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The Question of Language

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By

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

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FOREWORD

I have very carefully gone through Jawaharlal Nehru's essay on the question of language. The question has latterly become an unfortunate controversy. There is no valid reason for the ugly turn it has taken. Be that as it may, Jawaharlal's essay is a valuable contribution to a proper elucidation of the whole subject considered from the national and purely educational point of view. His constructive suggestions, if they are widely accepted by persons concerned, should put an end to the controversy which has taken a communal turn. The suggestions are exhaustive and eminently reasonable, and I have no hesitation in generally endorsing them.

Moving train

M. K. GANDHI

August 3, 1937

THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGE

I

We have had during recent months a revival of the old controversy between Hindi and Urdu, and high excitement has accompanied it and charges and counter-charges have been flung about. A subject eminently suited for calm and scholarly consideration and academic debate has been dragged down to the level of the market place and communal passions have centred round it. Inevitably, many of the champions who have entered the field of battle have little to do with scholarship or the love of a language for its own sake; they have been chiefly concerned with Government orders and court procedure. Those who love language as the embodiment of culture, of airy thought caught in the network of words and phrases, of ideas crystallized, of fine shades of meaning, of the music and rhythm that accompany it, of the fascinating history and associations of its words, of the picture of life in all its phases, those to whom a language is dear because of all this and more, wondered at this vulgar argument and kept away from it.

And yet we cannot keep away from it or ignore it, for the question of language is an important one for us. It is not important because of that cry of the ignorant that India is a babel of tongues with hundreds and hundreds of languages. India, as everyone who looks round him can see, has singularly few languages considering its vast size, and these are intimately allied to each other. India has also one dominant and wide-

widely prevalent notion that we can force a language to behave in a particular manner if we only will it so. It is true that under modern conditions with mass education and mass propaganda through the press, printed books, cinema and the radio, a language can be varied much more rapidly than in past times. And yet that variation is but the mirror of the rapid changes taking place among the people who use it. If a language loses touch with the people, it loses its vitality and becomes an artificial, lifeless thing, instead of the thing of life and strength and joy that it should be. Attempts to force the growth of a language in a particular direction are likely to end in distorting it and crushing its spirit.

III

What should be the policy of the State in regard to language? The Congress has briefly but clearly and definitely stated this in the resolution on Fundamental Rights: "The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected." By this declaration the Congress is bound and no minority or linguistic group can require a wider assurance. Further the Congress has stated in its constitution, as well as in many resolutions, that while the common language of the country should be Hindustani, the provincial languages should be dominant in their respective areas. A language cannot be imposed by resolution, and the Congress desire to develop a common language and carry on most of our work in the provincial languages would be pious wishes, ignored by the multitude, if they did not fit in with existing conditions and the needs of the situation. We have thus to see how far they so fit in.

spread language which, with its variations, covers a vast area and numbers its votaries by the hundred million. Yet the problem remains and has to be faced.

It has to be faced for the moment because of its communal and political implications. But that is a temporary matter and will pass. The real problem will remain: as to what policy we shall adopt in a scheme of general mass education and the cultural development of the people; how shall we promote the unity of India and yet preserve the rich diversity of our inheritance?

The question of language is ever one of great consequence for a people. Almost exactly three hundred years ago Milton, writing from Florence to a friend, emphasized this and said: "Nor is it to be considered of small consequence what language, pure or corrupt, a people has, or what is their customary degree of propriety in speaking it. . . . for let the words of a country be in part unhandsome and offensive in themselves, in part debased by wear and wrongly uttered, and what do they declare, but, by no light indication, that the inhabitants of that country are an indolent, idly-yawning race, with minds already long prepared for any amount of servility? On the other hand we have never heard that any empire, any state, did not at least flourish in a middling degree as long as its own liking and care for its language lasted."

II

A living language is a throbbing, vital thing, ever changing, ever growing and mirroring the people who speak and write it. It has its roots in the masses, though its superstructure may represent the culture of a few. How then can we change it or shape it to our liking by resolutions or orders from above? And yet I find this

IV

Our great provincial languages are no dialects or vernaculars as the ignorant sometimes call them. They are ancient languages with a rich inheritance, each spoken by many millions of persons, each tied up inextricably with the life and culture and ideas of the masses as well as of the upper classes. It is axiomatic that the masses can only grow educationally and culturally through the medium of their own language. Therefore it is inevitable that we lay stress on the provincial languages and carry on most of our work through them. The use of any other language will result in isolating the educated few from the masses and of retarding the growth of the people. Ever since the Congress took to the use of these provincial languages in carrying on its work, we developed contacts with the masses rapidly and the strength and prestige of the Congress increased all over the country. The Congress message reached the most distant hamlet and the political consciousness of the masses grew. Our system of education and public work must therefore be based on the provincial languages.

