

VISVA-BHARATI

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MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION

Objects.

"To study the Mind of Man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse points of view."

"To bring into more intimate relation with one another, through patient study and research, the different cultures of the East on the basis of their underlying unity."

"To approach the West from the standpoint of such a unity of the life and thought of Asia."

"To seek to realise in a common fellowship of study the meeting of the East and the West, and thus ultimately to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace through the establishment of free communication of ideas between the two hemispheres."

"And with such ideals in view to provide at Santiniketan aforesaid a centre of Culture where research into and study of the religion, literature, history, science, and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic, Sikh, Christian, and other civilisations may be pursued along with the culture of the West, with that simplicity in externals which is necessary for true spiritual realisation, in amity, good fellowship and co-operation between the thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, creed or caste, and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam."

Membership. "The membership of the Visva-bharati and of its Constituent Bodies shall be open to all persons irrespective of sex, nationality, race, creed, caste, or class and no test or condition shall be imposed as to religious belief or profession in admitting or appointing members, students, teachers, workers, or in any other connection whatsoever."

The Society is at present maintaining the following institutions:—Patha-Bhavana (School), Siksha-Bhavana (College), Vidya-Bhavana (Research Institute), Kala-Bhavana (School of Arts and Crafts) at Santiniketan, Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Surul and Visva-bharati Sammilani at Calcutta and Dacca. The Society manages its own press and publishing department.

The supreme control is vested in the Parishat, the Members in General Meeting assembled. The Governing Body is the Samsad, consisting of members elected by the Sadasyas and the representatives of the different departments.

Life-membership Rs. 250. Annual subscription for ordinary members Rs. 12.

Persons desiring to become members of Visva-bharati should fill up a Form of Application and send it to the Visva-bharati office.

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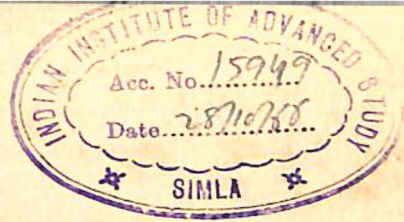
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A POET'S SCHOOL

From questions that have often been put to me, I have come to feel that the public claims an apology from the poet for having founded a school, as I in my rashness have done. One must admit that the silkworm which spins and the butterfly that floats on the air represent two different stages of existence, contrary to each other. The silkworm seems to have a cash value credited in its favour somewhere in Nature's accounting department, according to the amount of the task it performs. But the butterfly is irresponsible. The significance which it may possess has neither weight nor use and is lightly carried on its pair of dancing wings. Perhaps it pleases someone in the heart of the sunlight, the Lord Treasurer of colours, who has nothing to do with the account book and has a perfect mastery in the great art of wastefulness.

The poet may be compared to that foolish butterfly. He also tries to translate all the festive colours of creation in the vibration of his verses. Then why should he imprison himself in an interminable coil of duty, bringing out some good, tough and fairly respectable result? Why should he make himself accountable to those sane people who would judge the merit of his produce by the amount of profit it will bring?

I suppose this individual poet's answer would be, that when he brought together a few boys, one sunny day in winter, among the warm shadows of the *sál* trees strong, straight and tall, with branches of a dignified moderation, he started to write a poem in a medium not of words.

In these self-conscious days of psycho-analysis clever minds have discovered the secret spring of poetry

in some obscure stratum of repressed freedom, in some constant fretfulness of thwarted self-realisation. Evidently in this case they were right. The phantom of my long-ago boyhood *did* come to haunt the ruined opportunities of its early beginning; it sought to live in, the lives of other boys, to build up its missing paradise, as only children can do with ingredients which may not have any orthodox material, prescribed measure, or standard value.

This brings to my mind the name of another poet of ancient India, Kálidása, the story of whose life has not been written, but can easily be guessed. Fortunately for the scholars, he has left behind him no clear indication of his birth place, and thus they have a subject that oblivious time has left amply vacant for an endless variety of disagreement. My scholarship does not pretend to go deep, but I remember having read somewhere that he was born in beautiful Kashmir. Since then I have left off reading discussions about his birth-place for the fear of meeting with some learned contradiction equally convincing. Anyhow it is perfectly in the fitness of things that Kálidása should be born in Kashmir,—and I envy him, for I was born in Calcutta.

