



THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW



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VOL. LXVII

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No. 10

Rajaji's Experiment in Education

• WHAT DID HE MEAN BY HIS 1953 SCHEME?

T. P. Santhanakrishna Naidu, B.A., L.T., Chromepet.

Rajaji's experiment of 1953 in elementary education is now a forgotten episode to those who saw it or took part in it at the time and an almost unknown thing to those who came into the educational field after that time. Like all his ideas, it sounded simple when he stated it—cut the school day by half, have two sets of children, one for each half-day session, and, in the other half day, let each set individually go out and start learning the trades and occupations of the village. And the reason he gave—it sounded clear too: you double the number of children who go to school, using the same school-house and save on building costs, especially when you are hard up for funds (as we always are, when it is a matter of education!); you give practical training to children in crafts and agriculture, without having to look for specialist instructors, nor to pay for any, for what may be as good as the craft side of Basic Education; and you relieve the boredom for children of being shut in the school the whole day.

What the Officers did

Officers of the educational department took up the idea with much enthusiasm. They interpreted it as officers generally do, not quite like educationists—for they did nothing to explore and expound the philosophy underlying the idea, but went about it in the traditional office way. They delved, for example, into their archives

and dug out 'precedents'—what an old time Director had said about the advisability of half-day school for working children, especially girls and children of scheduled classes, to keep them in touch with school, without lapse into illiteracy, after they had been some two or three years at school. Somehow the officers did not seem to attach much weight to the conditions and circumstances of the 'precedent'. The number and date of the order was what they seemed to care for, and they found them and used them. Then they made 'rules' for carrying out the idea and for giving guidance to teachers to draw up time tables and maintain attendance registers.

What the Officers didn't do

They did not ask themselves: "What does Rajaji really mean to achieve by these steps from the educational, as different from the quantitative, financial and administrative, point of view?" Knowing Rajaji as a philosopher, they should have asked themselves: "What is the philosophy behind the idea?" But they didn't. Although many know that Rajaji often arrives by intuition at some decisions, no one, educationist or layman, in this instance tried to work back from the result to deeper and more substantial reasons than those of economy and convenience.

Some wrong assumptions

Unfortunately, Rajaji himself did not indulge in an examination of the possible deeper reasons, beyond the superficial ones he gave out, and come forward to explain them. He appeared to have no doubts, no need for caution and experiment, and no use for a survey to examine if the idea could work in all places and under all conditions. Did he not once say in the Legislative Assembly in 1938 that he didn't count the mosquitoes before he bought a mosquito net? There was no one then alert enough to tell him that he would any way have to measure the cloth for the net. In the same way, there was no one to tell him in 1953 that he had made several assumptions not in line with facts and figures, knowing his contempt for statistics, and therefore perhaps not daring to tell him. One such assumption is that all children who do not go to school are pressed into service by parents, and that if allowed to help their parents part of the day, they could be made to go to another school for part of the day. But this is really not so in every place, although it may be true in some places. There are other causes, like distance from school, and halving the school day cannot bring children from distant places.

It does not help us much now to examine all such assumptions. The point here is that, if these wholesale assumptions had not been made and the idea had been first tried as an experiment, time could have been gained during which two developments might probably have taken place, namely, the assumptions might have come to light and the limitations discovered, and at the same time justification could still have been found for continuing the experiment, not on a quantitative basis, but with a recognition of the educational philosophy underlying it, which an experiment under observation and study could more clearly bring out than a large scale innovation extending all over the State.

Why opposition grew

Apart from proceeding without giving time for examination and exposition, other things which Rajaji said at the time and the way he said them so provoked various people that the reaction became emotional and led to violent opposition from many sides. In his rhetoric, Rajaji called the schools jails and the teachers jailors. How could any one expect sincere co-operation from teachers called such names, on the top of their fears that doubling school enrolment by halving the school day might mean some of them being sent out? Again, in his telling the artisan and agricultural folk to bring up their children in hereditary occupations, against the tendency in human nature for any parent to see that his children has a better deal in life than he has himself had, and that too at a time when post-war influences and the ambitions arising from the country's independence indicated a change in patterns of life, was he not rubbing people the wrong way? Was it not a shock to the Basic Education people who (rightly or wrongly) thought they were following the Gandhian way to be told that he knew better than Gandhiji how schools should be run? The cumulative effect of it all was that Rajaji had to quit office, and his brain-wave did not have a chance of objective diagnosis.

An objective diagnosis

What is this objective diagnosis? It is the feeling which all educational reformers have that there are to be found among unlettered communities many desirable individual and social qualities and valuable skills acquired by tradition and environment or transmitted by heredity, and that in the process of education these should not get lost, as they seem to, in most educational systems including those which attempt correlation of school to life. Such correlation has both in the past and in the present taken many forms. One has been, and continues to be, through extra-curricular activities like scouting, guiding,

camping, hobbies, school clubs, student government, trips and tours etc. Another is the Basic Education scheme, now accepted as the national educational policy in India. In other countries, there are factory schools and farm schools. But in all these the aim and method is to bring life experience into the school by symbolisation, imitation, reproduction or transplantation, hence all second-hand. The setting, however, is always the school.

A variant is to train for life through life itself first-hand. The setting is life itself and the school is one of its units. Rajaji may have meant it, but unfortunately for himself and the idea, he either

failed to say it, or allowed other reasons to crowd it out. It is an aspect of educational philosophy which has not been really tried anywhere in this country, so far as is generally known. It could have been tried in this State, when its possibility was dimly seen, but not properly recognised on account of confusing extra-educational factors, which gave no room for a philosophy before action, and a political impatience which would not tolerate a pilot project before thinking of a full-fledged scheme. The idea is still there, to be thought over more deeply, to be planned in its details and experimented with, and to be improved upon and introduced in places and situations where it can work with success.

Elementary Education: Some Suggestions

M. Nagasubramanya Ayyar, Papanasam.

With a view to better the educational standards the following suggestions are made for the active consideration of the general public :

Single-Teacher Schools

The government are taking vigorous steps to see that all children benefit by attendance at school. A number of single-teacher schools are being opened. As matters are, no improvement is possible by multiplying schools of 1 to 5 Standards under one teacher. The handling of even two Standards by one teacher following the revised syllabus is, I fear, a mockery breeding indiscipline, granting that the teacher is earnest and enthusiastic. Now that there is to be a school in every hamlet, a bit of consolidation is necessary on economic as well as cultural grounds to turn out efficient work. A school which is unable to maintain an

attendance of even 15 in each of Standards 3, 4 and 5 may be allowed to work with Standards 1 and 2 only under one teacher. The working of the two Standards under the shift system would be more beneficial, up to an attendance of 40 in both Standards. Standards 3, 4 and 5 may have three teachers, when each Standard has an attendance of 15 in the initial stages to be raised to 18 eventually. It is necessary that the teacher does not reside beyond one mile in village areas. Until a school is able to have adequate attendance in Standards beyond the second, there is no harm in enabling the pupils to read in a central school not far off. This would be an indirect way of inducing villagers to strengthen their school by canvassing and sending children to school regularly. There are ever so many single-teacher schools with an attendance of 30 or so in 5 Standards. This is a sheer waste in my view.

Common Tests

At the end of Standard 4, there should be a comparative common test for a small group of schools, say even two or three in both oral and written, by a panel of examiners. At the end of Standard 7, there should be a district-wise public test.

