animated by a spirit of professional consciousness.

*Hope of Career:* The inertia or indifference which militates against the efficiency of teachers is to a great extent due to the blind-alley nature of the profession. The profession does not hold out any career for the large number of aspiring capable men. The position of the budding lawyer may not compare favourably in the beginning with that of the teacher but he can aspire to a seat in the bench. The path before the lawyer is steep and narrow but the goal is clearly in sight. He is therefore impelled to make strenuous efforts to be up-to-date with the result that he rises from place to place and fills up places of responsibility. The teacher who imagined himself to be better placed, finds himself stationary, feels he is not wanted, and may consider himself lucky if he be not sent out. The conditions of service are depressing, the salaries are very low; very often the salaries are in arrears; and teachers are sometimes asked to take their salaries in dribbets. To urge for payment of salaries in time is to court dismissal. Public men who are busy at the time of promotion or admission, are not worried about the non-payment of salaries. It never strikes them that the education of their own children should suffer if teachers be not paid. That there is no security of tenure is admitted by all. The "contract" attempted to be enforced by the department from its isolated position is highly appreciated by managing bodies since they can now with out any qualms of conscience or regard for the education of the pupils systematically replace senior teachers by inexperienced teachers. Teachers are human and under the existing conditions they become discontented and indifferent. They lose their enthusiasm for work and become irresponsive. Nothing can interest them and the education of the children suffers.

*Preparedness for work in other spheres:* There is an obligation on the members of every learned profession to look beyond the needs of the profession and to render service in other spheres wherever possible. Many institutions or organisations there are in the country which require the time, energy and even the resources of the cultured and educated classes. I may mention for instance the Co-operative Societies, Temperance Leagues, Social Service League, Adult Education Institutes and so on. The progress of the country depends upon the number of willing honorary workers it can command for running the institutions. The public recognition which it is possible for any learned profession to enjoy, will in a large measure depend upon the contribution in men and money that it is prepared to make. Teachers labour under an inferiority complex and they are not seen to take interest in these bodies and to bear a part of the responsibility. It should be possible for the profession to supply a definite quota in each locality for honorary work. It is opportunities of this kind that bring the public men

and teachers together and help them to understand each other. It should be our immediate object to win public recognition through our willingness to undertake public work.

It is clear that our profession to-day does not come up to the standard of a learned profession. It does not help us to be told that there are defects in other professions. Let us realise what our defects are and make an honest effort to get rid of them. The causes for this state of affairs may be partly internal and partly environmental. The task entrusted to us is of national importance and it is essential that our profession should rise to the full status of a learned profession so that it may be able to discharge its obligations. The remedy lies in organisation. The public will not at all be impressed with our capacity for training the future citizens so long as we do not show in action the value of organisation.

### THE S.S.L.C. COURSE\*

It gives me great pleasure to go over to Tiruchengode and meet the members of the Salem Guild. Your guild has been whole-heartedly co-operating with the South India Teachers' Union in all its activities and I do not think it necessary to say anything about the same just now.

You have asked me to speak on our S. S. L. C. course. It is an old vexed question. But you will admit the problem has not yet been satisfactorily tackled. There are many important points that still remain undecided. The question is difficult not because we do not know much about it but perhaps because we know too much. The topic of secondary education is on the lips of every one. Turn your attention to the proceedings of any Educational Conference. Look at the sentiments regarding education expressed on the platform and in the press both by laymen and teachers. You are sure to find direct and plain reference to secondary education.

We are told that our secondary education is far too literary and narrow and that the course is unrelated to the environment and life of the pupil. Our leaders tell us that the course is very heavy, that the university is dominating unduly the school courses and that examination is receiving an exaggerated and unnatural importance. There is a large section which maintains that the use of the foreign medium is a serious handicap to a large number of pupils and that the present day S.S.L.C. pupils show little knowledge of men and things. Some deplore the indifference to vocational training and argue that the number of misfits is increasing and that secondary education is a waste. These observations are in the nature of criticism either of the general educational policy or of the scope and aims of secondary education or of the methods adopted in the class-room.

You can easily put these observations together and gain a real idea as to what our public men want our secondary education to be. It is required to be a self-contained general education so as to provide the necessary cultural and informational material needed for the development of a full man. At the same time it is also expected to provide a few elective courses suited to the varying aptitudes and needs of thousands of pupils belonging to different social strata. A flexible and differentiated secondary school course is what the public wants. Such a course will not ignore the needs of liberal education and it will also have the additional advantage of providing to some extent for the future career or occupational needs of a large number of pupils.

You may begin to ask why no solution has been found when the nature of the problem happens to be so well understood. It seems to me that it is due to our peculiar mentality. One thing that may strike any observer is the conflict between principle and practice. Nice ideas are us-

\* Lecture delivered at the Salem District Educational Conference held in December, 1933.



ually reserved for platforms and conferences ; and we grow eloquent on vernacularisation, vocational education, the value of school record and so on. Neither politicians nor teachers care to pause for a moment to consider the steps that have to be taken to gain our ends. Our politicians and leaders are strong advocates of vocational education but they never put their heads together and table a cut motion at the time of the voting of grants so as to compel the Minister of Education to think of an active constructive programme. They speak strongly in favour of vernacularisation but they are not keen on using their position in District Boards and School Boards to give effect to proposals which are regarded as sound. They are taking shelter under public apathy and they forget that it is their duty to create public opinion. The Department of Education exhorts teachers not to attach undue importance to examination but the District Educational Officers comment in strong terms on the fall in the percentage of passes. Teachers are told that new and up-to-date methods should be adopted and that the reading habit should be encouraged. But the department does not choose to bear in mind these sentiments while preparing the budget and the equipment grants are cut out. The conflict between principle and practice is noticeable among teachers also. They adopt almost unanimously a resolution that the vernacular should be the medium of instruction even in colleges but in the class-room they have their own honest doubts about the practicability of the proposal. They protest against the domination of the school curriculum by the University but they never care to think of the school problem on its own merits independently of University requirements. They speak vehemently about the strain of public examinations but they urge the inclusion of all subjects taught in the schools in the list of public examination subjects. What about the parents themselves ? They are not worried about the courses or methods. Their indifference is convenient for the politician, the department and the teacher. The only thing which is uppermost in their mind is that their children should somehow pass the examination. It is no wonder that under such circumstances our secondary education still continues to run in the traditional narrow groove. Our pupils are not really dull, and our teachers are professionally better qualified than in other provinces. It should therefore be possible for us to effect the necessary reforms in the sphere of secondary education if the country should count upon an educated intelligentsia in the coming era.

You would perhaps like to know what the situation in other countries is in respect of secondary education. The problem of secondary education is very complex all the world over. The education of the adolescent is as complex as life itself. In European countries the varied needs are met by different types of secondary schools. The *Real gymnasium* of Germany emphasises the traditional classical side while the *Oberschule* or the modern school devotes special attention to modern sciences. There are also trade schools to suit the needs of those pupils who mean to enter life rather early. All types of schools are inter-linked so that pupils can change from one type to another. In America, the tendency is for introducing several

optional courses and this diversified system is considered very necessary if the number of misfits should be reduced and the wastage avoided. Unfortunately for us in our presidency, there is only one type of secondary school with its strong leaning towards the traditional literary side. How can this type provide for the aptitudes and needs of more than one hundred thousand pupils in our secondary schools? In other countries the three parties connected with public education, namely, the public men, the authorities including the managing bodies, and the teaching profession meet in conference to discuss the aim and scope of secondary education and any decision that may be arrived at becomes generally acceptable to the people. Will such a conference be possible here? The voice of the teacher is not heard and the co-operation of the professional organisation is not sought. If any teacher be at all taken into confidence, he invariably happens to be one who does not move freely with his comrades and has therefore no chance of knowing the view-point of the profession. It is the teacher that has to work the scheme and the success of a scheme is really assured when the teaching profession feels that the scheme in question is its own scheme. Further each party should be anxious to take all possible steps to make "the real" approach "the ideal" as far as possible. Now that education is a transferred subject, it should be possible for our Minister of Education to do what the Minister for Education in Bulgaria was able to do. The rise of the Agrarian party to power gave an opportunity to the school-master, Homarchefsky. He was dissatisfied with the literary traditional curriculum in Bulgarian schools and he regarded the educated unemployed as drones. When he became minister, he showed a spirit of determination to effect a silent revolution in the education system.

What is the way out? Our efforts must be directed towards reforming secondary education on the lines suggested by our public men and teachers in conferences and reports. There is general agreement that our secondary education should be self-contained and diversified. It may not be immediately possible to have different types of schools but a definite programme should be chalked out and the idea of a change in the complexion of secondary schools suited to the different localities should be popularised. In the meantime the existing secondary school course should be freed from objectionable features. Any secondary education scheme will be open to some criticism or other. All that we should do is to see that the scheme adopted by us is free from inherent defects from the educational standpoint. Any scheme which is educationally sound and which may reasonably be expected to serve our purpose should be given a fair trial. We are usually too critical and show a readiness to point to one defect here and another there in a proposed scheme while we remain unmoved by the thousand and one defects in an existing system. Let us not pick holes and let us be prepared to extend our whole-hearted support to a scheme which is intrinsically sound. There is one suggestion which I should make at this stage. We have frequently shown a tendency to condemn a scheme not because it is educationally unsound but because certain extraneous difficul-



ties have to be faced. No great cause has been won where there was no difficulty to be faced. Considering all points of view it seems to me that in the transition period the original S. S. L. C. scheme may be given a fair trial with some modifications. If you examine the scheme, it will be found to satisfy the general requirements of secondary education as understood at the present day. It comprises a course of general liberal education for all pupils and also an elective or optional course presenting a wide field for choice. It is self-contained and flexible. It is a good preparation for the university course and at the same time it seeks to provide for the needs of pupils who mean to follow a technical line or to enter life. You cannot point to any feature which can be regarded as educationally unsound. While it gave an opportunity for the students to become acquainted with the elements of several knowledge subjects, it rightly laid stress on the value of the school record and sought to mitigate the strain of the public examination. Under that scheme the teacher was given a wide latitude in respect of the selection of topics suited to the locality and freed to an appreciable extent from the obsession of the public examination. Teachers in secondary schools had a wide scope under the scheme for showing the stuff of which they were made. It may be said they were very near having Swaraj in respect of academic matters. No less a person than the Rt. Hon. Dr. Srinivasa Sastri expressed the view that in the course of some years teachers would of their own accord urge the deletion of subjects one after another from the list of subjects prescribed for the public examination. The scheme should be regarded as intrinsically sound and teachers also appreciate the spirit underlying the scheme. How is it then that this was not given a fair trial? Why was it that persistent representations for reversion to the Matriculation with all its objectionable features were made? The promoters of the scheme were not unaware of the difficulties in its working. They expected that teachers would realise the responsible nature of the task and give proper advice to the pupils and parents, and would also be prepared to maintain proper standards. It was expected that the school record would under such conditions be a more reliable guide for assessing the capacity of the pupil. The Committee also hoped that the inspecting officers would bring home to the teaching profession the implications of the scheme and be prepared to enforce the rules in order to keep up the standard. If the scheme is declared a failure, it is not on account of any inherent defects but because the parties responsible for the working of the scheme have not risen equal to the occasion. Teachers who used to condemn the slaughter of the innocents were found to advocate the publication of an eligibility list by the university. They were also loud in urging that the knowledge subjects under the B Group should be included in the list of public examination subjects. Very curious arguments were advanced in this connection. We were told that students did not care for the non-examination subjects. But the fact should be admitted that the hours allotted for the B. Group were often devoted as a matter of course in the teaching of English and optional subjects. Serious objection was also raised from the beginning against the



school record and it was frequently represented that the record might be done away with. Our inspecting officers could have done something to save the scheme if their hearts were in the S. S. L. C. scheme. Instead of spending their time in seeing whether the examination subjects were properly taught, they could have exercised vigilance enough to ensure proper attention being paid to the B Group subjects. It was open to them to suggest a reduction of grant if a school neglected the B Group subjects. They should form their own opinion about the efficiency of the school and see how far the public examination results accorded with their judgment. If there be discrepancy between their judgment and the public examination result, it is their duty to set the machine moving and remedy the defects of the external public examination. Many of them seemed to have moved in the line of least resistance and they merely echoed the sentiments of teachers that the B Group subjects were neglected by pupils. The scheme was modified and all the knowledge subjects were prescribed for the public examination. The eligibility list has come to stay and the school record is not taken seriously. Even before the first examination under the new scheme was held, the cry was heard that the courses were heavy and that the strain of the public examination would be unduly great. Did not our comrades cry that the knowledge subjects should be prescribed for the public examination? Should they not have foreseen that an increase in the number of examination subjects should necessarily increase the strain besides restricting the freedom of the teacher in regard to the choice and treatment of topics? If they be asked to lighten the syllabus, they are not inclined to come to a common understanding. Very often the teacher of Mathematics suggests a lightening in other subjects and other teachers do likewise. Some are so short-sighted as to suggest the deletion of subjects like Animal Life and Physiology and they betray an inability to understand the general scope and aims of the secondary education scheme. A suggestion that is frequently made is that the sixth form portion alone should be prescribed for the public examination. Is this division into watertight compartments possible or desirable? Does it not show that the public examination and the eligibility list loom large in the minds of teachers? If teachers feel that examination is a serious strain, it is up to them to suggest its abolition. A modification of the present scheme is now under contemplation and it looks as if teachers and authorities are puzzled. One important change which has been proposed is the deletion of knowledge subjects from the course. The pendulum has swung to the other side and the authorities seem to think that knowledge subjects do not count for much in the secondary school curriculum. They suggest that students may be asked to offer two optional subjects instead of one for the purpose of eligibility. It is claimed that this change will offer a wide field of choice for students. A mere provision of an optional group with a number of subjects does not necessarily mean that pupils who are intending to enter life or to pursue a technical line can be benefited by this scheme. Very few schools offer technical courses and even in respect of university subjects

the pupils have to take what the schools offer. It is idle to imagine that under the proposed change there will be wide field for choice. Even if that were possible, the question will still remain whether the deletion of knowledge subjects is educationally sound and whether pupils will not be of a distinctly inferior quality under the new scheme. There is a consensus of opinion among teachers that the deletion of knowledge subjects is an unwise step. It was with this view that the provincial educational conference held at Trichy passed a resolution that in any scheme the present five compulsory subjects should continue to have a place. It is contended that the proposed change will be a better preparation for the university. It may be that pupils may cover a wide ground in the optional subjects and thus save the university teachers some trouble. But their general knowledge and ability to appreciate literature and modern thought will be distinctly poorer and the university course does not consist of optionals alone. It is a pity that teachers in secondary schools complaining of the domination by the university should themselves be preoccupied with the university needs to the detriment of a large number of pupils who will never have a chance of entering the university classes. It is good that teachers in secondary schools remember that they are in charge of secondary education which is intended to serve varied purposes. They may, out of their loyalty to their *alma mater*, have a soft corner for the university courses but they will be shirking their duty if they shut their eyes to other aspects. If this point had been always borne in mind by teachers and inspecting authorities, the S. S. L. C. scheme would not have met with the undeserved fate. The Academic Council of the Madras University does not seem to be enthusiastic over the new proposal and it has shown its appreciation of the knowledge subjects by ruling out the optional group. This decision is really a reversion to the Matriculation. Everywhere teachers are eager to know what the next step will be. Opinion is sharply divided regarding the optional group. There may be endless discussion but the two parties should agree to differ. It is clear that it does not pay to tinker with a scheme. A change here and a change there will not improve a scheme.

The secondary education scheme should be flexible and self-contained if we should move with the modern trends in education. There is the danger of our losing the substance in the quarrel over trifles. Teachers do not trust themselves and we hear on the platform that "there are teachers and teachers" and "schools and schools". Much will depend upon teachers and inspecting officers. No scheme, however sound it may be, can have any chance of success if the teacher has no faith in the aims of secondary education and does not feel called upon to do his best for the cause of sound secondary education. Any system will prove a failure if care is not taken to see that the influence of extraneous force is minimised. While the headmaster and his colleagues are required to realise their responsibility and pronounce their opinion on the merits of each case the department is not keen on safeguarding their interests. How can the headmaster withstand the pressure brought to bear upon him by the president

and members of local bodies for promoting and selecting backward pupils? Very often teachers come into conflict with the managers and they have to face dismissal since the department is found unable to afford protection to teachers. It is for the Government to create and maintain the environment necessary for the successful working of this scheme. Let teachers be anxious to play their role properly and to discharge their duty fearlessly; let the departmental officers enforce the rules whenever necessary, aid liberally deserving cases in time and back up the teacher in the discharge of his legitimate work; let us have public men who are keen on having a broad-based secondary education, and are inclined to be guided by the experts on the spot. The grand experiment of secondary education cannot succeed if the different parties do not pull together in the right spirit. How can any scheme succeed when there is considerable room for improvement in the attitude of the parties concerned? It will be ostrich attitude to shut our eyes to our own defects and to look for improvement by piecemeal reform. With proper environment even a poor scheme will prove fruitful. Let us therefore try to give the principle behind the S. S. L. C. scheme a fair trial. Whatever changes may be made in the original scheme, it should not be forgotten that secondary education should not only be self-contained but also diversified. It should be possible for the experts to devise suitable groups of subjects so that no student leaving the secondary schools will go without picking up the elements of Science and History and Geography. It will be a great mistake if our course should be a procrustean bed trying to fit one hundred thousand pupils into one pattern. I appeal to my teacher friends not to take a narrow view of the situation. Let them look into the future and plan accordingly.



### IF I WERE THE MINISTER

To Dr. Besant should be given the credit for the idea of National Education. This might have been understood in different senses by different persons, but it should be admitted that her idea undoubtedly meant a radical reform of the system of education. The Government of India has deemed it necessary to bring to the notice of local governments the serious defects of the present system and called upon them to take in hand its thorough overhauling in the interest of the country. Reorganisation of Education has been in the fore-front of educational politics for some years past. The South India Teachers' Union has, on behalf of the teaching profession, been constantly pressing upon the public and the Government this momentous problem and it has even suggested a definite line of approach. Every month, some District Teachers' Guild or other is holding a conference and the need for the reorganisation of education on modern lines is being reiterated. This unchanging attitude of the Union and its Guilds towards reform is of special significance at the present moment. It is a pity that the Congress Ministry cannot escape the criticism that it relegated educational reform to the background and showed an inclination to tinker at it. Mr. Arayanayakam is reported to have made adverse remarks on the attitude of the Government in regard to the Wardha Scheme. It will be a great injustice to the teaching profession in this province if persons of his standing should, under such circumstances, have the impression that the teaching profession in the province of Madras is, perhaps, opposed to educational reorganisation. Any public man, who is conversant with the work of the Union and its Guilds, knows that teachers in the province of Madras are for the Wardha Scheme and for the reorganisation of higher education.

The "why" of reorganisation is clearly explained in the letter of the Government of India, the *Communique* of the Madras Government, and the reports published by the South India Teachers' Union. The tangled world situation of today and the welfare of 'The India of Tomorrow' in the study of which the best minds of India are engaged, point to the urgency of educational reorganisation. The problem of unemployment has already become a theme for short stories in several weeklies and monthlies in Indian languages. Even the man in the street feels that a solution should be found for this unfortunate position. How? The advocates of educational reform are not so simple as to imagine that educational reorganisation will create jobs. It cannot, however, be denied that the great confusion in our social economy is due to maladjustment and that it can be minimised appreciably by suitable measures of educational reform. In considering the educational planning in relation to unemployment, one should remember that the educational system should be correlated as far as possible to occupational equilibrium in the country as a whole.

It should not run counter to the tendencies of the *body politic* revealed by the census and other sociological studies. Many of the critics of the Wardha Scheme do not choose to look beyond their nose. They can serve the cause of education and the country better if they bear the fundamental sociological basis in mind and come forward with a constructive scheme for the education of the masses who are nowhere in the picture now. A properly reorganised education is what is implied in National Education. National Education is to be understood as the education of the whole man and has perforce to consider the interest of the child from all aspects. This four-fold aim holds good with regard to all grades of education and is a matter of importance to the child itself, to the parent, to the society, and to the Government. The emphasis which one may lay on the several aspects may vary at different stages, but an education that has to be accepted as National Education can hardly bear any fruit if it happens to ignore any of the four aspects. Judged by this test, the Wardha Scheme applicable to the whole population is undoubtedly the first important step in National education. The Central Advisory Board of Education has considered the Wardha Scheme and the recommendations it has made for the consideration of local governments show that the main principles of the Wardha Scheme are sound educationally, socially, economically and culturally. A reorganisation of higher education, Secondary and Collegiate, is equally important for more reasons than one. The reorganisation that is required is not a matter of inclusion of a subject or of a revision of the syllabus or of a change in nomenclature. Real and sound reorganisation involves a re-orientation and a new outlook on the part of all the parties associated with the education of the child. A good deal will, however, depend primarily upon the enthusiasm and spirit of determination on the part of the Government to realise fully its responsibility and adopt suitable measures from time to time. All eyes are naturally turned to the Minister for Education. What will the Minister do? It will perhaps simplify matters if I should tell you what I shall do if I should become a Minister.

However dissatisfied the Minister may feel with the existing system, he will not be for throwing it overboard. He can maintain that it has served a good purpose all these days. How far can the existing schools be expected to bear the burden at the present moment will have to be considered. The Minister will undertake a survey of the existing institutions with reference to their number, distribution, resources, equipment, and achievements. It should be his endeavour to turn to good account as many of them as possible provided they understand the spirit of the times and are ready to play their part.

The Minister will soon get into touch with the private management through whose efforts education has made good progress in our province. The official reports will have a lot to say about the dark buildings, lack of equipment, lack of resources, and the objectionable makeshifts employed to run the show. A conference will be convened with the managers to discuss the present situation without any reserve and evolve a plan of action



in regard to the placing of National Education on a sound basis. The desire of the management to run an institution on approved lines is legitimate and it will be granted. A definite understanding with regard to adequate financial help will be arrived at with due regard to the present and future needs. The grant-in-aid is promised only on the condition that the management agrees to abide by the conditions of service standardised by the Government. The management will also be required to appoint as teachers only persons whose names are published in the official list of qualified persons. It shall, however, be open to a management to enjoy a good measure of freedom in regard to the addition of subjects for instruction, time-table, and school days. The local bodies and municipalities that have come in for a good deal of criticism in connection with administration of schools will be called upon to express their view as to the application of a similar procedure in their case. It is quite likely that some of the institutions may be struggling or may be unable to do their work. In some areas it will be good if schools under different managements be transferred to one management. The possibility of amalgamation or federation should be explored so that struggling or inefficient institutions may be taken over by a public-spirited management. A reorganisation of the managing bodies on a voluntary or mutual consent basis will go a great way towards preventing wastage and improving the quality of instruction through provision for better resources and better teachers. Managers, including local bodies and municipalities, will be persuaded to constitute themselves into a Provincial Managers' Association which the Minister should consult officially. The managements will then feel that they have a share in the policy and administration of education and that they should do their best for the institutions under their control.

There is a common complaint that the parent is very indifferent and that he is not likely to appreciate the soundness of the proposals for the reorganisation of education. The Minister will consider it his duty to carry the parent-public with him. Without its intelligent co-operation the educational system will be seriously handicapped. The Education Week will be popularised still further and the parents in the locality will be given opportunities to visit the school and find out for themselves what is being done for their children. Publicity leaflets explaining in a popular manner, from time to time, the object of the several educational measures and rules will be published and broadcast by the publicity department. It will also be the duty of the Government to take steps to convince the parent that the school education is intended for the benefit of his children and that it will be wise on his part to consult teachers and listen to their advice. Now that rural reconstruction is on the lips of everyone, the parents in the locality may be inclined to visit schools more often. Will it not be good if schools should function as community centres and serve the public through radio, pictures and entertainments? Surely, in course of time, better understanding will come to prevail and pave the way for properly organised Parent-Teacher Associations.



How is the Minister to set about the reorganisation of the teaching profession? Is this not a big problem? The Minister who has before him valuable official information on the conditions of service of teachers in general and of teachers in aided institutions in particular cannot keep quiet even for a minute. It is not for him to indulge any longer in old platitudes and exhortation. So far as his influence can go, he will see to it that the same principles that are in the interests of efficiency and purity taken into consideration in respect of recruitment to public service are applied in the matter of recruitment of teachers so that qualified persons may not only be attracted to the profession but may think it worth-while to stay in the profession. With the help of a small committee in which the profession and the management will be represented as indicated in a resolution of the Union adopted in connection with G. O. No. 4619, the Minister will have the scales of salaries standardised; and recognition and aid will depend upon the willingness of the management to agree to the salary schedule. The provision for old age will be improved by combining the provident fund scheme with insurance. To ensure security of tenure of service, the circumstances under which the services of teachers can be terminated will be specifically stated in the contract and an aggrieved teacher can have the right of appeal. These service conditions are improved just to relieve teachers from unnecessary worry and stimulate them to steady and enthusiastic work. He will now turn his attention to their equipment for the work ahead of them.

The Minister cannot fail to realise that a reorganisation scheme cannot succeed if the teaching profession be not taken into confidence and called upon to bear its responsibility. He should therefore welcome the presence of a Provincial Teachers' organisation which alone will be considered competent to represent the view of the profession to the Government. A professional organisation which throws open its membership to all teachers throughout the province, irrespective of grade, sex, salary, religion or language and which has numerous local associations affiliated to it, is a valuable asset and the Minister should not go anywhere else in search of professional opinion if he means business. It can rightly claim the right of official representation on behalf of the profession in any *ad hoc* or statutory body or board appointed in connection with education. It is the country that will lose through denying such a right to the organisation. A friendly and definite attitude on the part of the Government will induce teachers in schools and colleges, Europeans and Indians, to join the organisation and meet freely on a common platform to discuss educational questions. Since service conditions are settled for the time being, the Educational Conferences should show more life and deal with academic matters of great importance as they turn up. The Minister will be very glad to see the change on the part of the teachers from the present practice of "asking" to the hopeful one of "giving". Why should not this large army of qualified teachers develop into a self-disciplined responsible body keen on taking the initiative when necessary and demonstrating to the

public that expenditure on public education is worthwhile investment? The Minister will not exhibit the "I know your interest" mentality which stifles initiative on the part of teachers and induces them to prefer a life of dependence. He is eagerly looking forward to the day when teachers will feel that they need not make any apology for the choice they have made. He will have no hesitation in assuring that he will render all possible help and watch with care and sympathetic interest the growth of the professional organisation.

What is expected of the Minister in connection with his own department when great changes are under contemplation? It seems to him that the Government should itself have a clear idea of its educational policy and programme. What the financial implications of the programme are will be carefully worked out and adequate provision will be made in the budget. Legislative measures, educational rules and codes which are necessary for co-ordinating the work of different bodies will also be introduced in consultation with the parties concerned. It will be found necessary hereafter to strengthen the personnel on the academic side so as to build up a wholesome academic tradition.

(a) Reorganization of training schools and colleges cannot be delayed. It is a pity that these have not made their influence felt so far in the sphere of education. It is an insult to them if public men should go on saying that the teachers needed for the working of the Wardha Scheme cannot be trained in our Province in spite of an expenditure of about four lakhs a year on training institutions. Many questions will be constantly coming up for consideration. Should a training college be merely a convenient expedient for service exigencies? Why should it not become an active educational research centre with specialists studying scientifically problems as they arise. The present state of indecision even in respect of elementary questions like the medium of instruction, correlation of subjects, etc., is astonishing. The training colleges should continue to be in touch with teachers in schools and help them to maintain a high standard. They should give periodically short courses of lectures on modern topics of interest for the benefit of teachers and also have a programme of teacher-in-service-training.

(b) Why is our present system regarded wasteful, and lifeless? Why should not the public be impressed with the inspectorate? There is a frequent complaint that the number of officers is not adequate. It is all the more necessary that great care should have been taken in the matter of recruitment. Much is expected of inspecting officers in western countries and they are regarded as philosopher, friend, and guide. The reports of H. M. Inspectors abound in practical suggestions of great value to teachers. No inspector can hope to command the confidence of the school authorities and the profession in our province unless he has established his reputation as a teacher in a school. A reorganisation of the inspectorate is long overdue. The Minister can realise there is much to be said for direct recruitment to the inspectorate from the profession up to a certain percentage as in the case of recruitment to the judiciary from the Bar. It is essential



that the officers should be given facilities to visit modern training institutions, acquaint themselves with modern trends in education, and undergo a special course fitting them for the responsible work. It is also a matter for consideration whether the present system of inspection itself may not be altered. The strength of the inspecting officer should not lie in codes and rules but in his competence to understand sympathetically the difficulties in the class room and offer useful suggestions.

A Minister of Education is constitutionally responsible to the public for the administration of education. If he be a wise man, he will not worry himself with administrative matters of no importance. It should be his eager desire to look at education as a whole, to keep his hands on the important nerve centres of the educational system and to carry through successfully the programme. Many difficulties are sure to arise in practice and new situations may have to be faced. He should therefore like to have about him a liberal-minded brain-trust that can with its experience and intimate knowledge give him proper advice. If this brain-trust should be efficient and business like it must not be large. This brain-trust is the Board of Education. *Ad hoc* Committees cannot be thought of when reorganisation has to be planned and worked and when crores of rupees are to be spent. The Board is just an advisory body consisting of representatives of the Managers' Association, the South India Teachers' Union and the Universities in South India with the Director of Public Instruction as Secretary and the Minister as Chairman. The above-mentioned bodies are directly associated with education in schools and colleges and it will be a pleasure to the Minister to work with them. Any machinery which brings together such representatives for the discussion of questions will promote better understanding and secure their willing co-operation. All parties may be trusted to pull together so that education can make steady progress. The Minister, who is the representative of the people will be the connecting link between the public and the Board and he will be very often in a position to adopt a line of action in general conformity with the view of the Board and also acceptable to the public. The reorganisation scheme will be allowed to proceed according to programme and it will not be frequently meddled with. The opposition to reorganisation which is noticed in some influential quarters may be due to a vague fear that political and party influences may begin to dominate and cause confusion in the sphere of education. It may be that this fear is baseless but yet a possibility of that kind will be avoided if a Board of Education constituted on non-communal and non-political considerations becomes a permanent institution charged with the task of examining educational questions in all their aspects and giving advice to the Minister then and there. Very soon a healthy convention will grow up and no Minister who takes his duties seriously will ever think of flouting the opinion of the Board. The country will in any case have a chance of seeing all sides of a question and it is quite likely that common sense will finally prevail.

The appeal of the Minister will be that the parties concerned, namely, the Government, the Management, the Public and the Teaching profession should always remember that the interests of the child have brought them together to work in a common sphere and they should not allow the child interests to suffer because of their individual differences. With goodwill and a spirit of give and take all parties can throw themselves heart and soul into the work of schools, especially when they feel confident that the Government is ready to lend a helping hand and do its utmost for National Education.



## POST WAR EDUCATION\*

I should like to thank the Council of the Guild for asking me to preside over this Conference. It is perhaps its desire that the members of the Guild should know how the South India Teachers' Union proposes to tackle the important problem of the day, Post-war Education.

The Union has appointed an *ad hoc* committee to study the several aspects of this problem and prepare a report with the help of information and materials gathered from affiliated associations. You may ask me what chance there is for the report of this committee being considered by the authorities and the public. You may also point to certain anomalies and tendencies in and outside the teaching profession and express a doubt about the successful completion of the work by the committee. What are the tendencies that may make the work difficult? There is the demoralising effect due to the psychological influence of the "impossibility suggestion" in the field of education. Mention any reform or topic, say the adoption of the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction, or the introduction of technical courses in the high school, or the provision for physical education and medical inspection, or the improvement in the conditions of service; the immediate reaction of teachers and public men is the expression of the feeling that such reform is impossible. We have to take note of this dead-weight of the impossibility suggestion which is likely to damp the enthusiasm of workers.

Another difficulty arises from the gulf between words and action. Look at the flood of leaflets generously distributed by the candidates aspiring for seats in the authorities of the university. While these leaflets contain sentiments expressing willingness to co-operate in the discussion of educational problems, the secretaries of associations have to make frantic efforts to get a ray of light from them.

Again there is the passionate desire for a seat in boards and committees appointed by the Government from time to time. Groups and sections, linguistic, communal, and professional, press their respective claims for representation when a board or committee is constituted. But such groups do not seem to evince any interest in the study of educational problems of their own accord. Nor have they shown any inclination to co-operate with non-official and unofficial committees interested in the study of problems.

These tendencies are apt to be discouraging but at this critical moment the Union should deem it its duty to go ahead with the study of the problem and place before the public its well-considered opinion for what it is worth. We are on the eve of great changes. We hear too often suggestive phrases, such as, Global Order, New World Order, World State,

\* Presidential address delivered at the Annual Conference of the Madras Teachers' Guild, April 1943.

International Cosmopolitanism, and so on. Even advanced countries like Great Britain and America where the well-organised educational system is able to adopt itself quickly to the rapidly changing conditions in the world of today, turn their attention to the lines of educational reconstruction, during the post-war period. We, in India, cannot but realise the need for a thorough overhauling of the present system of education. This may have some good results to its credit but it is difficult to dispute the widespread view that it is proving ineffective just now. We have been dealing with the question of educational reconstruction in a merely academic and light-hearted manner. The time has come for us to consider in right earnest the problem of post-war education, especially when the India of the future has to take its legitimate place among the United Nations. The problem of post-war education is by no means a simple one. It has points of contact with several important spheres in our national life. Let me take the more important aspects for consideration today.

When one thinks of post-war education, the following questions come uppermost in ones mind :

- (a) what should be the objectives of post-war education ?
- (b) who should be responsible for public education ?
- (c) what about the agency for running schools and colleges ?
- (d) what about the financing of public education ?
- (e) what about the teaching *personnal*, mode of recruitment, equipment and conditions of service, etc.

An agreement on these fundamental aspects must be reached if post-war education should be remodelled on satisfactory lines. This is possible only when the problem is approached by the Government, the managing agency, the public and the teaching profession in a sincere spirit of service to the school-going child uninfluenced by vested interests and narrow outlook.

Educationists and thinkers all over the world feel that the objectives of modern education should be clearly understood. Stated in plain terms, their view is that schools and colleges should adopt a programme for the education of the whole Nation and for the education of the whole man. It is clear that the pupil is not to be isolated from the society enviroment and that due recognition should be given to his future as a member of the family, a citizen, a bread-winner, and a distinct personality. No scheme of post-war education can ignore any of these aspects if the individual should play his part worthily, though emphasis should vary in accordance with the age of the pupil.

A clear understanding of the objectives of the post-war education makes it clear that the State alone should be held responsible for public education. The education of the whole man is a complex problem and the State is the only body that can prevent any conflict of interests and pave the way for an atmosphere of trust and good-will. The implications of State responsibility are far-reaching and it has to consider all questions of finance, administration and legislation. Education in South India has not



been fruitful to the extent that was expected chiefly because the State has not admitted its responsibility in plain terms.