What are these languages? Hindustani, of course, with its principal aspects of Hindi and Urdu, and its various dialects. Then there are Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati, sister languages of Hindi and nearly allied to it. In the South there are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. Besides these there are Oriya, Assamese and Sindhi, and Panjabi and Pushtu in the North-West. These dozen languages cover the whole of India, and of these, Hindustani has the widest range and also claims a certain all-India character.

V

Without infringing in the least on the domain of

the provincial languages, we must have a common all-India medium of communication. Some people imagine that English might serve as such, and to some extent English has served as such for our upper classes and for all-India political purposes. But this is manifestly impossible if we think in terms of the masses. We cannot educate millions of people in a totally foreign tongue. English will inevitably remain an important language for us because of our past associations and because of its present importance in the world. It will be the principal medium for us to communicate with the outside world, though I hope it will not be the only medium for this purpose. I think we should cultivate other foreign languages also, such as French, German, Russian, Spanish, Italian, Chinese and Japanese. But English cannot develop into an all-India language, known by millions.

The only possible all-India language is Hindustani. Already it is spoken by a hundred and twenty millions and partly understood by scores of millions of others. Even those who do not know it at all at present can learn it far more easily than a foreign language. There are many common words in all the languages of India, but what is far more important is the common cultural background of these languages, the similarity of ideas and the many linguistic affinities. This makes it relatively easy for an Indian to learn another Indian language.

VI

What is Hindustani? Vaguely we say that this word includes both Hindi and Urdu, as spoken and as written in the two scripts, and we endeavour to strike a golden mean between the two, and call this idea of ours Hindustani. Is this just an idea with no reality for its basis, or is it something more?

There are many variations in Hindustani as spoken and written in various parts of northern and central India. Numerous dialects have arisen. But these are the inevitable consequences of want of education, and with mass education these dialects will tend to disappear and a certain standardisation will set in.

There is the question of script. Devanagari and the Urdu script are utterly different from each other and there is no possibility of either of them assimilating the other. Therefore wisely we have agreed that both should have full play. This will be an additional burden on those who have to learn both and it will encourage separatism to some extent. But we have to put up with these disadvantages for any other course is not open to us. Both the scripts are part of the genius of our language and around them have gathered not only literatures peculiar to the scripts, but also a wall of sentiment which is solid and irremovable. What the distant future will bring to us I do not know, but for the present both must remain.

The Latin script has been advocated as a solution of some of our linguistic difficulties. It is certainly more efficient than either Hindi or Urdu from the point of view of rapid work. In these days of the type-writer and duplicator and other mechanical devices, the Latin script has great advantages over the Indian scripts which cannot utilise fully these new devices. But in spite of these advantages I do not think there is the slightest chance of the Latin script replacing Devanagari or Urdu. There is the wall of sentiment of course, strengthened even more by the fact that the Latin script is associated with our alien rulers. But there are more solid grounds also for its rejection. The scripts are essential parts of our literatures; without them we would be largely cut off from our old inheritance.

It may be possible however to reform our scripts to some extent. We have at present, besides Hindi

and Urdu, the Bengali, Marathi and Gujrati scripts, each of these three being very nearly allied to Devanagari. It should be easily possible to have a common script for these four languages. This need not necessarily be Devanagari, exactly as it is written today, but a slight variation of it. The development of a common script for Hindi, Bengali, Gujrati and Marathi would be a definite gain and would bring the four languages much nearer to each other.

I do not know how far it is possible for the Dravidian languages of the South to fit in with a northern script, or to evolve a common script for themselves. Those who have studied this might enlighten us on this point.

The Urdu script has to remain as it is, though some slight simplification of it might be attempted. It might easily absorb the Sindhi script which is very similar to it.