Working days

Standards 1 to 6 in an elementary school now work for 220 days, whereas in a secondary school with the elementary section tacked on, the number of working days is 200 only, though the syllabus is the same. This is an anomaly. Now that higher elementary schools are being opened in a large number of places, nothing is gained by having elementary sections under one and the same roof as the secondary school, especially when secondary schools are crying hoarse for accommodation. Incidentally, I may say that secondary schools may well work for 220 days, having Sundays only as weekly holidays, to give room for extra-curricular and extra-mural activities. Such activities and breaks in school work to pupils consequent on the holding of terminal examinations and teachers' absence do take a big slice from the 200 working days.

Selection of Pupil Teachers

A candidate must have put in at least six months' service as teacher and must know the rudiments of teaching technique, before being selected for training. Apart from some knowledge of gardening, a teacher aspiring for training must have a specified skill in *takli* and *charka* spinning. During the training course the pupil-teachers could be given active training in 'Ambar Charka' or in any other craft on a productive basis. 'As you sow, so you will reap' is an adage not inapplicable to the nurturing of young children by masters. Hence selection of teachers for training should be made by a written and a viva-voce test with no room for bias.

Teacher-Pupil Ratio

When a Standard is to be bifurcated, the minimum attendance should be 36. At present, a school of 1 to 5 Standards with an attendance of over 36 in Standard 1 but with 15 or so in all other Standards together, can have only three teachers. How the work can be efficient, even if the teachers be sincere and alert, can be gauged. Where such conditions have to prevail, one session schooling may be given for Standards 1 and 2.

Monthly Returns

As it is, the monthly return columns vary from place to place. This should not be. Orders are necessary to enforce uniformity in the form itself. There appears to be variation from range to range in the manner of submission of statements with regard to appointments of teachers, sanction of leave, transmission of T.S.R. to the office, steps to be taken for belated admission of pupils and so on. Clear-cut procedure to be followed Statewise in these and other matters has to be chalked out. An Educational Bulletin, as described hereunder, would surely serve a very useful purpose in these and many other constructive and progressive ways.

Payment to Teachers on the 1st

Even though payment may be made on the 1st working day of a month, there could be no harm in the submission of monthly returns by managers at the close of the previous month. On the strength of the pay bill to be submitted by the manager to the cheque issuing officer, the Commissioner of the Panchayat Union Council, two days before the close of the month, payment may be made on the 1st, subject to verification when the Deputy Inspector's recommendation after scrutiny of the M.R. arrives. There could not be any variation in many cases. Any defect may be corrected at the next payment. To avoid these difficulties, payment may be made on a fixed day in the month, say, the 10th of every month, as is followed in

railways by cashiers. The new method of preparing M.R. for fractions of two months, while other returns are to go monthly, is inconvenient and likely to present trouble in scrutiny. Now that Panchayat Union Councils are to issue cheques within a limited area, they may well draw the amounts in a lump sum and arrange to pay each school either on the 1st or on subsequent days in a programmed way. Each of the schools would be able to take delivery of the amount from the office sacrificing half a day only instead of having to waste even two days for encashment at the sub-treasury. If payment should be made only through sub-treasuries, it is necessary the managers or headmasters are not delayed for more than two hours after presentation of bills. The matter requires serious attention.

Teachers' monthly meetings

Among other things to be dealt with at meetings, a subject or two on suitable themes may be programmed in advance for exposition by 3 or 4 teachers to be selected by the casting of lots at the meeting. Of course there may be supplementary speeches by others also. This would make every one alert and informed, lest one should cut a sorry figure at the meeting. A model lesson may also be arranged for as a rule. Preparation of aids is a necessary thing. Each school may be asked to bring to the meeting the charts and aids prepared by it during the previous month for exhibition at the meeting. This would be conducive to better work and emulation. Of late, mobile centres are arranged for the meetings, as they are to have some social benefits. Teachers would like to gather only at important places for obvious reasons. They would use the trip for making some shopping also. The suggestions I have made may not be possible of fulfilment in mobile gatherings in inconvenient places. At best, such mobile gatherings would end only in social gatherings, allowing little or no time for cultural activities. I wish the system of holding mobile sessions may be dropped for the present.

T.P.F. Accounts

Similar to the T.S.R. a book may be had for T.P.F. transactions in duplicate.— one to be with the teacher and the duplicate with the inspecting authority. The book may have relevant columns to note the dates of remittances and withdrawals, cash certificates, insurance particulars and so on. Each book costing about 60 nP. would last for 10 to 12 years. During one's service, 4 books may be required. The heavy clerical work involved in the preparation of transfer of accounts and of closure could be avoided. When a teacher has left a school, the T.P.F. account book should be in the custody of the inspecting officer, until such time as the teacher goes to another school. The procedure will help early settlement of account and payment in the end.

Teachers' Service Register

The procedure followed in the scrutiny of the T.S.R. appears to vary from range to range and even from D.I. to D.I. Some D.I's insist on the submission of the T.S.R.'s for counter-signature then and there for the leave taken, appointment made by the manager and so on, while others do it at the school itself at the next visit or inspection to avoid chances of losing the book in the transit. The latter method is in every way better and safe, in view of the fact that the manager of the school is the sanctioning authority. There is no need for the movement of the T.S.R. often to the office of the D.I. to save misplacement accidentally or even otherwise.

T.S.L.C.

When a teacher is appointed for the first time in a school, the original certificate together with a true copy of its front page with some needed additions may go to the D.I. for scrutiny. The manager is to have the scrutinised copy as a permanent record for production at the next annual inspection.

Record Sheets

These are really certificates to be written and handled with great care. Record sheets vary in size and content even. Some schools are in the habit of using used up record sheets striking off old entries. No attention is given to fill up the entire columns suitably and legibly. There are ever so many omissions and commissions, the writing itself being as bad as bad could be. The government would do well to have numbered record sheets printed and sold to schools. In the alternative, the size and the kind of paper to be used by publishers may be prescribed. Used up record sheets should not be used. Record sheets should be written in block letters with care.

Educational Bulletin

Important G O's and proceedings of the higher authorities are supposed to be read at the teachers' gatherings monthly. While the teachers present cannot grasp the details by mere reading or by getting the gist only, the managers who are not teachers cannot have any knowledge of the changes in the rules in a proper way. It is necessary that each school is in the

know of the texts of the orders and proceedings. I would suggest the issue of a bilingual educational bulletin monthly or fortnightly at the Divisional Inspector's level. It may be priced nominally. The bulletin, besides publishing G.O's and Proceedings, could give statistics and information for the promotion of education. Topics on Basic Education, along with specimens of plans of work in a correlated way, must invariably find place in each issue. Noteworthy work turned out by schools in a remarkable way may find a place in the bulletin. The importance of this cannot be overestimated at this transition period. Much of the clerical work now having to be done in a perfunctory manner would be saved.

Fee Compensation, Midday Meal Grants Etc.

Considering the hardships to the management, half yearly maintenance grants are now allowed. While so, it is equally necessary that other grants must be paid within a fortnight of the submission of the statements and returns. Should scrutiny be delayed, at least 75 per cent of the grant paid previously may be paid to schools at the beginning of a quarter.

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SETBACK FOR SANSKRIT

N. Srinivasachariar, B. A. L.T., Madras.

An analysis of the scheme of language study in general, in recent years, will lead to a clear and a correct appraisal of the present position and the need for a vigorous rapprochement.