What agency should run schools and manage them is a delicate and difficult question. Today the local bodies and private managements bear a good portion of the burden. The service rendered by local bodies and private managements to the cause of education is undoubtedly great and the departmental reports bear testimony to the useful work done by them. But it is well known that many of the schools under local bodies and private management are reported to be leading a precarious existence. Adverse comments in the official reports on the conditions of service of teachers, the insanitary buildings and lack of equipment and playing fields are too frequent. The policy of State-aided education seems to have been adopted on the ground that the State with its limited resources could hardly cope with the situation. Is it not strange that what was deemed impossible for the state was considered possible for poor managers? Modern education has been making fresh and exacting demands upon the slender resources of the management. The State-aided system is breaking down during this emergency and the glaring defects of this system are plainly exposed. Look at the position of teachers employed in schools under the different agencies. The teachers in Government schools drawing a certain scale of salary have been granted dearness allowance; teachers in schools under some local bodies have, as the result of representation begun to receive some dearness allowance which is less than that received by Government servants. What about teachers in aided schools? Far from receiving any dearness allowance, they have to face the abrupt termination of their services owing to the fall in the fee income. The situation will have become more serious if the Director had not succeeded in persuading the Government to give relief. Even in times of plenty the appeal of the management for financial help does not meet with ready response since the Grant-in-aid Code is rigid and unhelpful. The time has come to reconsider dispassionately the pros and cons of the State-aided policy. Under no circumstances should the educational facilities of pupils be curtailed in whatever type of school he may happen to receive instruction. The history of elementary education in our province shows clearly that no progress is possible under the existing system. Subsidies and aids may continue to be given but the out-turn is likely to be poor. The feeling that improvement is possible only by the assumption of direct responsibility by the State is growing strong and the agency question has to be decided with due regard to the importance of mass education. The problem of agency in regard to higher education is not less complex and any decision that is finally arrived at should have in view the realisation of our objective.

The financing of education is the most difficult question. What amount should be allotted to education in the budget and what proportion the educational expenditure should bear to the general revenues have to be considered in the light of the work ahead of us in the field of education



The American practice of making land grants and earmarking certain taxes for education suggests one line of approach. There is considerable force in the argument that the Central Government should share with the Provincial Governments the educational burden. It will be good if a long-range programme be adopted and the cost be spread over a period, say, of twenty years.

Lastly there is the teaching personnel. Much will depend upon the teacher. Leaders and administrators appeal to teachers to train the pupils on such lines as to be free from sectional, communal or provincial bias and prejudice. A cosmopolitan outlook free from any partisan feeling is not only desirable but essential for the growth of the Indian Nation. The Turkish press delegation has done a service by clarifying the position in regard to religion on more than one occasion. It is hence necessary that the recruitment of teachers should be done with great care. Efficiency and proper social outlook should be the chief considerations that should weigh with the selection committee in regard to recruitment and promotion. Official reports admit the necessity for the improvement in the conditions of service of teachers in non-government schools. The idea of unification of the teaching service suggested by the Calcutta University Commission has to be examined in the light of the present needs and I cannot present the case of the teacher better than by quoting F. D. Roosevelt: "The teachers of the Nation must receive not only adequate pay but have a standing in the community which will make their position that of the highest possible influence for the Good." The present system of recruitment and promotion gives no scope for a teacher of talents. As a matter of fact distinct achievement is nowhere so often ignored as in the educational administration. What a teacher has been able to do while in service must be taken into account if the profession be expected to be able to take the initiative and fulfil its obligations to the Society.

While dealing with post-war education we should take into account the experience of the past, the knowledge of the present and the vision of the future. The magnitude of the problem should not be an excuse for shutting our eyes. The question is not whether reconstruction is possible but whether it is desirable to let education remain as it is a minute longer. The greatest man of India has already indicated the lines on which the remodelling should proceed, if India should count for anything.

The dominant idea of the Wardha scheme and the spirit behind it are plainly in the words uttered long ago by J. A. Froude. (Inaugural address delivered to University of St. Andrews.)

"I accept without qualification the first principle of our fore-fathers that every boy born into the world should be put in the way of maintaining himself in honest independence. No education which does not make this as its first aim is worth anything at all.....A man must learn to stand upright upon his own feet, to respect himself, to be independent of charity or accident."

Leaving aside the points of controversy, the scheme as finally adopted by the central advisory board may be taken as the basis for discussion and so far as basic education is concerned, Russia which till recently was more or less on a level with India in regard to education and industry holds out a ray of hope. In a short period of 25 years the 90% illiteracy has been liquidated and even new alphabets have been formed for some of the languages. What was purely an agricultural country has been transformed into an efficient industrial country. How great and rapid has been the transformation is clearly shown by the way Russia has been fighting its battles almost single-handed against the well-equipped, highly mechanised, scientifically trained might of Germany.

In conclusion, I should like to appeal to the members of the Guild to co-operate with the post-war education committee of the S. I. T. Union by communicating their opinions on the questionnaire or topics referred to them and to be prepared to explain to the public the results of our study of the Post-war education.

## OUR PROBLEM TO-DAY\*

I am meeting you at a critical moment in the history of South Indian education. I shall try to place my view of the position to-day in a frank manner. It is for you to consider all points of view and do what you can to make the S.I.T.U. function efficiently as the organization of our learned profession and to uphold its high ideals.

These are days when teachers are apt to change their idea of men and things. For years from 1920 onwards I happened to be an esteemed teacher enjoying the confidence of you all. In the last two or three weeks I have received one or two anonymous letters telling me that I am not wanted and I should resign. I am sorry I cannot act on this well-meant suggestion but I think the cause for this change should be examined. I feel and my colleagues in the Executive Board of the Union likewise feel, that I have been reflecting the opinion of teachers frankly and strongly as usual to the authorities. The appreciative terms of reference to my work in gatherings like this show that the attitude of teachers in general has not changed in regard to me. The only factor which may be held responsible for the expression of an adverse view should be the indifferent attitude of our Government in the rapidly changing conditions in our Province.

There is a stir or unrest in every sphere all over the world. In countries like England the Government is keen on keeping in touch with the varying needs of the people and on modifying its policy suitably then and there. In our Province, things which should have been attended to long ago in the field of education have been left undone and even now there is no indication of a change for the better. We are to-day educationally where other countries like Russia stood in 1913. It is no exaggeration if well-intentioned and competent thinkers in and outside India should feel that our backwardness in education is not a little responsible for the slow progress in political, social, industrial and economic fields.

Let us for a moment see how the problem of modern education is being faced in England and Madras. You may know that the Butler Act placing English education on a statutory basis was passed right in the midst of the total world war. This Act recognizes that the youth of the country is a valuable national asset and that the fate of the country depends upon the education of the people. This Act is rightly claimed to be a courageous and ingenious attempt to create a single national system from a bewildering variety of schools each with its own aims. It seeks to secure for all children a better start in life and to ensure a fuller measure of education according to aptitudes. It has succeeded in enlisting the

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\* Presidential Address delivered at the Annual Educational Conference of the Tinnevely Dt. Teachers' Guild held at Palamcottah on 19.4.47.



wholehearted co-operation of the several voluntary agencies by a correct understanding of their needs and by offer of liberal financial help. The plan, the machinery, the timetable for the programme, the provision of funds and the duties of the concerned bodies are set forth as clearly as possible and even the man in the street knows what the education programme is and how the Government proposes to work it out.

You may say India is not so favourably placed from the constitutional point of view and a similar pace cannot be expected. But education has been in the charge of Indian Ministers for nearly thirty years and it is astonishing that the percentage of literacy is still appallingly low. There is no adequate provision for technical education and advanced studies and our young men have to go abroad and spend considerable sums of money. The Educational Adviser to the Government of India was constrained to state in his official report that our Ministers were not quite keen on pushing forward educational schemes but were inclined more often for talk than for action. Can we say that the position is better to-day? Is it not strange that the political parties which are eager to take charge of administration and exercise power have no arrangements for enabling the aspiring members of the party to study the problems beforehand and equip themselves properly for the job? Even to-day we have no idea of the education programme of any party including the Congress Party. Ministers of Education do not think it necessary to pay any heed to the heaps of reports on education getting mouldy in the secretariat. The Press Statements issued by them to explain their own pet notions take us nowhere. There is considerable confusion and the school authorities hesitate to adopt certain measures since the Government is not generally inclined to incur additional expenditure. A planned education programme with adequate provision of funds and backed by a well-informed public opinion is not before the public and the progress made cannot therefore be judged. The interpellations and discussions in the legislatures relating to education do not encourage the hope that a concerted effort will be made for the all-round improvement of education in the near future. The people get the government they deserve and unless they wake up and cry halt to the meaningless discussion in and outside the Assembly, education in our Province will be seriously hampered. This will be unfortunate if the solid phalanx of the ministerial party does not plan wisely and pursue its work with vigour.

One distressing problem of education in regard to which unseemly and improper reference was officially made in the Assembly is that of the conditions of service of teachers. So low have been the salaries of teachers that the Central Advisory Board had to utter a word of warning to the authorities and to express the view that the authorities have not till now cared to consider educational services as of any practical importance. Those who are in touch with the administration of aided schools in our province cannot forget that salary cuts, stoppage of increments, termination of services and the migration of teachers were

common phenomena till recently and the S.I.T.U. has been bringing these grievances and objectionable practices to the notice of authorities. It has not struck the capable managers to organise themselves and come to a definite understanding with the Government as regards the financial help. The non-interference theory of the Government is no doubt a good protection to the management, but the teachers feel that they are turned from pillar to post. The education of children cannot but suffer under such conditions. The deplorable conditions of service of teachers have affected seriously the admission in training schools and colleges. How can it be otherwise? Teachers in service are living advertisement pillars and like David Copperfield are carrying on their backs invisible placards for any one to read: "Victims of school service. Keep away". It is no wonder that the emergency training scheme did not succeed and the shortage of teachers is alarming. The prolonged and painful controversy with the Government in respect of dearness allowance should open the eyes of the public to the need for a change in educational policy. Never has there been an occasion when Government would come forward and say it can find money to spare for teachers. But the Minister is not tired of asking them to show a spirit of sacrifice. Teachers are aware that the Madras Post-War Reconstruction Committee has recommended that the low salaries of teachers should be brought up to the scales recommended by the Central Advisory Board. On the occasion of the opening of the All India Educational Conference in December 1945, Sir Arthur Hope was pleased to admit that the official method of approach of the educational needs was not correct and that the status and pay of teachers, especially those in elementary schools should be improved. Teachers who have been feeling the pinch expected an improvement of their position at the time of the consideration of the salary problem by the Cabinet Committee. Many were hoping that the popular ministry would do the right thing at the right moment.

The eagerly looked for report is out and teachers are shocked. The scales of pay recommended for educational services do not compare favourably with those for other posts of a similar exacting nature. Even within the educational service an invidious distinction is made between Government schools and the rest. The salaries of teachers in elementary schools are still very low and do not amount to a living wage. The grant promised to aided secondary schools is not adequate and the adoption of the new scale is left to the option of the management. The Union and the affiliated Associations criticised the Cabinet recommendations and expressed the view that they were inadequate, disappointing and unsatisfactory. The Government came out with an explanatory communique which made matters worse. The reasons advanced by the Government for fixing higher scales for teachers in Government schools were shown to be untenable. Strong objection was also taken by teachers to the irrelevant and insinuating observation in the communique that the emoluments of a service should naturally bear a relation to the services rendered by the



service to the people of this country. This pompous, meaningless sentiment is certainly an afterthought and the attempt to use this principle as the yardstick for fixing the salaries of educational services alone is grossly unfair. There is enough of material to show that the salary problem has not been approached and in all likelihood will not be approached in the right spirit and with due regard to the bearing of education on national progress and welfare. Teachers' representatives who gave evidence before the salaries committee were surprised at the casual and light-hearted manner in which the members seemed to set about their business. The fears of our representatives have proved true. The reaction of the teaching profession is serious and a state of unrest has come to prevail.

There were worse things to come. Even persons dressed in brief authority like the Municipal Commissioners find it convenient to order about teachers and assign to them tasks unconnected with the school. In the course of a reply to a volley of questions in the Assembly, the then premier, Mr. T. Prakasam is reported to have made the shocking remark that in the fixing of scales for teachers the Government had in mind the holidays they enjoy. What about the Judicial Department enjoying holidays and drawing good salaries? We have also heard how persons occupying responsible positions stoop to a low level and argue that the low salaries for teachers are justified owing to the prevalence of private tuition. We do not want to take serious notice of such silly notions but yet these observations show that there is a deliberate disinclination on the part of the men in power to deal justly with teachers. They say one thing on the platform but do quite a different thing when in power. It is a travesty of facts when a Cabinet member says, that teachers also have joined the general scramble for increase of pay. For more than 30 years we have been urging the question of the revision of salaries. Teachers have been in the queue from early times and they are being elbowed out every time. It is such things that have upset teachers who feel that some effective steps should be adopted to maintain their self respect and improve their condition.

In this mood of frustration they naturally look around and see how employees in other spheres press their case in an aggressive form and succeed by causing headache to the Ministers. Further not a day passes without our seeing in the press announcement of the news of teachers' strikes in some part or other in India. There is nothing surprising if embittered teachers in our Province also should think of short cuts and think seriously of direct action. There is a crisis to be faced by the Union to-day. This is a formidable and delicate problem and all those interested in the Union should approach it with balanced minds and with regard for each other's opinion.

There are two methods open to us to get our grievances redressed and win our legitimate place. The traditional constitutional method of conferences, resolutions and deputations has been tried with some success but under the new democratic constitution this does not promise quick



results. In the specially agitated condition teachers have no faith in the generous intentions of the authorities, and with the example of railwaymen and others before them appreciate the potency of direct action like strike. The second method is on the lips of every one. Affiliated associations make an appeal to the Union for a lead in the direction of a strike and assure the Union of their full co-operation. It is a matter for satisfaction that the cause of teachers is admitted to be just. But the mere justness of a cause does not lead to victory. The direct action programme will have to be studied in all its intricate aspects in a calm and dispassionate manner. Those who feel strongly in the matter urge immediate direct action but nobody knows what is exactly wanted. It is essential that a joint meeting of the Executive Board and the office-bearers of the Guilds should meet before the Conference, exchange ideas, discuss the problem with the relevant data before them and formulate a general plan for consideration at the Conference. It is not wise to hustle the Board or the Conference into a decision since the question of direct action is undoubtedly a grave one.

Strike as ordinarily understood is an extreme step in the direct action programme. In view of the gravity of the situation the Executive Board recognized the strike as a legitimate weapon for the redress of grievances of a serious nature. The office-bearers of the Union who should have a fair idea of the strength of the Union cannot think of allowing the associations to resort to action straightaway. It feels that strike should be regarded as an extreme step to be adopted after good preparation if other measures fail. It has already suggested for the consideration of the affiliated associations a modified form of direct action which will not hit the children. This will certainly go a great way towards maintaining the self-respect and dignity of teachers and at the same time compel the authorities to change their angle of vision. This programme of the Board may not be spectacular but it requires self-reliance, strength of conviction and sacrifice to the same extent.

Strike is quite a new line of activity with the technique of which we are not familiar. Various views are expressed and various questions are freely asked. The office-bearers cannot be expected to express any opinion one way or the other. There is bound to be difference of opinion among teachers and it is necessary that there should be freedom for the expression of opinion. Let us sit together with a determination to come to an understanding through discussion and argument. Whatever view happens to prevail in the end, let it be admitted by all that every one was free to express his opinion and that the better side had the chance. I now should like to refer to some of the numerous points raised by our friends on the question of direct action. These are just illustrative and many more will be put to us before a decision is reached. Should the strike be province-wide or local? Should the strike be restricted to one grade at a time? Should all the teachers be compelled to join the strike? What about the teachers in schools where the conditions of service are

good? Will the strike produce quick results? Is it possible to conduct the strike in a non-violent manner? What is the machinery needed to be in charge of the strike programme? What about the relief fund needed for distribution as subsistence allowance during the strike period? What personnel is needed for the execution of the programme? What is the arrangement for propaganda? How many full-timed employees will be needed and how are they to be paid? What preparation is necessary before direct action can be launched? How far is local autonomy to be permitted? What is to be the relation between the Union Office and the action centres? Is it not an advantage to keep the strike programme apart from the Union in view of the large number of teachers who are outside the Union?

I have referred to these questions at some length and we who urge the adoption of direct action should be in a position to carry the rank and file with us and to convince them of the soundness of the step under contemplation by giving full information. Some of our over-enthusiastic friends tell me that it will be unnecessary for us to go into these details beforehand and that things will somehow shape themselves properly in course of time. That is not a proper view and the programme will end in a fiasco. If the strike should happen to be prolonged, several inconvenient situations will have to be faced. No responsible person or body will ever launch a programme unless adequate and careful preparations are made and competent full-timed persons are entrusted with the work. The Union should also know what its commitments are. We shall have to remember in this connection that some of our national leaders like Sirdar Vallabai Patel who are highly esteemed by us have expressed their views on teachers' strike clearly and freely. It is therefore necessary that a council of action to be constituted should go into the question thoroughly, take its own time for investigation, and be given freedom to make its recommendations regarding the feasibility, the opportune time, preparation of the ground and the resources needed in the form of men and money. A lot of spade work will have to be done since teachers are distributed all over the Province under different managements.

There can be no two opinions about the need for effective action. It is hoped that the proposed council of action will come out with its proposals at an early date. In the meantime the modified direct action programme suggested by the Executive Board may be tried to compel the management and the Government to recognise the justness of our claims. The Minister for Education may be able to see our point of view and find it possible to make a friendly gesture and enhance the scales of salaries. I feel as strongly as anybody in respect of the improvement of the status and conditions of service. But I feel still more strongly that we should not in the heat of the moment overlook the fundamental ideals of our profession. I am uneasy and unhappy when a scheme of direct action which hits the children directly and immediately is suggested. We are entrusted with the moulding of

the character of the pupils in their formative period and no one can say what effect our revolt will have on the tender minds of thousands of our pupils in their future. I also appeal to you to take note of some of the unhealthy byproducts inseparable from the strike as ordinarily understood. How shall we deal with a class room situation if the pupils rightly or wrongly take objection to an act of the teacher and resort to direct action? Will not the management and the authorities hold us responsible for the indiscipline and expect us to face the music and resolve the crisis? In a vast Province with several grades of teachers working in thousands under hundreds of managements acts of omission and commission are natural. Once redress through strike is adopted as the solution, it is difficult to resist the tendency to set the strike machinery moving for the redress of grievances. Should the school atmosphere degenerate into a market atmosphere? There is again the sympathetic strike which is very annoying and likely to alienate the sympathy of the public and the management. It will be a serious reflection on our professional fitness if we overlook these aspects. We should explore all possible ways to gain our object but we should not forget that the Union exists not only for the betterment of teachers but also for the advancement of education. The step that we adopt for the solution of the immediate problem should not come into conflict with the long-range ideal. With proper care and restraint it should be possible for us to succeed sooner or later. Let us take a realistic view and work steadfastly with trust in one another and in a spirit of non-violence.

Primary Education Committee. In calling upon the Committee to suggest the best method to be adopted for expansion and improvement of Elementary Education, the Government announced as its immediate policy the institution of compulsion for boys in all villages and towns with a population of 500 and over. To help the Committee to understand the question referred to it the Government circulated the note prepared by the late Mr. Gossain. The Government called upon the Committee to consider after the question in the light of Mr. Gossain's note and also to see whether the idea of part-time schools would prove feasible.

This is not the time to go into the question of the merits of the policy announced by the Government. But it is a matter for great reflection that the Government should have decided to introduce very clearly its present policy in regard to mass education. The Committee was therefore faced to take with a definite model. The report of the Committee is now before the Provincial Education Council and expects soon the report will already appeared in the press. There are one or two serious criticisms to be made against the report. The report contains no definite answer to the question referred to the Committee. In the very first paragraph the Committee expressed its desire to go beyond the terms of reference and to take up for consideration the entire field of Elementary Education. While saying that a thorough overhauling of the system is needed, the Committee has no definite recommendation to make. With regard to the question referred to it the Committee delivered an initial report in the Education Year, 1920-21.



### OUR GROUND FLOOR\*

The subject of our "Ground Floor" is on the lips of every one and there has been considerable discussion about it in the press and on the platform. Mr. Statham, the Director of Public Instruction, has, in his message to the Central Education Week Committee, laid stress on the importance of Mass Education. The South India Teachers' Union and its affiliated associations will certainly hasten to assure him of their support. Intelligent and whole-hearted co-operation of the profession with the authorities requires a clear understanding of, and agreement on, the fundamentals of mass education. The teaching profession would have been able to understand the measures adopted by the Government from time to time if the profession had an opportunity of sitting at the same table with the authorities and politicians and discussing educational questions. Unfortunately, the authorities in our province have always been proceeding on the assumption that the teaching profession has, and can have, no opinion to offer. Consequently, it is impossible for the teaching profession to know exactly where mass education stands. It has to rely upon papers and documents published by the Government, or by the press from time to time. The latest pronouncement with regard to mass education is the report of the Primary Education Committee. Some time back the Government appointed a Primary Education Committee. In calling upon this Committee to suggest the best method to be adopted for expansion and improvement of Elementary Education, the Government announced as its immediate policy, the introduction of compulsion for boys in all villages and towns with a population of 5,000 and over. To help the Committee to understand the question referred to it the Government circulated the note prepared by the late Mr. Champion. The Government called upon the Committee to consider the question in the light of Mr. Champion's note and also to see whether the idea of part-time schools would prove useful.

This is not the time to go into the question of the merits of the policy announced by the Government. But it is a matter for great satisfaction that the Government should have chosen to indicate very clearly its present policy in regard to mass education. The Committee was therefore face to face with a definite problem. The report of the Committee is now before the Provincial Economic Council and extracts from the report have already appeared in the press. There are one or two serious criticisms to be made against the report. The report contains no definite answer to the question referred to the Committee. In the very first paragraph the Committee expresses its desire to go beyond the terms of reference and to take up for consideration the entire field of Elementary Education. While saying that a thorough overhauling of the system is needed, the Committee has no definite recommendation to make. With regard to the question referred to it the

\* A lecture delivered on the Guild day of the Madras Education Week, Oct. 1936.

Committee makes the astounding statement that it deprecates the introduction of compulsion in any area unless there are a sufficient number of school-buildings, a sufficient number of schools with the complete structure of five standards, and sufficient staff and equipment to render the proper working of compulsion possible. It is very difficult to understand why the Committee should have chosen to consider the question in general terms and thus deprive the Government of the help expected from it.

Another point about the report is that it chooses to ignore the question of the education of children below the age of six. Though it may be justifiable technically under the definition in the Elementary Education Act, it is uneducational for the Committee to state that the proper care and education of children below the age of six is a matter more for consideration of the Health Department than for the Department of Education. All the world over, the Nursery School Movement is receiving special attention and even the buildings and furniture are newly designed to meet the needs of children. Psychologists tell us that habits and character are being formed even at an early stage of the child and it is very unfortunate that the Committee should make a statement which is likely to create an impression that the authorities and the public of Madras are not in touch with the modern trends in Education. The report of the Committee is more or less a hotch-potch one abounding in half-truths, irrelevant criticisms and contradictions with a sprinkling of pious declarations. The suggestions made by the Committee are by no means new and many of them such as free supply of books and change of school hours were made as early as 1920.

The chief points in the report I propose to consider are: (1) Public sympathy, (2) Poverty of the parents, (3) Stagnation and wastage, (4) Unsuitability of the courses, (5) Paucity of funds, and (6) Teaching grants.

Much is said about lack of public sympathy. All political parties have always stood for mass education. It is therefore very difficult to understand what kind of public sympathy is expected. The Committee itself says in its report that there is great scope for adopting moral persuasion. It can be safely said that there is no hostility on the part of the public with regard to mass education. This lack of public opinion is one of the old arguments repeated every time. What is the publicity work done by the authorities and politicians to make the public realise to the importance of education? Very few of the thousand and one politicians who are spending a lot of money in elections to Local Bodies and Legislatures have been educating public opinion in regard to mass education. It is unfair to take shelter under lack of public sympathy.

The poverty of the parents is an old idea which is given a new turn in the official note. The poverty of the parents has been the very reason why compulsion has been urged elsewhere in other countries. The official note and the report of the Committee seem to be inclined to the view that the children are the property of parents. Should they depend upon the earnings of children of school-going age? Take the case of the raising of the school-going age to 15 in England. The Government in England has as

a result of the agitation set up by the political parties been compelled to raise the age to 15 and the Labour and Liberal Parties have been opposed to the granting of exemption to a pupil who may be beneficially employed. Is it not strange that in our country we should just now begin to talk about poverty of parents as an excuse for not sending children to school? There are many ways in which the attendance of poor children at school can be secured, such as free supply of books. Why should the Committee hesitate to recommend to the Government the supply of midday meals which is being adopted in several municipalities? After all, what is the earning of the child? Even the adult in our province is able only to earn a pittance of a few pies a day. It is undesirable that the children of the poor should be deprived of the equality of opportunity.

Stagnation and wastage have been casually referred to in old reports, but during the past few years, much is said about these phenomena. Let us assume for the moment that there is considerable wastage owing to the premature withdrawal of pupils from schools and stagnation. The remedy lies not in shutting out facilities for elementary education. Compulsion is the only method which will ensure holding capacity and regular attendance. Even the problem of inducing the child to continue to attend the school cannot be solved without a certain measure of compulsion. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to expect a parent to continue to keep his child in school. There is therefore no escape from compulsion. Moreover, the introduction of compulsion does not rule out moral persuasion, publicity and appeal.

The phenomenon of stagnation and wastage have occurred elsewhere as for instance in the Phillippine Islands and the problem has been solved by suitable changes in the courses of study, by better teaching methods, by proper training of teachers, and by better conditions of service. The Committee states that much depends on the teacher, but it does not choose to bring to the Government's notice the scandalous conditions obtaining in Elementary Schools especially under Local Bodies. No reform of Elementary Education will produce any result until the Government takes care to see that qualified teachers are attracted to the profession, and are made to feel that it is worthwhile for them to remain in it. Mere increase of the inspectorate cannot go far, for even the inspectorate is placed in a very delicate position between the Department on the one hand, and the Local Bodies on the other. Very few of the inspecting staff can lay any claim to any training in modern methods with regard to instruction and testing and the police work indicated for inspectors in the report is just the thing that is discouraged in Western countries. He is to be an officer not so much for picking holes as for improving the efficiency of schools. If on the score of stagnation and wastage, the authorities are persuaded to act on the suggestion of the Committee for curtailing facilities for education, and adopt the much condemned scheme of concentration and consolidation on a presidency-wide scale, the load of illiteracy will become very heavy and the present generation will be guilty of handing over to the reformed Government a



much larger number of people who are unable to understand the implications and responsibilities of modern life. Some suggestions are of course made with regard to the school curriculum and other subjects, but it is surprising that the Committee should have devoted so much space to Higher Elementary Schools and the courses in them. The immediate problem before the country and the Government is mass education and education up to the fifth standard should receive special attention. The question of teaching English, the teaching of mensuration and surveying are all points which are irrelevant at the present moment and these should not be mixed up with the problem of mass education.

There is very little in the report about finances. It is astounding that the Committee should not have chosen to give an estimate of the cost of education. So long ago as 1920, when the Madras Elementary Education Act was under consideration, Sir Arthur Knapp expressed the idea that the future Minister would be in a better position to tackle the problem of finance because the District Educational Councils would have formed an estimate of the cost of expansion of Elementary education so as to bring educational facilities to every child of school-going age. Unfortunately the Committee takes for granted that funds will not be forthcoming and therefore it makes no definite suggestion as regards the equipment and conditions of service. We may feel certain no reform of Elementary education, either qualitative or quantitative, can be thought of unless there is the assurance from the Government that an allotment of further funds is possible. In the note of Mr. Champion, an attempt was made to prevent stagnation, by a change in the system of teaching grants. That proposal may be good for the Government. But apart from the objection that it tries to exalt the old condemned idea of payment by results, it does not attempt to offer definite encouragement to teachers who may be inclined to do their very best. Without calling in question the sincerity or the honest intentions of the managements, it is necessary to state that a change in the mere procedure regarding grants may not go far unless the Government also offer more liberal help and take definite steps to see that the money goes directly to teachers whose salaries are low. There is also a wrong notion that the question of mass education is more the duty of the managements and the teacher-managers. A large number of schools are run by committees and teacher-managers who have not the necessary means to run the schools efficiently in spite of their honest efforts to do so. Co-operation from all sources is necessary and should be welcomed if the Government do not have adequate resources. Whatever may be the agency employed, it is absolutely necessary that the Government should improve the conditions of service of teachers. The question of mass education is a big "Mettur Project." A leader with imagination, an expert to plan the programme properly and sincere and contented workers to work out the scheme are necessary. The greatest South Indian engineering feat as indicated by the Mettur Dam is a lesson for us in connection with Elementary Education. What is needed therefore is for the Government to formulate the general policy. It is for the Director of Public Instruction to devote his brains and time to the planning of the programme and the teaching profession should understand the spirit and work the scheme. In the absence of a programme, it is very difficult for the teacher or for the politician or even the authorities to say how far we have gone and when we shall be reaching the goal. Given a good programme, of elementary education upto the fifth standard, we shall be making rapid progress in the promotion of permanent literacy. If funds be wanting, the scheme may be tried in select districts and the experience gained therein may be of great value.

## EDUCATION AND THE CHALLENGE OF TO-DAY

The theme, "Education and the Challenge of To-day," which you have chosen for this year's Education Week is itself a challenge. The theme of Education and the Challenge of To-day admits of two interpretations. The problem is the same whether it is education challenging or being challenged. Whatever it may be, it is usually taken for granted that the school standing for education is on its trial and must justify its existence. You would like me to explain to you the why of this challenge.

You need not go far to find out the reason for this challenge. This is inevitable with the evolution of the modern education system from the old traditional type. How far away from the traditional system has the modern system moved will be obvious if you just go through the "Children's Charter" formulated by the White House Conference in 1930. Education for every child (normal or handicapped or in conflict with Society), education through discovery and development of individual abilities, education for life, education for complete living, education for children below 5 are all deemed to be the essential features of a modern education system. Look at the traditional education and on this modern system and the contrast should be obvious. The cross-over from the traditional single-purpose school to the modern multipurpose school which is anxious to take note of the child as an individual, a member of the home, a member of the Society, a citizen of the world and a bread-winner must have far-reaching consequences. The objectives of modern education programme are undoubtedly many, varied and kaleidoscopic; and naturally an emphasis on any one aspect, however well-intentioned and legitimate it may be, is bound to provoke criticism or cause dissatisfaction. There is no wonder if in the stirring times we have been living in, education happens to be challenged in more than one quarter.

If you would like to know the terms of the challenge you will do well to go through the convocation addresses and utterances of public men. Very probably you may come across statements more or less as follows :

(1) Education of to-day is unsuited to modern conditions and the curriculum is unnecessarily overcrowded. (2) Educational expenditure is mounting up and a good portion of the amount spent is a waste. (3) Our young men have no knowledge of the affairs of the world and their physique is far from satisfactory. (4) Educational administration lacks initiative and teachers should learn to scorn delights and live laborious days. (5) The Education which the speakers had in their own days was much better than the presentday type. (6) Undue importance is attached to equipment, laboratory and library and the provision of spacious buildings is a luxury. (7) The attention now paid to games and physical education takes away the time from intellectual work,



It is not necessary to examine any of these criticisms now and I am prepared to admit that these have been made with the best of motives. These challenging criticisms really raise one general question, viz., how "to enable *the right pupils* to receive the right education from the right teachers in the right type of school under conditions which will enable the pupils best to profit by their training." This challenge is made in general but clear terms. It is apt to be presumed that the school and the teacher are on their trial and that they alone have to set about reorganising education. But the emphasis on the right pupil, the right teacher, the right education etc., leaves on doubt that the challenge is intended for each and every one of the groups associated directly or indirectly with education. It cannot be otherwise since the parent, the society, the government and the teaching profession go on broadcasting that our schools are to give the children an all round training. Education has thrown out the challenge to the different groups and waits for an answer as to how far and how quickly each group is prepared to discharge its duties. Unfortunately the tendency in our province has till now been for each group to find fault with other groups. A perusal of reports of Committees reveals an unhealthy excuse-finding tendency in us which more than anything else has stood as a serious obstacle to the progress of education in our Province.

This double-edged challenge should be understood more as a call to every group to abandon its standoffishness attitude and to co-operate with other groups in a spirit of service. There is some truth in the criticisms made against the education of to-day but several of the criticisms can be easily shown to be due to a misunderstanding or ignorance of the objectives of modern education. People are not able to remember that education which is preparation for life must necessarily be as complex as life itself and can never be reduced to a simple formula. It is therefore necessary that the objectives of education which will certainly vary with the dynamic society should be explained to the people as clearly as possible in general terms. A well-planned publicity programme is essential if there should be agreement on the fundamentals of education. No one can question the need for such publicity in our province at the present moment when, in an enlightened country like the United States, the Department of the Interior finds it necessary to place all facts before the public and carry it with them in the working of the educational programme.

Whose is the responsibility for education has to be squarely faced if the province should reap the benefits of modern education. The State-aided policy of education outlined in the educational despatches is out of date; and most of the aided schools which impart instruction to a very large number of pupils find it impossible to cope with the demands frequently made on their purse. The less said about the salaries of teachers in these schools the better. Elementary education is expected somehow to show an improvement but the department itself admits that many aided schools and teacher-manager schools lead a precarious existence and look



forward eagerly to the teaching grant which falls much below the anticipated amount owing to pro-rata cuts imposed at the eleventh hour. Until the problem of the managing agency is seriously tackled, it is futile to expect any improvement.

Closely connected with the problem of the managing agency is the question of the financing of education in future. Closure of schools, termination of the services of qualified teachers, retrenchment and cuts are by no means rare and the tender plant of education can hardly show any growth under such unfavourable environment. There is acute discontent to-day among teachers and this can be traced to the lack of a clear understanding of the financial implications of the modern system. The defects arising from this position cannot be remedied either by the adoption of measures on the administrative side or by a revision of the syllabus and examination basis on the academic side. The fact remains that every measure of educational reform cannot but involve additional expenditure.

When you are discussing the challenge of to-day you will realise that several broad questions of educational policy and administration have to be considered together, such as the objectives, the managing agency, the educational finance, and the personnel. No administrator, however competent he may be, can be reasonably expected to be in a position to give proper advice to the Government on all educational matters. Nor is it desirable for the province to depend upon the brainwave of one man for a solution of the complex educational problems. In whatever way the position may be viewed, one thing that emerges clearly is the need for a small standing Advisory Board to advise the Government on all educational matters from time to time. It should be a very small body consisting of the representatives of the Government, the Universities, the Management and the South India Teacher's Union. A Board of this type will be a clearing house where educational ideas and schemes including the fads and frills of administrators, of leaders, or teachers can be discussed threadbare on their merits, without any reservation. The managements and teachers will have their say and the decision of the Board is finally the outcome of frank interchange of ideas among representatives of bodies directly connected with education and educational institutions. The Board is the proper body to explain to the public the objectives of education approved by the Government and also to issue from time to time hints and suggestions regarding the courses and methods for the guidance of the teaching profession. The Board will also be in a position to take a comprehensive view regarding the allotment of funds in the budget and to suggest to the Government the lines on which financial help can be rendered to private managers, and local bodies.

The South India Teachers' Union is strongly of opinion that the spirit of the Challenge should be rightly understood and that the creation of a statutory advisory Board of Education has become necessary for more reasons than one. Such a Board will go a great way towards co-ordinating the efforts of the various groups and giving a proper lead to the public. The public will have a feeling of confidence that broad educational questions are constantly engaging the attention of a body with persons who know the job and who can be trusted to realise the responsible nature of the task entrusted to them.