But psycho-analysis need not be disappointed, for he was banished from there to a city in the plain,—and his whole poem of *Meghaduta* reverberates with the music of sorrow that had its crown of suffering “in remembering happier things.” Is it not significant that in this poem, the lover’s errant fancy, in its quest of the beloved who dwelt in the paradise of eternal beauty, lingered with a deliberate delay of enjoyment round every hill, stream, or forest over which it passed; watched the grateful dark eyes of the peasant girls welcoming the rain-laden clouds of June; listened to some village elder reciting under the banyan tree a well-known love legend that ever remained fresh with the tears and smiles of generations of simple hearts?

Do we not feel in all this the prisoner of the stony-hearted city revelling in a vision of joy that, in his imaginary journey, followed him from hill to hill, waited at every turn of the path which bore the finger-posts of heaven for separated lovers banished on the earth?

It was not a physical home-sickness from which the poet suffered, it was something far more fundamental,—the homesickness of the soul. We feel in almost all his works the oppressive atmosphere of the King's palaces of those days, impervious with things of luxury, thick with the callousness of self-indulgence, albeit an atmosphere of refined culture, of an extravagant civilisation.

The poet in the royal court lived in banishment,—banishment from the immediate presence of the eternal. He knew, it was not merely his own banishment, but that of the whole age to which he was born, the age that had gathered its wealth and missed its well-being, built its storehouse of things and lost its background of the great universe. What was the form in which his desire for perfection persistently appeared in his drama and poems? It was in that of the *tapôvana*, the forest dwelling of the patriarchal community of ancient India. Those who are familiar with Sanskrit literature well know that this was not a colony of people with a primitive culture and mind. They were seekers of truth, for the sake of which they lived in an atmosphere of purity, but not of Puritanism; of the simple life, but not the life of self-mortification. They did not advocate celibacy and they had constant inter-communication with the other people who had to live the life of worldly interest. Their aim and endeavour have briefly been suggested in the *Upanishad* in these lines :

**Te sarvagam sarvatah prâpya dhirâ
yuktâtmanah sarvamêvâvisanti.**

Those men of serene mind enter into the All, having realised and being everywhere in union with the omnipresent Spirit.

It was never a philosophy of renunciation of a negative character, but of a realisation completely comprehensive. However, the tortured mind of Kálidása, in the prosperous city of Ujjaini and the glorious period of Vikramádivya, closely pressed by all-obstructing things and all-devouring *self*, made his thoughts hover round the vision of *tapóvana* for his inspiration of life, light and freedom.

It was not a deliberate copy, but a natural coincidence, that a poet of modern India also had a similar vision when he felt within him the misery of a spiritual banishment. In the time of Kálidása the people vividly believed in the ideal of *tapóvana*, the forest colony, and there can be no doubt that even in that late age there were communities of men living in the heart of nature, not ascetics fiercely in love with a lingering suicide but men of serene sanity who sought to realise the spiritual meaning of their life. And therefore when Kálidása sang of the *tapóvana*, his poems found their immediate communion in the living faith of his hearers. But to-day the idea of the *tapóvana* has lost any definite outline of reality, and has retreated into the faraway phantom land of legend; therefore, in a modern poem, it would merely be poetical, its meaning judged by a literary standard of appraisal. Then again, the spirit of the *tapóvana* in the purity of its original shape would be a fantastic anachronism in the present age. Therefore, in order to be real, it must find its reincarnation under modern conditions of life, and be the same in truth, not merely identical in fact. It was this which made the modern poet's heart crave to compose his poem in a tangible language.

But I must give the history in some detail.

Civilised man has come far away from the orbit of his normal life. He has gradually formed and intensi-

fied some habits that are like those of the bees for adapting himself to his hive world. We so often see modern men suffering from *ennui*, from world-weariness, from a spirit of rebellion against their environment for no reasonable cause whatever. Social revolutions are constantly ushered in with a suicidal violence that has its origin in our dissatisfaction with our hive-wall arrangement,—the too exclusive enclosure that deprives us of the perspective which is so much needed to give us the proper proportion in our art of living. All this is an indication that man has not really been moulded in the model of the bee, and therefore he becomes recklessly anti-social when his freedom to be more than social is ignored.