Before the 1948 scheme came into being, our public had to study the regional language or a classical language, and no special emphasis was laid then, on the compulsory study of the regional language even for those whose mother-tongue was the regional language. In the reorganised scheme of 1948, all pupils had to study the regional language as Part I of the first language. The second part contained a choice. A student can either have an intensive study of the regional language or a classical language. Hindi, however, was treated as an optional third language.

Quite recently, in conformity with the decision of the Central Government, the three-language formula was introduced here. Part I contained the regional language, Part II comprised Hindi, Sanskrit or any other Indian language not included in Part I, and Part III had English or any other non-Indian language. The language study under Part II began only in VIII Standard. Pupils who chose the academic course had to study three languages, while those taking the diversified courses were exempted from the study of either Hindi or Sanskrit, etc.

An examination of the above will reveal that under Part II languages, Sanskrit has been included along with Hindi. It is unfortunate that this classical language which is the bed-rock of a hoary culture and a vital factor in national integration, should have been gradually relegated to an insignificant position. Time was when it was on a par with the mother tongue

and when proficiency in neither language suffered. Later on, when the tinkering with secondary education began, Sanskrit became the Cinderella and the recent decision of the Academic Council which has come as a surprise even to the Minister is the last mile-stone.

The repercussion of such a decision and the absence of any immediate possibility of Sanskrit being restored to its former position are highly appalling. Could any student, in practice, be made to love a subject for the pleasure of it, when it loses its significance in a scheme of examination? The result will be the retrenchment of Sanskrit and Hindi teachers in schools and colleges.

Another harmful effect is that this language study under Part II begins from the eighth standard, while in the past, it started from Form I. The abolition of the study of Sanskrit or Hindi in lower forms has resulted in the gradual removal of teachers even in schools which struggled hard to maintain them. The fate of these teachers, especially in the lower forms, is rather disquieting. It is not possible for all of them to study Tamil overnight and seek their fortunes as Tamil Pandits.

The authorities should give these languages at least the place they occupied in the 1948 scheme—that is, as part of the regional language,—and begin the teaching of the subject from VI Standard onwards and not from VIII Standard. Even now a minimum may be prescribed for eligibility. This will be a step in the right direction, enabling students to study the language more intimately and the teachers to be secure.

The Legacy of Tagore

Principal J. Lahiri, M.A., B.T., Dip. Ed. (Lond.), T.C. (Cantab), W.B.S.E.S. (Retd).

A man of God-like genius is born once in a century. Blessed is the country where such a one is born, for he becomes deathless for all time. Ordinarily the idol of one age is relegated to the scrap-heap of Time's lumber room in the next. But a man whose writings appeal to the eternal verities, to the universal instincts of human nature, must be one who has gone into the roots of things. Such a man was Rabindranath Tagore, the most universal, the most encompassing and the most complete human being known the world over as a poet, patriot, painter, teacher, humanist, prophet and philosopher-seer venerated in his own country in the tradition of ancient *rishis* and abroad as a myriad-minded personality rolled into one. Whether judged by the test of Carlyle or of Emerson's ideal of representative man, Tagore was admittedly the nation's hero and the most representative figure, standing head and shoulders above others. He represents the cultural tradition or spirit of India, the tradition of accepting life in all its fullness, richness and variety and of going through it with song and dance. He was, indeed, the most impassioned and powerful interpreter of the spirit of India who was able to transform as if by the magic of his genius the Indian cultural movement from an idyll into a living force. The amplitude of his mind and the extraordinary versatility of his genius were such as to find creative self-expression in almost all branches of human culture.

He came at a time when political subjection had eaten into the very vitals of the body and soul of India, like a fell disease consuming the living tissues and killing the living organism slowly but inevitably. He came like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes so that we could

see things in their proper perspective. When truth hardness into a tradition, when a cycle of intellectual depression passes over men's minds, when the living stream of national life is blocked by accretions and accumulations of dead centuries like a sluggish river, such are the men sent down to the earth by God to resurrect the life-giving message of truth to humanity.

A Man of Action

Strangely enough, the dreamer of dreams was also a doer of deeds, a man of action. The great man of letters is always the stronger for being at the same time a man of the world who has faced the facts of life and has come into grips with reality. Among the various fields in which he worked were education and rural reconstruction. He translated his educational ideas into hard reality by establishing his school and University at Santiniketan, which have become one of the focal points of Indian culture, based on a rational synthesis of the culture of the East and the West, thereby falsifying Kipling's dictum. His concern for the uplift of the common man and the solution of his economic ills was reflected in the establishment of his Santiniketan where a comprehensive scheme of rural reconstruction based on the co-operative system, was implemented for the first time in India. The patriot in him made him too sensitive and devoted to the freedom of the country to remain always in his ivory tower of poetry and song. Again and again, he stepped out of his speculative sanction and in prophetic language warned the British Government against its repressive policy in India, warned Japan against aggression in China, warned the West for its money-grabbing materialism and the narrow cult of nationalism that

brings in wars. He was the leader of the Renaissance of Bengali literature which he enriched beyond measure by his contributions, and he took a prominent part in the *Swadeshi* movement in the first decade of the century. He gave up his knighthood as a gesture of protest against the Amritsar massacre. "The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruous context of humiliation, and for my part I wish to stand shorn of all special distinctions by the side of those of my countrymen who, for their so called insignificance, are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings".¹ All these go to prove that he was not a visionary poet but he was fully aware of his duties and responsibilities in the world of man.

His message of universalism, humanism, and internationalism

Besides the legacy he left for us in the field of literature and social reconstruction, his message of universalism, humanism, and internationalism constitutes a triple gift the value of which is yet to be appreciated by the world. His mind was imbued with the sublime ideals of the *Upanishads*. He realised in the core of his heart the essential inner unity of mankind and the brotherhood of men who were *Amritasya putrah*, i.e., sons of the Immortal. To realise this inner unity of mankind, he felt that peoples, races and nations must come to know each other on a cultural level. To achieve this lofty ideal of cultural synthesis he conceived and established his "Viswabharathi" which has for its motto, "*Yatra Visvam Bhavatyekanidam*", i.e., "where the world makes its home in one nest". He sought a rational synthesis between the Indian traditional values and the materialistic concepts that seem to militate against one another on a higher cultural plane. He felt that it is up to the genius of India to attempt this synthesis and so to achieve a true kind of unity through the practical application of her principle of unity in

diversity, as she has done whenever there was an impact of diverse cultures in the remote past of her chequered history. Here is an important lesson to mankind divided by hate and geographical barriers.

When the first European War broke out his mind was filled with a long drawn agony of suffering. He saw with a prophetic vision that the whole world was dashing itself to pieces and stuck to his faith in universalism and stood rock-like, firm, and unflinching in that faith, determining at the same time to go forth to all the world to preach his message of peace, love and brotherhood. So from the year 1919 onwards, the poet embarked on his world pilgrimage every four months preaching the message, which he embodied in his *Viswabharati* or Home of Universal Culture. Like his illustrious father, Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, he became as it were, a *Bairagi* (un-attached *sannyasi*) somewhat like a religious wanderer, for ever wandering away into the infinite beyond the limitations of the earth, a pilgrim of eternity. Thus it was that his Shantiniketan gradually became a place of pilgrimage for all peoples and races. So it is that Tagore became India's internationalist par excellence, and yet his feet were always planted on India's soil from which the poetry drew its sustenance and inspiration and his mind was saturated with the wisdom of the *Upanishads*.