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## POST-WAR EDUCATION

How far the backwardness of a country in technical education and technical training would handicap it in modern warfare became evident in the early stages of the last world war. The Hadow Report sought to remedy this defect in England and numerous senior or central schools were organised to give technical training to a large number of pupils at 11+... The present war is very aptly termed 'Total world war', and the suggestive appellation is only a shorthand way of expressing the pre-occupation of the entire population of most of the countries of the world, men and women, combatants and non-combatants with war effort. Strict control, vigorous discipline and methodical regimentation are in modern wars found to be as essential in the home front as in the battle field. That such control and regimentation should continue for some years after the cessation of hostilities in the interest of national recovery is also to be expected. One constantly hears of the new world order or new social order and it is taken for granted that men and women may have to abandon the traditional mode of living and thinking and adjust themselves to the complex and exacting conditions in the post-war world. The question is asked whether young men and women should not be trained to understand aright the significance of the several changes and adopt an attitude of give and take. Thinking men naturally look to the reform of the educational system, so as to foster and promote the spirit of tolerance, goodwill and friendly cooperation. Proposals for the reorganisation of education towards this end are being considered in England and America in all seriousness. What is our duty in India? There has been a good deal of talk in India on the reform of education since the outbreak of the last war and as usual it was not followed by any worthwhile action. India is still where Russia stood educationally in 1913 and her future will depend very much on how post-war education happens to be remodelled. Hence the importance of the question at the present moment.

Many are the problems which the postwar statesmen and administrators of India will have to face. Social, political and economic questions have to be carefully re-examined in the light of modern conditions and their interrelationship with one another as well as with education has to be constantly borne in mind. Men at the helm of affairs have to decide upon a long range programme for the all-round regeneration and rehabilitation of the country while at the same time they have to devise suitable temporary measures for urgent and immediate relief wherever and whenever necessary. The magnitude of the work they may have on hand cannot even be imagined. It is but proper therefore that the teaching profession should take upon itself the responsibility for a comprehensive study of post-war education in India and give them some relief. It will be a serious dereliction on its part if it should let things drift and have no help

to give our leaders as regards the formulation of an educational policy. The country expects the teaching profession to take note of the public sentiment in regard to national reconstruction and come forward with an educational scheme for consideration and adoption by the Government, with such modification as may be necessary. The South India Teachers' Union, the provincial organisation of teachers in South India, I am glad to say, has taken the initiative and begun to enlist the cooperation and sympathy of public men and members of the profession in connection with the study of the post-war education with special reference to South India.

The Executive Board of the Union appointed an ad hoc committee to consider the several aspects of postwar education in South India. This committee suggested a number of related topics for discussion and study and invited the opinions of teachers, teachers' organisations and public men. On the basis of the views obtained from different quarters a report was prepared and placed before the Provincial Educational Conference held at Vellore in May 1943 with Gurukula Dharmacharya Sri K. Rangaswamy Iyengar in the chair. I should like to invite the attention of teachers, parents, managers and sympathisers to the memorandum of the Board distributed among the delegates at the Conference.

The Conference decided that the memorandum might be taken to represent the view of the cross section of teaching profession in respect of post-war education and teachers were called upon to acquaint the public with the necessity for reorganisation and to keep in touch with public opinion. It is hoped that the Union will soon be able to incorporate the suggestions of the public and publish the final scheme for consideration at an early date.

I should like to mention the salient features in the memorandum just to give the public an idea of the complex and extensive nature of the problem. The following are the points of interest.—(1) Educational institutions that are concerned with public education should ordinarily be public institutions controlled, managed and administered by the State; (2) the financing of public institutions should be the concern and responsibility of the State, (3) for the uninterrupted and uniform progress of education throughout the country whole-hearted co-operation of the central government, provincial governments and local school administrations or boards is essential and this can be secured through a clearly understood devolution of powers among the three concerned authorities; (4) Every authority should be assisted by a board with well-defined powers and it is desirable to associate with it public men interested in education; (5) the creation of a properly trained, well equipped teaching personnel should be given special consideration and the conditions of service of teachers should be such as to enable them to discharge their obligations as members of the learned profession; (6) in the consideration of all educational questions such as courses, methods, curriculum, books and examinations, the teaching



profession should enjoy the privilege of expressing its opinion through its chosen representatives and serving the cause of the nation.

The foregoing recommendations may perhaps strike some persons as revolutionary. Let them try to understand the spirit behind them. During the one hundred years and more of western education in India, an educational policy has been apparently in force but very few are satisfied with its outcome. The fact cannot be contradicted that India occupies a very low place in the scale of nations in regard to educational and economic progress. It is improper and futile to apportion the blame. Common sense and prudence require that we should pull together and look forward. The Union has been feeling that the State has not plainly admitted its responsibility for public education. We are holding the view that education has not made good progress and moved with the times in our province chiefly because it has not been the concern of anybody in particular. The present war has shown that the educational edifice rests on very slender and insecure foundations. I should not be understood as stating that government has not been helping schools and colleges. As a matter of fact, the financial help rendered by the government to the schools in the city was very valuable at a critical moment. Yet those who are conversant with the management of schools and colleges recognise that the present policy is ill-suited to a poor country which is anxious to move forward. The feeling of the Union based on a study of the problem is that no progress can be made if the state hesitates to admit its responsibility for public education with all the implications involved in that admission. The glaring defect of the present situation in the sphere of public education will perhaps be easily perceived if the principle of the existing educational policy be proposed to be applied to another national sphere, say defence. What shall we think of a person who advocates the view that the creation and maintenance of an army of several equipped units needed for defence be left to local private effort aided by the government which may be given the power to appoint the chief officers including the commander-in-chief? Can such a policy ensure the maintenance of adequate number of competent men equipped with up-to-date weapons? The crux of the problem of post-war education is the question of the responsibility for public education. Admission of this responsibility need not and does not mean that the government should not seek the co-operation and support of bodies and individuals that are willing to render financial help to educational schemes. Persons and bodies that are now managing institutions are running them not for any personal end or profit. They have been giving their time, energy and resources unstintingly to the cause of education in a spirit of sacrifice. The government should not find it difficult to respect their wishes and persuade them by suitable adjustments and recognition to come under a general scheme in the interest of the country.

While considering post-war education one is to ask oneself what India is today and what India is to be tomorrow. Critics who point to the

existing difficulties are likely to be perplexed by the conflict of interests. They may refer to the vastness of the country, its poverty, the appalling illiteracy, the unsatisfactory distribution of schools, the lack of technical schools, the inadequate provision of libraries and so on, and they may have their own doubts about the chances of reconstruction. But the country with its thinking men of all shades of opinion cannot but think of the India of tomorrow and it is definitely looking forward. Leaders are hopeful that India will enjoy dominion status after the war. Dominion status is not a slogan, and every one has to constantly remind one self of his duties and responsibilities. We can hope to reap the fruit if our leaders be free to think carefully and plan properly.

A disquieting feature in the system of today is the growing tendency for the adoption of clumsy shortcuts in the matter of making the educational facilities in Arts and Professional colleges available to all communities. That there is considerable rush for admission to the University classes in general, and to professional colleges in particular, like the Medical and Engineering colleges, is well-known. A continuance of this rush for a number of years in succession should have opened the eyes of the government to the urgency and necessity for increasing substantially the provision for technological education. Far from approaching the problem at the right end and satisfying the aspirations of hundreds of young men of promise eager to qualify themselves in technical lines, the government have been evolving a novel method of educational rationing based on district, language and community considerations. I admit that there may be something to be said in favour of the procedure and it is not my intention to accuse the government. Viewing the question dispassionately I feel that the denial of facilities for technological education to a large number of bright young men on the ground that they belong to an over-represented district or community is undoubtedly a great national loss. The existing procedure for admission is regarded by young men as an educational black-out and a feeling of disappointment and discontent is created. In the India of tomorrow education is, and should be, a highway and it should be possible for every boy and girl to get the education for which he or she has the aptitude. Post-war education should emphasize the soundness of the principle of equality of opportunity to every individual and any kind of educational rationing on arbitrary grounds will tend to keep students of different communities apart from one another and prove detrimental to the growth of a spirit of comradeship.

Persons may agree in a general way with the post-war education scheme as indicated by the Union, but they are not sure as to how the object can be achieved. The matter of fact men among them with experience of administration will have one or two things to say. They will complain in the first place that we expect the government to do everything. Secondly, they take care to point out that what is possible for rich countries like England and America will not be possible in India. Such arguments are advanced every time a reform is proposed with the result that the



pigeonholes in the educational secretariat are packed with reports of committees whose main recommendations have yet to be given effect to. Even in England the view is gaining ground that the State should not be content with a wait and see attitude. Fortunately for us we have in Soviet Russia an excellent example of what State initiative can accomplish. Russia of 1913 used to be referred to in no complimentary terms and it was more or less on a level with agricultural India. Today it is recognised as a highly industrialised country and it is fighting single-handed the large well-equipped and scientifically trained German army with scientific weapons. For two years Soviet Russia faced immense losses in territory and resources with courage and determination. The spirit of the nation did not waver even under very trying circumstances. This is in itself a great tribute to the work of Soviet schools which have fostered such a national patriotic outlook in young men. The rapid recovery of the country and the recent victories speak eloquently of the great progress in technology, science, industry, and transport. Soviet Russia is what it is today because of the direct responsibility of the State for education. Vastness of the area, large population, different nationalities, appalling illiteracy, poverty of the masses and numerous languages have not obviously proved to be insurmountable obstacles for the Soviet republic. This is a point which the doubting Thomases will do well to bear in mind. As students of social and economic progress we are not concerned with ideological differences. The progress of Soviet Russia in a period of thirty years shows clearly that arguments advanced in India against thorough overhauling of education are not convincing and that India can without doubt hope to make rapid and satisfactory progress provided that we refuse to be drawn into useless controversy and set about our business with grit and devotion. Here are two pictures of Russia, Russia of 1913 and Russia of 1940 as given in the interesting booklet "U.S.S.R. speaks for itself," and comment is needless.

#### Growth of U.S.S.R.

	1913	1940
Population ...	139 millions	193 millions.
Workers ...	11.2 "	30.4 "
National income ...	21 billion roubles	125 billion roubles.
Education (in elementary & secondary schools) ...	7.8 millions	35 millions.
Higher education...	112 thousands	620 thousands.
Books ...	86 millions	701 millions.
Hospitals (Beds) ...	175 thousands	840 thousands.
Coal ...	29 million tons	164.6 million tons.
Oil and gas ...	9.2 "	34.2 "
Steel ...	42 "	184 "
Grain ...	801 million centiners	1295 million centiners.
Budget expenditure	6670 million roubles	173,259 million roubles.

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## THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION AND THE S. I. T. U.

This title may be startling to those who do not expect anything serious to happen in the sphere of education. An institution or system may be deemed to be passing through a period of crisis if its continuance and functioning be threatened by undue strain or successive shocks. A stereotyped literary education bearing no direct relation to life situations has been dominating all over the world for quite a long time. In India more than in any other country this system has been in force with very little change in character and outlook. A change over from the old single-purpose school to the modern multi-purpose school has become imperative in view of the rapidly changing conditions in the world today. Western countries understood the signs of the times long ago and were ready with their schemes of educational reorganisation. We have yet to take any action though we have been talking about it all these years. That a change over from the old to the new with all its implications is necessary for the future of India is no longer a matter for discussion. We cannot get on without this change over and hence the crisis in Indian education today.

One would like to know the circumstances which precipitated the crisis. The defects of the present literary type formed matter for mere academic discussion so long as educated persons could be easily absorbed in the services and learned professions. The first shock came from the last world war. The problem of unemployment that accompanied the last world war made people think furiously of the soundness of our educational system. Our eyes were opened to the ineffectiveness and unsuitability of the present education. Official reports and those of non-official committees like the Sapru Committee were emphatic that the reform of education could no longer be delayed. The Inter-University Board drew the attention of the public and the authorities to the necessity for reform. The Government of India itself issued a general circular to Local Governments and called upon them to undertake without delay a thorough overhauling of the educational system. It is noteworthy, that the circular suggested among other things that each of the three stages of education, *viz.*, the elementary, secondary and collegiate, should be self-contained in addition to being useful as a preparation for the next stage. Emphasis was therefore laid in the circular that the education in each stage should fit the large number of pupils who prefer to enter life immediately on leaving the school for some occupation or other. There was a good deal of discussion on this proposal in our province. The South India Teachers' Union pressed for a thorough overhauling of the system as contemplated by the Central Government. But the recommendations of the Local Government were halting and unhelpful. Valuable time was lost in endless discussions even after the assumption of office by the Congress Ministry. It is a pity that

very little came out of the discussions on the circular from the Government of India. The lesson of the crisis was thus forgotten for the time being.

The present world war overtook us rather too quickly. It is subjecting our educational system to repeated shocks. Technicians, skilled workers, experts, qualified propagandists and so on, are needed in thousands immediately. The cry is always for more and more. But the educational system in India is unfortunately not in a position to rise equal to the occasion. Look at the effect of the educational reforms introduced in England after the last world war as a result of the reports of the Hadow and Spens Committees. The battle for Britain is an eloquent testimony to the soundness of such reforms. The present total world war is a great eye-opener to us. It shows what little technical contribution can be expected from our schools in connection with modern wars in which technical training and weapons count for much. The problem in peace time will be no less exacting for many years after the war. Those who are competent to express an opinion assure us that the conditions in the society will be radically different from what they are today. The schools of the future can no longer be content with the transmission of mere book knowledge. The race is certainly for those nations whose schools are properly re-organised to give a sound all-round education to all the young men and women. Modern schools seek to train them to understand their position as individuals in the society as well as the interests of those around them and adjust themselves accordingly. Modern schools have to look ahead while arranging their programme. They should pay due regard to the manifold aspects of the child, viz., as a member of the family, as a member of the society, as the future bread-winner and as an individual personality. The objective of modern education is far more comprehensive and it is expected to give an all round training. Is there not a wide gulf between this objective of the new education and that of the old? Can we still continue to be indifferent to the question of educational reform? To be indifferent is to deny the opportunity that India rightly needs today for winning her legitimate place among the civilised countries.

It will be nothing short of a disaster if our leaders should again fail to appreciate the crisis and take suitable action without any delay. How essential is the reform of education under changing world conditions will become obvious from the foresight of His Majesty's Government. It has thought it necessary to undertake a remarkable piece of educational legislation right in the midst of war. The Butler Education Act is a very important measure which is to train the English youth for the great responsibilities of a citizen of the empire. It makes generous provision for financial help to the managing bodies to enable them to keep pace with the modern development.

What about unchanging India? We are all hopeful that post-war India will enjoy Dominion Status. The implications of this change are far reaching. Post-war India can win a good name for itself only when strenuous and sustained efforts are made for effecting the change over of the



educational system from the old to the new as rapidly and completely as possible. Fortunately for us the official report of the Central Advisory Board of the Government of India, popularly known as the Sargent Scheme, is available for our purpose. It is undoubtedly a well conceived and well intentioned realistic national scheme. The salient points of the scheme will certainly help our schools to do what is expected of modern schools in western countries.

It is natural that critics should point out a defect here and a defect there. The criticism is not always well-founded. It is sometimes an indication of needless fear or distrust. The report of the Committee is free from objectionable features and should be welcomed by all well-wishers of the country. It leaves no one in doubt with regard to the seriousness of the crisis in education. It regrets that what ought to have been done was not properly attended to in the past. It warns us that, if India should occupy the legitimate place among civilised countries, we should immediately set about the business of educational reform and planning and go in whole-heartedly for the scheme in its entirety.

Now is the time for the South India Teachers' Union to do its duty by the country. This opportunity should not be allowed to slip. It is a crime for teachers to sit with folded hands and expect others to take interest in educational reform. The Government will be naturally pre-occupied with varied questions of administration and reconstruction. Our leaders will have their hands too full and many of them will be by temperament and tradition slow to realise the urgency of educational reform. Parents have their own day-to-day problems and they will be finding it difficult to come to a conclusion. The S. I. T. U. will be serving the cause of the nation if it should educate the public with regard to the urgency and necessity of the change over to the modern education. It should give wide publicity to the essential points of the Sargent Scheme and rouse the parents and the public to the necessity for immediate action by the Government and the leaders. The public should be enabled to demand from the political parties and leaders assurance of support for the Sargent Scheme. Unless a steady and systematic attempt is made by the Union to educate the public, the Sargent Scheme may be shelved and locked up in the Secretariat. Can we allow this to happen? The Union welcomes the Sargent Scheme because the scheme stands for (1) the education of the whole nation irrespective of caste, community, race, creed, etc., (2) the education of the whole man including physical and vocational education, (3) equality of opportunity to ensure that every individual gets the type of education from which he can derive any benefit and that poor pupils with talents be helped by liberal scholarships and maintenance allowances, (4) the liberal provision of diversified course to meet the needs of the heterogeneous school-going population, (5) the adult education which is to transform millions of illiterate adults into useful literate citizens, (6) the emphasis of admission of financial responsibility by the Government and (7) a well-equipped, efficient and contented teaching profession. These are not features of ordinary significance. No other report, official or non-official, can ever claim to be so comprehensive and so well suited to the needs of the present day. Nothing that is essential has been omitted. Anything less than what is contained in the Report will hardly meet the needs of the situation. Let the S. I. T. U. secure to the Indian youth the opportunity he requires and let the educational system come out of the crisis with renewed vigour. The Education Week is the opportune moment for this public work.



## THE TEACHER AND THE SARGENT SCHEME\*

You have been pleased once again to invite me to speak on the occasion of the Education Week. You have asked me to speak on "The Teacher and the Sargent Scheme." This cannot be quite a new subject to an audience of Madras Teachers. The central theme for the Week is "the Crisis in Education and the South India Teachers' Union." You may perhaps expect me to deal with what is expected of teachers in respect of post-war education scheme. I hesitate to urge you to undertake the work of giving wide publicity to the views of the Union. Can I forget that teachers of aided schools and Colleges have been carrying on their work in these hard days as usual with a smile on their face even though the need for relief is tardily recognised or even ignored by the Managers and the Government.

Your invitation comes to me just when my mind was thinking over certain tendencies and developments in and outside the teaching profession. The eloquent inaugural address of our esteemed friend and well-wisher further helped me to give a shape to my lecture to-day. Two developments outside the teaching profession that have a direct bearing on our national welfare may be mentioned. On the one side is the series of B.B.C. Broadcast discussions on Foundations of Freedom under the chairmanship of Mr. Wickham Steed ; and on the other is the manifestation of "independent nation feeling" by group after group in our country. The broadcasts draw pointed attention to certain depressing conditions in the India of today, such as, poor out-turn from agriculture and great shortage in food production, low standard of living, prevalence of disease and malnutrition, high death rate, inadequate milk supply and lack of good drinking water. It is admitted that such evils are chiefly due to backwardness of India in respect of Education. As for the manifestation of independent nation feeling, each group is good enough to make its position clear to all and express its preparedness to go the full length to safeguard its interests and maintain its separateness. While the evils referred to in the broadcast are nation wide and call for concerted action for formulation of all-India policy, the separatist feeling keeps leaders apart and accentuates the feeling of distrust. The more marked the aloofness of the groups becomes the more difficult will it be for us to improve the position of the country. These two developments taken together form a challenge to our leaders interested in the welfare of the country. It is for them to take a realistic view and call for a truce of party strife and slogans. A common approach with balanced minds will help our leaders to tackle successfully the immediate and future needs of the country. A balanced mind fosters trust and schools will have work towards that end in view.

\* A lecture delivered under the auspices of the Madras Teachers' Guild on 13-10-44 on the occasion of the 14th South Indian Education Week.

The need for balanced mind is equally great in the teaching profession. There are two groups in the profession, which I may call for clearness sake the "why we" and the "why not we" groups. The former is numerically superior while the latter is more vocal and aggressive. The "why we" group consists of humdrum teachers. They feel that their work begins and ends in the class room. They are not keen on having any hand in regard to courses, programme, etc., and are always waiting to obey instructions. The "why not we" group feels that teachers should have a hand in the formulation of policy, courses, and programme. They think that they should be consulted in all matters educational. The "why we" mentality really amounts to a shirking of our responsibilities as members of the learned profession and is likely to create an impression in the public that the education of the youth of the country will not receive proper attention from teachers. The position taken up by the "why not we" group is a legitimate one which is sure to promote the cause of sound education. As a matter of fact, in all western countries consultation of the teachers' organisation is taken for granted and a spirit of comradeship between Teachers' Organisation and the authorities is a common feature. In India and especially in South India, it is presumed that Teachers' Organisation can have no opinion to offer and that the Government can always get the opinion of an individual teacher here and there if necessary. This disinclination of the Government to take the Teachers' Organisation into confidence is a great obstacle to the progress of education and no sense of responsibility can develop under such conditions. The natural reaction of the Teachers' Organisation is seen in the extreme view advocated by the "why not we" group that educational questions are the concern of teachers and that their views should prevail. The relation between teachers and authorities becomes strained and the feeling of distrust grows to the detriment of education. The fairness of the demand of the "why not we" group for adequate representation cannot be questioned, but it should also realise that education is not the concern of teachers alone and that its decision cannot be final. All that teachers can legitimately demand is that they should have adequate representation in Boards and Committees appointed from time to time for the consideration of educational questions, and that their accredited representatives should have opportunities of placing the view of the profession and helping the bodies in arriving at a decision. Anything more extreme than this may be impracticable especially in the present condition of our Society. Ideas, sentiments, and slogans of the street are beginning to enter the class room and teachers cannot be too careful. Teachers are expected to be loyal to the school and school children. They have till now pulled together as a team irrespective of differences of caste and creed. With the exhibition of sectional spirit of the militant type all round the school, it may not always be possible for teachers to subordinate sectional loyalty to school loyalty or professional loyalty. We should all of us strive for mutual good-will and fellowship. This will bear fruit only if we are



realistic and cultivate a balanced mind. In the coming trying years, the school where teachers have balanced minds will impress the public and create a confidence that extraneous considerations will never influence their decision in regard to School administration.

True education of the youth of the country is the concern of the four groups, the Government, the Managements, the Parents and the Teaching profession. Teachers will be justified if they should hold the view that each group is expected to make its own contribution in a willing manner and in no condescending spirit. The objective of modern education may be stated in broad terms as the provision of opportunities for enabling pupils in schools to become able-minded, healthy, intelligent, cultured, self-reliant and co-operating citizens. This objective cuts clean across the notion that education is the privilege of the few leisured classes. It really involves the education of the whole nation, and full scope for allround development of each individual. Any scheme of national education brought up for consideration should be judged from these stand-points. If it should be satisfactory in regard to essentials, we should welcome it and commend it to the people with such modifications in details as may be necessary to suit local condition.

The Report of the Central Advisery Board of Education, commonly known as the Sargent Scheme is now before the public. It is not necessary for me to go into the details of the Scheme now. What the Scheme stands for has to be understood clearly. The scheme stands for certain well accepted sound educational principles and ideals. These are (1) Education of the whole nation irrespective of race, caste or creed ; (2) Education of the whole man including physical education ; (3) Equality of opportunity with generous provision for scholarships and maintenance allowances for all poor but talented pupils belonging to any community ; (4) Education of the adults ; (5) The financial responsibility of the Government for education ; (6) Diversified courses, technical schools and play-technics to cater to the heterogeneous school-going population ; (7) Universal compulsory basic education 6-14 to ensure not mere literacy but preparation for citizenship and life and (8) a well-equipped trained and contented teaching profession with an assured status.

The Scheme is on the whole comprehensive and realistic. It seems to me it will stand the tests you may apply. The Advisory Board states plainly that it is not offering an ideal scheme. It is not its contention that everything in this scheme is entirely new. The scheme leaves no one in doubt about the crisis in education and puts in a strong plea for action. It warns us that India will not hold its legitimate place among the civilised countries if steps be not taken to give effect to the scheme in its entirety as early as possible. Teachers have to examine the scheme in a dispassionate manner and with balanced mind. An educational scheme cannot be expected to be perfect at the outset. In the working of the scheme new points are sure to arise and a modification may be found necessary. The question we should ask ourselves is not whether the scheme is idealistic



and logically perfect, but whether it can help us to achieve the main objective. The scheme is sound on the whole and it is essential to the welfare of the country. Teachers should deem it their duty to keep it in the public eye and urge the leaders and the Government to implement the recommendations.

No educational scheme can ever escape criticism and the Sargent Scheme is no exception to this rule. Constructive criticisms are few and it may be said that the chief educational points are not challenged or criticised. There will always be room for improvement in an educational scheme even though it may be drawn up by educationists. What is needed is action. Let me make mention of the chief criticisms so far made against the report. (1) 40 years too long. (2) No point in educational planning when no definite idea about the political status and the economic position of the country can be had. (3) Interference with the Provincial Autonomy. (4) Scheme is of the Government of India and the Provinces have to find the money. (5) Administration chapter unsatisfactory and the revival of I.E.S. unnecessary. (6) Managing agency and School administration Board not dealt with fully and special committee to go into the Agency question. (7) Selection principle and the interests of the backward communities. (8) Religious education. (9) Selection at 11 plus. (10) Why post-war. (11) "National" used not in the sense of "patriotic". (12) Nothing new in the scheme. (13) Indian genius not perceptible in the frame-work and curriculum. (14) Right of parents in respect of education they desire to give their children interfered with. (15) Conscripting teachers.

The committee itself has tried to make its position clear in regard to the period. The training of thousands of teachers with necessary qualifications is expected to take this time. Those who quote the example of Russia will themselves oppose measures adopted there for the expansion of education. Those who object to the period of 40 years will be doing a service if they urge immediate action and get the scheme introduced. It is good to have a blue print of educational planning which will be essential for the progress of the country and this need not wait till the final decision is reached in regard to our economic and political status. There is need for a fuller consideration of the Managing Agency since the present unsatisfactory condition of education is due to the inability and unsuitability of private managers and local bodies in respect of school administration. Of the other criticisms, only a few require some consideration. The danger to backward communities inherent in the selection process suggested for entrance to the high school is imaginary and unfounded. The report does not suggest outright selection nor does it shut out from high schools pupils who may not come up to the standard. A convincing case is made out for the selection principle in the Report. If the danger to backward communities be real, they may be exempted from this process for 10 years to begin with. The diversion at 11 plus to the high school is objected to on the ground that one uniform basic education from 6 to 14 may take away class feeling. The Report has got good arguments for diversion at 11 plus and experience alone can divide which may be the wise step in the long run.

Fears are expressed that the scheme may not be given effect to after all. On an examination of the scheme from all aspects we are convinced that the arguments for burying it are not at all convincing. The scheme is a great forward step. Let us therefore give wide publicity and persuade the public to bring pressure to bear upon the Government towards the introduction and working of the scheme.

## WHITHER ELEMENTARY EDUCATION\*

I consider it a great honour to be invited to preside over this Conference of Malabar District Aided Elementary School Teachers. I am glad you have extended the invitation to me in my capacity as the Secretary of the South India Teachers' Union. While I thank you heartily for your kindness, I feel I shall not be of any use to you since I cannot speak to you in Malayalam. I should also confess I have no first-hand knowledge of the problems you are called upon to face in your district. It is true that many of the disabilities under which you have been labouring are not confined to Malabar. I shall, therefore, venture to indicate to you the lines on which you may find it worthwhile to proceed at the present moment.

My work has been rendered somewhat easy by my friend Mr. Varkey, the Parliamentary Secretary for Education. While presiding over the Conference of Teacher-Managers of this district some days back, he was good enough to explain the policy of the Government in regard to aided elementary schools and appealed to teachers and managers to take a long view of things. He wanted them to realise that the Government was not opposed to good managers and good teachers. It is very desirable that both teachers and managers should acquaint themselves with the views expressed by him.

Elementary education is a many-sided problem in which several parties are interested. It is, however, fair that I should, on this occasion, pay special attention to the role of the teacher. You should know the present position of Elementary education. The Report on Education in India; 1935-36, published by the Bureau of Education, should open the eyes of all to the seriousness of the situation. It refers to the appalling stagnation and wastage, the disconcertingly small increase in the number of permanent literates, the ludicrously inadequate provision for the education of girls, the inefficiency of local bodies, and the remoteness of elementary education becoming universal, free and compulsory. Such criticisms have been very often made in official documents and it is natural that the Commissioner should be constrained to state that what is needed is not talk but immediate action. One will be sad to learn that the previous ministries into whose hands education had been transferred had not chosen to take note of the defects pointed out in official reports. The diagnosis of the situation is correct and accurate, but men with power and influence do not find it convenient to proceed beyond the stage of suggestions. For instance, the Hartog Committee suggested that the Central Government should reserve to itself some powers to co-ordinate the activities of the local governments and ensure uniform progress. It expected a good deal from a body like the Central Advisory Board and hoped it would give a definite

\* Presidential address delivered at the Fourth All Malabar aided Elementary School Teachers' Conference, Ottapalem, December 1938.



lead in regard to educational questions. Again, the Parliamentary Subcommittee of the Congress Party in our province has expressed the view that the local bodies have been tried and found wanting and that the Government should take into its own hands the control of their elementary school. There is again the proposal for the abolition of District Educational Councils on the ground that they are only the fifth wheel of the coach. Our local Government has considered at length the reorganisation of elementary education and formulated certain proposals. These suggestions and proposals made from time to time may be good so far as they go, but it is clear that no definite attempt has till now been made to tackle the problem of mass education as a whole.

The public is yet to have any general idea of the policy and the programme which the Government may choose to adopt. The absence of a definite programme has been responsible for the muddle and waste in elementary education. The quinquennial report for 1912-17 emphasised that Primary education should proceed upon a definite plan. A Bengal Committee has stated that "the mere expenditure of money cannot solve the fundamental problems of primary education, unless it is spent according to some well-considered scheme". Quite recently the Director of Public Instruction, Assam, pointed out that plans extending over a period of years should be drawn up and approved by the legislature so as to avoid another period of wastage and to ensure systematic and continuous progress towards a definite object. Is it not desirable and necessary that the public should be made to understand the magnitude of the problem and to appreciate the need for great demands on its resources?

The reorganisation scheme of the Government does not, unfortunately, go so far as to tell the public what programme the Government proposes to adopt. It is, however, a very interesting document which furnishes valuable information. The Government is rightly oppressed by the disquieting phenomena of *wastage and stagnation* and it is justified to some extent when it attributes the defects to the present school structure. Out of nearly forty-two thousand lower elementary schools in our province, only about seven thousand are complete with five standards, and over seven thousand schools have one to three standards. About 19,000 lower elementary schools are reported to be *single teacher* schools. There are as many as 30,000 trained teachers of the lower elementary grade. In view of this school structure, the Government feel that the most urgent need in mass education is to eliminate incomplete, inefficient and ineffective schools and to build up in their places a system of complete, economically well-filled, well-staffed, five standard primary schools. This object is a laudable one, but the method by which it is proposed to be achieved appears to be neither feasible nor suitable. The position of teacher-managers is well-known and official reports have never attempted to conceal the facts from the public. The Madras Report for the quinquennium, 1911-1912 to 1916-17 describes the "Teacher-manager Schools" as follows:—"The teacher-manager has no funds to fall back upon and has to depend upon his grant and payments



partly in money and partly in kind. He ekes out his precarious living as a stamp-vendor, petition writer, medical quack or priest and in his endeavours to secure his bodily sustenance is less regular than he should be in providing the necessary mental pabulum for his pupils." It is for the public and the Government to see whether the object mentioned in the reorganisation scheme can be gained through the administration of the *grant-in-aid*. Elimination of schools will certainly be hastened but it is very doubtful whether any appreciable number of teacher-managers will be able to convert their schools into complete and efficient schools with one teacher for each standard. The draft report of the Government does not tell us how it proposes to build up complete schools when the ill-equipped, ill-housed, ill-staffed teacher-manager schools disappear. While dealing with the improvement of mass education, the draft report recognises the necessity for the improvement of the conditions of service of teachers and stresses the need for the adoption of suitable measures. Directors of Public Instruction have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Government to the unsatisfactory conditions of service of teachers in aided schools in general and in teacher-manager schools in particular.

The public and the authorities are not unaware of the serious discontent among teachers in elementary schools. That the grievances of teachers are on the whole real and legitimate is admitted. They have been asking themselves "Who are we"? "What are we"? and "Where are we"? They are often puzzled by the utterances of our political leaders. The terms in which our leaders choose to refer to teachers are by no means complimentary. In all good intention they describe teachers as poor, starved, half-educated, ill-equipped and unpractical persons without any individuality of their own. In the same breath we are told that much depends upon teachers and that the country looks to them for the moral, material and social progress of the community. Our public men are not insincere but often fail to think for a moment whether the cause of public education can ever hope to make any progress under the existing circumstances. The salaries paid to teachers in many aided elementary schools are admitted to be very low and even these low salaries are not paid regularly. A more unfortunate feature is the view held even in official quarters that teachers drawing low salaries cannot be expected to realise their responsibility and should therefore be subjected to careful supervision. Statements have been made that the chance of a satisfactory solution of the problem of salaries should be remote inasmuch as an increase of the salary of every teacher by one rupee will involve an additional expenditure of several lakhs. What should one think of the condition of thousands of teachers if the addition of even one rupee should prove to be a great relief? Will not the denial of even this relief affect the equanimity of thousands of teachers? Is it not strange that teachers should be called upon to look to the nobility of work irrespective of their salaries? Now and then some critical minded politician attempts to explain away the deplorable position of the teacher by questioning the value of work done in schools. If education

be bad, "the culprit is the nation" in the words of Rt. Hon'ble H.A. L. Fisher. To those who call upon teachers not to think of salaries, the Rt. Hon'ble has the following reply: "in a profession numbering 150,000 members, you cannot rely upon the missionary spirit alone as a source of recruitment. With all our manifold virtues, we cannot depend upon an annual supply of 9000 missionaries, content to endure a hard, narrow, and stinted existence for the sheer love of teaching. In every large profession you must rely upon economic motives to some extent for your recruits, in the teaching profession less than elsewhere perhaps; but even teachers are human . . . An anxious and depressed teacher is a bad teacher; an embittered teacher is a social danger." Therefore, how is the critical situation to be handled?

The Government have been convinced of the necessity for adopting immediately measures which will allay discontent and restore confidence among teachers. The *license idea* to which certain objections were raised has given place to the *service register*. This is a sincere attempt on the part of the Director of Public Instruction to do something to ensure security of tenure of service and regular payment of salaries. That the Government will not hesitate to step in to protect teachers is what is implied in the service register. There is, however, a widespread feeling among teachers that the service register does not go far enough. The teacher-managers have been complaining in their turn that the rules of the service register hit them very hard and that 15% of the teaching grant permitted to be taken by the management is considered inadequate. The South India Teachers' Union is generally of the opinion that standardised scales of salaries for the several grades of teachers now obtaining in schools under local bodies should be adopted in the case of aided schools as well and that the termination of the services of teachers should be for specified reasons and with the approval of the Department. Such a reform will be essential if the teaching profession should throw itself heart and soul into the great nation-building work. Any hesitation or delay gives room for misunderstanding and a state of tension will continue to prevail in school administration. It is said of Lenin that he wanted that the "Soviet Government should undertake steady, systematic, persistent work to raise the teacher culturally, to give him comprehensive training for his really high calling and the most, most and most important, to improve his material position." The cause of teachers is admitted to be just and the proposal of the service register should be regarded as the first step the Government has taken in the interests of teachers.