Thus we ought to have later on two scripts: the composite Devanagari-Bengali-Marathi-Gujrati, and the Urdu, and also, if necessary, a southern script. No attempt must be made to suppress any one of these, unless there is a possibility by general agreement of those concerned to fit in the southern languages with a northern script, which is likely to be Hindi, or a slight variation of it.

VII

Let us consider Hindustani both as the mother tongue of the north and central India, and as an all-India language. The two aspects are different and must be dealt with separately.

Hindi and Urdu are the two main aspects of this language. Obviously they have the same basis, the same grammar, the same fund of ordinary words to draw upon. They are in fact the same basic language. And yet the present differences are considerable, and one is

said to draw its inspiration from Sanskrit and the other to some extent from Persian. To consider Hindi as the language of the Hindus and Urdu as that of the Muslims is absurd. Urdu, except for its script, is of the very soil of India and has no place outside India. It is even today the home language of large numbers of Hindus in the North.

The coming of Muslim rulers to India brought Persian as a court language and, to the end of the Moghal period, Persian continued to be so used. The language of the people in north and central India continued to be Hindi throughout. Being a living language it absorbed a number of Persian words; Gujrati and Marathi did likewise. But essentially Hindi remained Hindi. A highly persianised form of Hindi developed round the Imperial courts but this was called *Rekhta*. The word Urdu seems to have come into use during the Moghal period in the camps of the Moghals, but it appears to have been used almost synonymously with Hindi. It did not signify even a variation of Hindi. Right upto the Revolt of 1857, Urdu meant Hindi, except in regard to script. As is well known some of the finest Hindi poets have been Muslims. Till this Revolt, and even for some time after, the usual term applied to the language was Hindi. This did not refer to the script but to the language, the language of Hind. Muslims who wrote in the Urdu script usually called the language Hindi.

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that the words Hindi and Urdu began to signify something different from each other. This separatism grew. Probably it was a reflex of the rising national consciousness which first affected the Hindus, who began to lay stress on purer Hindi and the Devanagari script. Nationalism was for them inevitably at the beginning a form of Hindu nationalism. A little later the Muslims slowly developed their form of nationalism, which was Muslim

PAGE NO- 9 TO 12 MISSING IN ORIGINAL

they happen to reach this public, they are not understood. Is it surprising that Hindi and Urdu books have restricted sales? Even our newspapers in Hindi and Urdu barely tap the great reading public because they too generally use the language of the literary coteries.

Our writers therefore must think in terms of a mass audience and clientèle and must deliberately seek to write for them. This will result automatically in the simplification of language, and the stilted and flowery phrases and constructions, which are always signs of decadence in a language, will give place to words of strength and power. We have not yet fully recovered from the notion that culture and literary attainments are the products and accompaniments of courtly circles. If we think in this way we remain confined in narrow circles and can find no entrance to the hearts and minds of the masses. Culture today must have a wider mass basis, and language, which is one of the embodiments of that culture, must also have that basis.

This approach to the masses is not merely a question of simple words and phrases. It is equally a matter of ideas and of the inner content of those words and phrases. Language which is to make appeal to the masses must deal with the problems of those masses, with their joys and sorrows, their hopes and aspirations. It must represent and mirror the life of the people as a whole and not that of a small group at the top. Then only will it have its roots in the soil and find sustenance from it.

This applies not only to Hindi and Urdu but to all our Indian languages. I know that in all of them these ideas are finding utterance and they are looking more and more towards the masses. This process must be accelerated and our writers should deliberately aim at encouraging it.

It is also desirable, I think, for our languages to cultivate contacts with foreign literatures by means of

translations of both the old classics and modern books. This will put us in touch with cultural and literary and social movements in other countries and will strengthen our own languages by the infusion of fresh ideas.

I imagine that probably Bengali, of all Indian languages, has gone furthest in developing contacts with the masses. Literary Bengali is not something apart from and far removed from the life of the people of Bengal. The genius of one man, Rabindra Nath Tagore, has bridged that gap between the cultured few and the masses, and today his beautiful songs and poems are heard even in the humblest hut. They have not only added to the wealth of Bengali literature but enriched the life of the people of Bengal, and made of their language a powerful medium of the finest literary expression in the simplest terms. We cannot produce geniuses for the asking but we can all learn from this and shape our own course accordingly. In this connection I should also like to mention Gujrati. I am told that Gandhi-ji's simple and powerful language has had a great influence on modern Gujrati writing.