In our highly complex modern condition, mechanical forces are organised with such efficiency that the materials produced grow far in advance of man's selective and assimilative capacity to simplify them into harmony with his nature and needs. Such an intemperate overgrowth of things, like the rank vegetation of the tropics, creates confinement for man. The nest is simple, it has an easy relationship with the sky; the cage is complex and costly, it is too much itself, excommunicating whatever lies outside. And modern man is busy building his cage, fast developing his parasitism on the monster, *Thing*, whom he allows to envelop him on all sides. He is always occupied in adapting himself to its dead angularities, limits himself to its limitations, and merely becomes a part of it.

This talk of mine may seem too oriental to some of my hearers who, I am told, believe that a constant high pressure of living produced by an artificially cultivated hunger of things generates and feeds the energy that drives civilisation upon its endless journey. Personally, I do not believe that this has ever been the principal driving force leading to its eminence any great civilisation of which we know in history. But I have broached this subject not for its full discussion,

but to explain the conduct of a poet in his attempt to trespass into a domain reserved for the expert and for those who have academic distinction.

I was born in what was then the metropolis of British India. Our ancestors came floating to Calcutta upon the earliest tide of the fluctuating fortune of the East India Company. The conventional code of life for our family thereupon became a confluence of three cultures, the Hindu, the Mahomedan and the British. My grandfather belonged to that period when an amplitude of dress and courtesy and a generous leisure was gradually being clipped and curtailed into Victorian manners, economical in time, in ceremonies and in the dignity of personal appearance. This will show that I came to a world in which the modern city-bred spirit of progress had just begun driving its triumphal car over the luscious green life of our ancient village community.

Though the trampling process was almost complete around me, yet the wailing cry of the past was still lingering over the wreckage. I had often listened to my eldest brother describing with the poignancy of a hopeless regret a society hospitable, sweet with the old-world aroma of natural kindness, full of a simple faith and the ceremonial poetry of life. But all this was a vanishing shadow behind me in the golden haze of a twilight horizon,—the all-pervading fact around my boyhood being the modern city, newly built by a Company of Western traders and the spirit of the modern time seeking its unaccustomed path into our life, stumbling against countless anomalies. But it always is a surprise to me to think that though this closed up hardness of a city was my only experience of the world, yet my mind was constantly haunted by the home-sick fancies of an exile.

It seems that the sub-conscious remembrance of some primeval dwelling-place where, in our ancestors' minds were figured and voiced the mysteries of the

inarticulate rocks, the rushing water and the dark whispers of the forest, was constantly stirring my blood with its call. Some shadow-haunted living reminiscence in me seemed to ache for the pre-natal cradle and play-ground it once shared with the primal life in the illimitable magic of land, water and air. The thin, shrill, cry of the high-flying kite in the blazing sun of a dazed Indian midday sent to a solitary boy the signal of a dumb distant kinship. The few cocoanut palms growing by the boundary wall of our house, like some war captives from an older army of invaders of this earth, spoke to me of the eternal companionship which the great brotherhood of trees has ever offered to man. They made my heart wistful with the invitation of the forest. I had the good fortune of answering this invitation in person a few years later, when as a little boy of ten, I stood alone on the Himalayas under the shade of great *deodars*, awed by the dark dignity of life's first-born aristocracy, by its sturdy fortitude that was terrible as well as courteous.

Looking back upon those moments of my boyhood days when all my mind seemed to float poised upon a large feeling of the sky, of the light, and to tingle with the brown earth in its glistening grass, I cannot help believing that my Indian ancestry had left deep in my being the legacy of its philosophy, the philosophy which speaks of fulfilment through harmony with all things. For good or for evil it has the effect of arousing a great desire in us for seeking our freedom, not in the man-made world but in the depth of the universe, and makes us offer our reverence to the divinity inherent in fire, water and trees, in everything moving and growing. The founding of my school had its origin in the memory of that longing for freedom, the memory which seems to go back beyond the sky-line of my birth.

Freedom in the mere sense of independence has no content, and therefore no meaning. Perfect freedom

lies in the perfect harmony of relationship which we realise in this world,—not through our response to it in *knowing*, but in *being*. Objects of knowledge maintain an infinite distance from us who are the knowers. For knowledge is not union. Therefore the further world of freedom awaits us there where we reach truth, not through feeling it by our senses, or knowing it by reason, but through the union of perfect sympathy.