His humanism rests on the fundamental assumptions that no man is an island, that we are all members of one human family, that each of us has to play his part in this forward march towards perfection, that the life-force is continually striving to improve in its creations and that this process must continue until men and women become something like gods and goddesses (or Bernard Shaw's "super-men"). The spirit of man has faced all kinds of dangers ever since man was forged out of the ape, but his growing intelligence has some how helped him to overcome all

obstacles that have come in his way. Every man is a custodian of a little particle of that spirit and that intelligence, that divine discontent "which constantly urges him on and on to the betterment of his race and it is upto him to contribute his quota so as to bring into existence that happy world which Tagore prayed our own country might achieve in future :—

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,

Where knowledge is free,

Where the world has not broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls.

Where words come out from the depth of truth.

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary sand of dead habit,

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action,

Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake 2

Even though his musical voice has long since been silenced for ever, fortunately for humanity the clarion call of his message for a better order of things is really timeless and its appeal to humanity eternal. It was Tagore's immense service to India that he induced his countrymen to come out of their narrow grooves and made them think of the broader issues affecting humanity. It is this that makes Tagore the outstanding humanity of our generation.

His Religious Ideas

Hibbert Lectures, *The Religion of Man*, show that he was a man of religion, that development is the result of the life-force, blind and instinctive in origin in lower animals but purposive in man, forged out of God's own image and endowed with a destiny so ordained that man may develop into perfection by virtue of his free will, freedom of thought and action through the cycle of births and rebirths, that in every man God is inherent as "Jeevan Devata" (Life-Force) guiding and inspiring him to fulfil that high destiny, and

that one should have implicit faith in one's Life-Force and in the ultimate fulfilment of one's destiny.

Lyrics, Songs and Plays.

His lyrics, songs, musical operas and dance dramas stand in a class by themselves. They combine intense emotion and lofty idealism with comparable music and are characterised by the measured cadence of his diction, sweetness of the language and the richness of the imagery. All the moods, sentiments and emotions of man find expression in them. There is a touch of elfin magic about them. The beauty of the visible world, Nature with her bewildering profusion, her teeming concrete life, her riddles, her magical appeal to the eye and the sense of touch and, above all, the pervading sense of mysticism strike his prismatic imagination and are dissolved into rainbow colours, till when the very personality of the singer melts into his song, he ceases to be a man and becomes a voice—a lyric incarnate. The dominant idea that finds expression in Tagore's lyrics is the divinity in man. Life is an unending stream on which man has been floating along stretching out his arms in search of perfection in what seems to be an eternal quest. Alongside of this idea there is a parallel line of thought which brings us the cheering consolation and comfort that it is not man alone who is out on his eternal quest for self-realisation, but that God himself is coming down every now and then from Heaven through the ages to reveal Himself to men. He who has faith in this concept can hear unmistakably the measured footsteps of God as He reveals and surrenders Himself to his own creation.

His musical operas and dance-dramas are simply exquisite in their subject matter and expression. His dramas reveal the action and interaction of ideas against a background of moving reality in a form that has created a new technique for

future ages. His novels are as varied in their content as they are masterly in their execution. His short stories have the delicacy and the tenderness of true poetic feelings. His paintings have marvellous suggestiveness that haunts the mind. His attitude towards Nature is pantheistic like that of Wordsworth, but it is the much higher pantheism of a Vedantist. Like Wordsworth, he felt the presence of a spirit of Divinity in Nature which produced in his mind a sensation of joy and enriched it with high and noble thoughts. Like him, too, he felt that all aspects of Nature, grand, majestic and sublime, are permeated by this presence of an all pervading, mysterious and indwelling spirit, and that in all his struggles man, who is an object of Nature, continues to be in it and is never torn apart from Nature, however tragic his external circumstances or inner emotions may be. Literature is great only in so far as it is a living organic thing, intimately related to life. Its root lies in the soil from which it draws its sustenance and inspirations the soil of a particular age with its limitations and characteristics, but its flower is blown upon by the very breath of Heaven. It is this that makes great literature not of an age but of all ages. Tagore's writings contain these eternal verities.

Poems of childhood

His poems of childhood also stand in a class by themselves. The dominant ideas are that the child has a divine right to a life of joy, that education consists in the gradual flowering of the divinity inherent in the child somewhat like that of a bud spreading out its petals in the surrounding air. The child is the one being who has hold of the secret of the universe. There is a great delicacy also in the poems that deal with human love. With Tagore love is a transcendental force kindling all things into beauty. His compelling greatness lies in the fact that he sounded the depths of sorrow and despair like Shakespeare's tragedies; some of his best poems were written under the shadow of a series

of personal bereavements, and yet he preserved to the end a courageous confidence and a faith in human nature.

Educational Ideals

As a child, Tagore conceived great dislike for traditional schooling, its formal discipline of the classroom, with its steam-roller type of uniformity in teaching in lessons pumped down the unwilling throats of children leading to the suppression of personality, and its faith in cramming. His mind was too sensitive to fall readily into the conventional ruts of schools of the traditional orthodox type. When he grew up, he remembered his own unhappy school days. It was this that made him open a school at Santiniketan where children could learn without feeling unhappy and which is very different from schools of the orthodox type in these respects, viz., open air classes, auto-education, communion with Nature, self-discipline, creative self-expression, absence of corporal punishment, regimentation, dissociation from life etc. He loved to be with the children and he was a great teacher himself. There is a significant passage in Lord Ronaldshay's *The Heart of Hindustan*, in which he records his impression of a lesson given by Tagore in the mango-garden of Santiniketan to his students. He compares Tagore's teaching to the teaching of Christ with the help of his wonderful parables to the children of the fishermen of Galilee. His contribution to education is undoubtedly his, lasting monument and legacy to the nation. Such a man was Rabindranath. Where shall we find another man like him?

He wove upon the roaring Loom of Time the beautiful garment of great literature. A century has gone past since the date of his birth. The time has certainly come for us of the present generation not only to acknowledge our indebtedness to him but also to translate some of his ideas into actual practice. The time has come for us to make a proper assessment of his contributions which is indeed a baffling problem consi-

dering the versatility of the talents of his myriad-minded personality. If for instance his universalism, humanism and internationalism were accepted by the warring

nations of today, the world would undoubtedly be a better place to live in. May God give us strength to carry out his best wishes.

Address on the Occasion of the Tagore Centenary Celebration held at Chirimiri, M.P.

—o— Mental Hygiene Programme in Schools

Jagjit Singh, P.H.S., Simla,

What the school does to a child affects his feelings and emotional development as well as his intellect. The class-room teacher can give assignments in such a way that the pupil either feels the significance of the work assigned or feels bored, worried, or rebellious. In day-to-day situations the teacher and the head-master can work with the child in a manner which helps him feel secure in the knowledge that his efforts and his perplexities are understood and appreciated. Or they can make him insecure and cause him to feel that he does not have a reasonable chance. Thus, while teachers are guiding intellectual learning, at the same time they are affecting the children's emotional development. Through their reaction to the child both in and out of the class-room, they can help the child to release his energies in constructive work and play.

Studies of the causes of mental illness indicate that a constantly increasing proportion of cases develop from mental strain arising from feelings of insecurity, inadequacy and futility produced by the home, school and community environments.