XI

Let us now consider the other aspect of Hindustani as an all-India language, bearing in mind that it is no rival to the great provincial languages and there is no question of its encroaching on them. For the moment let us set aside the question of script, for both scripts must have full play. We cannot of course insist on every one learning both scripts; that would be an intolerable burden for the masses. The State should encourage both scripts and leave the persons concerned, or their parents, to choose between the two. Let us therefore consider the content of the language apart from its script.

Apart from its widespread range and dominance

over India, Hindustani has certain other advantages as an all-India language. It is relatively easy to learn and its grammar is simple, except for the confusion of its genders. Can we simplify it still further?

We have a remarkably successful experiment to guide us, that of *Basic English*. A number of scholars, after many years labour, have evolved a simplified form of English which is essentially English and indistinguishable from it, and yet which is astonishingly easy to learn. Grammar has almost disappeared except for a few simple rules and the basic vocabulary has been reduced to about 980 words, excluding scientific, technical and commercial terms. This whole vocabulary and grammar can be put down on one sheet of paper and an intelligent person can learn it in two or three weeks. He will require practice of course in the use of the new language.

This experiment must not be confused with the many previous attempts to evolve a common world language—Volapuk, Esperanto etc. All such languages, though simple, were highly artificial and to learn them was an additional burden. The breath of life did not vitalize them and they could never become the languages of large numbers of people. Basic English, having all their advantages, does not suffer from this disadvantage, as it is a living language. Those who learn Basic English can not only have a simple and efficient means of communication with others, but they are already on the threshold of Standard English and can proceed further if they so wish.

My enthusiasm for Basic English might lead to the query: Why not have this as an all-India language? No, this cannot be, for the whole genius of this language is alien to our people and we would have to transplant them completely before we can impose this as an all-India language. The practical difficulties would also be far greater than in the case of Hindustani which is already so widely known all over India.

But I think that where we teach English as a foreign tongue, and we shall have to do this on an extensive scale, Basic English should be taught. Only those who wish to make a special study of the language, should proceed to Standard English.

XII

Can we evolve a *Basic Hindustani* after the fashion of Basic English? I think this is easily possible if our scholars will turn their minds to this end. The grammar should be as simple as possible, almost non-existent, and yet it must not do violence to the existing grammar of the language. The essential thing to be borne in mind is that while this Basic language is complete in itself for the expression of all non-technical ideas, it is yet a stepping stone to the further study of the language. The vocabulary might consist of a thousand words or so, not chosen at random because they are common words in the Indian languages, but because they form a complete whole and require no extraneous assistance for all ordinary speaking and writing.

Such a Basic Hindustani should be the all-India language, and with a little effort from the State it will spread with extreme rapidity all over the country and will help in bringing about that national unity which we all desire. It will bring Hindi and Urdu closer together and will also help in developing an all-India linguistic unity. On that solid and common foundation even if variations grow or diversions occur, they will not lead to separatism. Those who wish to add to their knowledge of Hindustani can easily do so, those who are content with knowing Basic Hindustani only can yet take part in the larger life of the nation.

I have said previously that we should not object to the development of Hindi or Urdu separately. The new

words that come in from either direction will enrich our inheritance, if they are vital, living words forced on us by circumstances or coming up from the masses. But the formation of artificial words with no real sanction behind them has no such significance. To a large extent we have to form artificial words to meet the growing needs of our political, economic, scientific and commercial life. In the formation of such words we should try to avoid duplication and separatism. We should be bold enough, I think, to lift bodily foreign technical words which have become current coin in many parts of the world, and to adopt them as Hindustani words. Indeed I should like them to be adopted by all the Indian languages. This will make it easier for our people to read technical and scientific works in various languages, Indian and foreign. Any other course will lead to chaos and confusion in the mind of the student who has to grapple with large numbers of technical terms, and who often has to read important books in other languages. An attempt to have a separate and distinct scientific vocabulary is to isolate and stultify our scientific growth and to put an intolerable burden on the teacher and taught alike. The public life and affairs of the world are already closely knit together and form a single whole. We should make it as easy as possible for our people to understand them and take part in them, and for foreigners to understand our public affairs.