It requires some clear thinking on the part of teachers if they should like to make up their minds. Should they, in a moment of depression, yield to the appeal for direct action such as demonstration and strike or should they understand their position and maintain the dignity and self-respect of the time-honoured profession? To arrive at a correct decision it is necessary that they should reflect calmly on the circumstances of today. They should not forget that no one denies that their difficulties are real and that a solution should be found. We shall ask ourselves whether the century-



old disabilities can be removed at one step or by one stroke. That the Government and the Department are keen on settling the question is evident from the service register. Our leaders appreciate the need for affording relief but are unable owing to lack of funds to give full satisfaction. This is just the time, therefore, for self-restraint and patience and one can certainly hope that with the improvement in the finances the needs of teachers will be satisfied. It will be worthwhile for your organisation to keep the Government informed of your grievances and press for relief in a constitutional manner.

I am anxious you should pause to think for a moment of the implications of direct action. If teachers should resort to direct action with a view to having their grievances redressed they will find it very difficult to resist or counteract the tendency on the part of pupils to employ the same device in regard to day to day school administration. Should such a possibility be a matter of no concern to an educationist? There is still another aspect which should not be lightly treated. Does not direct action do harm to numerous innocent children for no fault of theirs? Direct action is opposed to the cause of sound education and to the tradition and ideals of the profession. When you think of direct action, you should not forget that you have to suffer privation or to appeal to the public for funds to maintain yourselves during the period of struggle. Will the public view with sympathy your action when it directly affects their children? Direct action cannot lead to any lasting solution but it will bring about a good deal of ill-feeling.

The question remains whether the authorities, leaders and public men are at all hostile to us. They have given clear indications of their interest in our welfare. They plainly tell us that they are not able to do all we want to be done simply because financial difficulties confront them at every step. All over the country the problem of mass education has begun to exercise the minds of our leaders and they are considering the ways and means of placing public education on a sound basis. They make no secret of the poverty of the country and welcome help and co-operation from every quarter. It will not do for teachers and teacher-managers to expect everything to be done for them at the present moment when hundreds of villages happen to be without schools and thousands of children have no school places. Our leaders will be glad if the teaching profession should come forward and suggest a way out of this difficulty especially in view of the fact that more funds will not be available for mass education from general revenues. Teachers and teacher-managers should realise that this is not the time to press their rights and privileges. They should sink their differences and work wholeheartedly towards getting an adequate return for the money now spent on mass education and also helping the expansion of elementary education. The teaching profession should of its own accord put its shoulder to the wheel and chalk out a systematic constructive programme.



Your association should in the first place take steps to make your members maintain their self-respect and the dignity of the profession. Stagnation and wastage which make elementary education ineffective can become things of the past if teachers and teacher-managers should solemnly resolve to set their face against the oft-quoted objectionable practices. A public opinion should be developed in our ranks and the prestige of the profession will be considerably enhanced if we set our houses in order. The Government will not then be bothered with supervision and its officers will be free to devote their attention to educational and academic aspects. Secondly, it should be the object of your association to undertake an educational survey of your district and gather data about school-less centres, and the attitude and resources of the public in various localities. It should then discuss the educational needs of your district with the representatives in district boards and legislatures and with associations and social service leagues in your area and come to a definite conclusion with regard to the distribution, organization and administration of schools. The next step will be for your association to persuade groups of teachers to take up work in specified areas and to make earnest attempts to adopt a prescribed course of instruction. That public education whether undertaken by private individuals or by authorities depends ultimately upon public support, should be clearly understood by us from the beginning. In olden days the pial schools enjoyed an appreciable measure of support from the people of the locality. The groups of teachers should be trained to approach the parent public in a proper manner chiefly through serving the children. *Modern teaching* expects every teacher to respect the personality of the child and in a *new type school* the children learn to like the teacher. The sincere interest which teachers evince in the all-round welfare of children is bound to create confidence in public education and public schools and the public will not be slow to extend their support. These schools will no longer be teacher-managed schools but co-operative staff-managed schools depending upon the public support. The public should become *education-minded* and the masses in villages should be stirred to action. Once the people in villages realise the advantage of public education and show a wider outlook as the result of the efforts of self-sacrificing teachers, the Government will not be slow to go forward. The *Vidya Mandir* scheme which has several peculiar features is essentially based on public support. Your association can get subventions from the Government if the latter be convinced of the determination on your part to carry out the programme in co-operation with the leaders in the locality. You may distribute the grant to the several centres according to an agreed formula and your association may help the cause by co-ordinating the activities of the centres, giving expert advice when necessary, arranging a programme of shows and talks in different centres by competent persons, and raising funds. If in your district a plan be adopted and worked for 5 years as an experiment, you will have good work to your credit and it will then be necessary to take

stock of the situation and to chalk out the future line of action. If the experiment be successful, it can be extended to other districts. If teachers work steadily and earnestly and let the schools develop into real *community centres*, they can win the confidence of the public and the Government and have the satisfaction of making a valuable contribution to public education. The plan that I suggest may appear adventurous but it gives you scope for doing your bit for the country. You will find that your confidence in the public will not have been misplaced. Your association should take the responsibility for planning and working the programme but it should always keep aloof from party politics and enjoy the co-operation and support of all groups. There is no place for communal or party politics in your organisation. If only your members understand the principle of non-violence, they will feel a new spirit animating them and urging them to live with the people and for the people.

been rapidly changing everywhere. To the Director of Public Instruction and the resolutions adopted at your conference show no change in the position of teachers in elementary schools. There has been a cry in the wilderness. What is surprising is that no distinguished statesman has so far been made to place elementary education and teachers in aided elementary schools on a sound footing though the authorities as well as leaders are negligent of the conditions in elementary schools.

The Government, which is always slow to move in giving relief to teachers in aided elementary schools has after prolonged consideration sanctioned a dearness allowance of just four rupees. That this is very inadequate will not be disputed and a further increase may be possible in view of your representations. In view of the extremely low salaries of teachers in aided elementary schools, it will be proper and just if the Government could sanction for the duration of the war dearness allowance to all teachers in aided elementary schools on the scale prescribed by the Government to its own employees. While the teachers of the Government is annoying to teachers the exhortation of the leaders' provocative. They appeal to teachers not to adopt the leadership spirit but to find satisfaction in the nobility of the profession. We are not to come across the proper type of leaders in South India who will have the gift to ensure teachers that their wants will be attended to and that they may go on working enthusiastically free from worry. Under such circumstances members of your Union will naturally ask themselves what the line of action for the future should be. Now that the Government have been pleased to take note of the difficulties of teachers in aided schools, I have every reason to hope that your Union may by further representations succeed in persuading the Government to give teachers relief on the scale prescribed for their employees.

Your Union will have to think of a cooperative line of work if it should win for teachers their legitimate place in the field of education.

\* An address delivered at the Tamil Nadu Teachers' Union Conference of the Government of India, Madras, 1944.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TO-DAY\*

You have been pleased to invite me to preside over your Ninth Annual Conference. I am very sorry for the great inconvenience caused to you by the postponement of the conference. I should like to thank you heartily for the kindness and consideration shown to me. I am glad to say I am much impressed with your loyalty to the South India Teachers' Union and with your enthusiasm for the uplift of the teaching profession.

I am not a stranger to the teachers of Malabar. Their plain-speaking has brought the deplorable conditions of teachers in elementary aided schools to the notice of the public and the authorities. Conditions have been rapidly changing everywhere but the memorandum submitted by you to the Director of Public Instruction and the resolutions adopted at your conference show no change in the position of teachers in elementary schools. Their cry has been a cry in the wilderness. What is surprising is that no determined attempt has so far been made to place elementary education and teachers in aided elementary schools on a sound footing though the authorities as well as leaders are not ignorant of the conditions in elementary schools.

The Government, which is always slow to move in giving relief to teachers in aided elementary schools, has after prolonged consideration sanctioned a dearness allowance of just four rupees. That this is very inadequate will not be disputed and a further increase may be possible in view of your representations. In view of the admittedly low salaries of teachers in aided elementary schools, it will be proper and just if the Government could sanction for the duration of the war dearness allowance to all teachers in aided elementary schools on the scale prescribed by the Government to its own employees. While the red tape of the Government is annoying to teachers, the exhortation of the leaders is provocative. They appeal to teachers not to adopt the trade union spirit but to find satisfaction in the nobility of the profession. We are yet to come across the proper type of leaders in South India who will have the grit to assure teachers that their wants will be attended to and that they may go on working enthusiastically free from worry. Under such circumstances members of your Union will naturally ask themselves what the line of action for the future should be. Now that the Government have been pleased to take note of the difficulties of teachers in aided schools, I have every reason to hope that your Union may by further representations succeed in persuading the Government to give teachers relief on the scale prescribed for their employees.

Your Union will have to think of a constructive line of work if it should win for teachers their legitimate place in the field of education.

\* An address delivered at the Ninth Annual Educational Conference of the Kottayam taluk aided Elementary School Teachers' Union, December 1944.



You should be aware of the world wide awakening in the sphere of education after the last world war. Thinking men in western countries are convinced that a thorough overhauling of the educational system has become essential. The Butler Education Act, which marks a great step forward in education, was recently enacted in England in the din of war. In all civilised countries action quickly follows discussion, but in India we do not proceed beyond the stage of discussion, especially in regard to educational problems. How disastrously has this tendency affected progress becomes plain from the special B. B. C. broadcast series on "Foundations of Freedom". The broadcasts refer to serious depressing conditions in the India of today such as the low standard of living, the crushing poverty of the ryot, the prevalence of diseases, the appalling illiteracy, the scarcity of drinking water and milk, the poor yield of lands, and the lack of industries. It is also clear from the broadcast discussion that this deplorable condition is primarily due to the backwardness of Indian education. The broadcasts leave one in no doubt that education is the crying need of the India of today and that it should be properly reorganised and planned. The time for a thorough overhauling has come. As a matter of fact leaders have been freely expressing their feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing system on school speech days and ceremonial occasions. It is therefore difficult for me to understand what the Rt. Honourable Dr. Sastriar had in mind when he is reported to have sounded a note of warning against sudden changes. I hope the Rt. Honourable Sastriar did not have in mind the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education popularly known as the Sargent Report when he made the above mentioned observation. I feel that we have been speaking of changing the system for nearly fifty years but have not moved even an inch.

The Sargent Scheme is just a blue-print of post-war education in India. It is the work of a Board consisting of men of experience. The Report is based on the results of the careful study of the various aspects of education by separate committees. The Advisory Board has approached the problem in the right spirit and deemed it necessary to invite our attention to a significant passage in the British White Paper on Education, namely, "Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of this country depends". It is convinced that what ought to have been done was left undone all these years. It feels that a national scheme of education is essential if India should hold its own among the civilised countries. Broadly speaking, the objective of this national education is that the pupils passing through schools should become able-bodied, healthy, intelligent, cultured, self-reliant and co-operating citizens. A suitable framework which is not altogether new is suggested and a curriculum suitable for each stage is indicated. The framework proposed comprises (1) compulsory universal free basic education for all children between the ages of 6 and 14. (2) High school education of 6 years with literary and technical sides. (3) University education of 3 years. (4) Technical colleges for the training of expert technicians. It is not necessary to go

into the details now but I may say the Sargent Scheme is a comprehensive and realistic scheme which is calculated to accelerate the all-round progress of the country. It is a scheme for the education of the whole man, proper stress being also laid on the physical education and preparation for an occupation. It is a scheme which is based on the idea that expenditure on Education is really a long term investment and that, in the task of educating the whole nation, the talented poor pupils belonging to any community should be liberally helped with funds. A tentative plan is suggested for the completion of the programme and the approximate cost has also been worked out. The Report has paid special attention to the recruitment, qualifications and conditions of service of teachers and emphasised the point that the pay and the status of the teacher should be considerably improved if "the profession should attract the right type of recruit." In this connection the following significant and appropriate remark is noteworthy: "The present deplorable position is explicable only on the assumption that the authorities responsible do not regard education as a service of any real public importance."

Let me just mention the chief features of the basic education. This universal, free and compulsory education is for all children between the ages of 6 and 14. The objective of basic education is to enable the pupils leaving the school to take their place in the community as *workers and citizens*. Much more than mere literacy is directly aimed at, since basic education is education for democracy. The curriculum and the principle followed are more or less on the lines of the Wardha Scheme. Since the bulk of children may stop with basic education, basic schools are proposed to be well staffed and equipped. The minimum qualification for a teacher is the matric certificate together with a training course of two or three years. The minimum national scale for teachers (men and women) in junior basic schools (schools with 5 standards) is 30—1—35—3 biennial 50. Teachers in senior basic schools will be on a scale 40—2—80. Allowances for houses etc., are also suggested and separate scales have been proposed for headmasters. Pensions and provident funds are also proposed as provision for old age. The urgent need of the country is a vast increase in the number of trained teachers, especially women teachers. A period of 40 years is supposed to be required for the completion of the programme of basic education. The first period of 5 years is to be the preparatory period when training colleges and schools will be organised to keep up the supply of teachers. The cost of the scheme has been worked out on the basis of 1 teacher for 30 pupils in junior basic classes and 1 teacher for 25 pupils in the senior basic classes. The total cost of establishing a national system of basic schools will be over 200 crores, 70% of which will be towards the salaries of teachers.

Those who have followed the B. B. C. broadcast discussions will welcome the basic education as outlined by the Central Advisory Board though they may think the period of 40 years unduly long. The Board feels that anything less than the provisions of its scheme will not be useful



and that money spent will be a waste. The Board has emphasised that the Central Government should come forward with generous financial help. The Central Government has not come to any decision either on the general policy or on the details of the programme. Much will depend upon how the Central Government will begin to act. Local Governments may be naturally expected to consider the Sargent Scheme and be ready with tentative proposals so that action can be taken and effect given to the scheme as early as possible. It was hoped that the Madras Sub-committee on education would make such recommendations to the Post-war Reconstruction Committee as will enable Madras Province to make rapid progress. Unfortunately the decisions of the committee in respect of basic education are vague, disappointing and unsatisfactory. There is no indication that the sub-committee has considered the recommendations of the Sargent Committee. It is surprising that the objective of the Madras Committee seems to be mere literacy. The decisions show a desire to let existing practice continue with as few changes as possible. The existing agencies with all their defects are to continue to function and participate in the expansion of education. While the Sargent Scheme is definitely opposed to the application of compulsion only up to the end of V standard, and has even pointed out the danger and inadequacy of this step, the Madras Committee recommends the application of compulsion only up to the 5th standard. The qualifications of teachers will have to continue as hitherto and no detailed plan for the training and supply of teachers has been published. The salaries proposed (Rs. 20) are very inadequate and the present unsatisfactory arrangement causing considerable hardship to teachers in aided schools is apparently to continue. The plan of "education drive" so far followed, has not led to appreciable results and the recommendations of the committee if adopted will make Madras a benighted presidency. The continuance of the present practice will be a retrograde step and it is surprising that proposals radically different from those of the Central Advisory Board should be formulated and the need for taxation be pointed out even before the Central Government announces its decision on general policy including finance.

What is the role of teachers and teachers' unions at the present moment? Teachers in aided schools suffer simply because they are teachers in aided schools. The policy of state aided education is out of date so far as elementary education is concerned. This has to be scrapped if elementary education should make any progress. But the Madras Committee sees no reason to change the present policy even though aided schools are found unable to bear the burden and have come in for adverse criticism by the department. It is certain that elementary education cannot be expected to progress according to plan, if there be any plan at all, so long as there are different agencies associated with the administration of schools. From the point of view of the objective, scope and magnitude of basic education it is essential that basic schools should be state schools administered by the state. The responsibility must be undivided and the plan can be worked



out systematically when there is only one agency. Teachers' Unions should therefore educate the public with regard to the importance of basic education as outlined in the Sargent scheme. They should explain to the public that all elementary or basic schools should be State schools so that instruction may be of a uniformly high standard through the provision for well qualified, adequately paid staff and for equipment. The public are the patrons of schools including teachers and they should be made to realise that teachers should be given due recognition and be trusted to realise their responsibility. This will be possible if the Teachers' Unions should make their members realise the dignity of the profession and the trust placed in their hands. It should also urge the authorities to provide special facilities for in-service training for young teachers. The demands on the teaching capacity of the teacher are increasing and a regular scheme of short refresher courses should be arranged by the Unions and Guilds to enable teachers to equip themselves properly. Your Union should bring to the notice of members and the public in the locality the advantages of basic education and explain how the welfare of children is bound up with the adoption of a suitable scheme of education. Considering that the proposals of the Madras Committee are unsatisfactory, it is the duty of the Teachers' Union to give the correct lead and make the public interested in the basic education. You will have to go one step further. Let Kottayam Taluk Union study the needs of Kottayam Taluk so far as basic education is concerned. Take a map of the taluk, and mark the villages with a population of 500 or more. With your survey of the population together with the geographical and social features you may form an idea of the number of schools needed for your taluk, of the areas needing only junior schools and the areas suitable for a compound basic school. A knowledge of the crafts in the locality and of the occupations of parents will also be valuable in planning a scheme of basic schools in your taluk. Such a study will widen your outlook, make you feel strong and independent intellectually and help you to make your own contribution to the progress of education. The popular notion that teachers are not conversant with things outside the school will disappear and you will yourselves feel that the public and the authorities look to you for reliable and accurate information.

## WHITHER EDUCATION?\*

The Executive Board of the South India Teachers' Union and the Reception Committee of the Twenty-ninth Provincial Educational Conference have been kind enough to invite me to preside over the Conference at Mangalore. I should sincerely thank them for the great honour they have conferred on me. What is the object of the Executive Board in calling upon its central forward to preside on this occasion? It seems to me that I am required to place before you the magnitude of the work ahead of you and to appeal to you to help the Board to play the game whatever may be the odds against it.

Education is on the lips of every one and the space allotted to it in the press is a good index of the interest evinced by the public in the work of schools. I should like to state at the outset that I do not propose to say anything on such hardy annuals as the medium of Instruction, Place of English, Vocational Education, S. S. L. C. Scheme, G.O. No 4619, the Inspectorate, Public Examination and so on. Nor is it necessary for me to deal with Stagnation and Wastage or Hindi in schools. The Union has expressed its opinion on all these questions and it is enough if I should assure you that I do not hold a view different from that of the Union in regard to questions other than the external public examination at the end of the high school course.

What is wrong with us and with our education? The book of "Education in India 1935-1936" published by the Bureau of Education, contains the following observation in the first chapter. The increasing amount of attention given to education by provinces, educational bodies and individuals is the most prominent feature of the year under review. *Few are the voices raised in support of the present system.* The prevailing discontent is finding wide expression and action must be taken sooner or later . . . Again and again attention has been drawn to the above facts (defects of the system) in the press, on the platform and in provincial and other reports. *What is now necessary is a determined effort to do something about it and not merely to talk.*" This straightforward and refreshing statement is a challenge to the authorities, the ministries, the political parties and the public.

There is a tendency in our province to condemn local bodies for all sins of omission and commission and it is not my intention to hold any brief for them. What about the provincial government and ministries? In an interesting article contributed to the 1937 Year-Book of Education by Sir P. J. Hartog on "The Relations of the Central Government in India to Education under the new Constitution," there is ample material to show that the provincial governments have not been enthusiastic and forward

\* Presidential address, XXIX Madras Provincial Educational Conference Mangalore, May 1938.



enough to take the fullest advantage of the generous disposition of the Government of India. The Resolution issued by the Government of India in 1913 and the circulars sent to the local governments up to 1919 have, time and again, impressed upon them the necessity for the conversion of lower primary schools into upper primary schools and the elimination of wastage between class and class through the appointment of better qualified and better paid teachers. They have also expressed the view that one teacher for each standard should be appointed and that *a minimum scale of salary be fixed for trained teachers*. The Central Government have also expressed their willingness to offer financial assistance to provinces in regard to the liquidation of illiteracy. It is found that, from 1913-17, a sum of 329 lakhs under non-recurring account and a sum of 124 lakhs on recurring account were disbursed to provinces for this purpose. Sir Hartog expresses his surprise that the efforts of the Central Government, far from being appreciated, happened to be interpreted as unnecessary interference.

In the light of the facts alluded to by Sir Hartog, very few will fail to appreciate the spirit of the passage in "Education in India" urging determined effort and action. 'Is the situation really serious?' is a question which anyone may naturally ask. The present position is briefly but clearly stated as follows in "Education in India": "All are agreed that stagnation and wastage is appalling, that the administration by local bodies shows no improvement and is thoroughly inefficient, that compulsory primary education is as remote as ever, that the annual increase in the percentage of permanent literates is disconcertingly small, that the universities contain many students who are unfitted to profit by higher education, that unemployment amongst the educated classes is common and that provision for the education of girls is ludicrously inadequate." There cannot be a stronger indictment of the present policy and system of education. Is there anything to be wondered at if, under such circumstances, the Educational Commissioner should deem necessary to make an appeal for determined effort?

The Madras Government considered the letter from the Government of India pointing out the urgency of a *thorough overhauling of the present system of education*; and the *interim* Ministry published a scheme of reorganisation suited to the special needs and the peculiar conditions of this province. The words, arguments, and ideas in the letter of the Central Government have been freely borrowed in the preparation of a scheme and the opinion of educational bodies has also been invited. The Congress Ministry which has taken up the reins of administration has not so far officially adopted the *interim* ministry proposals; but the Hon'ble Minister for Education has been referring to the scheme of the *interim* ministry as the Government scheme. The opinions of the educational bodies have not been published. No expert committee has been appointed as in other provinces to examine the various proposals. We are told that the Government scheme will come into force in 1939. The attitude of the authorities is likely to be mistaken for non-cooperation or unapproachability.



lity and the cause of education is bound to suffer. As matters stand at present, the reorganisation scheme which should have been based chiefly on the materials furnished by the Director of Public Instruction can represent only one side, though it is an important one. No ministry, which has any knowledge of the history of education in our country, will ever commit the mistake of coming to a final decision on its own account quite independently of the opinion offered by the non-official educational bodies. "*Education*" is, in the words of Prof. Jacks, "*a social enterprise, demanding for its due achievement a general mobilization of the energy, intelligence, idealism, and courage of the entire community.*" Now that reorganisation of education is proposed to be seriously considered, it behoves the ministry to abandon the attitude of *stand-offishness* and to have a heart to heart talk with the representatives of the Union and the Management. The merit of any reorganisation scheme should be judged by the extent to which the glaring defects in the system are sought to be removed.

What is the reorganisation scheme of the Government? I am sure you will all be familiar with the details of that scheme. At the elementary stage, the reorganisation scheme seeks to increase the percentage of permanent literates in proportion to the school-going population *through elimination of incomplete, uneconomic and inefficient elementary schools chiefly by administering the rules for grants-in-aid and subsidies* in a specified manner. As regards higher education, the scheme takes away one year from the university stage, extends the secondary school course by one year, suggests diversion of pupils to technical or trade schools, proposes bifurcation of courses at the high school stage and recommends an external public examination at the fourth form stage for the selection of students to the pre-university or technical courses as the case may be. A lowering of the maximum age to 18 in regard to recruitment for public service is also recommended so as to encourage the diversion of pupils to occupations and thus to remove the congestion in the college classes. There are good sentiments here and there in the Government scheme. It is, however, for the public to consider whether the reorganisation scheme is likely to remedy the serious defects in the system and to give a chance to our young men.

The first objection to the Government scheme which even a beginner may make is the absence in the *communiqué* of any reference to finance. How can any reorganisation be attempted unless adequate funds are made available? Neither the conversion of incomplete schools, nor the provision of several vocational courses will be possible unless funds are allotted in the budget. The improvement of the conditions of service on which there is no difference of opinion means additional expenditure. How can we take the official reorganisation scheme seriously when we find the financial aspect is not touched upon?

Secondly, the scheme is silent on the delicate and difficult problem of the relation between the Government and the Management. The aided institutions have been playing a dominant part in the sphere of education,

Reorganisation of a far-reaching nature, which is declared to be the end in view, should affect the managing bodies in some way or other at every stage. The success of any scheme of reorganisation will depend to a considerable extent on the financial stability and willing co-operation of the Management. The Government is aware of the financial condition of the managing bodies and it should have taken pains to consider how far these aided schools can be relied upon to bear the increasing burden. No one knows how many schools will have to be closed for want of funds. How the Government proposes to give effect to the reorganisation scheme if the managers be found unable to bear the strain is not discussed. One gains the impression that the Government seems still to be acting on the assumption that it is the duty of the Management to bear the responsibility for education, while its duty stops with giving advice and aid if possible. There are the local bodies whose administration has come in for adverse criticism. Nothing is mentioned in the *communiqué* about the control of the schools under local bodies, though it is freely talked about that elementary schools under local bodies will be transferred to the Government. Is it not fair that the public and the managers should know what plan the Government is having in mind? Is it not necessary that the Management should have a clear idea of the relation that should exist between it and the Government?

Thirdly, the Government scheme does not indicate clearly any planning in respect of education. The public can have no idea as to what the Government programme is even in a general way and how this programme is proposed to be completed. If the tendency for drift should continue to be the outstanding feature in the administration of education there will be no means for the public to judge the progress of the reorganisation scheme as years pass on. It is justifiable for the public to assume that wastage and stagnation could have been avoided if a definite programme had been followed. While the authorities complain that local bodies have not cared to submit any programme for the expansion of elementary education, they are themselves averse to the formulation of a comprehensive programme. The quinquennial reports of the Central Government will open the eyes of the Congress Ministry to the need for independent thinking and courageous spirit. In the quinquennial report for 1912-17, it has been observed by the Commissioner that "it is important both for the general increase of literacy and for ensuring that facilities are not confined to certain communities, that the expansion of primary education should proceed upon a definite plan." The report for 1927-32 refers to a quotation by the Hartog Committee from the report of the Bengal Committee and this emphasises the same point: "The mere expenditure of money cannot solve the fundamental problems of primary education, unless it is spent according to some well-considered scheme based on faith and courage as well as on the experience and experiments of the past." The Director of Public Instruction of Assam, is reported to have recently pointed out that plans extending over a period of years should be drawn up and approved by the Legislature so as to avoid



another period of wastage and to ensure systematic and continuous progress towards a definite object. Something in the nature of a programme was attempted in our province as the result of a survey in 1923 and the quinquennial report for 1922-27 gives prominence to the *schme of a school in each village with a population of 500*. Unfortunately the programme does not seem to have been worked out with faith and courage. The tendency to treat certain well-known symptoms, such as wastage and stagnation is becoming more marked and the closure of schools is the only remedy that is seriously suggested. There is the danger of the goal itself being forgotten. No one knows whither our administrators want the province to move. The Congress Ministry may perhaps be puzzled by the numerous tables of statistics. If our Premier should, in the midst of his heavy work, find time to go through the quinquennial reports of the Government of India, he will understand the outlook and limitations of our administrators and easily discover that the lack of a well-planned programme has led us to the present unenviable position. It is for the Congress Ministry to ask itself the question '*Whither Education?*' and to call upon the Department to bring up proposals for the working of the programme.

Lastly, the scheme gives us no idea as to the manner in which the conditions of service of teachers are proposed to be regulated. Administration reports and other official reports admit the seriousness of the position in many aided schools and in several schools under local bodies. The Union has been constantly harping on the point which is plainly stated as follows in "*Education in India*." "The fact that India is a poor country is no excuse for the miserably low salaries of pay which some provinces offer. To reply that teachers can be obtained on the scales offered does not take into account the type of teacher recruited and the effect on the school of having a staff discontented, depressed by poverty and on the look out for other means of increasing their income." The conditions of service in secondary and elementary schools are equally bad and utter confusion prevails in several schools under local bodies. The contract which is insisted upon by the Government has not proved useful in ensuring security of tenure. Instances of managements resorting to the provisions of the contract for terminating the services of qualified, competent and hardworking teachers on religious or communal or linguistic grounds are not infrequent and a state of alarm prevails. The proposed *license* scheme for teachers in aided elementary schools cannot claim anything more than that the position of teachers will not become worse. The Government is aware of all these facts and yet no attempt is made in the *communiqué* to set right things. The improvement of the conditions of service in aided schools is regarded by the Government as a concern of the Management. What the situation will be in a few years no one can foresee. The Union wants it to be clearly understood that the profession looks to the Government for the immediate adoption of suitable measures which will promote contentment and ensure security of tenure. Effective measures will have to be adopted if things should not get out of control. Otherwise, the Government will find it very



difficult to make the public believe that it cannot be held responsible for the mess. In the absence of any good plan for regulating the conditions of service of teachers, any reorganisation scheme will be doomed to failure.

Apart from such general considerations, the Government scheme is objectionable for a variety of reasons. It is my duty to remind you of the opinion of the Union on this scheme. The Union is opposed to the idea of restriction of facilities for education though it is in sympathy with the diversion of pupils to courses for which they have aptitude. It holds strongly the view that the proper distribution of pupils among the several courses is what is needed. Hence it is opposed to the arbitrary selection of pupils at the fourth form stage by means of an external public examination. On grounds of economy and practical administration the Union is also opposed to the extension of the secondary school course by one year. It is my honest conviction that the reorganisation scheme does not touch even the fringe of the problem. Why the Academic Councils have not considered the question is inexplicable. Many are the points in the *communiqué* which are rather obscure and no indication is given as to how far the Government is prepared to implement its own halting recommendations. It will be a pity if this scheme should come into force in 1939 in the present form. The Union will then have a busy time and if it should realise its duty it should get ready for action.

The Wardha scheme has just now entered the stage and it is not proper for anyone to brush it aside or to kill it with kindness. I do not propose to say anything about the Wardha scheme at this stage for obvious reasons. But I am extremely surprised to be told that many of the objects in the scheme could be achieved with the help of the new syllabus proposed to be introduced by the Government. This is certainly an admission that the Wardha scheme is sound. Yet one fails to understand the hush-hush attitude in regard to this departmental syllabus. What is this mystery about the syllabus? Why this has not been published till now is not known. Is it not strange that mention should often be made of this syllabus about which the public and the profession are utterly in the dark by the Premier and the Minister for Education? Is it not amusing that the Minister for Education should attempt to persuade the public to accept the *unknown syllabus* by dragging in the name of Mahatmaji in support of it? Why should the Minister ask the public to be satisfied with a substitute on the strength of the good opinion of Mahatmaji while his all-India scheme itself is available? The problem of reorganisation is not a simple one and a scheme does not originate *de novo* in the Old College and the Secretariat. There is a strong case for convening a conference of the representatives of the Union, the Management, the Industries and the Universities with the Premier as Chairman to consider immediately the reorganisation of education in all its aspects on the basis of the material available just now and to formulate definite proposals. Ordinarily, the politician is not keen on keeping the problems of education before the public since there is nothing spectacular in it. It is, however, essential that the problem of reorganisa-

tion should now be successfully tackled. In considering the problem : with all its ramifications we should not be deterred by financial considerations. It is worthwhile to know where we are and how we should proceed. The question is not whether we can afford to spend the money, but whether we can afford not to spend it. One preliminary condition for the solution of the problem lies in the clear recognition of the fact that the four concerned parties, the Government, the Management, the Parents, and the Teaching profession should *change their angle of vision and look at the problem from the point of view of the child*. Then shall we have the proper atmosphere for the discussion of this vexed question.

The Government will have a different role to play in the reorganised education. It should be more than a mere administering agency. While making all parties concerned realise that its powers will be freely used whenever an occasion demands it, it should do all it can to encourage initiative and co-operation. A Board of Education consisting of the representatives of the Universities, the Union, and the Management is absolutely necessary if the Ministry should get expert advice at every stage. The arguments for the creation of a Central Advisory Board of Education are no less valid for the creation of a Board of Education in each province. The history of education would have been altogether different if such a Board had been constituted earlier. The Government should not hesitate to assume direct responsibility for education ; but at the same time it should endeavour to enlist the support and co-operation of the Management and the Teaching Profession.

That the private management has done valuable service in the cause of education is well known. Madras owes very much to private effort, mission and non-mission. The relation between the Government and the Management should be clearly defined to avoid confusion. The responsibility which the Government is bound to assume in the interest of public education makes it obligatory on the Government to satisfy itself with regard to the conditions of service of teachers, accommodation and equipment in every school. Aid and recognition by the Government mean that aided institutions are regarded as national institutions in whose welfare and efficiency the Government is deeply and directly interested. While the need for this wholesome interference of the State cannot be called in question, it is essential that the *Management should have a distinct assurance that it can always count upon the liberal support of the Government, irrespective of race, religion or political complexion of the Management so long as the conditions for recognition and aid are scrupulously and faithfully observed*. No Management that is sincerely anxious for promoting the sound secular education of the children may allow itself to be swayed by considerations of religion or caste or language. If there be any Management that does not come up to this ideal, the Government should make it clear that its school will cease to be a public institution. It will also be a good principle if recruitment to the staff of schools be made by selection from an approved register of qualified teachers maintained by the Department so that the public



may have full confidence with regard to the quality of instruction. Every one should remember in this connection the significance of the remark made by our Premier in the Assembly that the proper way of looking at the question of recruitment is to see how it will affect the child. The Union further feels that the managers should be regarded as partners who should be consulted on all important questions. It will be in the best interests of education if their co-operation be solicited, both by the Government and the Union. The Management which is interested in the education of the child should, in its turn, not regard the teacher as an employee. It should be willing to recognise him as a partner in the great social enterprise. The number of managing bodies is very large in our province and they have yet to realise the value of collective bargaining. No concerted action has till now been attempted. An organisation of Managers has become necessary for the progress of education on sound lines. Questions of transformation and amalgamation of schools are sure to arise under the reorganisation scheme and the organisation may go a great way towards promoting better understanding not only among Managing Bodies but also between the Management and the Government.

The parents usually plead complete ignorance of the work of our schools and they are often unable to understand the needs of their children. There is a good deal of amusing and unintelligent criticism in regard to books, notebooks and courses. Our educated men find it difficult to appreciate the adoption of modern methods and appliances in the classroom, though they are themselves keen on enjoying the modern amenities in the form of improved cars, roads and lights. The ignorance of the public is a serious obstacle and our schools do not catch the eye of even educated men. There is a great need for publicity work and I should like to remind you of the objective of the Canadian Federation of Teachers' Association in this connection. "The only way to gain permanent benefit is to change the attitude and outlook of the people. We are therefore, turning our thoughts more and more to research and experiment and to working in co-operation with trustees and parents so that they too will be ready for changes." Our Education Week organised year after year is to become more popular and with better co-operation and understanding between the Department and the Union, it will be easy to educate the public.