Children with the freshness of their senses come directly to the intimacy of this world. This is the first great gift they have. They must accept it naked and simple and must never again lose their power of immediate communication with it. For our perfection we have to be vitally savage and mentally civilised; we should have the gift to be natural with nature and human with human society. The misery which I felt was owing to the crowded solitude in which I dwelt in a city where man was everywhere, with never a gap for the immense non-human. My banished soul sitting in the civilised isolation of town-life cried within me for the enlargement of the horizon of its comprehension. I was like the torn-away line of a verse, always in a state of suspense while the other line, to which it rhymed and which could give it fulness, was smudged away into some misty, undecipherable distance. The inexpensive power to the happy which, along with other children, I brought with me to this world, was being constantly worn away by friction with the brick-and-mortar arrangement of life, by monotonously mechanical habits and the customary code of respectability.

In the usual course I was sent to school, but possibly my suffering was unusual, greater than that of most other children. The non-civilised in me was sensitive; it had the great thirst for colour, for music, for movement of life. Our city-built education took no heed of that living fact. It had its luggage van

waiting for branded bales of marketable result. The relative proportion of the non-civilised and civilised in man should be in the proportion of water and land on our globe, the former predominating. But the school had for its object a continual reclamation of the civilised. Such a drain of the fluid element causes an aridity which may not be considered deplorable under city conditions. But my nature never got accustomed to those conditions, to the callous decency of the pavement. The non-civilised triumphed in me only too soon and drove me away from my school when I had just entered my teens. I found myself stranded on a solitary island of ignorance and had to rely solely upon my own instincts to build up my education from the very beginning.

This reminds me that when I was young I had the great good fortune of coming upon a Bengali translation of Robinson Crusoe. I still believe that it is one of the best books for boys that has ever been written. I have already spoken in this paper about my longing when young to run away from my own self and be one with everything in nature. I have described this mood as particularly Indian, the outcome of a traditional desire for the expansion of consciousness. One has to admit that such a desire is too subjective in its character, but this is inevitable in our geographical circumstances. We live under the extortionate tyranny of the tropics, paying heavy toll every moment for the barest right of existence. The heat, the damp, the unspeakable fecundity of minute life feeding upon big life, the perpetual sources of irritation, visible and invisible, leave very little margin of capital for extravagant experiments.

Excess of energy seeks obstacles for its self-realisation. That is why we find so often in Western literature a constant emphasis upon the malignant aspect of nature, in whom the people of the West seem to delight to discover an enemy for the sheer enjoy-

ment of challenging her to fight. The reason which made Alexander express his desire to find other worlds to conquer when his conquest in this world was completed, makes these enormously vital people desire, when they have some respite in their sublime Mission of fighting against objects that are noxious, to go out of their way to spread their coattails in other peoples' thoroughfares and to claim indemnity when these are trodden upon. In order to take the thrilling risk of hurting themselves they are ready to welcome endless trouble to hurt others who are inoffensive,—the beautiful birds which happen to know how to fly away, the timid beasts which have the advantage of inhabiting inaccessible regions, and—but I avoid the discourtesy of mentioning higher races in this connection.

Life's fulfilment finds constant contradictions in its path, but these are necessary for the sake of its advance. The stream is saved from the sluggishness of its current by the perpetual opposition of the soil through which it must cut its way and which forms its banks. The spirit of fight belongs to the genius of life. The tuning of an instrument has to be done, not because it reveals a proficient perseverance in the face of difficulty, but because it helps music to be perfectly realised. Let us rejoice that, in the West, life's instrument is being tuned in all its different chords, owing to the great fact that the West has a triumphant pleasure in its struggle of contest with obstacles. The spirit of creation in the heart of the universe will never allow, for its own sake, obstacles to be completely removed. It is only because positive truth lies in that ideal of perfection, which has to be won by our own endeavour in order to make it our own, that the spirit of fight is great, and not in the exhibition of a muscular athleticism or the rude barbarism of a ravenous rapacity.

In Robinson Crusoe, the delight of the union with

nature finds its expression in a story of adventure in which the solitary man is face to face with solitary nature, coaxing her, co-operating with her, exploring her secrets, using all his faculties to win her help. The joy I felt in reading this book was not in sharing the pride of a human success against the closed fist of a parsimonious nature, but in the active realisation of harmony with her through intelligently determined dealings, the natural conclusion of which was success. And this is the heroic love-adventure of the West, the active wooing of the earth.