School interest in mental hygiene is a practical application of the oft-stated interest in the whole child. To the school's responsibility for children's intellectual development and physical health, interest in their emotional development is now being added. This attention implies recognition of the importance of attitudes in influencing learning and behaviour and

a realization that the way one feels is as important as how one thinks and acts.

How can schools provide for the constructive development of mental health? What provisions by way of organization and personnel are required? In answering these questions a specific example showing how school procedures may produce or prevent mental strains may be helpful.

Suppose there is a pupil who is constantly clamouring for attention. He has his hand up much of the time and wants to be recognized. He asks many unnecessary questions. What approach on the part of the teacher and the school would take account of the emotional development, as well as the intellectual development of such a pupil?

To begin with, the class room teacher needs to recognize that, back of this behaviour, there are causes. Some appreciation of possible causes would be helpful. For example, a pupil who clamours for attention, whether by asking many unnecessary questions or in other ways, may have a feeling of insecurity or inadequacy that he is trying to overcome. This feeling of inadequacy may come from home, playground or school experiences. It may be a combination of being dominated at home and not feeling the significance of his work at school. Or it may be that his playground experiences are producing in him a feeling of defeat or failure, and he is trying to overcome this feeling by demanding attention. Studies of behaviour indicate that such

causes often lie at the back of attention-seeking behaviour.

When the teacher appreciates the fact that something is causing this behaviour and that these causes may vary widely from child to child, he can see that he must have insight into such causes before he can guide the child to use his mental energies in satisfying and constructive ways. If the teacher or headmaster uses ridicule, sarcasm, fear of punishment, or similar methods before thinking of the behaviour, the problem may be aggravated and the mental strains and dissatisfaction may grow instead of diminishing. Similarly, if the teacher accepts the behaviour at face value and gives the pupil the attention he demands, he may not help the pupil to handle his problem constructively.

The schools of the nation need headmasters and classroom teachers who have keen insight into the causes of child behaviour and who are themselves sufficiently well adjusted to look at pupils as growing individuals who need their help. Every school system needs suitable administrative arrangements to acquaint headmasters and classroom teachers with all the pupils in their school and classes, in terms of their backgrounds, feelings and perplexities. Every school needs expert help which they can use when they need it. Furthermore, every pupil should learn something about his own feelings, emotions and behaviour, so that he can take a hand in solving his own problems.

Schools are faced with the problem of providing a social and emotional environment for pupils that avoids the things known to have disintegrating effects and that provides experiences known to contribute to wholesome emotional development. The general philosophy of the school system, personnel practices, the manner in which the curriculum is prepared, types of supervision, administrative attitude towards the control of pupil conduct, and school procedures in promotion, all may affect emotional health.

As the personnel procedures of a school system greatly influence the mental health of classroom teachers, such procedures include the methods of selecting and appointing school employees, assured tenure, sick leave, provisions for retirement in old age, and salary schedules that are in keeping with those paid to others in the community with comparable training, experience and responsibility. All these administrative measures may significantly affect teachers' feelings of security, adequacy, happiness and self-respect, and thus affect the character of their work with children. And the conditions of service of teachers in our country are too well-known to need any description.

The methods used in curriculum construction exert an important influence on the feelings of the teachers towards their work. An extremely rigid, specialist-prepared curriculum such as we normally have in India, which the teacher is expected to follow, regardless of pupil needs or interests, tends to mechanize the programme, emphasize subject matter, and ignore personality development. On the other hand, a flexible programme, such as the new basic education with opportunities for teacher initiative, places a higher premium on growth than on the acquisition of isolated units of knowledge or skill. The basic education programme places upon teachers the responsibility for adapting their programme to the needs of pupils, but at the same time gives them freedom to meet challenging tasks in the manner best suited to their respective abilities. This opportunity for initiative and this planning for particular groups give teachers increased appreciation of the importance of their work and an added feeling of usefulness to society.

Methods of supervision affect the emotional atmosphere of the classroom, because they are related to the teacher's feelings of adequacy, security and happiness. Modern methods of supervision are exercised through methods which protect the self-respect of teachers and emphasize co-operative teacher-supervisor

activities. Through positive, constructive and friendly help, the headmaster or other supervisor respects the personalities of teachers in the same manner that teachers respect the personalities of their pupils. Dictatorial, supercritical, belittling forms of supervision are out of place in the school that is concerned with mental health. It is the responsibility of administrative officials to provide administrative machinery that permits teachers and supervisors to work effectively, cooperatively and enthusiastically for the progressive growth of children.

Administrative attitudes toward the control of pupil conduct influence the relationships between pupils and classroom teachers. Does the school administrator condone corporal punishment without prior study as to the possible origin or causes of the behaviour? Is misbehaviour to be followed by routine retributive punishment, or is the pupil in trouble studied and helped? Only when administrative officers consider behaviour as symptomatic evidence of basic attitudes, desires and urges, it is possible for a school to deal intelligently with the behaviour problems of pupils. Behaviour must be studied not from the point of view of its annoyance to the teacher, but with a knowledge of how it is affected by home conditions, group attitudes, past experiences and other factors. A programme of school mental hygiene requires that disciplinary problems be approached with a determination to discover the underlying causes for the behaviour coupled with a sincere desire to help the pupil.

Consideration of the emotional and social atmosphere of classrooms requires thought to be given to such factors as the promotion methods, report cards and home work. Much study has been given to the effects of grouping pupils into classes, thus limiting school social contacts to those of close chronological age and implying that a group of children should all have identical experiences. As

a result of these studies, some schools in the U. S. A. and U. K. are now breaking down the class barriers of the primary classes, so as to permit participation in group activities by those of varying ages and to provide more individualized programme and greater opportunity for leadership and followership. Minimising grade placement in the primary school and introducing less rigidity into promotion practices make it possible for pupils to progress in accord with their individual achievement and growth.

Many changes in report card forms and increased use of meetings between teachers and parents, even in our country, are further indications of school interest in the development of the whole child rather than solely in his acquisition of knowledge. In a similar manner, the problem of home work is now considered in many schools in the light of what the child does during his entire day and in terms of the effect of home work on recreative opportunities and participation in extra-curricular, home, social and community activities. The abundant literature on all these topics in current educational periodicals and books testifies to the educator's interest in organization procedure as they relate to personality development through their influence on the atmosphere of the classroom.

Although the general policies of school organization and administration such as those just discussed indirectly affect the emotional tone of every classroom, more direct than many of these is the influence of the teacher's personality, his teaching methods and his understanding of the growth and mental development of children. The personality of the classroom teacher undoubtedly is just as important a factor in the child's education as the teacher's technical knowledge. The emotional reactions of a teacher tend to produce similar emotional responses on the part of his pupils. The happy, understanding, resourceful teacher helps each pupil to develop those same qualities.

Further, the attitude of the teacher is important in developing the essential basis for expression, creative activity and social growth.

An emotionally unstable teacher may on occasion exert such an unfavourable influence on children that he should not remain in the classroom. The teacher with an uncontrollable temper, or one who is severely depressed, markedly prejudiced, flagrantly intolerant, biting sarcasm or habitually scolding may endanger the emotional health of pupils as seriously as one with tuberculosis or some other communicable disease endangers their physical health. Such a teacher needs help, but while he is being helped, it is often advisable for him to be away from his classroom, so that his pupils are

free from the repression and fear which his presence creates.