Many foreign words can and should thus be taken in, but many technical words will have to be taken from our own language also. It is desirable that linguistic and technical experts should make a list of such words for common use. This will not only bring about uniformity and precision, in matters where variety and vagueness are highly undesirable, but will also prevent the use of absurd phrases and expressions. Our journalist friends have a knack of translating literally foreign words and phrases without caring much for the meaning

behind them, and then these loose words become current coin and produce confusion of thought. Trade union has been translated sometimes as *vyapar sangh*, a perfectly literal translation and yet as far removed from the truth as anything could be. But the choicest of the translations has been that of 'imperial preference'. This was called by an enterprising journalist *shahi pasand*.

XIII

What should then be the policy of the State in regard to language? The State has to decide this question in regard to its courts and offices, and education.

The official language of each province for affairs of State should be the language of the province. But everywhere Hindustani, as the all-India language, should be officially recognised and documents in it accepted in both the Devanagiri and Urdu scripts. In the Hindustani speaking provinces the two scripts must be officially recognised and it should be open to any person to address a court or an office in either script. The burden of supplying a copy in the other script should not be put upon him. The office or the court may occasionally use either script, but it would be absurd to enforce the rule that everything should be done in both scripts. The script that is mostly used in the area which the court or office serves will become the dominant script of that court or office. But official notifications should be issued in both scripts.

State education must be governed by the rule that it should be given in the language of the student. Thus in each linguistic area the language of that area should be the medium of instruction. But I would go a step further. Wherever there are a sufficient number of people belonging to a linguistic group, even though they might be living in a different linguistic area, they can demand from the State that special provision be made

for teaching them in their own language. This would depend of course on such students being easily accessible from a convenient centre, and it would apply to primary education and, perhaps, if the number was large enough, to secondary education. Thus in Calcutta the medium of instruction would be Bengali. But there are large numbers of people there whose mother tongues are Hindustani, Tamil, Telugu, Gujrati etc. Each of these groups can claim from the State that their primary schools should be run in their own languages. How far it will be possible to extend this to secondary education, I do not quite know. That would depend on the number of pupils concerned and other factors. These pupils would of course have to learn Bengali, the language of the linguistic area they live in, but this is likely to be done in the early secondary stage and after.

In the Hindustani speaking provinces both Devanagari and Urdu scripts will be taught in the schools, the pupils or their parents choosing between them. In the primary stage only one script should be used but the learning of the other script should be encouraged in the secondary stage.

In the non-Hindustani speaking provinces Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

University education should be in the language of the linguistic area, Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language being compulsory subjects. This compulsion need not apply to technical schools and higher technical courses. Provision for teaching foreign languages as well as our classical languages should be made in our secondary schools but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

Among the provincial languages I have mentioned Pushtu and Punjabi. I think primary education should

be given in these, but how far higher education can also be given through them is a doubtful matter requiring consideration, as they are not sufficiently advanced. Probably Hindustani will be the best medium for higher education in these areas.

XIV

I have, with great presumption, made various suggestions ranging from primary to university education. It will be easy to criticise what I have written and to point out the difficulties in the way, for I am no expert in education or in languages. But my very inexpertness is perhaps in my favour and I can consider the problem from a layman's point of view and a detached outlook. Also I should like to make it clear that I am not discussing in this essay the important and difficult problem of education as a whole. I am only dealing with the language side of it. When we consider the whole subject of education we have to think in terms of the State and the society we are aiming at; we have to train our people to that end; we have to decide what our citizens should be like and what their occupations should be; we have to fit in this education to their life and occupations; we have to produce harmony and equilibrium in their private and social and public life. We shall have to lay far greater stress on technical and scientific training if we are to take our place in the modern world. All this and more we shall have to do, and in doing so we shall have to upset the present incompetent and inefficient and top-heavy system of education, and build anew on securer foundations.

But for the moment let us confine ourselves to the question of language and arrive at some general agreement in regard to it. I have written this essay with a view to invite consideration of this problem from a wider angle. If we agree to the general principles I have dis-

cussed, the application of them in practice will not be difficult. We are not in a position to apply most of these principles today in spite of so-called provincial autonomy. We have no financial resources and our hands are tied up in a variety of ways. But to the extent we can put our principles into practice we should do so.

It may be that there is general agreement in regard to some of the suggestions I have made, and some disagreement in regard to others. Let us at least know where we agree; the points for discussion and debate will then be limited in number and we can consider them separately.