A well-organised teaching profession is a valuable asset to a country. In several Western countries, teachers are required by statutes to join the Teachers' organisations and to attend their conferences. These organisations have been started everywhere primarily with the object of improving the status and salaries of teachers and of safeguarding their interests. Fortunately for the children in those countries, the organisations were able to win their points early in their career and they are free to direct their attention towards educational research and guiding the public in educational matters. They are consulted by the Government on all educational questions and are given official recognition and representation on behalf of



the profession. The National Union of Teachers in England is invariably consulted and it also has seats in the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education and in the Burnham Salaries Committee. The National Educational Association of the United States of America wields immense influence with its membership of nearly 3 lakhs and with the annual income of 5 hundred thousand dollars from subscriptions. These organisations maintain full-timed salaried officers of good status and there are several departments such as Law, Organisation, Pedagogy, Discipline, Publicity and so on. Where are we in our province? Some days back, the Hon'ble Minister for Education is reported to have said in Bellary that the Government had to resort to an external public examination at the fourth form stage since Headmasters could not take upon themselves the responsibility for the selection of pupils for the pre-university or technical courses. You may be aware that the Provincial Conference of Headmasters held last December in Madras expressed itself decidedly against a public examination at the fourth form stage. The Conference was, I may remind you, opened by the Minister for Education and presided over by the Parliamentary Secretary for Education. Should the opinion of stray Headmasters here and there be preferred to the decision of a Conference of Headmasters? Is it not strange that the Minister for Education who is, and should be, amenable to the rigorous discipline of his party, should happen to encourage the notion, though unconsciously, that organisation is of no consequence to the teaching profession? This has got a moral for us. Our Premier replied to a remark from the Opposition benches in the Legislative Assembly that the members of the Congress Cabinet preferred to *graze together* lest any should go astray and fall a victim. It is not for me to say anything about sectional associations, but it is imperative we should graze together. Little minds and big things do not go together. We should endeavour to pull together and speak with one voice whatever platform we choose to occupy. The need for independent non-official educational opinion on which the Calcutta University Commission has laid much stress is always admitted and it is the duty of every teacher to make the South India Teachers' Union the one organisation that can represent the South Indian teaching profession. A profession that cannot organise itself on such lines will never be admitted to be fit to train the future citizens on sound lines. The Congress Ministry which is alive to the value of sound organisation in moulding and guiding public opinion should, far from doing anything which is likely to interfere with the wholesome influence of an organised body like the Union, lend a helping hand in promoting its development. It should make it plain that individuals, however eminent they may be, can only speak for themselves and that their opinion can never be preferred to that of an organisation. The Government should officially recognise the Union which represents the entire profession. Only then will every individual who feels the urge to do his bit for the profession think it necessary to join the organisation and avail himself of the opportunities

for service. The growth of professional solidarity should be a matter of deep concern to both teachers and Government. All teachers, except a few anti-social individuals, will then realise the advantage of meeting on a common platform under one banner, irrespective of colour, race and religion. There should be no place either for snobbishness on one side or inferiority complex on the other. Teachers will then be in a position to fulfil all the obligations of the members of a learned profession and a healthy nonofficial educational opinion may be built up. Our affiliated associations have got a good deal of work to do in this direction beyond setting their houses in order.

Our Union will have a great future if we choose to give it a chance. The future of the profession is closely bound up with that of the Union. Its constitution is broad-based and it has no feeling of ill-will either against the Management or the Government. We, the teachers in South India, are, however, anxious to do for South Indian Education what teachers in England and America have been doing in their countries. Should we not do our best for the children? Should we not make our schools A-1? Should we not play our part to make our nation, A-1 nation? Should we not serve our public like the teachers in other countries? Should we not give such a training in our schools that our children will turn out in the fulness of time our admirers and well-wishers? Should we not be free in the sphere of education? Should we not aspire for Dominion status in the sphere of education? The Union can help us to achieve these ends if we are prepared to think seriously and earnestly of what is expected of us at the present moment. Our politicians are rightly pre-occupied with the problems of relief to the rural population. If we keep quiet they are likely to leave educational problems severely alone. It is up to us to study the problems in all their aspects, to keep them in the forefront and to press them upon the attention of the public and the Government. Our Union can play the game well and worthily if teachers be prepared for sacrifice and should realise that they have to bear their responsibility in the nation-building work. A planned programme of publicity is needed to make the public realise the significance of the measures to be adopted by the Government. The public should be persuaded to bring pressure to bear upon the Ministry and to point out to it the danger of *education holiday*. A sustained programme of work is not possible unless silver bullets are placed at the disposal of the Union. It is only when you are prepared to stand by your resolutions and to help the Working Committee to function as a Committee of action that the Ministry will cease to give advice and recognise you as a factor and take you seriously. Think of the Tilak Swaraj Fund and the position that the Congress occupies to-day is easily understood. Many of us may be poor, but we are several thousands strong. It should be our duty to raise at least the very modest figure of Rs. 20,000 suggested by the esteemed President of our Union some years back. Such a determination on our part will make the public realise that we mean business. We should, for some years, abandon the habit of moving

numerous resolutions on routine matters in our conferences and leave it to the Working Committee to deal with them in due course. It will be good for us to concentrate our attention on the major questions of policy, control, and administration indicated in the resolutions to be discussed this year. Whatever effort we may make should be not merely for the betterment of the profession. I am anxious that our programme should prove to be a great help to our leaders in their great task of national reconstruction. I am reminded just now in this connection of an important law propounded by Prof. Blackman in regard to processes in plants. This law, known as the *Law of Limiting Factors*, implies that the rate of any activity depending on the interaction of a number of factors is determined by the magnitude of that factor which is at a minimum. Should we allow the teaching profession to be the limiting factor in respect of the activity of national reconstruction? It is the duty of the profession and the authorities to understand the significance of this law and raise the efficiency of the organisation. Otherwise, the profession will be a great drag on the nation and the efforts of our political leaders will bear no fruit. A unique opportunity of sacrifice and service is the privilege of the present-day teaching profession. Let it not be said that teachers have not risen equal to the occasion. Madras has ample resources in regard to schools and qualified and trained teachers. With co-operation and good will between the authorities and the teaching profession, our province can easily take and maintain the first place. Let the political parties, the authorities, the managers and the teachers remember that the call of the country on each section is for definite action. Let the profession show its earnestness and sense of duty by building up a *Dominion Status Fund*. The Union will then be able to launch upon a programme of publicity and action and the future of the profession as well as of the province will be bright.



## EDUCATION AND THE S. I. T. U. : WELCOME ADDRESS\*

It gives me very great pleasure to extend, on behalf of the Thirtieth Madras Provincial Educational Conference, a cordial welcome to our distinguished guests who have readily and willingly consented to participate in the functions of this conference. I have great pleasure in welcoming the distinguished representatives of the public and the delegates of the Teachers' Associations affiliated to the South India Teachers' Union. The pleasure we all feel is tinged with regret that Srimathi Radhabai Subbaroyan and Sri P. Seshadri have, owing to sudden ill-health, found it impossible to preside over the conference. It is our sincere wish that they will soon be restored to health.

The Reception Committee has a feeling of satisfaction that it has been able to secure at very short notice an able and distinguished educationist for the Presidentship. Sri V. P. Audhiseshiah has a good record of work as a teacher behind him and the Conference should consider itself fortunate to have him as President.

The Conference of this year is more in the nature of a family gathering. The Chairman of the Reception Committee is a humble teacher who has been pushed to prominence through the generosity of teachers in the Province. The President elect, is, as I have already mentioned, a teacher of great experience. The Hon'ble Mr. C. J. Varkey, who is to open the Conference, was a teacher for a number of years. He was kind enough to open the Educational Conference last year at Mangalore when he was the Parliamentary Secretary. We are glad to see him holding to-day the responsible position of the Minister for Education and I have no doubt you are eagerly looking forward to a clear statement of the policy of the Government in regard to Education in general and of the measures under contemplation for the betterment of the conditions of service of teachers in particular. It seems to me that Sri K. Venkataswamy Naidu who is to open the Educational Exhibition, has equally strong claims to be recognised as a member, though an adopted one, of our happy family. His intimate connection with the Board of Management of the Pachaiappa College, his long connection with the Standing Committee for Education in the Corporation and the high office he has been holding in the Scout Organisation, are well-known and we are glad that he is here to open the Exhibition.

The Reception Committee notes with pleasure that the Conference of this year has made a record so far as the number of delegates is concerned. This is noteworthy especially when it is remembered that the 'Go as you please' facilities available in previous years happen to be denied this year. We appeal to the members of the Central Assembly to urge the Railway Board to grant special concession facilities to teachers to enable them to attend meetings and conferences convened by associations of teachers, to discuss educational questions. You, the delegates of the Thirtieth

Provincial Educational Conference, have made journeys at great inconvenience and expense. You have before you a crowded programme for three days. In a city of distances like Madras which is unfortunately passing through a period of water scarcity, you may be put to considerable inconvenience. The Reception Committee is anxious to make your stay in Madras comfortable and it deems it a great privilege to serve you. We are conscious of the short-comings in the arrangements for the conference; and let me, on behalf of the Committee, crave your indulgence. The Committee hopes you will have a pleasant time.

In a few minutes, my distinguished friends on this platform will be making a clean dissection of the system of education and be showing you the ramifications of its intricate network. It is, therefore, unnecessary for me to deal with the general problem of education. May I, however, be permitted to make clear to the public and the Government what the South India Teachers' Union stands for at the present moment and what it can do with the co-operation and support of the Government?

You are aware that the Government of India has called upon Local Governments to take in hand the thorough overhauling of the present system of education. The Commissioner of Education with the Government of India is obviously tired of the tendency for talk and he puts in a strong plea for action. The Madras Government published its scheme of reorganisation of education and there was a feverish activity for some months everywhere. The South India Teachers' Union expressed an adverse opinion in regard to the proposals in the *Communique* of the Government and it may be of interest to you to know that the Madras, Andhra and Annamalai Universities are opposed to some of the chief proposals of the Government. In the meantime, the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education has been published. The Central Advisory Board of Education has emphasised the soundness of the scheme and also commended it to the provinces with certain minor alterations. There has been a lull in the air for several months and we are in a state of suspended animation. It is more than a year since the Congress Party assumed office. Persons frequently ask us as to what the next step of the Government will be.

The budget speech of the Hon'ble Minister for Education does not give any indication of the mind or intentions of the Government regarding any educational question. His prefatory remark that the budget was prepared on the basis of 'carrying on in the usual way' is susceptible of different interpretations. Interpellations by members of the Legislature do not elicit anything more than the laconic reply that the 'matter is still under consideration'. While other Provinces have shown a determination to make a beginning and also appointed committees to suggest a suitable line of action, we are asked to believe that the Government *Communique* is the last word on the subject of reorganisation of education and that all that is needed is a revision of the syllabus.

One important point that cannot be ignored in the planning of education to-day is the conflict of ideologies in our country. How far the

increasing tension in the international situation is likely to influence education in the years to come is difficult to imagine. Teachers in South India are seriously told by responsible leaders that they need not concern themselves with anything other than the class room routine. This suggestion of segregation should appear strange when we find teachers in England are called upon to be ready, among other things, to lead thousands of children to specially constructed shelters in up-country districts with provision for protection against attacks from the air. The India of to-morrow which forms a favourite theme with our leaders can be secure only when it rests on a well balanced and properly reorganised system of education.

A hundred years ago, the question of what the system of education ought to be, formed the subject of controversy and there was a battle royal on that. The same question is raised to day in a still more complex form and a solution should be found. Can we turn to the history of Indian Education for guidance just now? A good deal of harm is often caused in this connection by laying stress on catchwords like cultural education, vocational education, projects, Wardha education and so on. At the time of the introduction of western education, it was a question of 'oriental studies' versus 'western knowledge'. Now it is 'book-learning' versus 'learning by doing'. The documents and papers relating to the introduction of western education abound in fallacies and half-truths which, at this distance of time, are very amusing. The Macaulay group as well as the Ram Mohan group will be declared by a fair critic to have been unduly severe in regard to their criticism of oriental studies and extravagantly optimistic in respect of the possibilities of western knowledge. The lustre of oriental studies has in no way been dimmed by the unmerited censure of the Macaulay group and their intrinsic value cannot be questioned even to-day. Curiously enough, it is the products of the western system of education that come in for adverse criticism on all the platforms to-day. We should admit that Macaulay's diagnosis of the problem was fairly correct and that emphasis on western knowledge was made with the honest intention that the educated classes should become free to think and act for themselves. It is true that some of the arguments advanced by the Macaulay group are fanciful; but the decision should on the whole be regarded as quite sound. The following observation in the minute of Macaulay (1835) is significant even to-day, though it was then applicable to oriental studies. "I conceive that we have at present no right to the respectable name of a Board of Public Instruction. We are a Board for wasting the public money, for raising up a breed of scholars who find their scholarship an encumbrance and a blemish, who live on the public while they are receiving education, and whose education is so utterly useless to them that, when they have received it, they must either starve or live on the public all the rest of their lives. Entertaining these opinions, I am naturally desirous to decline all share in the responsibility of a body which, unless it alters its whole mode of proceedings, I must consider, not merely as useless, but as positively noxious." Can the Congress Ministry or the public still have



any doubt as to the line it ought to take in regard to the reorganisation of education?

The crisis in education is more serious today. Should the early stage of the traditional literary type be replaced by the Wardha scheme of basic education? What should one think of the opposition from one set of persons? A cent per cent agreement with the arguments of the advocates of the Wardha school is unnecessary for the Wardha Scheme of basic education to be adopted as the first step in national education. Once a thorough overhauling of the system of education is found imperative, it will be prudent and wise on the part of the public to welcome this Wardha scheme which, more than any other scheme, holds out a chance of making our children able-bodied, cultured, intelligent, and self-reliant. A no-changer who tenaciously clings to the traditional type does as much disservice to the cause of education as one who has an exaggerated notion of the benefits of the Wardha Scheme. The historical parallel points to the necessity for understanding the realities of the situation and extending our whole-hearted support to the Government towards the introduction of the Wardha Scheme. This support of the Wardha scheme need not and should not necessarily mean that the traditional type has no great purpose to serve.

A sum of nearly two and half crores is spent from public funds every year on education. There is again the money spent by other agencies on education. How to get an adequate return for the money spent on education is the question that should engage the attention of the South India Teachers' Union and the Government? The Union realises that the ministry of education is not a bed of roses and that it should receive the willing support of the public and the teaching profession. The Union has no politics of its own and thinks that education should be above party politics. In the interest of education, the Union holds the view that the teaching profession should not affiliate itself to any political party. There is, however, one important ideal which the Union wants the teaching profession to bear in mind. The community of teachers should take no note of differences of caste, race, creed, language, etc., in the work of schools. Further, it is essential in the peculiar conditions obtaining in our province that our schools endeavour to bring up children on healthy cosmopolitan lines which will prevent misunderstanding owing to territorial, linguistic, and communal or religious bias. The teaching profession should see that the undesirable influences noticed in the society do not affect the tone of the school and that due care is taken to foster the growth of sound conventions, abiding goodwill and mutual understanding among children in schools. Much will depend upon the outlook and attitude of the *personnel* of the teaching profession. It is a matter for careful consideration whether the teaching profession should not study carefully the problem of indiscipline in schools. A proper school atmosphere is the only remedy for indiscipline in schools. A well-managed school is usually free from dissatisfaction and discontent and the atmosphere of such a school is one where the germs of indiscipline can hardly flourish.

In the circumstances in which this province finds itself to-day, it is for the Government to take the initiative immediately and adopt a definite policy. While the Union may have no hesitation in assuring the Minister for Education of its whole-hearted support, it should at the same time appeal to him to realise the need for a distinct change in the general outlook and to be ready to take action as suggested by the Commissioner for Education. In the first place, a distinct admission that the education of the people is primarily the responsibility of the Government will remove misapprehensions and pave the way for national education. Secondly, a small representative committee should study the proposals for the reorganisation of education and the minister should formulate on the basis of the expert advice he has received a comprehensive and articulated scheme of national education with a ten year programme. It will at the same time be necessary for him to have the financial implications of the scheme examined. He may have to see how far the present method of preparation of the educational budget is satisfactory. It will be desirable if he could make the cabinet agree to a formula which will be elastic enough to meet the growing needs for education as years pass on. A still more important question which requires his immediate attention is the problem of the managing agency. There is a good deal of complaint about the administration of schools, whether under local bodies or under private management. The fate of several schools is hanging in the balance. Cuts, reduction of scale, stoppage of increments, and retrenchment are becoming common in most schools. The entire question of the managing agency requires to be reviewed in the light of the present day developments and the minister should come to a definite conclusion with regard to the policy to be followed hereafter. Alongside of the managing agency should be discussed the conditions of service of teachers. There is lip sympathy everywhere and it is surprising that, in these days when even persons occupying honorary positions like Chairmen of Municipalities are successfully urging their claims for allowances to enable them to visit several areas, teachers are still called upon to regard the flattering and meaningless platitudes about the nobility of the profession as substitutes for hard cash. The Minister should see to it that teachers are treated in the same manner as public servants and that the rules relating to the conditions of service of teachers are not different in principle. Lastly, the Minister should have a standing expert body to advise him on all educational questions. By whatever name it may be called, the need for a Board of Education is real at the present moment and it is essential that the Board should consist of the representatives of Universities, the Management, the Government and the South India Teachers' Union.

The financial resources of our province may be inadequate and inelastic; but what is available can be utilised to the best advantage if education be considered as a whole, and if the Government should choose to take the partners into its confidence. Conditions are changing rapidly and the cry in the Legislature and elsewhere is for concessions and more concessions. The solicitude for the backward classes is praiseworthy but the needs of the largest number should not be neglected. The Union believes that much can be achieved if the department, the management and the teaching profession could sit together and discuss freely all problems.

## ஆசிரியர்களின் அல்லல்.

நண்பர்களே,

சம்மேளனத் தலைவர் திரு. முத்துபாக்கியம் அவர்கள் என்னை இந்த மகா நாட்டுக்குத் தலைமை வகிக்க அன்புடன் கேட்டார்கள், தென்னிந்திய ஆசிரியர் சங்கத்தினிடம் உங்களுக்குள்ள பற்றை இதிலிருந்து தெரிந்து கொண்டேன். உங்கள் குறைகளை நீக்கவும், தேவைகளைத் தேடிக்கொடுக்கவும் எனக்குச் சாத்திய மில்லை யென்பது உங்களுக்குத் தெரியும். உங்களுடன் இருந்து தேவைகளை நேரில் கேட்டறிந்து கொள்ள நல்ல சமயம் எனக்குக் கிடைத்தது. இம்மகா நாட்டில் பொதுஜனங்கள் சார்பாக சட்டசபை அங்கத்தினரும், அதிகாரிகள் சார்பாக கல்வி அதிகாரிகளும் மேலும் கல்வியில் அனுபவமுள்ள பெரியோர்களும் பங்கெடுத்துக் கொள்வதைக் கண்டு சந்தோஷமடைகிறேன். உங்களுக்கு என் நன்றியைத் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

சம்மேளனத்தின் விதிகளையும் நோக்கங்களையும் கவனித்துப் படித்தேன். கல்வித் துறையில் அபிவிருத்தியும் தொழிலில் தேர்ச்சியும் உங்கள் சங்கத்தின் நோக்கங்களில் அடங்கியுள்ளன. இது மெச்சத் தக்கது. சங்கத்தின் நோக்கங்களையும், விதிகளையும், உழைப்பையும் பார்க்கும்போது ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்கள் பொறுப்புடன் காரியங்களைச் செய்யக் கூடியவர்கள் என்ற நம்பிக்கை வலுப்படும. ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களை மனச்சாக்கிக்கு விரோதமாகத் தாழ்த்திப் பேசும் தலைவர்கள் மகாநாட்டு நிகழ்ச்சியையும் கண்காட்சியையும் கவனிப்பார்களானால் ஆசிரியர்களுக்கும் தேசத்திற்கும் நன்மை உண்டாகும்.

பல வருஷங்களுக அதிகாரிகளையும் தலைவர்களையும் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்கள் வேண்டுவதென்ன? (1) விலை வாசிக்கேற்றதும், நல்வாழ்க்கைக்குப் போதுமானதுமான மாதச் சம்பளம். (2) வயது காலத்தில் செலக்கியமாயிருக்கப் பொருள். (3) வகுப்பறையில் போதலு முறை சுதந்திரம் போதலு சாதனங்கள் (4) செய்கரியமான பள்ளிக்கூடக் கட்டிடம் (5) தொழிலில் தேர்ச்சிக்கேற்ற உயர்வு. (6) பொறுப்பு, வகிக்கக்கூடிய அம்சங்கள். (7) புத்தக வசதி. (8) தம் பிள்ளைக்குப் படிப்பு வசதி. (9) ஆராய்ச்சி வசதி. (10) விடிஸனின் கடமைகளைச் செய்வது. இவை ஆசிரியர்களின் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு அவசியமென்பதை எவரும் மறுக்க மாட்டார்கள். இவற்றின் அவசியத்தைப் பல இடங்களில் ஸார்ஜெண்டு ரிபோர்ட்டில் தெளிவாகக் காணலாம்.

தூறு வருஷங்களுக்கு மேலாக ஆரம்பப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களைப் பற்றியும் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களைப் பற்றியும் மகா நாடுகளிலும் பத்திரிகைகளிலும் பரிசீலனை செய்து வருகிறார்கள். நம் மாகாணத்தில் பல திண்ணைப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்கள் பொதுஜனங்களின் ஆதரவையும் நன்மதிப்பையும் தாராளமாகப் பெற்று கல்விக்காக உழைத்து வந்தன. அக்காலத்தியப் பாடத் திட்டமும் போதலு முறையும் சிறந்தன வென்று சொல்வதற்கில்லை. ஆயினும் தெரிந்தவரையில் பிள்ளைகளுக்கு எண்ணும் எழுத்தும் நன்றாகக் கற்பிக்கப்பட்டன, ஆரம்பக் கல்வி, வேகமாய்ப் பரவுவதற்காகச் சர்க்கார் பொருளுதவி கொடுக்க வரவே ஸ்தல ஸ்தாபனங்களும் தனி



மானேஜர்களும் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களை ஏற்படுத்தினார்கள். ஆனால் பொதுஜன ஆதரவும் பெற்றோர்களின் நெருங்கிய சம்பந்தமும் நாளடைவில் மறையத் தொடங்கின. சர்க்காரும் வேண்டிய அளவிற்கு உதவி புரிந்ததாக நாம் சொல்வதற்கில்லை. கட்டிடங்கள் சரியாயில்லை யென்றும் ஆசிரியர்களுக்குத் தகுந்த சம்பளம் கொடுக்கப் படவில்லையென்றும், ஆசிரியர்கள் தேர்ச்சி யில்லாதவர்களென்றும் அதிகாரிகளே பல குறைகளைக் கூறியிருக்கிறார்கள்.

உலகத்தில் வெகு வருஷங்களாகப் படிப்பாளிகளின் தொகை மிகக் குறைந்திருக்கும் நாடு இந்தியாவே. நூற்றுக்கு 15 பேர்களே இன்று படிப்பாளிகள். இவர்களில் அநேகர் எழுத்தைப் பற்றாட்டாளர்கள். 1913ம் வருஷம் இந்தியாவும், ருஷ்யாவும் சமமாகத் தாழ்ந்த நிலையிலிருந்தன. படிப்பாளிகளின் தொகை குறைவாயிருந்ததுடன் இரண்டு தேசங்களும் தொழிற்சாலைகளில்லாததால் விவசாயத்தையே அண்டியிருந்தன. முப்பது வருஷங்களில் ருஷ்யா வெகுவாக முன்னேற்றமடைந்திருக்கிறது. நூற்றுக்கு நூறு பேர் படிப்பாளிகளாக விளங்குகிறார்கள். மேலும் விஞ்ஞான சாஸ்திரத்தில் தேர்ச்சி உண்டாகி ருஷ்யாவில் தொழிற்சாலைகள் அபிவிருத்தியடைந்திருக்கின்றன. இந்தியா இன்னமும் தாழ்ந்த நிலையிலிருப்பதற்கு கல்வியின் தாழ்ந்த நிலைகாரணமென்று தலைவர்களும் ஆராய்ச்சிக்காரர்களும் வற்புறுத்தி யிருக்கிறார்கள். இந்த உண்மையையே சமீபத்தில் கனம் ஸார்ஜென்டும் ரிபோர்ட்டில் அடிக்கடி அழுத்தமாகச் சொல்லுகிறார். தேசத்தின் வருங்காலம் தேச மக்களின் கல்வியைப் பொறுத்திருக்கிறது என்று இங்கிலாந்தில் மந்திரி பார்லிமெண்டில் சொன்ன எச்சரிக்கையை ஸார்ஜென்ட் நமக்கு ஞாபகப்படுத்துகிறார்.

தென் இந்திய ஆசிரிய சங்கமும் நம் மாகாண முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு ஆரம்பக் கல்வி முன்னேற்றம் அவசியமென்பதை பன்முறை வெளியிட்டிருக்கிறது. சில வருஷங்களாக ஆரம்பப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களைச் சீர்திருத்துவதற்கு அதிகாரிகள் கையாண்ட முறைகளை அப்போதைக்கப்போது கவனித்து குறைகளை அதிகாரிகளுக்குத் தெரிவித்து வந்தது. மேலும் ஆசிரியர்களின் சம்பளங்களை உயர்த்துவது அவசியமென்று எடுத்துக் காட்டி இன்றுவரை முயன்று வருவதை நீங்கள் அறிவீர்கள். மாகாணக் கல்வி மகாநாடுகளில் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களின் தேர்ச்சிக்காக “மறு பயிற்சி” கள் ஏற்பாடு செய்வதுண்டு. ஜில்லாக்களில் சங்கங்கள் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களைத் தடையின்றி அங்கத்தினராகச் சேர்த்துக் கொண்டு விஷயங்களைக் கூடி ஆலோசிக்கவும் தீர்மானத்திற்கு வரவும் விதிகளை மாற்றியிருக்கிறார்கள். இரண்டு அணு சந்தாவைக் கொடுத்து நேராக மாகாணச் சங்கமான யூனியனில் சேரும் உரிமை ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களுக்குத்தானுண்டு. யூனியன் அதிகத்தில் கவனிக்கப்படும் ரகசிய நிதியிலும் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு சௌகரியம் செய்திருக்கிறார்கள். பிராவிடண்டுபண்டு சௌகரியம் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களுக்கும் கிடைக்க வேண்டுமென்று யூனியன் சர்க்காருக்கு எழுதி வருகிறது. ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியரின் மதிப்பு உயர்ந்தால்தான் மந்திரிமுதல் கல்வியில் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட எல்லோருக்கும் மதிப்பு ஏற்படுமென்பது யூனியனின் அபிப்பிராயம். கல்வி அபிவிருத்தியை உத்தேசித்தும், தொழில் மாடில் ஒற்றுமையேற்படவும் கல்வி இலாகாத் தலைவர் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரிய யூனியன்களைத் தென் இந்திய ஆசிரிய சங்கத்தினோடும் அதன் ஜில்லாக் கிளைச் சங்கங்களோடும் சேர்வதற்கு அனுமதி கொடுத்திருக்கிறார்கள். நம் முயற்சியால் படிப்படியாக முன்னேறி வருகிறோம். உதாரணமாக பல மாதங்களுக்கப்பால் புத்தப் படியாக (டியர்னஸ் அலவன்ஸ்) இரண்டு ரூபாய் உதவிப் பள்ளிக்கூட ஆசிரியர்களுக்குக் கொடுத்தார்கள். அடிக்கடி மன்றாடியதின் பேரில் நான்கு ரூபாயும் பின்பு எட்டு ரூபாயும் இப்போது பதினாறு ரூபாயும்

சர்க்காரே கொடுக்கிறார்கள். ஸ்தல ஸ்தாபன ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களும் வெகு நாள் இந்தப் பஞ்சப்படியை அடையவில்லை. மிடிவாதமாக யூனியன் வற்புறுத்தியதன் பேரில் அவர்களும் இந்த செளகரியத்தை அடைகிறார்கள். ஆனால் சம்பளத் திட்டம் இன்னும் மேர்சமாகவே யிருக்கிறது. உதவிப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களில் ஆசிரியர்கள் சம்பளத்தைச் சொல்லிக்கொள்ளவும் வெட்கப்படுகிறார்கள். மாணேஜர்களுக்கும் ஆசிரியர்களுக்கும் இது சம்பந்தமாக மனஸ்தாபம் உண்டாகவே ஆசிரியர்களை வேலையினின்றும் நீக்கிவிடுகிறார்கள். திடீரென வேலையினின்று நிறுத்துவதைத் தடுக்கவும், சம்பளத்தை நினைத்தபடி மாற்றமலிருக்கவும் யூனியன் ஆசிரியர்களைக் கலந்து பேசின பின்பு சர்க்கார் ஸர்வீஸ் ரெஜிஸ்தர் முறையை அமுலுக்குக் கொண்டு வந்தார்கள்.

நம் மாகாணத்தில் சுமார் முப்பத்தேழாயிரம் ஆரம்பப் பாடசாலைகள் உள்ளன. இவற்றுள் பாதி ஸ்தல ஸ்தாபனங்களின் கீழும் பாதி தனிப்பட்ட மாணேஜ்மெண்டின் கீழும் இருக்கின்றன. சுமார் முப்பது லக்ஷம் பிள்ளைகளும் பெண்களும் படிக்கிறார்கள். லக்ஷம் ஆசிரியர்கள் உழைத்து வருகிறார்கள். கட்டாயப் படிப்பு அமுலுக்கு வந்தால் இன்னும் முப்பது லக்ஷம் பிள்ளைகளுக்கு ஏற்பாடு செய்ய வேண்டும். மேலும் ஒரு லக்ஷம் ஆசிரியர்கள் தேவை. பயிற்சிப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களில் வருஷத்திற்கு ஆறுயிரம் ஆசிரியர் பயிற்சி பெறலாம். சில வருஷங்களாக பயிற்சிக்கு வருவதை விரும்புவோர் மிகவும் குறைவு. பள்ளிக்கூடங்களிலும் காலியான இடங்களுக்கு ஆசிரியர்கள் கிடைப்பதில்லை. அதிகாரிகளும், மாணேஜ்மெண்டும் இந்த நிலையை அறிவார்கள். சம்பளம் மிகவும் குறைவாயிருப்பதாலும், மேலே உயர்வுக்கு இடமில்லாததாலும் ஆசிரியத் தொழிலை, படித்தவர்கள் விரும்புவதில்லை.

ஆசிரியத் தொழிலின் ஊதியமும் மதிப்பும் இப்படியே யிருக்கும்வரை படித்தவர் ஆசிரியத் தொழிலை பொருட்படுத்தமாட்டார்கள்.

ஆசிரியர்களின் சம்பளம் இதுகாறும் மேர்சமாயிருப்பது கல்வியை முக்கியமானதாக அதிகாரிகள் இதுவரையில் கருதவில்லை யென்பதைக் காட்டுகிறதென்று ஸார்ஜெண்டு ரிபோர்டு கூறுகிறது. பல மகாநாடுகளில் தீர்மானங்கள் சம்பளக் குறைவைக் கண்டித்து வருகின்றன. சென்னை புனருத்தாரணக் கமிட்டியும் ஸார்ஜெண்டு திட்டப்பட்டி சம்பளம் கொடுப்பது அவசியமென சிபார்சு செய்திருக்கிறது. 1946-ம் வருஷம் பச்சையப்பன் கல்லூரியில் அகில இந்திய கல்வி மகாநாட்டைத் திறந்து வைக்கும்போது கவர்னர் ஹோப் இதுவரை கல்வி சம்பந்தமாக சர்க்கார் அனுஷ்டித்த முறை சரியல்லவென்றும், ஆசிரியர்களின் சம்பளமும் மதிப்பும் உயரும் வழியைக் காமினெட் யோசிப்பதாகவும் கூறினர். நல்லகாலம் பிறக்குமென்ற நம்பிக்கையில் ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்கள் காமினெட் தீர்மானத்தை எதிர் பார்த்தார்கள். ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு எதிர்பார்த்தபடி தகுந்த சம்பள விகிதம் கிடைக்கவில்லை. முக்கியமாக உதவிப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களிலுள்ள ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு ஏமாற்றம் அதிகம். இப்போதுள்ள திட்டத்தைவிட சற்று அதிகமாகக் கொடுத்திருக்கிறேமென்று சொல்லி மந்திரி ஆசிரியர்களைத் திருப்தி அடையச் சொல்கிறார். புதுச் சம்பளத் திட்டம் பின்வருமாறு :—

மாணேஜ்மெண்டு	லோயர்	ஹையர்	ஸெகண்டரி
கவர்ன்மெண்டு	20-1-35	25-1-45	40-3-55-2-85
போர்டு	20-1-30	25-1-40	35-1½-65
எய்டெட்	15	20-1½-25	25-1-35

இந்தச் சம்பளத் திட்டம் சரியானதல்ல. ஒரேவித யோக்யதையுள்ள ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு மாணேஜ்மெண்டுக் கேற்றபடி சம்பளம் வேறுபடுகிறது. கவர்ன்

மெண்டு ஸெகண்டரி கிரேட் ஆசிரியர் ஒசைப்படாமல் 40-3-55 2-85 வாங்கும் போது பக்கத்தேயுள்ள போர்டு பள்ளிக்கூடத்தில் அவர்போன்றவர் 35-11-65தான் வாங்க முடியும். அடுத்த தெருவில் எய்டெட் பள்ளிக்கூடத்தில், 25-1-35 ரூபாயைக் கொண்டு சந்தோஷமாகவும் உத்ஸாகத்துடனும் இவர் வேலை செய்ய வேண்டும். இந்த வித்தியாசம் என்று ஒழியும்? இந்தத் தொழிலுக்கு ஏன் வந்தோமென்று ஆரம்ப ஆசிரியர்கள் நினைத்து வருந்துவதில் ஆச்சரிமென்ன? ஆசிரியர்களின் குழப்பத்தை சர்க்கார் நீக்கவேண்டுமென்ற தோரணையில் மறுபடியும் ஒரு அறிக்கை வெளியிட்டிருக்கிறார்கள். அதில் எதிர்பாராத சில கொள்கைகளை வெளியிட்டிருப்பது ஆசிரியர்களின் மனதைப் புண்படுத்தியது. எங்கும் அமைதி குறைந்து மனக் கசப்பு அதிகரித்திருக்கிறது. அறிக்கையின் இறுதியில் பின்வருமாறு கூறியிருக்கிறார்கள் : தங்களுக்கு சாத்தியமானதைச் செய்ய சர்க்கார் முன் வந்திருப்பதால் வேலையில் அதிகத் திறமையை அவர்கள் எதிர்பார்க்கிறார்கள். ஆரம்பப் படிப்பு முதலான எல்லாப் படிப்புகளிலும் இப்போதைக்காட்டிலும் அதிக மேம்பாட்டிற்கு இடமிருக்கிறது என்பது மறுப்பதற்கில்லை. ஒரு இலாகாவின் சம்பள விகிதம் தேசத்திற்காகச் செய்யும் இலாகாவின் தொண்டைப் பொறுத்திருக்கும். ஆசிரியர்களை உயர்த்துவதற்கான பணத்தை ஜனங்களிடம் வேண்டுகிறபோது அவர்கள் தேசத்திற்காகச் செய்யும் தொண்டின் அளவைக் கவனிக்க வேண்டும்." இந்தக் கொள்கையை நான் விவரமாகப் பரிசீலனை செய்யப்போவதில்லை. அவசியமுமில்லை. ஆனாலும் இக்கொள்கை எல்லா இலாகாக்களுக்கும் காரினைட்டு மந்திரிகளுக்கும் கஜக்கோலாக உபயோகப்பட வேண்டும். முதலில் சம்பளத் திட்டம் இலாகாக்களுக்கு விதித்தபோது இந்தக் கொள்கை கமிட்டியின் மனதிலிருந்ததாகவே சர்க்கார் அறிக்கையில் விளங்கவில்லை. நியாயமான முறையில் சம்பளத் திட்டம் செய்வதானால் இக்கொள்கையே கஜக்கோலாகக்கொண்டு தேசத்திற்கும் ஜனங்களுக்கும் ஏற்பட்ட நன்மையை மதிப்புப்போட்டு ஏற்றபடி சம்பளத்தை மாற்ற வேண்டும். இப்போது கொள்கையை வெளியிடுவது தர்மமல்ல : நியாயமுமல்ல. ஆசிரியர்களின் சம்பளத் திட்டத்தின் சம்பந்தமாக அர்த்தமற்றதும் வாதத்திற்கிடமானதுமான பின் யோசனையை எவரும் சிலாக்கிகமாட்டார்கள்.

ஆசிரியர்கள் அதிருப்தி அடைந்து மனம் கொதிப்பதில் ஆச்சரியமென்ன? ஆரம்பக் கல்வியின் முன்னேற்றத்தில் ஈடுபடவேண்டாமாவென்று ஆசிரியர்களைக் கேட்க எவருக்கு மனம் வரும்?