Many other factors influence the emotional tone of the classroom. The physical environment may be attractive, colourful, pleasing and distinctive, or it may be drab, identical with all other classrooms, and depressingly void of decorations. The teacher's voice may be harsh, loud and grunting, or pleasing, inviting and friendly. The way the teacher dresses, and even the way he smiles, tends to do something to pupils, either to make them responsive and encouraged, or uncertain, despondent and repressed.

The methods of teaching and adapting the school programme to suit individual differences among the pupils are other factors worth consideration, and require a much more lengthy description.

—The Licentiate

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Prof. M. Rangacharya's *Great English Translation of*

SRI-BHASHYA

VOLUME I. Rs. 15.

The Educational Publishing Co.,

Nungambakkam, Madras-6.

OUR EDUCATIONAL DIARY

"PEPYS"

8-9-61 The Academic Council of the Madras University has passed a resolution that students who have taken up Hindi or any other non-regional language as a third language need not secure any pass marks in the public examination, though they have to sit for the examination.

9-9-61 Dr. Shrimali said in the Lok Sabha that scheduled caste students will not get post-matric scholarships in cases where their parents' annual income exceeds Rs. 6,000.

11-9-61 The Government of India are working out a scheme for opening schools with Hindi and English media for the benefit of children of Central Government employees.

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Dr. Shrimali said that in the Third Plan period, all training schools and colleges would be converted into basic training institutions.

[It is not clear whether students other than children of Central Government employees will be admitted into these schools, if there is room for such admission.]

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The Committee appointed by the Government has recommended that all existing schools should be transformed into Basic ones with a view to imparting training to students in crafts on scientific lines.

[I am at a loss to know how Basic education, which fights shy of any theoretical knowledge, can impart training on scientific lines.]

26-9-61 The Education Minister said in the Madras Assembly that, though it was the policy of the Government to have Tamil as the medium of study in secondary schools, it took care to provide facilities for study through the English medium wherever necessary, i.e., where they were approved by the Department.

27-9-61 Dr. M. S. Mehta, the Vice-chancellor of the Rajasthan University, speaking at Coimbatore, said that adult or social education needed the sustained efforts of all. The Universities should make a substantial contribution to adult education. Primary education should be followed up by adult education; otherwise children would lapse into illiteracy.

30-9-61 In the Kerala State, English will be introduced from the III Standard from 1962-63. The Government has also accepted the recommendation that emphasis should be laid on moral and spiritual values in education. Special importance will be given to the study of Indian History in the XI standard. It is also proposed to make only one subject (instead of three) elective in the bifurcated course and to provide advanced courses in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and English. The periods allotted to music and crafts will be diverted to these subjects.

[The change in syllabus in the bifurcated course is a beneficial one. It will enable the student to pick up a fairly substantial knowledge of his elective subjects.]

6-10-61 The Ministers of Education of the four southern states will meet in Hyderabad to discuss the educational system in south India. The subjects to be discussed are:

the abolition of higher secondary education and the introduction of two-year junior colleges with English as the medium of introduction; nationalisation and standardisation of textbooks at the primary stage; and the training of teachers of non-regional languages.

The Madras University has decided to permit the opening of colleges where only P.U.C. Classes will be conducted as a transitory measure for a period of five years.

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Rabindranath Tagore's Educational Philosophy - 2

Dr. R. S. Mani. M.A B.T., M.Ed., Ph.D. Gandhigram,

Rabindranath Tagore's approach to education is Humanistic. He believes: "Living ideals can never be set into clock-work arrangement, giving accurate account of its every second. And those who have faith in their idea have to test its truth in discords and failures that are sure to come to tempt them from their path." The same educationist further observes: "I for my part believe in the principle of life, in the soul of man, more than in methods. I believe that the object of education is the freedom of mind which can only be achieved through the path of freedom— though freedom has its risk and responsibility as life itself has."

Tagore could never forget that children are after all living beings—perhaps more living than grown-up people, "who have built their shells of habit around them". Hence, according to Rabindranath, it becomes absolutely necessary for the mental growth and development of children "that they should not have mere schools for their lessons, but a world whose guiding spirit is personal love."

To Tagore, one of the avowed objects of education was the highest one, that of giving man the unity of truth. How was that to be achieved? That unity of truth,

in his opinion, would be obtained only when there is no separation of relationship between the intellect, the physical and spiritual aspects of education. What is more important is the prevalence of harmony amongst these factors. The poet-educationist observes in his 'Spirit of Japan', "the highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence." While aiming at such a harmony, he greatly deplores, "we devote our whole attention to giving children information, not knowing that by this emphasis we are accentuating a break between the intellectual, physical and the spiritual life."

The above illustration make it very clear that Tagore wanted to establish harmony of relationship through humanism in his educational experiments. In his view, only fullness of expression would signify full life, and therefore, it is but natural "our children should be given its full measure of life's draught for which it has an endless thirst".

Further tinges of humanism in Tagore's educational philosophy are to be found, in the course of his observation: "The young mind should be saturated

with the idea that it has been born in a human world which is in harmony with the world around it". Is it not greatly disheartening for us to find, as it was so to Tagore, that "this is what our regular type of school ignores with an air of superior wisdom, severe and disdainful?" Tagore, who was keenly sensitive, never liked the system of education that obtained in his boyhood days. Therefore, he pertinently points out the truth that the regular school "forcibly snatches children away from a world full of the mystery of God's own handiwork, full of the suggestiveness of personality".

The early education of Rabindranath has given him enough knowledge of the wrong from which children of men suffer. He considers children to be God's own creation. To him, education of sympathy is of far more importance than mere knowledge which is power. This becomes evident in his observation: "We have come to this world to accept it. We may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fulness by sympathy." Tagore was aggrieved to find that education of sympathy was not only systematically ignored in schools but severely repressed. No one can disagree with Tagore that "the greatest of educations for which we came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead."

The sensitive mind of the poet-educationalist even in his boyhood days revolted against the de-humanising system of education of which he had some taste. In his own imaginative way, he points out rather vividly: "When I was young, I gave up learning and ran away from my lessons. That saved me and I owe all that I possess to-day to that courageous step taken when I was young." He further adds: "I fled the classes which gave me instruction, but which did not inspire. One thing I have gained, a sensitivity to the touch of life and nature who speak to me."

To Tagore, the world in which he lived was full of joy, and therefore it was his conception that "we are born with that God-given gift of taking delight in the world, but such delightful activity is fettered and imprisoned, stilled by a force called discipline, which kills the sensitiveness of the child mind which is always on the alert, restless and eager to receive first-hand knowledge from mother-nature."

He never liked the idea of sitting inert like dead specimens of some museums, "whilst lessons are pelted at us from on high, like hailstones on flowers."

What is the true humanism in Tagore's educational philosophy? To quote his own words: "We have to keep in mind the fact that love and action are the only mediums through which perfect knowledge can be obtained; for the object of knowledge is not pedantry but wisdom." A still further insight into the dominant, humanistic philosophic tendency is evident in his observation: "We have obstacles in human nature and in outer circumstances. Some of us have a feeble faith in boys' minds as living organisms and some have the natural propensity of doing good by force. On the other hand, the boys have their different degrees of receptivity and there are a good number of inevitable failures. Delinquencies make their appearance unexpectedly, making us suspicious as to the efficacy of our own ideals". But these factors did not dishearten Rabindranath, because he was firm that every one should pass through dark periods of doubt and reaction. According to him, these conflicts and warnings were more or less indicative of the true aspects of reality. To sum up, Tagore's humanism in educational philosophy lies crystallised in the principle of life, in the soul of man rather than in methods. It is here Tagore breaks new ground, opening new vistas.