I might add that my frequent references to linguistic areas and the language of the province, necessitate that provincial units should correspond with such language areas.

XV

To facilitate this consideration I give below some of my main suggestions:

1. Our public work should be carried on and State education should be given in the language of each linguistic area. This language should be the dominant language in that area. These Indian languages to be recognised officially for this purpose are: Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu), Bengali, Gujrati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Assamese, Sindhi and, to some extent, Pushtu and Punjabi.

2. In the Hindustani speaking area both Hindi and Urdu, with their scripts, should be officially recognised. Public notifications should be issued in both scripts. Either script might be used by a person in addressing a court or a public office, and he should not be called upon to supply a copy in the other script.

3. The medium of State instruction in the Hindus-

tani area being Hindustani, both scripts will be recognised and used. Each pupil or his parents will make a choice of script. Pupils will not be compelled to learn both scripts but may be encouraged to do so in the secondary stage.

4. Hindustani (both scripts) will be recognised as the all-India language. As such it will be open to any person throughout India to address a court or public office in Hindustani (either script) without any obligation to give a copy in another script or language.

5. An attempt should be made to unify the Devanagari, Bengali, Gujrati and Marathi scripts and to produce a composite script suited to printing, typing and the use of modern mechanical devices.

6. The Sindhi script should be absorbed in the Urdu script, which should be simplified, to the extent that is possible, and suited to printing, typing etc.

7. The possibility of approximating the southern scripts to Devanagari should be explored. If that is not considered feasible, then an attempt should be made to have a common script for the southern languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

8. It is not possible for us to think in terms of the Latin script for our languages, for the present at least, in spite of various advantages which that script possesses. We must thus have two scripts: the composite Devanagari—Bengali—Gujrati—Marathi; and the Urdu—Sindhi; and, if necessary, a script for the southern languages, unless this can be approximated to the first.

9. The tendency for Hindi and Urdu in the Hindustani speaking area to diverge and develop separately need not be viewed with alarm, nor should any obstruction be placed in the development of either. This is to some extent natural as new and more abstruse ideas come into the language. The development of either will enrich the language. There is bound to be an adjustment later on as world forces and nationalism press

in this direction, and mass education will bring a measure of standardisation and uniformity.

10. We should lay stress on the language (Hindi, Urdu, as well as the other Indian languages) looking to the masses and speaking in terms of them. Writers should write for the masses in simple language understood by them, and they should deal with problems affecting the masses. Courtly and affected style and flowery phrases should be discouraged and a simple vigorous style developed. Apart from its other advantages, this will also lead to uniformity between Hindi and Urdu.

11. A *Basic Hindustani* should be evolved out of Hindustani on the lines of Basic English. This should be a simple language with very little grammar and a vocabulary of about a thousand words. It must be a complete language, good enough for all ordinary speech and writing, and yet within the framework of Hindustani, and a stepping stone for the further study of that language.

12. Apart from Basic Hindustani, we should fix upon scientific, technical, political and commercial words to be used in Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu) as well as, if possible, in other Indian languages. Where necessary, these words should be taken from foreign languages and bodily adopted. Lists of other words from our own languages should be made, so that in all technical and such like matters we might have a precise and uniform vocabulary.

13. The policy governing State education should be that education is to be given in the language of the student. In each linguistic area education from the primary to the university stage will be given in the language of the province. Even within a linguistic area, if there are a sufficient number of students whose mother tongue is some other Indian language, they will be entitled to receive primary education in their mother ton-

gue, provided they are easily accessible from a convenient centre. It may also be possible, if the number is large enough, to give them secondary education also in the mother tongue. But all such students will have to take, as a compulsory subject, the language of the linguistic area they live in.

14. In the non-Hindustani speaking areas, Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

15. The medium of instruction for university education will be the language of the linguistic area. Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language should be compulsory subjects. This compulsion of learning additional languages need not apply to higher technical courses, though a knowledge of languages is desirable even there.

16. Provision for teaching foreign languages, as well as our classical languages, should be made in our secondary schools but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain special courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

17. Translations should be made of a considerable number of classical and modern works in foreign literatures into the Indian languages, so that our languages might develop contacts with the cultural, literary and social movements in other countries, and gain strength thereby.

ALLAHABAD

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 25, 1937