அடுத்தபடி என்ன செய்வதென்று ஒருவரை யொருவர் கேட்கின்றனர். தென் இந்திய ஆசிரியர் சங்கம் என்ன செய்வதாக உத்தேசம் என்று சிலர் எழுதுகிறார்கள். நேரடி நடவடிக்கை நான் சரியான வழி என்று காலத்திய போக்கைத் தழுவி வற்புறுத்துகிறார்கள். ஆத்திரப்பட்டுக் காரியத்தை நாம் கெடுத்துவிடக் கூடாது. ஒரே மானேஜ்மெண்டின் கீழ் எல்லா ஆசிரியர்களுமில்லை. மானேஜ்மெண்டுகளிலும், மனதிற்கிசைந்தவர் சிலரே. ஆசிரியரின் சிரமத்தைப் பாராட்டாதவர் பலர். தங்களுக்குக் கொடுக்கும் நிர்வாகக் கிராண்டு குறைந்ததென்று மானேஜ்மெண்டுகளும் கண்ணீர் விடுகின்றன. தனிப்பட்ட மானேஜர்களும் மானேஜ்மெண்டும் ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு சௌகரியத்தைச் செய்யலாம். ஆனால் ஆசிரியர்களின் ஆதரவுடன் சர்க்காரிடம் மன்றாடி ஜெயிக்கும் வன்மையும் உணர்ச்சியும் அவர்களிடம் நாம் எதிர்பார்ப்பதற்கில்லை. ஆகவே ஆரம்பப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்களை யெல்லாம் சர்க்கார் நிர்வாகத்திற்குள்ளேயே கொண்டுவருவது அவசியமெனப் பல காரணங்களை முன்னிட்டு நமது யூனியன் வற்புறுத்தி வருகிறது. சமீபத்தில் இதே விதக் கொள்கையைத் தழுவப் போவதாக பம்பாய் பிரதம மந்திரி கனம் கெர் அவர்கள் வெளியிட்டிருக்கிறார்கள். இந்தப் பிரச்சினையை சர்க்கார் கவனிப்பதாகத் தெரியவில்லை. உணவுப் பங்கீடு துணிப் பங்கீடு இவற்றைப் பற்றின விவரங்கள்



அடிக்கடி சென்னை சர்க்கார் பத்திரிகை “மெட்ராஸ் இன்பர்மேஷனி”ல் வருகின்றன. கட்டாயப் படிப்புக் கல்வித் திட்டம் மிரோகிராமப்பற்றி விவரங்கள் வரக்கூடாது. எல்லாம் சர்க்கார் கேள்வி ஜாப்தாவுடன் நின்றதுவிட்டது போலும். மௌன் வழியை மந்திரி அனுசரித்து ஜனங்களுக்குத் தொண்டு புரிவது ஆச்சரியமல்லவா? எவ்விதம் கட்டாயக் கல்விப் படிப்புத் திட்டத்தை அமுலுக்குக்கொண்டு வர உத்தேசித்திருக்கிறார்களோ நாமறியோம். உள்ள பள்ளிக்கூடங்களுக்கு ஆசிரியர்கள் இல்லாதபோது ஆயிரக் கணக்காக ஆசிரியர்கள் எங்கிருந்து தோன்றுவார்கள்? தற்கால ஆசிரியர் நிலையைக் கண்ணால் பார்த்தும் காதால் கேட்டும் ஆசிரியர் வேலையில் அமர எவர் வருவார்?

ஆகவே சங்கங்களில் சம்பளத் திட்டம் குறைவென்றும் எந்த மாணேஜ்மெண்டின் கீழிருப்பினும் ஒரு கிரேட் ஆசிரியரின் சம்பளம் ஒரே விதமாக இருக்க வேண்டுமென்றும் தீர்மானங்கள் செய்து சர்க்காருக்கு அனுப்ப வேண்டும். இத்துடன் மாணேஜ்மெண்டையும் ஆங்காங்குள்ள ஆசிரியர்கள் சர்க்கார் திட்டப்படி சம்பளம் கொடுக்கும்படி கேட்டுக்கொள்ளலாம். அவர்கள் முயற்சியெடுக்காவிடில் வேலைக்குத் தகுந்த கூலி என்ற சர்க்கார் தத்துவத்தை ஒட்டி “கூலிக்குத் தகுந்த வேலை” என்ற தத்துவத்தை அனுசரிக்கப் போவதாகத் தெரிவிப்பது சரியான முறை. குழந்தைகளின் படிப்பில் சாதாரணமாக வழக்கம்போல் 10 மணி முதல் 4-30 வரையில் யாதொரு புகாருக்கு இடமின்றி குழந்தைகளை உதலாகத்துடனும் பொறுப்புடனும் சொல்லிக் கொடுப்பதை எக்காலத்திலும் அடிப்படையாகக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். அதை மாணேஜ்மெண்டும், பெற்றோரும் சொல்லாமலே அறியும்படி நடந்து கொள்வது காரியம் கை கூடுவதற்குச் சாதகமாகும். மற்றைய நேரங்களிலோ வேறு பள்ளிக்கூட காரியங்களிலோ பங்கெடுப்பது மனதிற்குச் சமாதானமில்லாத காரியமென்பதை மரியாதையாகத் தெரிவிப்பது நல்லது. வேலை நிறுத்தம் செய்வது சரியா சரியில்லையா யென்பதுபற்றி தீர்மானத்திற்கு வருமுன்பு, அம்முறையால் நம் கஷ்டம் உடனே நீங்குமா வென்பதையும் நினைக்க வேண்டும். பிறர் குற்றம் சொல்வதற்கில்லாமலும் குழந்தைகளின் படிப்பில் நமக்குப் பொறுப்பில்லை என்கிற அபிப்பிராயத்திற்கு இடங்கொடாமலும் நம் காரியத்தைக் கைகூடுவதற்குப் பல வழிகளை நிதானமாக அனுஷ்டிப்பது சரியானது. இடத்திற்கும் ஊருக்கும் மாணேஜ்மெண்டுக்கும் ஏற்றபடி வழிகளைத் தேடுவதால் பலன் ஏற்படலாம். ஆசிரியர்கள் தாமே வேலை நிறுத்தம் செய்யாது தங்களுடைய சாத்வீக முறையின் காரணமாக வேலையினின்றும் நீக்கப்பட நேரிடின் பொதுஜனங்களும் பெற்றோர்களும் ஆசிரியர்களை ஆதரிப்பார்கள். மாணேஜ்மெண்டும் கூலிக்குத் தகுந்த வேலை என்ற கொள்கையை ஒத்துக் கொள்வது சாத்தியப்படலாம். ஏனெனில் அவர்களுக்குச் சர்க்கார் வேண்டிய பொருளுதவி கொடுக்கத் தயங்குகிறார்கள். ஆசிரியர்கள் அவ்வவ்விடங்களில் கூடி பொறுமையாக லாபநஷ்டங்களை யோசித்து தங்கள் அபிப்பிராயங்களை யூனியனுக்குத் தெரிவித்தால் எல்லா வழிகளையும் பரிசீலனை செய்து சரியான முடிவுக்கு வரக்கூடும். தென் இந்திய ஆசிரிய சங்கத்தின் நிர்வாக போர்டும் கிளைச் சங்கங்களுக்கு சில வழிகளைக் குறிப்பிட்டு ஆலோசிக்கச் சொல்லி யிருக்கிறது. பொது ஜனங்களும் பத்திரிகைகளும் விசேஷமாகத் தமிழ்ப் பத்திரிகைகளும் ஆசிரியர்களை ஆதரித்து வருகின்றன. கல்கியில் பல தடவை ஆசிரியர்களின் நிலையை உருக்கமாகவும் உண்மையாகவும் விவரித்து வருவதை நான் பாராட்டுகிறேன். சர்க்கார் சம்பள அறிக்கை சம்பந்தமாக அதில் சமீபத்தில் வெளி வந்துள்ள விஷயம் பழைய கட்டுரைகளைத் தோற்கடித்து விட்டது. வேலை நிறுத்தத்தை கடைசி வழியாக நினைத்து திடமான மனதுடன் வேறு வழிகளை யூனியன் காட்டியபடி அனுஷ்டிப்போம். அதனால் லாபம் சீக்கிரம் ஏற்படாவிட

டாலும் பொறுப்பை வகிப்பவர்கள் எனப் பொது ஜனங்களும் அதிகாரிகளும் ஆசிரியர்களைக் கருதுவார்களென்பதில் சந்தேகமில்லை.

இந்த சமயத்தில் வேறு ஒரு விஷயத்தையும் நீங்கள் யோசிக்கலாம் என்று தோன்றுகிறது. கட்டாயப் படிப்பு இப்போதுள்ள ரீதியில் சிக்கிரம் பரவுமென்று நினைப்பதற்கில்லை. சம்பளம் கொடுக்கவோ அல்லது பள்ளிக்கூடங்களைச் சர்க்கார் ஆதீனத்தில்தான் ஆரம்பப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்கள் நடக்கவேண்டுமென்று நாம் நினைப்பானேன்? தனியாகவே பொது ஜன ஆதரவை நம்பி கிராமங்களில் சர்க்கார் சம்பந்தமில்லாமலே ஆசிரியர்கள் ஆங்காங்கு பள்ளிக்கூடங்களை ஸ்தாபித்து பொது ஜனங்களின் மதிப்பையும் ஆதரவையும் ஏன் அடையக்கூடாது? ஜனங்களுடன் நெருங்கிப்பழகி புது உணர்ச்சி உண்டு பண்ணுங்கள். கல்வி வசதிகளை கிராமங்களில் பரவச் செய்யுங்கள். ஜனங்கள் தம்முடைய தேவைகளையும் உரிமைகளையும் கவனிக்கும்படி அரசியல் கட்சிகளை வற்புறுத்தும் சக்தியை வளரச் செய்யுங்கள். அவர்கள் பிரியத்தைத் கொண்டினால் அடையுங்கள். அப்போது ஆசிரியர்கள் மந்திரிகளைச் சுகமாயிருக்கிறீர்களா வென்று கேட்க முடியும்.

இந்த சமயத்தில் வேறு ஒரு விஷயத்தையும் நீங்கள் யோசிக்கலாம் என்று தோன்றுகிறது. கட்டாயப் படிப்பு இப்போதுள்ள ரீதியில் சிக்கிரம் பரவுமென்று நினைப்பதற்கில்லை. சம்பளம் கொடுக்கவோ அல்லது பள்ளிக்கூடங்களைச் சர்க்கார் ஆதீனத்தில்தான் ஆரம்பப் பள்ளிக்கூடங்கள் நடக்கவேண்டுமென்று நாம் நினைப்பானேன்? தனியாகவே பொது ஜன ஆதரவை நம்பி கிராமங்களில் சர்க்கார் சம்பந்தமில்லாமலே ஆசிரியர்கள் ஆங்காங்கு பள்ளிக்கூடங்களை ஸ்தாபித்து பொது ஜனங்களின் மதிப்பையும் ஆதரவையும் ஏன் அடையக்கூடாது? ஜனங்களுடன் நெருங்கிப்பழகி புது உணர்ச்சி உண்டு பண்ணுங்கள். கல்வி வசதிகளை கிராமங்களில் பரவச் செய்யுங்கள். ஜனங்கள் தம்முடைய தேவைகளையும் உரிமைகளையும் கவனிக்கும்படி அரசியல் கட்சிகளை வற்புறுத்தும் சக்தியை வளரச் செய்யுங்கள். அவர்கள் பிரியத்தைத் தொண்டினால் அடையுங்கள். அப்போது ஆசிரியர்கள் மந்திரிகளைச் சுகமாயிருக்கிறீர்களா வென்று கேட்க முடியும்.

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A SYMPOSIUM

## ART IN EDUCATION IN FREE INDIA

This subject suggests to me not in the first place the development of a school of Indian artists (how can I presume to tell in what direction genius may burn) but something that Art may do in the education of the common run of free citizens in Free India.

Education as we know it *ought* to be, for the free development of a balanced personality, is one thing. Education as we have it, with the tyranny of the examination, the crowded class-room, the glorification of the text-book, is another. Yet let us not forget our ideals. It may be hard to carry them out with meagre apparatus and limited finances and big classes, but if our ideals are really right, we can do something about it, while the best modern set up can be vitiated by a wrong attitude on the teacher's part towards the pupil.

Art teaching in modern education then, is part of the endeavour to liberate the natural faculties of the pupil and train him to be himself. Only through being our best and truest selves can we be really useful citizens and balanced personalities.

But can the ordinary small child "Practice Art"? Think of the effect on the child, not on the piece of paper and the answer is "Yes." There is in the child an unconscious ability to formulate his ideas in a pattern or a "picture." He has not the ability to make a realistic representation of a scene, but he has a language, a pictorial method of his own. His men and women and houses are drawn according to a formula. Just as God Siva has his trident and Lakshmi her peacock, so that we recognise the crudest representation of them by their symbols, so the child has certain symbols for a man or woman and these must be put in. When they are expressed, Mother or Father or Teacher has been drawn, because the thali, the sari, the bangles, those articles that the child considers characteristic of the subject, have been put in. Even if single lines and circles stand for limbs and head, the child does not mind.

Using his own formulas then, the child will make pictures. These will grow in realism as the child grows older and observes figures and scenes more closely but the development comes from the child's own observation, not from the teacher's instruction. The teacher cannot see for the child, he can only help the child to see for himself.

Perspective too, will never develop in its Western form, except in a few cases. The way in which older children represent scenes is more like the way the Mogul artists did, with rivers winding up and up to huts and trees and mountains at the top of the picture and figures in the foreground no bigger than those in the middle distance.

Pattern work is another direction in which Indian children freely express themselves. Where does it come from? It is not an exact copy of any kolum or any design based on typical Indian motifs, yet shown to artists of another country, it can be recognised as typically Indian. One English teacher with a strong bent herself towards naturalistic representation, and little aptitude for decorative work, was continually surprised to find her classes of Indian children always producing work that was typically Indian and decorative. Those versed in Indian art have looked at some of the work of school children and said that it reminded them of Mogul styles of work. But the pupils are village girls who have never seen any Indian art work. Truly there are untapped springs of originality and art in our Indian school children, if we will only provide them with paper and paint to express themselves. "I myself can learn something from that painting. It is all there, she understands composition and look at her colour scheme." The speaker was a well-known Indian artist and the painter was a poor village training student, last in the class as far as marks were concerned.

It needs a special attitude of mind to appreciate the art work of little children. When they get older, the appeal is more general. But one needs to learn what are the merits of the work. Pleasing colour, unity of composition, rhythm of line and form, balance. These are among the characteristics of good work. There is usually merit when work is done under the stress of emotion, because the pupil wants to do it and loves to take trouble to get it just as he wants it to be, spending time and care on it. The picture tells the story and tells it forcibly. There are little details that are characteristic of the scene and show close and appreciative observation. The figures and objects in the picture all contribute to the whole. Little extra details of trees and flowers are put in to complete the picture. The whole thing is entirely original and typical of the work of that particular pupil. So we get Indian life seen through the eyes of the Indian child. Women drawing water from the well, the celebration of Deepavalli with its lights, the bazaar, the school, the sports field, festivals and city crowds, growing crops, wayside scenes, home life, travel, daily work, all the life of the countryside.

Without deliberate effort it comes to pass that the art work of anyone school or anyone teacher has a character of its own as well as the art work of individual pupils. We may look for the development of characteristic schools of Indian Child Art, differing from any known school of Indian Art and yet typically Indian.

India seems to lean towards small and highly decorative paintings, done with opaque colour. This type of work is produced wherever Indian Child Art has begun to develop. We may hope also to get murals, so characteristic of India. There are proper murals painted skilfully on properly prepared surfaces—but what of the gods and goddesses painted in crude colours on the white-washed walls of shrines? There is room for both types in our schools. the skilled mural by the advanced pupil and the free effort on the ordinary white-washed wall of the class-room. My



school is enlivened by most vital if unskilled pictures of Indian life, painted on the white-washed walls. The pupils drew the pictures full-sized on the blackboards and then in charcoal on the walls and then painted them freely with powder paint mixed with gum.

As well as paint, children need other mediums, sometimes because they need a change or because they take to a solid medium more than to paint and paper. They can work in clay, making small figures or plaques and painting them, they can carve in wood or salt or plaster of Paris. Papier mache' has its possibilities for masks, puppets, vases. Pottery ought to be a possible artcraft for schools. Both lino cuts and cuts in india rubber have already proved a successful means of self-expression for Indian pupils. If some arrangement could be made to supply fairly cheap indigenous materials for school art work it would remove a great difficulty. We need to be able to buy brushes, powder paint, clay, aloe, plaintain and palmira fibre, lino and lino-cutting tools, medium for amateur fabric printing, lettering pens, simple indigenous products, not elaborate highly finished western articles. If these were available, school art might have a chance to develop.

Girls will do embroidery and make and paint objects to beautify the home, stools and screens, curtains, cushions, table cloths. The production of well-designed and pleasingly decorated children's clothes is a fruitful field when hygiene demands a change from the old types and western patterns are not always suitable or well-chosen. The interior decoration of the Indian home in Free India cries aloud for the hand of the woman who combines Indian grace and order with modern requirements.

Then what about training in Art appreciation? India has a wealth of folk art in every day things, pottery, embroidery, printed fabrics, silver brass and copper vessels, images of gods, jewellery, weapons, vessels for common or ceremonial use, wood carving on doorways and furniture, toys, lamps, tools. These bear the stamp of the artist craftsman, the man who produced things not by the score but one by one, with loving workmanship. These are all about us, but they are despised and neglected and fast disappearing, giving place to machine made goods, things that are "cheap and nasty" copies of what the west thinks desirable or things that Japan thinks she can sell to us. Our art education in schools should teach children to value these things, to preserve family treasures of such kind and to recognise the merit in them.

Children ought to learn the characteristics of local architecture (in our area the development of Dravidian styles). They can know something of different styles of ornament and indulge their collectors' instinct by going out and finding and sketching specimens of what they have been shown in pictures and diagrams. Specimens and information on this can be found at the Madras Museum and the development of Indian scripture can be studied in the same way. Pupils will study the historical development and the artistic merit.

Then children ought to be acquainted with some of the leading schools of art in India's past. They should see pictures of objects found at Mohanjadaro, good coloured copies of the Ajanta frescoes, copies and originals of Rajput paintings and any local paintings available of Mogul pictures. A town or city should have examples of these things framed or displayed under glass, especially the Ajanta pictures, and lectures or lessons should be given on them, their history and artistic merits. These museums might display objects chosen and arranged for their artistic interest, not merely on a historical basis.

On the walls of secondary schools and colleges I would like to see large, carefully chosen coloured prints of the great art of the East and West, Indian and Chinese prints should be there and also good prints of the greatest European art, Italian, Dutch, English, the French Impressionists. It is possible to buy fine large coloured reproductions of these latter at a reasonable price. Indian students are bound to see Western pictures. They ought to see examples of the best and learn their good points and the difference between Eastern and Western, ancient and modern work. Otherwise they may grow up to admire only pictures that are photographic in their presentation and sentimental in their appeal.

Schools should have their own small museums where books, smaller pictures, bronze, jewellery and embroidery are displayed for a time behind glass.

I think that the appreciation of Indian craftsmanship and folk art and the famous ancient schools of painting is more important for school and college students than a study of modern Indian art, which is apt to be too self-conscious and sophisticated, to form the basis of art education but of course students ought to know that pictures are still being painted and take an interest in local artists and art exhibition.

Such is a programme of Indian school art education. To carry it out we need teachers with artistic interest, not necessarily with high technical qualifications, but those who are prepared to learn and develop their sense of art and to help their pupils along the road of artistic self-expression that lies before Free India.

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN MODERN INDIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

To many of us the term "Social Studies" is new. It has been the custom to teach history, geography, civics, economics, and sociology as separate subjects. But now these various subjects are brought together in order that they may serve their purpose in the education of children in a more natural way. Next increasing recognition is given to relationships that exist between the various branches of social studies. The adoption of the unit system has facilitated the relationships and the fusion of these branches. Also, in recent years, we have become familiar with the idea that "education is life." If education is life, the school must be life-like. In life situations and problems are not in water-tight compartments of subjects. Therefore, social studies which is the study of human relations can serve our children better as relationships than a separate subject.

The term, "social studies" and "social sciences" are used interchangeably although they have somewhat different meanings. Social sciences are organized scholarly bodies of knowledge and study of human relationships. But social studies are only such adapted materials that are drawn from social science, a store house of knowledge, as we can use for instructional purposes in schools. For *e.g.*, a class unit on food, and a form I unit on cotton and a form IV unit on co-operative unions have nothing to contribute to the sum total of human knowledge. But they are, however, examples of utilization of social sciences for teaching purposes.

Let us next consider why social studies which is a study of human relationships should be included in the school curriculum. Society has changed from being primitive and simple to being advanced and complex. The public naturally expects the school to help the pupils in their personal conduct, and in their social adjustment. A tremendous need for social education is set up by the social changes that we witness. The curriculum which best serves society is one which reflects not only the objectives and ideals but also the needs of that society; therefore, our school curriculum should provide for that need for social education by including social studies. Even though a great deal of social education is contributed by such subjects as hygiene, art, music, literature and language, mathematics and science, the chief responsibility rests upon the social studies. Through socially education we aim at developing socially competent individuals. Social competent individuals are those who are able to live and work happily and efficiently with one another and who can create a society where happiness peace, goodwill, abundance, security and beauty are integral parts of its culture.

The changes that have taken place in recent years deserve our consideration because they make new demands on the school to take over the responsibility of social training of children. The process of changes are



so striking and written so largely in our everyday life that anyone who runs may read. Although 80% of our people live in the villages, we have no reason to suppose that they have not felt the impact of those changes. With almost no hesitation we can say there is a stirring up of thought and attitude, if nothing else, even in the remotest village in our country. As a result of the spread of railways and bus routes, motion pictures and broadcasting, neighbourhood boundaries have been greatly extended and new ideas have been infused into towns as well as into villages. The returned war-veterans have somewhat broken down the isolation of the villages. Various organizations for rural welfare are touching the life of the people. Migration of people to urban and industrial centres has set up bridges of contact with the outside world for the village folks.

We have passed from being citizens of a subject nation to being citizens of a free and independent country. New energies are unleashed, new opportunities are opened, new problems have come up. There is a call to educate for democracy. We are being transformed from being, in the main, an agrarian civilization into an interdependent industrial one as well. We are on the verge of new ways of living. We can no longer stand in isolation as a nation. We are swept into world currents of events. The rise of industrial civilization is accompanied by growth of knowledge. The spirit of science has been busy in researches. Invention has followed invention. The instruments of communication are knitting nations closely together and even make it possible to have a world society. The magnitude of the educational task is being increased because of the expansion of the social world in which the individual lives.

With the advance of industrial society the school has expanded with great rapidity. Enrolment has increased. The increased enrolment has also increased the proportion of less capable pupils, the range of pupil ability, and of interest. The boy who wants to get a job and earn money may not have the same interest as a boy who is expecting to attend college or a technological school. New curricula have been proposed to provide for the increased needs and interests. Our youths need guidance for suitable choice of courses and employment on the basis of knowledge of their abilities, aptitudes and of occupations.

It is seen from the foregoing statements that our young people of to-day need a larger fund of information and a keener insight into social realities than did the young people of yesterday who had relatively simple, sheltered social world. This demand for a high level popular information should be also reflected in the curriculum.

This is the setting in which social studies should provide experiences for our young people for a fuller understanding of our civilization and its institutions as well as those of the world and also provide opportunities for social education so that they may meet life with confidence and understanding and be efficient and effective members of social groups. To achieve these objectives, certain new emphasis should be included.

First emphasis should be upon those phases of man's progress which are or can be intimately related to the *present*, and upon present day problems and conditions. This does not mean losing sight of past achievements but that mere preservation of past achievements which offer no challenge to a growing generation are reduced or eliminated. This will mean in the field of history, a reduced emphasis on political and military history and an increased emphasis on social, economic and cultural history. It will also mean reduced emphasis on chronology and an ancient history. More attention will be given to the rise of the common man, social processes, and the rise of democratic institutions. There will be greater emphasis on recent history, current events and the times in which we live. It will mean inclusion of many new courses, some of local interest, while others will cover such fields as international relations, economics, government and contemporary problems.

Second, the emphasis will be on *personal* conduct. Units on etiquette, social behaviour, and manners will help to develop in pupils self-assurance, and the ability to get along with people, and to succeed in getting and holding a job.

Information regarding occupational opportunities and *guidance* for suitable training and employment will be the third emphasis. This service is so important that it could be taken over by the school.

The fourth important task will be *consumer education*. We are left to the mercy of business, advertising, and propaganda. We do not know true values and prices. Consumer education which is really "wise buying" is indispensable for efficient living. Units of community civics, economics, co-operative societies, government and private agencies control, bureau of standards, and related subjects such as those of credit and instalments could make extremely valuable contributions for living.

The fifth important responsibility will be educating our youth against propaganda. Let them get an insight into the techniques of propagandists. It will protect them against gullibility and will also inculcate caution to prevent hasty and foolish sentimentality. Acquaint pupils as thoroughly as possible with actual agencies such as the important newspapers, periodicals, broadcasting, motion pictures and methods of propaganda. Present critical times demand ordinary citizens to be propaganda-conscious and be equipped to unmask motives and purposes. If this is not achieved, public opinion, which is the very foundation of political democracy, will be corrupted and that will be the cause of the deterioration of free institutions.

Sixth, closely allied to the methods used in building up a defence against propaganda is that of developing *critical thinking*, a quality so important for the preservation of democracy. Controversial issues should be taught provided basic knowledge on the issues are imparted to the pupils and the pupils are acquainted with the techniques and agencies of propaganda. A democratic society requires certain habits, dispositions,

loyalties and knowledge in its citizens. One such loyalty is given to the democratic process of free discussion to criticism, to group decision, and to a mentality marked by a scientific spirit. One of the functions of social studies is to deliberately foster and strengthen this spirit and thereby train intelligent citizens. Teach the children the meaning and methods of democracy. Provide continuous opportunities for free discussion on controversial issues. Train pupils in the appropriate skills and dispositions. Develop a habit of mistrusting all purely authoritarian pronouncements. Develop a disposition to protect the rights of minorities and to consider their position. Encourage only informal and honest criticisms of institutions, practices, government and public persons and officials.

Seventh, the larger community outside of the school should be looked upon as a laboratory where social life and customs, government and economics in every day life may be studied at first hand. Also, in the community the need for realism can be satisfied, and valuable principles and habits in citizenship can be learned.

In the social studies classrooms citizenship projects, which have very definite character-training value, may be sponsored; school elections, citizenship codes, co-operation with welfare or social workers, collection of food, clothing, toys and other gifts, on festival days, drives for all sorts of worthy projects may be started and carried out.

Eighth, in the study of regions of the world, *human geography* should receive greater emphasis than hitherto.

The ninth obligation will be giving our pupils some idea of social planning. Knowledge of the extent of our material and human resources, and how to facilitate their best use deserve an emphasis in the social curriculum.

Tenth, greater attention than formerly should be given to our *neighbour countries* to build our attitude. Derogatory contrasts and comments on our neighbours, the Burmese, the Afghans, the Chinese, the Arabs, the Japanese and the Malaysians build a superiority complex besides being just bad manners and bad policy.

Eleventh, and last, *international relations* must be presented in a new light. Efforts to promote peace and good will between nations should be revived. It should be recognized that peace can stand more firmly on goodwill and mutual confidence than on formal plans and that goodwill could be built up in school.

Thus Social Studies will function, in modern Indian secondary school education, with an increased emphasis on social elements, on contemporary settings and on realistic and functional aspects, and with a diminished attention to many traditional elements of "subjects" which have outlived their purpose in the education of the children and the youth of this country.

The Success of Social studies as a potent agency in building happy, efficient and effective citizens depends not only on its new emphasis on social contact, and functional and contemporary elements but also on the quality and training of teachers, and on the education of the public to new and widened outlook on life.

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## TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

It is fashionable, nowadays, to decry examinations and to lay the blame for many of the evils of our present system of education at their door. It may be well, therefore, without denying the truth of these allegations, to remind ourselves of some of the values of examinations. A well-designed and well-conducted examination can have a wholesome and stimulating effect on education. It can ensure the maintenance of a decent standard; and public examinations, by providing a common standard of reference enable schools and colleges to evaluate the success of their teaching and the quality of the students in their institutions. Since students everywhere are adepts at learning to study in the way that yields the best results in examinations, the character of the examination and the teacher's use of it are of great educational importance. Since teachers gain kudos from their pupils' successes the type of examination influences also the methods of teaching employed. Thirdly, the examination requirements affect the kind of text-books written and prescribed for study.

So long as examinations are retained, it is futile to think that we can plan a system of education in which examinations shall not influence the method of teaching, *nor should we desire to do so*. What we can ask is that examinations be so designed that they are illuminating and educative rather than restrictive and uneducative in their effects.

An examination, which calls for only the reproduction of a miscellaneous assortment of facts, places a premium on memory, encourages parrot learning and the cramming of partially understood material to be returned, undigested, in the examination paper. It should be remembered in this connection, that the correct repetition of a number of 'causes' or 'effects' does not necessarily constitute an understanding of the relationships between them, as lists of causes, for example, an historical event, the location of a town, a natural phenomenon, may easily be learnt up from text-books or notes and repeated without any real thought behind the answer. An examination, on the other hand, designed to discover the pupil's understanding of the subject, his ability to think about it, to *use* his knowledge rather than merely to reproduce it, to draw correct inferences from relevant material presented to him, such an examination will encourage the methods of teaching and study likely to produce such competence. It is not difficult for an only moderately-experienced examiner to detect a memorized answer, and if examiners adhered strictly to the warning given at the head of some public examination papers that memorized answers would be discounted, and failed students who produced them, there might be a speedy and startling reform in the methods of teaching and learning. It is not to be supposed that a good memory and a mind stored with information is to be despised; on the contrary, ability to acquire information and retain it is an essential to any progress in education. What is most emphati-

cally stated is that information itself is not enough. To information must be added understanding, discrimination, judgment and the ability to use information for good ends.

The type of examination most widely known and still most commonly used is the essay type. This is now regarded with increasing dissatisfaction in informed circles since its unreliability has been demonstrated by many researches, including, to mention just two, those of Starch and Elliott in 1913 and of Hartog and Rhodes in 1935. Examples have been produced of the same answer paper being given widely varying marks by different examiners, the most startling example being that of a Geometry paper which received marks varying from 28% to 92% from different examiners. It has been shown that students may answer papers for the same subject in an examination set and marked by the same examiner and passing in one, fail in the other. This demonstrates the variableness both of the examinee's performance and of the examiner's paper setting and marking. It has been shown that an examiner may give the same paper different marks on different occasions, that if he reads an answer of moderate standard after reading a very good one he may fail the former, while if he reads it after a poor answer he will give it a good mark, and all this believing that he is being careful and fair. However impartial an examiner may try to be, he is almost certain to be biased according as the views of the examinee coincide or clash with his own. It is well-known also that individual examiners differ in the qualities for which they look in assessing an answer, some paying great attention to the amount of correct detailed factual information, others looking rather for originality of thought and a grasp of the essentials. Some penalise heavily for bad spelling and untidiness, others overlook these. Some of these discrepancies are lessened where the examiners are given careful and detailed instructions, but even under these conditions it has been discovered that there are wide divergencies. These divergencies affect the average students. There is only rarely disagreement among examiners over the very good and the very poor candidates. But it does happen that an average student will fail and the whole of his future career be affected when he would have passed if his paper had been marked by a different examiner or by the same examiner on a different day. It is a matter of wonder that so many of our pupils do in the public examinations pretty much as their teachers expect!

The essay type of examination has other limitations. In the time given only a very inadequate sampling of the pupil's knowledge can be tested. There cannot be questions on every topic of the course. An attempt is made, sometimes, to overcome this by asking a large number of short questions which are to be answered in a sentence or two or even a few words. While a larger area of knowledge can be covered by this method, unless the questions are very skilfully planned they tend to become trivial; it is difficult to test the student's grasp of the wider relationship, and an insidious type of cramming and memorizing is encouraged

in which the students learn short, 'snappy' answers to questions catechism-fashion, and are not encouraged to think.

Before passing on to consider other forms of examinations and tests, it will be well to mention the abilities and skills for which the written essay type of examination is the most valid method of appraisal. There is, as yet, no other way of testing the candidate's ability to summarise, collect and organise data in the form of an argument or defence of a position, to develop a new application, compare alternative views, or evaluate a proposition. These can be tested only by the essay examination, and pupils should realise in their preparation for the examination that they are learning not only geography, history, science and so on, but are learning also to develop these skills so essential to citizenship in a democracy. The Harvard Committee in their report, 'General Education in a Free Society' have enumerated as the traits of mind essential to modern democratic life the ability to think effectively, to communicate what they have thought, to make judgments relevant to the matter in hand, to discriminate between values. The second of these traits is one that may be fostered by a wise use of the essay type of examination.

This brings us back to the point that examinations should test not only the pupils' knowledge of a certain subject but also their performance in certain differentiated skills. It is one of the weaknesses of the essay type examination that it is difficult to isolate and assess the different skills. It is in an attempt to overcome both the unreliability of the essay type examination and the lack of discrimination of skills that new methods of testing have come into existence.

It is not possible in the limited space available for this paper to deal fully with the details of New Type Tests, and it is presumed that readers will be familiar with the main forms and types of questions, the simple Recall and open Completion types, the True-False type, the Multiple Choice type, including the best and poorest Reasons types and so on. The essential features of New Type Tests are that no long written answers are required and that therefore a wide area of knowledge can be tested in detail. The examinee responds by supplying single words, by underlining suitable words from a number given, by "ticking" the correct answer from a number of statements. It is obvious that such methods do not afford a means of assessing the examinee's power of expression, his ability to select and arrange material, to present a case convincingly, or any of the other abilities mentioned above, and pupils brought up exclusively on this type of examination have been known to present themselves for university education sadly lacking in these essential and elementary skills, almost illiterate in their ability to communicate thought. This is only one more illustration of the way the character of the examination affects the methods of education.

It would seem, then, that what is needed is a judicious mixture of both types of examinations if an all-round training is to be given in schools. For a comprehensive survey of the examinee's store of knowledge, the New



Type Tests may prove to be more satisfactory than the old essay type. Their exponents claim for them a greater degree of objectivity than is possible in the more orthodox type. This is certainly true so far as the marking is concerned, but Vernon claims that the subjective element enters into the setting of the New Type Tests, the statements chosen for a True-False Test, the alternatives in a Multiple Choice Test reflecting the personal interests and bias of the examiner and being therefore unintentionally more favourable to one pupil than another. There is certainly truth in this and on the whole the correlations between any two New Type Tests purporting to cover the same field set by different examiners have not yet been found to be consistently high. This means that the New Type examiners have not yet succeeded in solving the problem of unreliability, though they may have eliminated the more extreme cases. The New Type Test is however a comparative newcomer on the scene and there is much room for research and experiment before a final judgment is pronounced.