ON CRITICISM IN THE OPEN SOCIETY

John Kenneth Galbraith.

A few days after the resumption of nuclear tests--after the long moratorium when it seemed that restraint and good sense had arrested the terrible contest which they signified --I had a talk with an old friend in Washington. He asked me what would have happened if the United States had been the first to take this grim and fateful step. He answered his own question: a multitude of critics would everywhere, in the United States, as elsewhere, have condemned the action.

"Why", he inquired, "is the United States Government so much more subject to criticism than that of other countries?"

There is a related question which is frequently asked of me in India. It is, why are your papers and political leaders so severe in their treatment of India? Surely, it is suggested, there are more iniquitous objects of attack than this mild and friendly land. Why do you search so assiduously for our faults? Why pick on Mr. Nehru?

Any satisfactory answer to these questions must deal with the peculiar and often paradoxical role of criticism in the open society, in that society which not only accords opportunity but offers encouragement to a plurality of views and in which it is assumed that every persuasively argued idea can have an influence, however marginal, on the march of events.

The peculiarities and paradoxes of criticism in the open society can initially be illustrated by examining recent American comment on public education. In the United States we have the world's oldest system of universal primary education. We also have the world's most diverse and imaginative and in many respects most highly developed system of secondary education. American colleges and universities were the first in the world to make higher education a democratic right. Until they did so, university education had always been the privilege of a minute intellectual, aristocratic or financial elite. Yet not even the most diligent student of the recent literature on American education would have been aware of these virtues. I am obliged to tell you that he would not have been aware of them from my own rather lengthy writing on the subject and in composing the foregoing brief encomiums I felt strangely out of character. The reason is that we have been seeking in these last years to improve our educational system.

In such matters criticism is the engine of change. The individual, devoid of children or prospect of procreation and more than a little concerned about his taxes, contends that the schools are fine. That is his defence of the *status quo*. The concerned citizen shuns identification with such praise; for him it is language of contentment, even of reaction. He must say that the schools are over-crowded if

From an address by Professor Galbraith, Ambassador of the United States in India, at Annamalai University Convocation on October 19, 1961.

he is to make the case for new schools. He must say that the teachers are grossly underpaid if he is to persuade anyone that the pay of teachers must be increased. He must picture the pupils as a major menace to law and order if he is to argue that their playgrounds should be enlarged. In recent years the American educational reformer has found the Soviet Union his most valuable ally. The core of all modern criticism of our education is that the Soviets are doing much better. With this they helpfully agree. The paradox, one on which we rarely reflect, is that the best friend of our schools, colleges and universities is ordinarily the man who makes out the worst case, absolutely or by comparison with others, for their current performance.

Elsewhere in American social life change similarly waits upon criticism. We raise the minimum wage for workers only by noting that the income of those affected is extremely inadequate. We improve the position of the aged only after enlarging on the poverty imposed by their present pensions. We can hope for the renewal and rebuilding of our cities only if we first publicise the noisome qualities of our slums. We win support for artistic and cultural activities only by warning of our tendency to narrow materialism.

It is not essential that the criticism which wins change be valid. Much of it has a ritual quality. Our trade unions win increases in pay only after appearing to affirm the classic prediction of Marx that workers under capitalism undergo progressive immiseration. Things are not quite that bad. There is a Chinese proverb which holds that even the prickly mimosa is an adequate defence against a naked man armed only with a just cause. Our armed services win appropriation from the United States Congress only after establishing both their nakedness and the appalling prickliness of the opposing mimosa.

Since social criticism is an engine of change, its employment has become a matter of political controversy. In the

United States as elsewhere, political division turns on attitudes toward change. The last Presidential campaign in the United States was fought largely over the issue of social criticism. Should we make a point of our faults and shortcomings in the hope that this might be an inducement to improvement? Should we avoid mention of them lest this be taken as an admission before the world of weaknesses in the American society? There were some who thought this a rather slight issue. I am not so sure. It concerned, I think, one of the central characteristics of the open society.

All open societies employ criticism as an instrument of change. No close observer of the habits and customs of Indian journalists and political leaders can imagine that Indian society is in any way retarded in this respect. A desire for improvement, whether it be in integration of linguistic groups, the rate of economic growth, the performance of the public sector plants, the efficiency of the civil service, the discipline of students, the effectiveness of the Congress Party, the availability of housing, the quality of urban housekeeping, the supply of electric power or, one suspects, the excesses of the monsoon begins with a severe condemnation of what exists.

One is regularly asked in the United States about the slow progress of Indian agricultural development, the shortcomings in the management of public sector plants, or the inadequacy of the population policy. The source and documentation for this concern, without exception, is the criticism of Indian scholars and journalists. The latter, as white American comment on education, comes from those who most want improvement.

This use of criticism as an engine of change is, in short, common to all open societies. It is also, more than incidentally a recurrent source of error in assessing their strength. These societies wear their faults on their sleeve. Or more accurately,

they inscribe them on their banners, for this is fundamental for their mechanism of reform. The society that does not have similar need to publicise its shortcomings may be thought by superficial men to have no shortcomings. In fact it may merely be leaving them uncorrected. During the second World War those of us who were concerned with industrial mobilisation in the United States and the United Kingdom were made constantly and painfully aware of the inadequacy of our performance. Our short comings were a source of joy to all journalists.

But others were imperfect as well. Mussolini looked well in prospect and rather less well in retrospect. In the closing months of the war and thereafter it became my task to unravel the procedures by which Germans had employed their totalitarian authority to wage the war. In many respects the Germans had been even more dilatory than we. Most German factories had remained on a single shift throughout the conflict; women were never mobilised; luxury consumption was preserved until rather late in the war; the leaders had been very cautious about imposing sacrifices on a people whom they did not trust. And where we had been forced to improve our ways under the relentless criticism of the public and press, the German authorities had suffered no such onslaught. The facade they presented to the world seemed imposing and efficient. In fooling the world the Nazi leaders had also fooled each other.

I am not especially sanguine about the improvability of man and I have even graver doubts about his chances for redemption after he assumes public office. But I am persuaded that official inadequacy is something that can only be enjoyed in silence. We may lay it down as a law that without public criticism all governments look much better and are much worse.

I come now to a further point. We rely on criticism to bring change in the open society. But this instrument is not nar-

rowly limited by national boundaries. The citizens of every open society are constantly concerned with altering the policies of other such societies.

Specifically when they see something in the actions of another government which does not meet with their approval, they resort to the same instrument they employ at home. They may have less hope that they will be able to alter the actions of the other government. Their instinct is still to try.

And their instinct is sound. The open society is so described because it is open to the influence of any idea. Its decisions are not taken in accordance with an ordained and settled system of doctrine which it is pointless for any person or group to hope to alter. And influential ideas can come from anywhere, no exclusive license for criticism is issued with a passport. It would be silly to suggest that external criticism is as influential as that which is reinforced by the sanction of the franchise. But a remarkable number of factors combine with natural receptivity to ideas to insure the overseas critic a hearing. Domestic critics of a policy regularly draw reinforcement from attacks by friendly foreigners. If something induces an angry uproar abroad, many will take it as an indication of mismanagement or error. In an interdependent world a critical press may eventually have an adverse effect on something important—on trade, aid, votes in the United Nations, or the rooms accorded to tourists. The opinion of people in other countries owes some of its influence to the simple circumstance that people have been taught to think it is important. Thomas Jefferson began the most famous of American proclamations by observing that it was called forth by "a recent respect to the opinions of mankind."

In consequence of this use of criticism as an instrument of international government, the open societies are vigorous critics of each other. Indian journalists, commentators and political leaders attack the United States on racial integration,

military alliances, For Eastern policy, the movies, and a host of other sins. The criticism we have long observed comes with greatest vigour from our most devoted friends. This is to be expected. One's friends are most concerned to correct policy which seems to them in error. Nor are they without success. It was, for example, the drumfire of criticism with which Indian journalists attacked various theses on the evils of neutralism in the last decade which were influential in their early abandonment.

And the reaction with which we are dealing is reversible. When the American journalist, commentator or Congressman looks similarly askance at India's economic organization, agricultural system, United Nations posture or some internal social or religious institutions, he is similarly assuming that his words will be influential, for it is his faith that any argument must be influential.

I do not wish to carry these matters to extremes. At all times some men will speak out of antagonism. Some will criticise as the result of calculation, not conviction. But as between the open societies, it is very likely that men will speak out of the conviction that what they criticise can be changed.

This peculiar role of criticism, we should observe, operates in substantial measure only as between open societies. It is another of the paradoxes of social criticism that, although we may be much less enamoured of the behaviour of a closed society we will usually be much less comprehensive in our criticism of that behaviour. The closed system, being closed, is unresponsive to our influence. This we sense, so we do not bang hopelessly on the blank wall.

During World War II any superficial observer could easily have supposed from reading the American papers that the real enemy of the American people were still the British. And the inadequacies of the Americans enlivened many a long evening

of English conversation. No German general came in for nearly so much adverse American comment as Montgomery. Nor did the British accord nearly as much critical scrutiny to any enemy leader as to Eisenhower. Neither of the open societies was nearly so harsh on the Soviets as it was on the other.

Some simple guides to everyday action and reaction emerge from the foregoing, and let me specify them.

First and most obvious, we must recognize that criticism is essential in the intercourse of open societies. We should expect it. We should expect on occasion to be angered by it. Anger is one of the responses to ideas which all skilled purveyors seek, for it is the mark of a peculiarly penetrating impact.

Second, we ought to remember that the open society, by its nature, puts its worst foot forward. This is the way it improves itself. If this is not kept in mind, we will have a highly distorted view of the achievements of these societies, especially in comparison with other systems. The United States maintains in India a rather substantial organization with the function among others of defending our society from its critics. The critics are mostly Americans.

Third, we must remember that, although criticism is sometimes an instrument of conflict, it is more often an index of fraternity. Formal and dull men say that one does not criticise a friendly government. They should know that it is friendly governments that one does criticise. Evil by one's antagonists is assumed. Lapses from virtue by one's friends call for immediate corrective comment.

Fourth, we recognize that, as between the open societies, criticism represents, in effect, an extension of franchise and in a most valuable form. We have been told by every prophet of the commonplace that this is a small and highly interrelated

world. Actions of the United States Congress have a bearing on the rate of Indian economic development and well-being. Decisions by the Indian government substantially condition American foreign policy. Is it surprising that we should have developed ways of influencing the decisions, by which we are affected? On the contrary it was natural and desirable. And it was inevitable that criticism, the principal instrument by which the citizen brings influence to bear in the open society, should be given international employment.

Finally, we must not equate criticism as between the open societies with criticism as between the open and closed systems.

I doubt that any National Community is wholly unresponsive to the influence of ideas. Yet the formal acceptance of a ruling ideology, and the formal alignment of expressed opinion therewith, enormously modifies the impact of both internal and external opinion. The result is of extreme importance. The critics concern themselves with those societies they have found responsive. It is not the most unwelcome policy that arouses the most objection. Rather it is the one that seems most susceptible to the influence of criticism and hence most subject to change. Criticism no less than the lambs and the calves soon develops an instinct for the greener pasture.

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EDITORIAL

In the Melting Pot?

It was announced recently at Madras that there would be no introduction of the XI Standard in Madras next academic year as originally planned. This has been followed up by the decision of the Education Ministers of the Southern Region at Hyderabad on October 28th to get the entire pattern of the Higher Secondary and Pre-University courses of study reviewed by an expert body. The misgivings that we expressed at the time that pattern was ushered in seem to have justified themselves.

We had then pointed out that, while the Secondary Education Commission had urged an additional year's schooling and the University Education Commission an extra year in the degree course, providing altogether 17 years of education up to the degree, instead of the long-existing 15 years, the reorganised courses, in school and college cut this down to 14 years. We also drew attention to the added burden to the Government by the removal of the Pre-University course from

the colleges and its inclusion in Higher Secondary Schools.

Other criticisms levelled at the new scheme at that time took note of the insufficient duration of the transition to the degree class from the High School. Then again there was the question of the medium of instruction for higher education. If a student passing out of the Higher Secondary School was to get straight into the degree class, and if he had been learning everything in his mother-tongue at school, he could not be expected to cope with English as the medium of instruction in colleges. Hence the logical insistence on the regional language as the medium of instruction in Universities also.

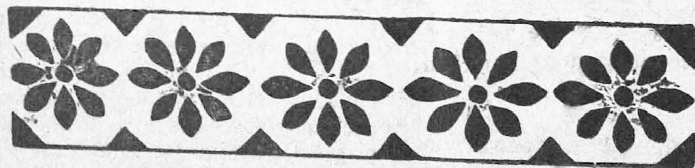
The decision of the Southern Ministers throws the entire question into the melting pot once again. We may deplore it as yet another case of reforming in haste and repenting at leisure. Still it would all be to the good, if this leads to the revival of the Intermediate course and a firm decision to persist with English as the medium of instruction in the Universities for quite a long time to come.

A Wise decision

We have received some criticisms against the G. O. Misc. No. 2318 dated 25th September last. It may be remembered that this G. O. laid down criteria for giving weightage to secondary grade teachers and fixation of pay of secondary grade teachers working in higher grade posts in elementary schools. The G. O. sought to fit these teachers into the revised pay scales and presumably sought at the same time to apply the principles of G. O. No. 556, Education, of 1958. The difficulty here is that the higher grade scale of pay is lower than that of the secondary grade, and that men with the same qualifications were subjected to differential treatment on the basis of the somewhat artificial distinction between 'sanctioned' and 'declared' posts. One result of the order would have been a secondary grade teacher just joining service would start on a basic pay of Rs. 90/- per month, while another man with the same qualifications, but, working in a higher grade post, even after

a few years of service would get less. There was even a demand by some managements for return of part of the salaries drawn by the secondary grade teachers in higher grade posts from June 1960 on the ground that they had been overpaid according to the new scales as interpreted by the G. O. of 25th September. Thus in their case the whole scheme of the revised pay scales meant not merely less pay in future but also with retrospective effect.

We are glad to learn from a statement of Sri C. Subramaniam, the Education Minister, that this anomaly has been rectified, and that secondary grade teachers who have worked in higher grade posts from before April 1, 1958, will not be adversely affected. This is good news, and we trust that care will be taken to see that there is no ambiguity in the final orders. May we hope also that a few other anomalies which have been brought to the notice of the authorities in respect of the working of the new pay scales will be considered in the same helpful spirit?



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Note.—Separate lists are available for each Section.