The more modern methods of examination have opened the way to testing other achievements than the amount of information or skill in the mechanics of mathematics. It is as important for people to know how to obtain information as to acquire a large store. Tests have been devised to measure the pupil's ability to obtain information from charts, maps, graphs and other diagrams. Where such an ability is to be tested the information must not be of the kind already known to the pupil. His ability to interpret a production chart, for example, will only be tested validly if he has no previous knowledge of the region concerned. In the same way the pupil's power of comprehension of reading matter is tested on unfamiliar matter. On the other hand, his ability to draw valid conclusions from data given and to detect conclusions not valid may be tested both on material that is familiar and that which is unfamiliar, for this ability includes the power to distinguish between evidence and one's preconceived ideas. This may be illustrated by a very simple example:—

*Date* :—Marie Curie was not a Frenchwoman by birth, but as a result of her marriage to Pierre Curie she carried out all her work in the country of her adoption. After her husband's untimely death she became Professor at the Sorbonne occupying the chair that had been created for her husband. This was the first time a position in French higher education had been given to a woman.

*Test* :—Mark with a + every statement that can be validly deduced from the above passage.

Mark with a — every statement that can be shown to be false.

Mark with a 0 every statement that may or may not be true but which cannot be proved to be so.

*Statements.* (+) Marie Curie was the first woman Professor at the Sorbonne.

(0) She was also the first foreigner to occupy the position,

(0) She was a Pole.

(—) Pierre Curie was delighted when his wife was made Professor.

If we can discover whether the pupil can think so objectively that he can distinguish between what he already knows and what is given him in the data, we are getting very close to discovering personality traits. There is no space to elaborate this here, but as personality tests, and tests of interest, attitudes and prejudices and the like become increasingly reliable we shall have valuable supplements to the usual examinations in knowledge and related skills, and the means of obtaining more all-round pictures of our pupils.

No mention has been made so far of the Intelligence Test. Such Tests aim at discovering the amount of general innate intelligence possessed by the examinee. Where this can be discovered it is possible to estimate whether a pupil is working up to the level of his real ability or not, and it then in turn becomes possible, on the one hand, to prevent undue pressure on the less able and, on the other hand, to investigate the reasons for a child's work being so much below that of which he is capable. The Intelligence Test should also be useful in helping to decide admissions to higher education. It is a great fallacy to believe that an examination which should mark the successful completion of schooling for the *average* boy or girl should also be the means of admission to the University which is for the definitely *above average* person. The S.S.L.C. Examiner needs to ask himself, "What is it reasonable to expect the average boy or girl to know and be able to do at the end of the High School course?" and to set his papers accordingly. The examiner for admission to the University needs to ask himself, "What knowledge and qualities of mind are essential for success in University studies?" and to plan his paper to discover this. It needs to be recognised that many factors other than a 30-35% pass standard in the S.S.L.C. examination is needed to make a University student. The age of the student, the number of years spent in the High School, and such abilities as may be revealed in tests of objective thinking ability to obtain information all count.

Examinations in the past have been concerned with information and related skills. Let us think of the abilities we want our children and young people to develop and plan means of testing them. If we did that, we might evolve an examination system that was a real stimulus and and challenge to our work in school and college.

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## PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN FREE INDIA

Physical Education has been defined as 'education of the physical and education through the physical.' The body is the main tool in physical education.

Education of the physical—the body—is based on the biological maxim that structure makes function and that function makes structure. It takes into consideration the anatomical and physiological construction of the body. Psychological laws are not ignored. Dynamic muscular activity is used to train the body to be skilful, graceful, agile and strong, and to develop the vital organs so as to enable them to function efficiently. True education of the body has no truck with "muscle-cult," or "systems" or fads, because the body is a living organism in a changing environment with specific needs, interest and capacities which no "cult," "system" or fad can satisfy. In a scientific programme for the education of the body, one has accordingly to use all physical activities *natural* to man, such as those which involve the fundamental skills of running, jumping, kicking, throwing, climbing, etc., and the *national* activities that have been preserved among a people and handed down traditionally through the ages and are still popular. Besides, one has also to use many other activities that have been found by constant usage and practice to be eminently suited for the building up of the human body, such as games and sports, swimming, the defensive and offensive arts, which have found favour in the country. In a programme of scientific physical education there is throughout a fundamental emphasis on the disciplining of the body—"self-discipline"—for, without discipline there can be no progress even of the individual in his attempt to educate, to build up, to train and to develop his body.

Education through the physical—the body—takes place while one engages in any form of purposeful bodily activity, be it individual or group activity. The mind process, the development of which is the pre-eminent aim of class room work through intellectual pursuits, is accelerated on the play ground or the gymnasium. Alertness to size up a situation, quick thinking,—analysis and synthesis of the factors involved in a situation—, and immediate judgment and action, are characteristic of every single activity of the playground and gymnasium. The training of the will is equally brought to the fore. The mind is being educated constantly in all bodily activity; coordination between mind and muscle is built up, and a healthy mind in a healthy body is developed.

Education through the physical is more apparent in the moral and social virtues which arise as the concomitants of the whole programme. Mention has already been made of discipline and the training of the will. Sportsmanly qualities and citizenship traits are sown and nurtured, encouraged and developed through the activities of the physical education programme no less than through other educational activities. Honesty and



fair play, cooperation and team-spirit, obedience to the rules of the game, to the captain and the referee, group discipline, esprit-de-corps, and loyalty, tolerance and broad mindedness, amity and comradery and many other virtues which make the sportsman and the good citizen, are prized as the prime result of the physical education programme. The claim is therefore made that physical education is education.

While it is true that in the entire programme of physical education and in its multifarious activities the body is the primary tool, the true physical educator never loses sight of the fact that the body is a living organism wherein the body, mind and soul are an indivisible entity and are closely and inseparably knit together, and wherein one acts and reacts on one another in kaleidoscopic patterns to produce the integrated personality with the capacity to live the abundant life, to live most and serve best.

With the ushering in of Free India, the demand on her sons and daughters has increased a hundred-fold, a thousand-fold, perhaps even more, because on them depends our future. No longer need we merely hark back to India's glorious past or grumble at the waywardness and indifference of the foreign ruler. We have now to rely on ourselves. The very short and brief expectation of life which is only a little over a third of those of progressive nations, the pitifully high rate of mortality, the toll in loss of efficiency and the nation's riches through sickness and disease, the lack of discipline that pervades through and through, the unbalanced sense of values of life, its crookedness and utter selfishness with never a care for the other fellow, the perceptible lack of a spirit of equality or brotherliness,—those and many more are the millstones that hang round our necks even now and hamper our progress even though we are citizens of Free India. The eradication of these evils and their removal to attain and to accelerate progress is one of the most pressing needs of Free India. Emphasising the gravity of the problems facing Free India our great Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, said: "What we want above everything else is cohesion and discipline, not enforced from above but self-determined. Only thus can democracy function or else it cracks up, giving place to dictatorship. We must learn to function now as free men and women with self-imposed discipline." Physical Education in Free India can have and has no other goal, and so seeks to cooperate with all the agencies that have the progress of the country and of her people at heart.

Health and physical fitness have been the foremost of considerations of all free peoples all over the world from the dawn of history, because on this foundation stands the nation's efficiency—its greatness and its achievements. It is time that our leaders bestirred themselves and bestowed serious thought to this great need of Free India and come forward with enunciations of policies on this subject and promulgate clear cut plans for their implementation. To every man, woman and child opportunity for daily participation in satisfying and joyous physical activities ought to be the policy, implemented through the agency of highly qualified and trained workers adequately and amply remunerated and with the aid of gymnasia, play grounds and community recreation centres fully equipped and well provided. Educators have a great responsibility in this matter in that they must give the lead and demand of the governments, provincial and central, concerted action to remove physical illiteracy, physical unfitness and physical disabilities which have such an adverse effect on mental, moral and social development.

DR. G. F. ANDREWS.

### THREE DECADES OF INDIAN SCOUTING

Started in 1916 by Lieut. Tarini P. Sinha and Sri S. V. Khandakar in the Y. M. I. A., Madras, the Indian Scout Movement advanced by leaps and bounds and there were scout and cub units in almost every town in South India. As early as 1918, Dr. G. S. Arundale spoke thus: "I rejoice at such soul movements as find a place among the elders today. But I turn with an almost inexpressible feeling to the promise of India's future greatness that discloses itself in the glowing fire of India's youth today—driving the engines of many movements to make the Indian youth a conscious Indian citizen. In my belief the Scout Movement stands first, far and away first, in its value to the Motherland and in the gift of citizenship it bestows upon its followers." It was Dr. Besant who realised that we must help boys and girls to build their own world by drawing out the noble thoughts and the glorious dreams and the heroic actions that are innate within every one of them. Scouting had been for long a close preserve of the European and Anglo-Indian youths, its novelty and its semi-military aspect won the hearts of Indian youths who longed to be soldiers of their motherland.

#### The Ideal of a Scout

In our country's history many brave men and women have sacrificed themselves for friend, country and ideals, willing to suffer and endure and to face the most frightful horrors without praise or glory, often without their sacrifice being known to a single human soul.

Like Arjun, ever loth his foe to strike  
At disadvantage; friend and foe alike  
To serve with kindness and with courtesy  
Stern in the fight, humble in victory  
Like Rama, friend of every living thing  
Rama the perfect son, the perfect king  
Who reared for kingship, kingship set aside  
He stood at Triumph's threshold, still held fast to duty.  
Like royal Asoka, masterful but kind  
Ardent of heart and courage, meet of mind  
Using his genius in the arts of peace  
To make his people glad, to bring release  
From sickness and from poverty and pain.  
Like bold Shivaji, warrior teacher-king  
Skilled in all manly arts—the spear to fling  
To wield the brand and hurl the javelin far,  
To cross the desert by the guiding star  
To know the secrets of the mountain ways  
To cheer men's courage with one word of praise.  
A king self-trained in king-craft, splendid and strong

Blessed the land to whom such men belong !

Unto this path all heroes' steps have led

This path the sons of India again shall tread

This path may India's Scouts begin to tread.

Thus our great scout teacher Mr. F. G. Pearce inspired the first Indian Scout who joined the movement in 1916. Mr. Pearce and G. P. Aryaratna spread the movement everywhere in South India. Later on Mr. K. Sanjiva Kamath carried on the good work and by 1921 there were 15,000 scouts all over the Presidency. The amalgamation with the official sponsord movement took place this year. There was a grand carnival in the Island Grounds wherein the scout units displayed their skill. It was a big "South Indian Boy Scout village" which Lord Baden Powell visited. Our badge changed but we still cherish our old scout badge of "the star and the lakes" with the motto "Be prepared" under it. Since 1921 the movement gathered more and more strength till it remained the undisputed youth organisation in the province for over three decades.

### Training in Citizenship

Scouting is a training in Citizenship. It is not a mere game of soldiering. It develops health by means of physical exercises and drill, games and camping. It develops character by means of gradual training in responsibility, honour, leadership and self-reliance. At the same time scouting develops skill and natural talent by teaching hobbies and handicrafts which are useful for earning a livelihood. Scouting develops public spirit by teaching the supreme necessity for each citizen to be willing and ready to help others. No wonder Scouting still persists as a useful adjunct to school activity in spite of other attractions which the present decade affords.

### Camp Craft

The ideal camp is full of adventure and joy. It is in a lovely land full of beautiful plains and mountains, valleys and forests, rivers and lakes. The scouts have found their way there. They have their laws and regulations and ways of living. Brotherhood is the keynote there. Everyone is cheerful and clean. They are energetic as they spend much of their time in open air. They work hard and also enjoy working hard—a good training in endurance. They make their own "gadgets" or improvised articles. The games they play are full of interest. There is a spirit of adventure, the boys fond of imagining themselves as hunters and soldiers, with sticks as swords, go in search of an imaginary enemy. For adventure and discovery the boy has to learn how to overcome the difficulties and get rid of laziness or weakness of resolve. In scout camps there are individual "hikes" or strolls, like a pioneer the scout marks the tracks of animals and birds on the way. He notes down the important landmarks, the hill and the dale, the nullah and forest in his sketch maps. The hiker is a bit of amateur surveyor. Down Nature's ways he goes and feels happy.



O! the gleesome saunter over fields and hill sides!  
 The leaves and flowers of the commonest weeds,  
 The moist fresh stillness of the woods,  
 The exquisite smell of the earth at daybreak  
 And all through the forenoon.

(Walt Whitman)

Thus scouting supplements schooling by bringing the child into very close touch with Nature, by making him thoroughly familiar with his younger brethren, plants and animals—camps teach them the names, characteristics, habits and uses of the commonest plants and animals. This has to be done partly by observation and partly by instruction. Our ancestors observed the life of Nature round them far more than we do today, for we live in towns with its hum-drum conventional routine life. "The frogs are silent in dry weather," so says a hymn in Rig Veda. In Hindu and Buddhist scriptures animals are mentioned again and again. We are asked to cast off pride "as snake casts off its decayed old skin". We are to stamp out evil in us "as an elephant does a house of mud". Man in his search for wealth is like a "hare in the net," or "a calf after its mother when longing for milk". So down Nature's ways we should go to know of the wealth of our land, its plants and animals. Thus kindled with a spirit of adventure we can create a wider India across the seas as our forefathers did in times of old.

### The War and the Future

The World War gave a golden opportunity to the youths to distinguish themselves in the Air Force, Navy, and the Army. Our ex-scouts held positions of trust, honour and danger and played a conspicuous part displaying skill, courage and quick decision in emergency. I am aware of many such heroes who flew in the air, at any moment to be dashed to the ground. There were young men who dared the depths of the seas and dashed over the edge of the trench.

There were heroines who stood by the wounded, facing unflinchingly the most appalling dangers. Many of our scouts attended the International Scout Jamborees at Wembley, Birkenhead, Godollo, and Paris and came back rich with experience.

### Unity and Service

With India's freedom should follow unity in all ranks. The formation of a Unity Board to coordinate activities has brought the Boy Scout Association, the Hindustan Scouts, the Catholic Scouts and the Girl Guides together. The future of scouting in independent India is very bright indeed. Its outlook is cosmopolitan and non-communal. It has all the elements of citizenship training in it. Hence the Government of Madras have appointed a committee to introduce elements of scouting in our schools as part of regular work, to ensure order, efficiency and discipline in the educational institutions. Team work under qualified leaders—the Patrol system—is necessary to improve the tone and discipline of any institution of youths. The leader with his idealism, initiative and perseverance stands as a teacher for service and sacrifice.

"Oh, you wise men who would reconstruct the world! Give us the young. It is the dreams which we teach them, it is the Utopias which we conceive for them, it is the thoughts which we think for them, which will rebuild the world." *Benjamin Kidd.*

## TEACHER-EDUCATION AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Perhaps the most vital need of education to-day is the need of forward looking Teachers' Colleges to prepare teachers in the light of a sound philosophy and psychology of education. Mr. Bernard Shaw is reported to have said once that his education had been interrupted by his schooling. This is certainly not an uncommon experience, and the school must accept a very large share of the responsibility for the large proportion of maladjusted personalities that one meets within every walk of life; but the blame for this sad state of affairs ultimately devolves to a large extent upon the teacher-educating institutions with their inadequate offerings still heavily weighted in the direction of a variety of non-functioning courses with their emphasis on conventional school procedures and content. This emphasis on 'subjects' rather than on children is unmistakeable in most courses offered in our training schools and colleges. An essentially bookish conception of education for children and adolescents appears to have been uppermost in the minds of those who devised the prevailing curricula of teacher-education; but, strange to say, this conception persists in spite of the steadily increasing acceptance of a new philosophy of education which claims to be seriously concerned with the whole being in relation to his fellows. It was only the other day that a young and enthusiastic professor of education volunteered to deliver a course of lectures on "The School and Mental Hygiene" to the students of a training class in this city; but, although the Principal of the institution was progressive enough to accept the offer, it was thoughtlessly turned down by the professor in charge of the syllabus because of "a difficulty in accommodating the lectures in the time-table." This incident is only an indication of the antiquated conception of teacher education still cherished by the vast majority of teacher educators in this country.

### Inadequate Text-Books

This deficiency on the human side of teaching has to be removed by the inclusion of courses that contain material on children's emotional and social life and development and are conducted in such a manner as to be functional in terms of wholesome personality. It will be argued that every curriculum of teacher-education includes a course in psychology; but a very discouraging factor in the situation is the formal and theoretical nature of such a course. It generally tends to be a 'text-book' course with a prescribed text-book (often religiously followed both by the lecturer and the students) that is incredibly sterile in view of the special needs of the students and the opportunities in modern psychology. Such a text-book as a rule devotes some thirty to forty pages to such topics as 'evolution of the mind' and 'reactions and the nervous system' presented in a highly theoretical fashion; it generally includes some pages on 'habit,' relying mainly on James, but seldom nearly as interesting as the original; then it



contains a couple of hundred pages on the old standbys — 'sensation,' 'attention,' 'perception,' 'memory,' 'imagination' and 'thinking.' There may be a short chapter devoted to 'feeling and emotion' (which may be just a concession to modernity), but the matter in it is likely to be as unattractive as any of the rest, despite the inherent interest of the subject. Another series of chapters may include something on 'instincts,' 'volition' and 'applied psychology.' Books of this sort may be considered to be in the college and normal school tradition, but they can scarcely be expected to be really effective in changing students in such a way as to make them more competent in dealing with their own psychological problems or in helping children to develop wholesome personalities. What is badly needed to-day in our teacher-educating institutions is a radical modification of the established courses in 'educational psychology' so as to include material that deals with the numerous problems of motivation, personality, and physical and mental growth. Every sane educationist will agree with Professor Henry N. MacCracken when he says: "I believe thoroughly in the introduction of mental hygiene into the curriculum and particularly into the life of the college. As a teacher, I feel sure that it should be introduced into every normal college and into every course there is for the training of the teacher."

### Importance of Development of personality

Those in charge of our teacher-educating colleges and institutes ought, therefore, to come forward and make a stand in favour of a real teacher preparation based on human needs rather than academic traditions. There should be a greater recognition of, and an added emphasis, on the need for understanding the emotional life of the child and the causes underlying social maladjustments, undesirable behaviour, unsatisfactory school work and unhappiness. Training in the application of the principles of psychiatry and mental hygiene to school situations should therefore become an important part of the work of the Teachers' College. Teachers who are receiving their professional education need to be impressed with the importance of the obligation of considering the child as a whole—his intellectual capacity and achievement, his emotional make-up, his physical condition, his social relationships, his vocational aptitudes and talents, his moral and religious values, his economic resources, his aesthetic appreciation. Emphasis must be placed upon the development of the student as a person rather than upon his intellectual training alone; for intellectual development cannot and should not be isolated from the development of the whole personality. Teachers need to realize effectively that the general arrangements for the promotion of mental health, and specially individual guidance, should give proper weight to physical, emotional, moral and aesthetic factors as well as to intellectual factors in personal growth. In fine, the main purpose of every teacher-educating institution should be to give its students real and valuable experience in learning about people, in contrast to the acquisition of an examinable amount of academic knowledge—some-



thing to quicken their sensitivity to, and acceptance of, the meaning of their own feeling and behaviour as well as that of others. This object can be attained only by the abundant use of a wide variety of material—fiction and biography, case material from records, first-hand case studies, and contributions to current popular magazines as well as to scientific and professional publications,

### Problem-pupils

A great many classroom teachers to-day are baffled by the personality problems of pupils because their training has not prepared them to grapple with such problems. In every school, mingled with children who are normal and well adjusted, are many others who are unhappy, embittered, bewildered, thwarted, timid, introverted, negative, afraid of life. There are others who are ill-behaved, braggarts, bullies, lazy, day-dreamers, procrastinators, without loyalties, cynical, defiant, indifferent, emotionally infantile, deprived of the substantial emotional satisfactions without which true human adjustment is unachievable. The lot of such children is certainly a hard one, worthy of our sympathy and attention, and their vagaries "must be regarded as symptomatic of some underlying frustration or conflict—they are the child's frantic S. O. S. for help." Every such child who is not adjusting well in school should be regarded as a case for special study; but unless the teacher has been trained to adopt a case study approach to the problems of the individual child, he (or she) is impotent to render the requisite aid. Teacher-educating institutions must pay more attention to child development. We must immediately develop a type of experiences in our Teachers' Colleges that will lead prospective teachers to become conscious of how and why children behave as they do, how they learn best, and why learning takes place better in one environment than in another. All our child study must be based on actual experiences with children in the classroom, on the play-grounds, and in their homes.

### Importance of a mentally healthy atmosphere

Another important responsibility of every Teachers' College is to give its students every available form of guidance and help in reshaping their own personalities in accordance with the tenets of mental health, for a healthy school atmosphere can only be created by teachers who are themselves mentally healthy and who have an abiding interest in children and a real respect for the personality of each child. "There is no place in vital education for the fussy, worried teacher: the jealous, domineering teacher the teacher who looks on every erring child as a lost soul; the teacher who is hopelessly shocked at every mention of sex; the depressed, fearful, harassed teacher; and the teacher who regards her pupils as her 'natural enemies.' . . . Whether teachers realize it or not, the personality qualities arising in their children are matters of cause and effect, not accidents." Recent researches on teacher-pupil relationships have confirmed that emotionally unstable teachers tend to have associated with them children who tend toward instability, whereas emotionally stable teachers tend to be associated with more emotionally stable pupils. This seems to

hold true in spite of visible differences in school organization, for, as Dr. Bernard Glueck has pointed out, "whatever the system in vogue, the personality of the teacher is in the last analysis the medium through which the child comes in contact with it." But, as things now stand, by far too many teachers (headmasters and headmistresses included) are afflicted with such chronic disorders of personality as bid fair to result in the development of a sizable crop of disturbances in the very children whom they are supposed to nourish and cherish as the heritage of society. This is tantamount to saying that some teachers not only fail to do constructive work with their boys and girls, but that they stimulate them in such a way as to develop from virgin soil, as it were, actual behaviour delinquencies and warped personalities.

### The Real Issue

The real issue, then, is not the traditional one of 'methods' *versus* 'knowledge of subject matter,' but something that goes deeper. The task we have is that of seeking out and preparing people for this peculiarly important and difficult business of helping human beings to grow and develop adequately. Whether they are to work with little children or boys and girls of adolescent age, we are convinced that these teachers need to be sympathetic folk; that they should be aware of at least some of the more significant discoveries that modern sciences have made about human behaviour. We are convinced, also, that they need to be more than merely sympathetic—that they need to be proficient in the art of living with people—and the Teachers' College has to help them to acquire this skill. As Dr. M. E. Townsend says, students in an institution for the preparation of teachers are more than 'credit gatherers'; 'they are persons, in need of friendship; they have real problems, and in some instances are victims of worries, emotional upsets, and defects of immaturity or uncongenial home surroundings. The Teachers' College which allows them to go to the field more confused, with problems still unsolved, with attitudes embittered can with difficulty defend its programme, regardless of its academic offerings.' A teacher is a human being and consequently his professional education should be concerned with his total personality rather than with his intellect alone. The criterion of a good teaching personality would appear to be a balanced, normal, undivided self, able to go about the business of living with youth without malice or prejudice, with a body that functions effectively, and with an emotional pattern under quiet control.

It cannot, therefore, be emphasized too strongly that the real question in teacher preparation to-day is not that involved in the persistent and futile controversy between the respective advocates of 'knowledge of subject matter' and 'methods of teaching.' It is concerned with something much more fundamental than this. What is involved is a new kind of teacher preparation, made necessary by a new kind of education. Those who are leaders in this kind of education are convinced that wholesome teacher personality, understanding of human behaviour, and adjustment of human beings to social living, transcend in importance any mere factual knowledge or techniques, useful though these are in their own sphere. An appreciation of pupil growth and development and the dynamic nature of personality is basic for teachers; and teacher education in the future will have to approximate more to the training of the social worker in its wholesome emphasis upon mental hygiene and the needs of human beings.



## THE MONTESSORI SPIRIT IN INDIAN EDUCATION

It has been said that India has a spiritual message to give to the world, a message of good will and peace. To my mind we can never give this our contribution unless the character of the world changes.

The world is in a great confusion in every aspect; there is darkness everywhere—suspicion—mistrust among the nations of the world—a spirit of grabbing and of brutish competition is evident.

As a result we have faced two world wars one after another and a third, fourth and fifth may come if we do not understand the root cause of these wars. This root is an unpreparedness of mankind. The only solution of the problem lies therefore in an earnest resolve to undertake to *educate for world peace*.

It is at this point that Dr. Maria Montessori acquires such great importance with her constructive plan for humanity itself. She talks of the Cosmic Plan of the Universe, mankind included, the will of God—which fulfills itself according to a plan known fully to Him alone, which reveals itself to those whose intuitive vision is able to see His plan working.

Dr. Montessori further declares conclusively that it is the child only who has the potential faculties to manifest and carry out His will in his development towards adulthood. Dr. Montessori builds an environment for the child which is true, free from prejudice and which is universal.

Knowing that the basis of all self-knowledge is acquired through the senses—Karmendrias—the organs of sensation—she starts her presentation in the developmental materials at the age of 3, taking in to consideration the vital need of the child to a sense of order and render conscious the great wealth of fundamental experience and basic acquisitions made before that age through the unconscious, absorbent mind.

Even at the age when the child is learning to speak his mother tongue by invitation he observes the sounds and discovers that each complex of human sounds has a definite meaning. He does so by an inner urge which Madame Montessori calls sensitivity. It gives him the faculty of picking up the whole of his mother tongue.

At this early age the child can learn any number of words, any number of languages too. The life of the child is filled with words—not only material and concrete words—but scientific words, in Geography, History, Astronomy, Geometry, Biology, Zoology etc.

The third important point is that all the problems of the child are approached from a synthetic universal standpoint, later coming down to particulars.

When introducing Geography, Madame Montessori does not give the study of the plan for class-room, School, Village, District, but starts



with the world and the story of its creation. The child sees the Sun, Moon, Stars and asks many questions. The child wants to know everything around. Dr. Montessori finds an answer. If the right answer is not given to the child at the proper time and in the right way his possibility of developing by these means is lost for ever.

By the time the child is 7 he knows all about Continents, Oceans, Seas, the biggest Mountains, Rivers, Lakes, Deserts, Islands—a complete world study and not only geographical; he also knows the history of humanity. Knowledge right down to animal, plant and mineral life is also absorbed in this way.

The child is prepared as a world citizen, learning to appreciate the whole and he evinces a keen interest in everything in the world and of the world. He is conscious of man's task in and for it.

He follows closely the world's biological and psychological development during his infancy. Not only humanity is developed in the child but also he builds up the scientific mathematical mind which characterises man through the Montessori Method. It would surprise one to know that children of 6—7 do square roots, construction of triangles—perform simple scientific experiments for themselves etc., but all as parts of a whole and as means of personal development. The activity of acquiring knowledge is continuous, and quenches the child's soul's thirst.

In a Montessori School there is no class system, no time table, no shouting and class teaching. Every child is at his work, chosen by him according to vital news and interests. The teacher is in the background, leaving the child with his object of study. The teacher is a servant to help where and when needed.

A happiness, a satisfaction, a complete living is achieved for the child. He grows to be universal—a true and helpful citizen of the world, with a well-based consciousness of his task and his time.

If this Montessori Spirit is taken up by all Nations to reconstruct the Youth of the World and if, as I may venture to say, the world follows the child's guidance, as Dr. Montessori does, there is sure to rise a humanity which is human, loving, helpful and progressive.

Dr. Montessori has definitely chosen India as the most suited soil for this great work for peace and good will among men. May He who guides the nations aid her in this great spiritual task, and us to follow His lead.

## **RE-ORGANISATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION**

At a time when every one recognises the importance and urgency of reorganising education in all grades and stages, there is no need specially to stress the importance of the reorganisation of secondary education. What is more necessary is to arrive at certain broad conclusions regarding the objectives of this reorganisation and the consequential changes in its content.

### **Universal Secondary Education**

One preliminary point that may be briefly referred to is that the stage has not yet come in our country for making secondary education universal and free. This can only come when elementary education is first made free and universal and when the economic resources of the country become so highly developed that the community will be in a position to spare the finances necessary to run hundreds of Secondary Schools required to educate all the youth of the country up to the age of eighteen or so. No one should forget that there are two sides to the additional cost that the country will have to face in a situation like that. There is not only the direct cost involved in maintaining schools but also the indirect cost resulting from the youth spending five or six years in school instead of in agriculture or industry adding to the national income and earning their livelihood. Our poverty thus stands in the way of secondary education becoming universal.

### **Selection of Pupils**

From this it follows that every scheme of reorganisation should start on the assumption that there must be some appropriate method adopted for selecting those who are to receive secondary education. The present method is not satisfactory at all. Under the existing system it is economic considerations in the main and not merit and ability that decide who should proceed to secondary schools and who should be satisfied with mere elementary education. If the parents or guardians are well-to-do their children automatically proceed to secondary schools; otherwise not. A better method has to be devised under which only those who are likely to be most benefited by secondary education will proceed to such schools. If their parents happen to be poor, there should be a liberal system of scholarships. The particular method to be adopted for the purpose is a matter of detail. It should be settled by experts. The only point to be kept in mind in this connection is that it should not be a mere written examination test. It should be based on a more comprehensive record of the pupils' work and the impression he creates on his teachers.

### **Government to assume responsibility**

A second point in framing all schemes of reorganisation is that the ultimate responsibility for seeing that every district has a minimum num-

ber of schools and that they are being maintained at a tolerable level of efficiency should rest on the Government of the Province. At present there are areas where there are too many schools while there are others which have very few. Educational opportunities therefore are not being fairly and equitably distributed. Of course, this does not mean that voluntary agencies should be discouraged from starting secondary schools wherever they want, provided that they do not call for much help from government. But where Government has to supply finances in the shape of grants of several kinds it is necessary that it utilises its limited resources in an equitable manner so that areas which are backward may get preference over those which are more advanced and progressive. It is on this basis that Government rules and regulations regarding recognition of schools and making grants in aid of them are to be worked in practice.

### Efficiency

Government should also insist on a fair level of efficiency being maintained by every secondary school—efficiency as measured by the salaries paid to teachers, the equipment of schools, the buildings in which they are located and the attention they pay to extra curricular activities. No recognition should be given to a school which does not come up to the minimum laid down by Government. This should be the first step in any scheme of reorganisation. In spite of a long history of agitation for improving the conditions of service of teachers in schools—conditions regarding their pay, tenure, leave and retirement—things have not improved very much. And secondary education cannot make any real progress unless there is substantial improvement in these conditions. It is the teacher that makes or mars a school. Everything else is subsidiary.

### Definition of objectives

There should be a clearer definition of the objectives of secondary education. There are at least three points to be kept in mind in this connection. The first is that it should be education in the most comprehensive sense of the term and aim at the all-round development of the pupils so that when they leave the school and enter the world, they do it as better men and women and as more useful members of the community. In a free and responsible India this ideal of education for citizenship needs great emphasis. It is this aspect that has all along been ignored. The training given in secondary schools must be such as will make pupils active citizens of the country—active physically, intellectually and socially. The second point is that secondary education should be a self-sufficient one. By the time a pupil completes the secondary course, he must be in a position, if he is so minded, to enter the world, earn this livelihood and cease to be dependent on others or on the general community. This implies the third point that secondary education should not, as has been all along the case, be regarded as only a step in enabling the pupils to enter a university. This does not mean that there should be no connection between the two. As a matter of fact there must be such a connection and an intimate one also. But the objective of secondary education ought to be broader.



There are many among the pupils of secondary schools who have no aptitude or ability for prosecuting higher studies. There is no meaning in forcing them also to go through a course which has value only in the case of those who can and ought to enter the University. This aspect has all along been ignored. And this should to-day be specially kept in mind in laying down any scheme of reorganisation and working it.

### Training in Citizenship.

Naturally the content of education should in the light of the above objectives undergo a transformation. Training in active citizenship should be fostered. All activities and all studies and subjects needed for this purpose should be introduced in the secondary schools of the future. No one can be a useful citizen unless he is physically strong and healthy. And in these days when in the interests of the country's defence, large forces, consisting of persons who are physically fit for the purpose have to be raised, it becomes all the more necessary that adequate attention has to be paid to the physical training of secondary schools' pupils as it is from their ranks that the more intelligent recruits to the defence services have to be secured. Here again it is for the experts to decide by what methods this particular purpose is to be achieved, whether as some enthusiasts advocate there will be need for the introduction of military training in Secondary Schools, what place should medical inspection have in them, what games and sports—Indian and English—are to be utilised, how much time is to be devoted for activities like these and so on. What is relevant for the discussion here is that physical training is a necessary element in the training for citizenship.

Two other elements also form an integral part of it. One is the rendering of some kind of social community service. Pupils must be trained in this line of work. The widening of the scope of scouting and making it compulsory for all pupils are intimately connected with training in social service. The other element is the inclusion of social studies among the subjects taught in secondary courses. Departments of education in several provinces as well as other educational bodies are coming to recognise the significance of such studies and proposals have been put forward to substitute them for the existing independent and isolated courses in History, Geography and Civics. This is a move in the right direction. But here also the help of experts is needed to draw syllabuses in the subject. There is a danger that ill-integrated syllabuses might be drawn up rather hurriedly by persons who have not had the necessary time and equipment for this purpose. This danger has to be avoided. Any syllabus drawn should be published for public criticism before it is finalised and sufficient time should be given to scholars to prepare sound text books on the subject before schools begin to teach them.

### Religious Instruction

There are some who think that regular instruction in religion and morals should be imparted if pupils are to be trained to become good citizens. This is the view of Abul Kalam Azad, the Minister of Education in

the Central Government of India to-day. No one belittles the importance of religion and religious instruction in the ordering of a community. But the school does not seem to be the proper place for imparting such instruction, especially in a country like ours where there are numerous religious and sectarian differences. It is better that it is left in the hands of parents. Moreover formal instruction in religion will not make an effective appeal to pupils in the secondary stage. And pupils who sit together when they learn other subjects have, in the peculiar circumstances of our country, to be split up into separate sections when religion is taught to them and this will naturally encourage separatist tendencies. For these and several other reasons it is better that formal religious instruction is not included in the secondary school courses.

### Diversified Courses

It is with a view to realise the other objectives that it is now agreed by all that secondary schools should provide for a variety of courses and not merely for academic and literary courses which cannot serve any purpose other than enabling the pupils to proceed later on to a University. There is no need to argue this case for this position further. It is more or less self-evident. A large majority of pupils in secondary schools have no aptitude for university education. They do not possess the literary bent of mind. They may be more interested in pursuits where manipulative skill and actual work with hands are more important. It may be that it is only through such pursuits that they can develop their personality and lead a richer and fuller life. To compel them as is the case at present to pursue purely academic courses of studies based on book knowledge is to stunt their natural growth. Moreover it also results in Universities becoming overcrowded and filled with many students who cannot be benefited by University training. This accounts for the high percentage of failures in University examinations. Finally the country requires today and will require in a larger degree in the years to come a more numerous supply of trained personnel who have the technical qualifications to work as foremen, supervisors etc. in industrial concerns. And if agriculture is also mechanised as it will probably be if co-operative and collectivist farming becomes a reality, there will be increasing demand for technically qualified persons in agriculture also. For these reasons it may be laid down that there is the strongest possible case for a diversified system of secondary education.

Necessarily there will broadly be in future two sets of courses—technical and vocational on one side and literary on the other. Let it however be recognised that the division is not between cultural and non-cultural courses as people generally think it to be. Such a division is meaningless. Every one who knows anything on the subject and who is competent to pronounce an opinion on it holds the opinion that technical and vocational courses are no less cultural than literary courses. Each broadens the experience and the outlook of the pupil but in a different way.



### Technical Courses

The nature of the technical and vocational courses that deserve to be introduced and the way in which they have to be organised were fully examined by Messrs. Wood and Abbot, the two British Educational experts, invited by the Government of India some years ago and the suggestions and recommendations contained in their report have not lost any of their value or significance with the lapse of years. The best thing is for provincial government to take their report as a starting point and work out details in the light of local conditions—industrial and agricultural. The most important point to be noted in this connection is that there should be a coordination between the technical courses taught in schools and the industries in the region. It is only when there is some degree of industrialisation on modern lines with labourers working with machine tools that there will be need for technically trained young men. Otherwise technical schools will be a waste. But there are everywhere plans for industrialisation. Provincial governments are keen on it. And the situation may be taken as being favourable for the introduction of diversified courses in schools.

### Art and Commerce

It is also necessary that technical education should be interpreted rather broadly. It should provide for courses in Art, in Commercial subjects and in the technique of clerical work like shorthand, typewriting, precis working, book-keeping and commercial correspondence. It may be that there is some uncertainty regarding the kind of equipment that clerks and accountants should have in future, if English loses the place of primacy which it now possesses. But that is a matter of detail which can be looked into when the situation gets actually altered. Even when it is altered clerks have to be trained and secondary schools have to provide them with the foundations and preliminaries of this training. This is the only point that is being made here.

### Balanced Education

One other aspect of diversified courses requires some reference. It is the need to provide for some kind of general and liberal education even to those who are undergoing technical and vocational courses. Otherwise the development will be narrow and one-sided. It will not be the education of the whole man. Provision for the study of the mother-tongue and its literature, and of some other language should be made. Similarly even those who take to literary and academic courses should do some kind of manual work. It is this integration, this balance between the different aspects of life that should be kept prominent in all reorganisation of education. This is the essence of culture and of liberalism. It alone will put an end to that artificial division of society into manual workers and intellectuals. It will pave the way for the coming of an organically united community into existence.

### Languages

There is only one other point of which mention has to be made. It is the controversy regarding the place that has to be assigned to the mother



tongue, to the regional language where it is different from the mother-tongue, to Hindi, to Sanskrit and other classical languages like Persian and Arabic and to English. In discussions on this subject there is conflict between what sentiment dictates and what reason and common sense dictate and it is this that has introduced a number of needless complexities into the subject.

### **Mother-tongue**

On one point there is a large amount of agreement. The mother tongue should be the medium of instruction in the entire secondary school course and should therefore take the place of English. But even here a difficulty has cropped up as in some cases the mother tongue of the pupil is different from the regional language in the area, the language spoken and understood by the large majority of the people in it. In such a case is it the mother-tongue or the regional language that should be accepted as the medium of instruction? One or two observations may be made in this connection.

### **Regional Language Versus Mother-tongue**

There are three situations in which the mother tongue is different from the regional language. The first relates to bilingual areas where there is not one regional language but at least two if not more. This is the case for instance with the City of Madras and with some of the border districts in the Province like Chittoor and Bellary. The second relates to cases where people have been long settled in areas where the regional language is different from the mother tongue. There is no question here of two regional languages. These settlers form small and scattered minorities and they are as familiar from their childhood with the regional language as with their mother tongue. An illustration of this is afforded by the Telugus settled for nearly four hundred years in the Tamilnad and by the Tamilians similarly settled in Andhra. The third situation arises in respect of those Muslims whose mother tongue happens to be Urdu instead of the regional language.

### **Regional Language to be Preferred**

It is suggested that the question may be settled on the following lines. In a bilingual area like the city of Madras both Telugu and Tamil should be used as media. It may involve additional expenditure but managements as well as Government should be prepared to meet it. The case of Telugus settled in the Tamil region and of the Tamils settled in the Telugu region are easily disposed of. These people are quite familiar with the regional language. To speak in it is as natural to them as to speak in the mother tongue. No hardship will be caused if pupils are taught in the regional language. They also prefer it. For without a knowledge of it they cannot live in the region or carry on business in it. As a matter of fact this is what is obtaining to-day and no one complains about it. The Tamils for instance settled permanently in the Andhra learn only the Telugu language and the same is the case with the Telugus in the Tamil area. Several of them are eminent scholars in the regional language and have won

reputation as poets and prose writers. It will be the best thing if the Muslims also agree to having the regional language as the medium of instruction for their children, and do what the Telugus and Tamils referred to here have been doing. Though they speak Urdu they are quite familiar with the regional language. In some of the Telugu districts they learn only Telugu not out of compulsion but voluntarily. And it is right that this practice is extended. But if inspite of utilitarian considerations like these any of these groups whose mother-tongue is different from the regional language insist on the mother-tongue alone being the medium of instruction Government should have no objection to permit such a course provided that the cost involved is borne by the groups. This is the price they have to pay for satisfying their sentiment.

### English, Hindi and Sanskrit

In regard to other languages the question is not so easy to settle. There are those who contend that as English has been serving as a common language for the educated classes in India for at least a century and as it is a language of international importance and as it is likely to be continued as the medium of instruction in colleges and Universities for sometime longer every pupil in the secondary school should compulsorily study it. But this argument is not quite convincing especially in view of the diversified courses adverted to above. Many pupils will not be proceeding to the universities at all. There is therefore no meaning in compelling them to study English. There is again the contention of those who think that as Hindi is to become the language of administration for All India purposes it should be compulsorily taught in secondary schools. But many fear that if a pupil is made to study as a matter of compulsion his mother-tongue, Hindi and English, on some ground or other there will be none to study Sanskrit and other classical languages and that this will result in our losing touch with the classical culture of the past. It is their opinion that as many pupils as possible should be encouraged to study Sanskrit.

### Option to pupils

It will be difficult to suggest a solution that will satisfy these different schools of thought. A reasonable solution is to give the option to pupils to select one of the three languages—Hindi, English and Sanskrit—for compulsory study beside his mother-tongue or the regional language in the first three forms of the secondary school course and an additional language in the higher forms so that when he leaves the secondary school he will have a working knowledge of the regional language and two other languages. An objection may be raised that it will be too taxing, too much of a strain for one to learn three languages. But it may not really be so if it is only a working knowledge that he is expected to obtain. Anyhow this question requires further investigation.

### Conclusion

There are so many other aspects of secondary education that have to be looked into if we are to reorganise it on proper lines. For instance there is the question of the place which examinations should have in any reorganised scheme and there are similar other problems. But limitations of space do not permit an enquiry into them all. It will be enough if we recognise that there is need for its reorganisation and that we have to draw a distinction between fundamental directions of reform and the subsidiary ones. And this is all that has been attempted here.

## BASIC EDUCATION

In his address to the Advisory Board of Basic Education, the Hon'ble Sri T. S. Avinashilingham Chettiar declared that a comprehensive plan for the spread of Basic Education would be drawn up soon. This announcement is of great importance. It definitely assures us that Government have accepted the educational method that has come to be known as Basic Education. It makes it clear that Government will be adopting a plan for the spread of Basic Education throughout the Province. These are two welcome features. Hitherto, only lip sympathy was shown to the Basic plan of Education. The old Congress Ministry looked at the plan with a discreet reserve though the then Education Minister wrote a book explaining the Wardha Education Plan, and even organised a Wardha Training School which was short lived. It worked only for nine months and the officers of the Education Department freely discussed the impracticability of the Wardha Plan. It is therefore gratifying to note that the present Ministry has made up its mind to introduce Basic Education and spread it throughout the province in accordance with a comprehensive plan.

Even though the plan is not available, signs are not wanting to indicate that Government mean action too. The opening of Basic Training Schools in the current year, though only a few, the recent announcement regarding the provision of Rs. 10 lakhs for organising more Basic Training Schools in the coming year, deputing some of the Officers of the Department to undergo training in the basic method and the offer of generous stipends to graduates with a view to securing well qualified teachers, all indicate action according to a plan. One could see that if action be taken along these lines for some years, then the number of basic trained teachers available each year would rapidly increase. But even as such, it would take many, many years to satisfy the needs of the province. We are told that we would require in all 300,000 teachers, if basic education should be made free, universal and compulsory. The chief criticism against the Sargent Plan was that it opined that it would take a minimum of 40 years to be put into full effect. The Hon'ble Minister seems to think that in a period of 5 years, he can accomplish the task as far as our province is concerned. It is good that the period is shortened to the absolute minimum. But if we should achieve the goal more vigorous steps than are contemplated so far should be taken. Otherwise, only the plan and the wish will be there and we will be where we are in the matter of educational progress. It is therefore suggested that side by side with the opening of training schools, the existing training schools be also transformed into basic training schools. Our existing training schools can easily train about 6000 teachers per annum. They have all the equipment, accommodation and the teaching personnel. With a reorientation given to the teaching practice to suit the needs of the Basic Plan, they can immediately fit into the new scheme and easily help in the



supply of trained teachers needed for completing the plan. It must be admitted that some improvements have been effected in the salary and service conditions of teachers. But yet the attitude of the authorities and of the public to teachers is such as not to create enthusiasm for teaching as a profession. It is therefore necessary that the authorities should give serious consideration to this problem and try to induce young men and women to take to teaching.

The suggestion that students after completing their matriculation or after their graduation in a university should do service as a teacher for one year will not at all help the cause of education. Will such a suggestion ever be made in the matter of public health? If responsible men in power should seriously suggest that the education of the young child should be entrusted to untrained and unwilling youths, there can be no greater wrong. Teaching the young is a responsible job. It is a specialist's work. It requires great skill and is an arduous task. It demands not only a professional technique but the zeal and devotion of a mission.

Government should also take on hand the re-training of existing teachers. There are nearly 100,000 teachers mostly trained. They need a little guidance so as to enable them to adopt the plan of Basic Education especially in regard to making craft activity the vehicle of instruction. Two or three short courses extending to 3 or 4 weeks at a time will go a great way in transforming the existing Elementary Schools into Basic Schools and thus help to achieve the end of spreading Basic Education all over the province within a short period.

It is understood that while the Basic Plan should extend to a period of eight years covering the ages 6—14, Government propose to introduce it in two stages, the first stage of five years for the age 6—11 and then extend by stages upto the age of 14.

There has been a lot of talk of wastage and of lapse into illiteracy. In spite of the great increase in the school going population, the percentage of literacy has not increased. This lapse into illiteracy may be due to many causes but the chief cause is that a five year school course cannot be expected to lay the foundation for life-long literacy, especially when children of 11 after leaving school have to work in the farm or the field. It is very necessary, in the interests of long-term economy and of progress, that Basic Education should be made from the beginning free, compulsory and universal for all between the ages of 6 and 14 and that every child should be given the benefit of a eight year Basic Schooling. Such a plan will result in improved citizenry, apart from the direct educational results to the individual. Compulsion may be extended from area to area, but when introduced it should guarantee pupils' schooling up to the age of 14 at least.

Progress of mass education in the past has been slow mainly because of divided responsibility. Local bodies and private agencies were expected to do everything while Government contented itself by awarding grants and

censuring these agencies. The responsibility for the spread of Basic Education must be borne entirely by the government. It does not mean that all Basic Schools should be taken over by the State and administered according to a rigid code. Local initiative and local effort are desirable and useful but they should not be strained.

If Basic Education is to succeed, then there should be no division of responsibility. Government and Government alone should assume the responsibility, though it can make use of all available non-official help. If the existing local bodies are not found efficient in the administration of education, the causes should be studied and suitable modifications effected. One reason for their inefficiency is the largeness of their area. The lack of adequate finance and the mode of election to these local bodies might have also contributed to the state of affairs. These are not irremediable defects. Local Education Authorities can be constituted for more manageable areas; it will be easy to see that competent persons man these authorities and as for finance, it is the duty of the Government to find it. Private agencies may be allowed to conduct schools under a satisfactory system of grants and a suitable code of regulations so as to ensure to the public that these schools would provide the same facilities as are provided in the Public Schools.

An estimate of the annual recurring expenditure of a 8-year free compulsory and universal scheme of Basic Education is not difficult to compute. The Central Advisory Board of Education estimated it at about Rs. 34 crores for this province. That was a prewar estimate. Under present conditions this would be about Rs. 50 crores. Even though this amount is nearly equal to the total provincial revenues, it would only mean an educational expenditure of Rs. 10 per annum per capita of population and hence it should not be considered heavy.

A planned programme of Basic Education on the lines indicated is of vital necessity. As the Hon'ble Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Minister for Education, indicated in his address to the Central Advisory Board of Education and to the Conference of Education Ministers, the problem is very urgent and Education cannot wait any longer. Considering the national importance of Basic Education, the Central Government should take its share in implementing the scheme for the adoption of free, universal and compulsory Basic Education. It may have to make liberal annual grants to the provinces, in order to enable the provinces to go forward with their programmes vigorously. While such aid should not mean any severe or stringent interference in the day-to-day administration, the Central Government should be made to feel that its help is being put to proper use. Unless liberal Central support to Basic Education is available, it will not be possible for the provinces to make any notable progress. Finance has been the greatest obstacle to the progress of education and in Free India, when all concerned are alive both to the importance and urgency of Education Reform, liberal aid from the Centre is a vital need.

## ADULT EDUCATION IN FREE INDIA

I feel very strongly about the urgent need for adult education on an extensive scale and in an intensive manner in Free India, because without universal literacy and basic culture at the bottom and the highest scientific and artistic and religious culture at the top, Free India will not be a prosperous India or be an honoured guide of the world as she was in the past.

The latest literacy estimate for India was made by Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Education Minister, Government of India, on 19th December 1947, when he said on the occasion of the inauguration of the Central Institute of Education, that it was 14.7%. Thus out of every hundred persons 85 are totally illiterate. He pointed out there are not enough of trained teachers for educating the three crores of school going children between the ages of six and eleven in India and said: "We should not postpone our educational schemes simply because there are not sufficient trained teachers. Rather we should mobilise as teachers all the educated persons available and at the same time carry on the training of teachers with the greatest possible speed, so that trained teachers can be made available in sufficient numbers in the shortest possible time."

I wish to present here and now another side of the shield. Elementary education—universal and compulsory and free—of all boys and girls is good—nay, is inevitable and indispensable. But it by itself will not lead to the highest measure of salutary results. Some persons seem to think that the illiterate adults may well be ignored because they are bound to die out within a generation. But they forget that the presence of illiterate adults is a potent cause of the landslide of the youths arduously lifted to the level of bare literacy back into the slough of illiteracy. They act as a perpetual drag upon the general culture of the nation. Mr. Bryson says in his work on Adult Education that at an educational conference a worker referred to the acquisition of literacy by a man 90 years old that he was asked what good there was in giving such an old man a skill which he would never live to use, and that the answer was that he had nearly a hundred descendants and that when he learnt to read, all the others became keen to acquire knowledge. We have lost the old instruments of humanistic and divinising culture through puranic expositions and harikathas and we have not gone along the track of universal literacy and numerous libraries which are the hall-marks of modernism. We are thus between two worlds—"the one dead and the other powerless to be born."

And yet we are on the eve of India's new self-evolved constitution being brought into force in 1948. Adult suffrage is its basis; Adult suffrage without universal literacy will be a delusion and a snare, and universal literacy will be perpetually receding like the horizon which moves



off as we approach it, until universal free compulsory elementary education goes hand in hand with adult education and by means of a five-year plan we complete adult literacy and keep up the institution of elementary education at its highest level and pitch of efficiency as our primary national duty. Let us remember the following wise words of Joseph K. Hart: "Hence we may as well as admit that it is not education of children that can save the world from destruction; it is the education of adults: it is the adult who must be weaned from his provincial-mindedness, his animistic prejudices, his narrow customs, his obsolete habits; it is the adult who must be given the chance to become free in a world of science, tolerance, human sympathy, and intelligent organisation."

That is why speed is of the essence of the adult education drive in India today. I have been advocating, though as yet in vain, the need of every graduate being conscripted for such a work and compelled to do adult education work for a period of six months in towns and especially in villages before receiving his diploma. Every candidate for entry into the public service must be similarly conscripted for such work before he can hope to be entertained as an official in the public service. When we are thinking of conscription for the defence of the motherland against external enemies, why should we fight shy of the conscription of all the available teaching power for the defence of the motherland against the invidious internal foe of ignorance? Surely freedom from ignorance is the basic freedom of the Atlantic Charter.

It may be said, and with justice, that a raw graduate would not be fit to take up the job of imparting adult literacy. That is why I want the universities to give some basic training for three months in adult psychology and general knowledge of the methods of imparting knowledge of a modern type to modern illiterate men and women. After such training they may be given certificates or diplomas in Adult Education Training and sent out into villages and towns to carry on their vigorous campaign against illiteracy and to liquidate illiteracy entirely in the space of five years. I am an old man in a hurry and wish to see such a great consummation in my life. The work of adult education can and must be taken by the old as well as the young who are literate. "All hands to the rescue" is my slogan and my motto and my mantram. The university must also inaugurate a far-flung intensive and extensive university extension movement and foster also university settlements.

We have all heard the slogan that the mind of a child is plastic that the mind of an adult is immobile and that few men take in new ideas after they reach the twenty-fifth year. It is no doubt true that sensory acuteness lessens with age and that ageing persons show a decline in muscular and nervous control. The older persons learn languages less quickly than the young. But they have greater eagerness and zest for learning than the young and they have got with them a basic fund of general and professional knowledge which the youth have not. They have a keener sense of the relations of things than the young and can appreciate and

apply and organise and inter-relate better than the young such knowledge as they acquire. Cato started learning Greek when he was past eighty. When asked why he began to learn it at that age, he replied: "What other age have I?"

I quite realise that the adult is a shy fatigued unreceptive animal and cannot be commanded or intimidated. But he knows much more than a boy or a girl, having learnt a certain measure of wisdom in the hard school of life. He is eager to learn but he must be taught in such a way as to make him take pride in learning and feel that he confers a favour by learning! The ordinary teachers learn child psychology (though of the western type) but are taught little and know little about adult psychology. But I think that the teachers who have to take up adult education can in the course of three months' training pick up adult psychology and general knowledge about public affairs and become efficient factors in adult education and efficiently coax the adults into universal literacy. They should welcome and conscript the magic lantern and the gramophone and the radio and the theatre and the cinema as their powerful aids. Each one of these will be found to be an Aladdin's lamp. We must have also museums and art galleries and libraries and reading rooms and induce the literate adults to make the best use of them all. More than everything else the teachers of adults should shed all their innate or acquired superiority complexes and enter into the skins of the adults and fascinate their minds and hearts.

But I am not content with a vision of universal adult literacy. Adult education is more than mere adult literacy and adult culture is more than mere adult education. Bryson says well: "Lifelong learning is an ancient ideal in the history of civilization, but adult education as an organised social movement is comparatively new in American-life." I am keen on adult education as an organised social movement in India also. Mr. Bryson defines an adult as "one who has other business in the world but who uses part of his time and energy to acquire more intellectual equipment." All the progressive and cultured factors in modern life in India must come to his help. The government and the university must help him. All the literates must come to his aid. The employers must run adult education schools for equipping him with literacy. They will find such work to be an investment even more than a social or humanitarian duty. The literate workers if they are equipped with modern knowledge in their line of work will bring more profit to the employers and more gain and happiness to themselves and step up production and become a national asset and enable the motherland to pass from the present era of deficit into the new era of plenty and surplus and make her loved and honoured all over the world.

The higher aspect of adult education is therefore to equip the adult with higher knowledge in his line of work and make him a better worker than he was before and also to open before his vision the heavens of history and science, of literature and art, and of philosophy and religion. It must

make him a skilled specialist in his line; and it must liberalise him and liberate the God in him. It is sure, if it is imparted in the right way, to make him a better voter and work democracy well for the national good. Without it, an illiterate voter is sure to be manipulated as an automaton by demagogues and is sure to degenerate into a national and universal curse. It must, in addition to making him a better political thinker, speaker and doer, release the divine creativeness in him so as to let it have free play in the realms of Art and Religion. It must enable him to plan a higher social order and work the plan successfully.

Mr. Bryson says: "There is no scientific evidence for the natural notion that a child is born with special aptitudes for the culture in which he is to live. He is born a human being; he is made into a Frenchman, or a Russian, or a Chinese by processes which begin to bear heavily upon him from the moment of his birth. He acquires language, ideals, ways of doing things, skills, prejudices, and loyalties." Though as a Hindu and as a believer in the doctrine of Karma, I do not regard birth as an accident but as a result of parental karmic causes, yet I feel that nurture plays at least as important a place as nature in the unfolding of the human personality. I want every one to be trained to be intensely national and international. Tagore says well: "It has been my steadfast endeavour that the boys of my Shantiniketan school should acquire a true vision of the history of humanity as a whole, broad and untainted with race-hatred."

If adult education proceeds on the above lines in Free India, I feel sure we shall all live soon in a Free Federal Democratic Prosperous Cultured Artistic Religious India which will once again be the leader of the world.



## CANONS OF TERMINOLOGY

The new set-up of our country which is taking shape since 15th August, 1947 should quicken the life of the masses. This quickening should be helped by provision for universal education through a net-work of schools for formal education at the earlier stages and a net-work of libraries for self-education thereafter. The main switch for releasing the educative process—the process of the harmonious development of personality in all its three facets, vital, mental and spiritual—the main switch which is reachable to one and all at the present stage of human evolution is in the mental facet. The science and the art of manipulating the master-switch in the spiritual facet is known only to the *Urthmen* and the *Rishis* who are yet far too few. The manipulation of the main-switch in the mental-facet has to be through ideas and ideas are inextricably dependent for their communication on language. The only language through which ideas can flow with the least resistance in the case of most people is the mother-tongue.

But the mother tongues of the people of our land had been stagnant during the last two hundred years. During this long and eventful period, they have been by-passed by the surging wave of ideas in deep regions of thought in all fronts in the field of knowledge. They are, therefore, bare of the terms needed to communicate current thought below a certain depth. One of the primary tasks now is thus to build up terminology in the several languages of the land. This has to be done under the action of three forces, as it were, forces compelling (1) the comfort of the lower intellectual strata of society, who are generally localised in expressing and absorbing ideas in the superficial layers of thought, needed for daily life and the pursuit of the arts and crafts, (2) facility for the inter-provincial intercourse of the higher strata, who venture to cross linguistic borders, in expressing and absorbing ideas in the deeper layers of thought, needed for the promotion of national life, the pursuit of the fundamental and applied sciences and participation in the legal, social, economical, political and educational progress of the country as a whole, and (3) unimpeded communication of nascent ideas at the deepest layers of thought being explored at the moment by the handful of specialists in the world taken as a whole, needed for concerted international effort in extending the boundaries of the field of knowledge in all its dimensions.

It is a feature of cosmic economy that those who are localised, inter-provincial and international respectively in their sphere of thought and action need, for their respective fulfilment, the absorption and expression of ideas in the top, intermediate and bottom-most layers of thought and are also, by nature, mono-lingual, bilingual and multilingual respectively. An examination of the terminologies in the languages, that had not been paralysed during the last few centuries, shows that the purity of elements decreases as we descend down the labyrinth of terms in service at the

successive depths in the layers of thought. This natural phenomenon should be borne in mind when we are obliged, in our present circumstances, to give up waiting for the slow *laissez faire* development of terminology in the modern Indian languages and proceed to set up planned terminology at the initial stages. The *laissez faire* process, which had already set in, has been largely conditioned by journalism, which cannot be expected to think of the future or to take a whole view of the field of knowledge. The result is that terms get improvidently forged for ideas of daily currency and a great handicap results in forging expressive terminology for ideas in the deeper layers of thought. Further, conscious, political antipathies set up a pathological insistence on purity in each language and this creates a centrifugal force which will ultimately clog inter-provincial and international intercourse and co-operation in the pursuit of knowledge. In my own subject, Library Science, attempts at terminology are a foot among those who are at once my colleagues, friends and old students. This has given me opportunity to observe the chaos, disruption and incongruity which results from the forces of journalism, passing political creeds and vacuum due to the absence of a normative science of terminology so essential for planned terminology. To make a humble attempt at removing this vacuum, Sri Murari Lal Nagar and myself are engaged in a survey of the past and a peep into the future in order to write out a small book entitled *Canons of Terminology*.

I know how deeply Prof. M. S. Sabhesan is interested in this problem. I know his valiant efforts in building up scientific terminology in Tamil. I remember that he was the first to join forces with me in the institution of the popular lectures which we called "Everything about Something Series," for helping our thought to express itself in the medium of Tamil. I should therefore like to offer as my contribution to Prof. Sabhesan's Sashtiabdhapurti Commemoration Volume a short pilot version of some of my Canons of Terminology, in the *sutra-cum-commentary* style in which the original book is being written. Each canon appears in this first line in English, then as a *sutra* in Sanskrit, and lastly as a *sutra* in Tamil. The object of enunciating the canons in Sanskrit is to facilitate the consistent use of cognate words for any given idea in its translation into the several regional languages. The work of translating my basic books in Library Science into the regional languages has shown us that if the translation is made direct from the English original, the centrifugal forces gain ascendancy and that if we supply a Sanskrit version of those basic books for translation, the centripetal forces have a chance and consistent formulation of terminology emerges.

Illustrations and commentaries are also extracted from the draft of our contemplated book, under some of the canons as mere samples. In the examples, the first line gives the English terms. The first Sanskrit line gives the terms which satisfy the canons. The second Sanskrit line gives the terms which have been coined by others; these violate the canons; these are taken in most cases from *Words of General Use in the Legislative Assemblies rendered into Hindi* by G. S. Gupta, Speaker, C. P. and Berar Legislative Assembly, Nagpur.

My Tamil rendering of the *sutras* needs an apology. As I could not get any Tamil scholar in Delhi with whom I can discuss it, it is not as good as I wish it to be.

## CANONS OF TERMINOLOGY

### परिभाषापत्रम्

பரிபாஷை உப சூத்திரங்கள்

#### 1 Section on Terms

#### 1 शब्दः प्रकरणम्

1 சொற் றிரிவு

#### 11 One-one Correspondence

#### 11 एकैकैव

11 ஒன்றிற்கொன்றே

111 A term is to have a unique meaning ; homonyms are to be avoided.

111:1 एकोऽर्थः ।

111:2 न नाना ।

111:1 சொல்லிற்கொருபொருளே.

111:2 பலபொருள் விலக்கேல்.

Exs. Health Minister

Food Minister

Deputy Secretary

सुखाधार मन्त्री

आहार मन्त्री

प्रतिनिधि सचिव

लोकस्वास्थ्य मन्त्री

खाद्य मन्त्री

प्रतिसचिव

சுகாதார மந்திரி

ஆகார மந்திரி

குரதிநிதிச்செலிவர்

The term *Loka* includes not only humans but also beasts and plants and moreover it has also other meanings of varying shades of difference. It is desirable to avoid it. If at all it cannot be dropped altogether in the present context, it may be replaced by *jana*.

*Khadyamantri* may lend itself to the ridiculous meaning "Eatable Minister." *Prati* can mean both 'deputy' and 'opponent' or 'opposite' as in the word *Prativadi*.

112 There is to be consistency in the representation of an idea in whatever combination it occurs ; different terms are not to be used to represent it in different combinations.

112:1 भावैक्ये शब्दैक्यम् ।

112:2 न नाना ।

112:1 ஒரு பொருளுக்கொரு சொல்லே

112:2 பல சொல் விலக்கேல்.

113 The terms for allied ideas are to be allied but differentiated.

113 सजातीय विभिन्नभावानाम् सजातीय विभिन्नशब्दाः ।

113 ஒருவகைப் பொருள்களுக்கு, வித்தியாசப்படுத்தப்பட்ட

ஒரு வகைச் சொற்களே.

#### 14 Meaning of Term

#### 14 शब्दार्थः

14 சொற்பொருள்

141 It is the idea which is to be represented ; it is not the word which is to be translated.

141:1 अर्थोऽनूयः ।

141:2 न शब्दः ।

141:1 பொருளைச் சொற் தழுவு.

141:2 சொல்லைத் தழுவேல்.



Exs.	Public Works Minister निर्माण मन्त्री । लोककर्म मन्त्री । நிர்மாண மந்திரி.	Treasury Bench मन्त्री वर्गः । मन्त्री मञ्च । மந்திரி வர்க்கம்.	Whip प्रेरकः । प्रतोद । முரேரகன்.
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The undesirability of rendering 'Public Works' (= Engineering) into *Loka Karma* on the purely verbal level is obvious.

The term 'Treasury Bench' now denotes the occupants of that bench and not the bench itself.

*Pratoda* is cognate with the European term 'Thong' which means 'Whip'—a material. But in parliamentary parlance, a whip is a person who brings the party members to work in concert. *Preraka* denotes him truly.

142 The intended idea is to be represented and not any aberration from it.

142:1 उद्दिष्टोऽर्थो बोध्यः । 142:2 न तदाभासः ।

142:1 உத்தேசித்த பொருளைச் சொல்ல 142:2 அதன் மாறுபாடுகளை அல்ல.

Exs.	Food Minister आहार मन्त्री । अन्न मंत्री । ஆகார மந்திரி.	Secretariate सचिवागार, सचिववर्ग । सचिवालय । சசிவக்கொட்டாரம், சசிவவர்க்கம்.
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*Anna* is only a subclass of *Ahara* and so the latter is preferable.

Secretariate can mean either the staff or the building. These two meanings should be differentiated. *Alaya* is too profound a word to be used for a building of this sort.

143 The idea is to be represented directly and not obliquely.

143:1 अर्थस्वतस्संवेद्यः । 143:2 न नेयः ।

143:1 பொருளை நேரிற்சொல்ல 143:2 ஒளிவாய்ச் சொல்லேல்.

Exs.	Development Minister अभ्युन्नति मन्त्री । विकास मन्त्री । முன்னேற்ற ஆகார மந்திரி.
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*Vikasa* means unfoldment or evolution as in biology. But 'Development Minister' means a minister who steps up the material sources and thereby raises the standard of life of the people.

15 True Suggestion

15 यथार्थव्यञ्जनम्

15 யதார்த்த வுசனம்

153 The term is to be suggestive of the true function and not a mistaken one.

153:1 यथार्थो धर्मः । 153:2 न तदाभासः ।

153:1 சொல் யதார்த்த தர்மத்தை குசிப்பிக்க. 153:2 தவறுதலாய் உணரப்பட்ட தர்மத்தை குசிப்பிக்கேல்.

Excise Minister

निर्मिति राजस्व मंत्री ।

मादक मंत्री ।

உற்பத்தி வரி மந்திரி.

Excise really means tax levied on commodities at the stage of production before they are brought to sale. It may be levied on any commodity and not merely on intoxicants. Further *Madakamantri* may mean Intoxicating Minister! It can be seen that *Nirmitarajasva* denotes the function truly.

156 The term is to be suggestive of the true genesis and not of a mistaken one.

156:1 यथार्थः प्रादुर्भावः ।

156:2 न तदाभासः ।

156:1 யதார்த்த உற்பத்தியை  
சூசிப்பிக்க.156:2 தவறுதலாய் உணரப்பட்ட  
உற்பத்தியை சூசிப்பிக்கேல்.

16 Time Element

16 कालतत्त्वम्

16 காலதத்வம்

161 A term is to look forward and not backward.

161:1 भविष्यदालोक्यम् ।

161:2 न भूतम् ।

161:1 பதங்கள் முன் நோக்கவும்

161:2 இன் நோக்கேல்

## 2 SECTION ON LANGUAGE

## 2 भाषा प्रकरणम्

## 2 பாஷைப் பிரிவு

## 21 Regional Terms

## 21 प्रांतीय भाषिक परिभाषा:

## 21 பிராந்திய பாஷைப் பரிபாஷைகள்

21 A term derived from the regional language is to be used to represent a common idea recurring in daily life and the arts and crafts, belonging to the superficial layers of thought and current among the lower intellectual strata of society.

21 देहयात्रा निर्वाहकोपकलासंबद्धान्न प्राकृतजनवर्ति साधारण भावस्य  
प्रांतीय भाषिकपरिभाषा ।

21 தினசரி வாழ்க்கை கிர்வாகத்திற்கு வேண்டியதானதும், சில்லறைத் தொழில்கள் சம்பந்தமானதும், மேலிழந்தவாரியானதும், பிராகிருத ஜனங்களால் கையாளப்படுவதுமான, சாதாரண பொருளின் சொல், பிராந்திய பாஷையினதாக.

## 25 International Terms

## 25 सार्वभौम परिभाषा:

## 25 உலகப்பொது பரிபாஷைகள்

25 An International term is to be used to represent a learned idea, not recurring in daily life, belonging to the deepest layers of thought and current among the uppermost intellectual strata of the world; but an alternative term in the classical language of the country may also be provided to facilitate filtration to the lower intellectual strata of the society.

**25:1** देहयात्रानिर्वाहकेतरगहनतम सार्वभौमोच्चतम विद्वज्जनवर्तिभावस्य सार्वभौम परिभाषा ।

**25:2** परं जनान्तर प्रवेशार्थं देशमूल भाषिकावान्तर परिभाषा च ।

**25:1** தினசரி வாழ்க்கை நிர்வாகத்திற்கு வேண்டாததானதும், அதிகமாய் ஆழ்ந்ததானதும், உலகத்திலே வெகு சில வித்வான்களால்மட்டும் கையாளப்படுவதுமான பொருளுக்கு உலகப் பொதுவான பரிபாஷையை ஏற்க.

**25:2** ஆனால் இதர ஜனங்களிடையே பரவச்செய்ய அனுகூலமாக, தேச மூல பரிபாஷையிலும் மற்றொரு பரிபாஷை கற்பிக்க.

### 28 Classical Terms

#### 28 देशमूलभाषिक परिभाषा:

28 தேசமூல பரிபாஷைப் பரிபாஷைகள்

**28** A radical in the classical language of a country is to be adopted to represent an idea belonging to the intermediate layers of thought and current among the intermediate intellectual strata of society ; and it is to be dressed according to the morphology of the classical language ; to facilitate filtration to the lowest intellectual strata, alternative forms of it dressed according to the morphologies of the regional languages are also to be provided.

**28:1** मध्यस्तरीय मध्यविद्वज्जनवर्तिभावस्य देशमूलभाषिक परिभाषा ।

**28:2** सा देशमूलभाषा प्रत्याद्युपहिता ।

**28:3** परं प्राकृतजनः प्रवेशार्थमवान्तरतया सा प्रांतीय भाषा प्रत्याद्युपहिता च ।

**28:1** மத்யமமான அறிவுப்படைக்கு உறித்தானதும், மத்யமமான வித்வான்களிடையே கையாளப்படுவதுமான பொருளுக்குறிய பரிபாஷைக்கு ஆதாரச்சொல் தேசத்தின் மூலபரிபாஷையினதாக.

**28:2** அதன், இலக்கணத்திரிபுகளும் அப்பரிபாஷையினதே ஆக.

**28:3** தவிர, பிராகிருத ஜனங்களிடையே பரவச் செய்வதற்கு அனுகூலமாக இலக்கணத்திரிபுகள் பிராந்திய பரிபாஷைகளினதும் ஆக.

### 3 SECTION ON AGENCY

#### 3 अधिकारि प्रकरणम्

3 அதிகாரிப் பிரிவு

#### 31 Regional Terms

#### 31 प्रांतीय भाषिक परिभाषा:

31 பிராந்திய பரிபாஷைப் பரிபாஷைகள்.

**31** A term in a regional language gets created by non-personal, collective, folk-force.

**311** Its creation is not subject to a conscious application of pre-determined canons.

**312** But a comparative study can isolate certain canons of statistical validity i.e., canons to which the mode of the terms conforms though not each term.

**313** These terms are subject to change in connotation and denotation, decay and death in course of time.

**314** These changes etc are also caused by folk-force.

**315** Canons can only delay but not prevent them.

Etc.

Etc.

Etc.