I remember how in my youth, the feeling of intense delight and wonder once followed me in my railway journey across Europe from Brindisi to Calais, when I realised the vast beauty of this continent everywhere blossoming in a glow of health and richness under the age-long attention of her chivalrous lover, Western humanity. He had gained her, made her his own, unlocked the inexhaustible generosity of her heart. And I had intently wished that the introspective vision of the universal soul which an Eastern devotee realises in the solitude of his mind could be united with this spirit of its outward expression in service, the exercise of will in unfolding the wealth of beauty and well-being from its shy obscurity to the light.

I remember the morning when a beggar woman in a Bengal village gathered in the loose end of her *sári* the stale flowers that were about to be thrown away from the vase on my table; and with an ecstatic expression of tenderness she buried her face in them, exclaiming "Oh, Beloved of my Heart!" Her eyes could easily pierce the veil of the outward form and reach the realm of the infinite in these flowers where she found the intimate touch of her Beloved. But in spite of it all she lacked that energy of worship, the Western form of direct divine service, which helps the earth to bring out her flowers and spread the reign

of beauty on the desolate dust. I refuse to think that the twin spirits of the East and the West, the Mary and Martha, can never meet to make perfect the realisation of truth. And in spite of our material poverty and the antagonism of time I wait patiently for this meeting.

Robinson Crusoe's island comes to my mind when I think of an institution where the first great lesson in the perfect union of man and nature not only through love but through active communication, can be had unobstructed. 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. The primary object of an institution of this kind should not merely be to educate one's limbs and mind to be in efficient readiness for all emergencies, but to be in perfect tune in the symphony of response between life and world, to find the balance of their harmony which is wisdom. The first important lesson for children in such a place would be that of improvisation, the constant imposition of the ready-made having been banished therefrom in order to give constant occasions to explore one's capacity through surprises of achievement. I must make it plain that this means a lesson not in simple life, but in creative life. For life may grow complex, and yet if there is a living personality in its centre, it will still have the unity of creation, it will carry its own weight in perfect grace, and will not be a mere addition to the number of facts that only goes to swell a crowd.

I wish I could say that we have fully realised my dream in our school. We have only made the first introduction towards it and have given an opportunity to the children to find their freedom in Nature by being able to love it. For love is freedom; it gives us that fulness of existence which saves us from paying with our soul for objects that are immensely cheap. Love lights up this world with its meaning and makes life

feel that it has everywhere that *enough* which truly is its feast. I know men who preach the cult of simple life by glorifying the spiritual merit of poverty. I refuse to imagine any special value in poverty when it is a mere negation. Only when the mind has the sensitiveness to be able to respond to the deeper call of reality is it naturally weaned away from the lure of the fictitious value of things. It is callousness which robs us of our simple power to enjoy and dooms us to the indignity of a snobbish pride in furniture and the foolish burden of expensive things. But to pit the callousness of asceticism against the callousness of luxury is merely fighting one evil with the help of another, inviting the pitiless demon of the desert in place of the indiscriminate demon of the jungle.

I tried my best to develop in the children of my school the freshness of their feeling for Nature, a sensitiveness of soul in their relationship with their human surroundings, with the help of literature, festive ceremonials and also the religious teaching which enjoins us to come to the nearer presence of the world through the soul, thus to gain it more than can be measured—like gaining an instrument, not merely by having it, but by producing music upon it. I prepared for my children a real home-coming into this world. Among other subjects learnt in the open air under the shade of trees they had their music and picture-making; they had their dramatic performances, activities that were the expressions of life.

But as I have already hinted this was not sufficient and I waited for men and the means to be able to introduce into our school an active vigour of work, the joyous exercise of our inventive and constructive energies that help to build up character and by their constant movements naturally sweep away all accumulations of dirt, decay and death. In other words I always felt the need of the Western genius for imparting to my educational ideal that strength

of reality which knows how to clear the path towards a definite end of practical good.

For me the obstacles were numerous. The tradition of the community which calls itself educated, the parents' expectations, the up-bringing of the teachers themselves, the claim and the constitution of the official University, were all overwhelmingly arrayed against the idea I had cherished. In addition to this, our funds which had all but failed to attract contribution from my countrymen were hardly adequate to support an institution in which the number of boys must necessarily be small.

Fortunately help came to us from an English friend who took the leading part in creating and guiding the rural organisation work connected with the Visva-bharati. He believes, as I do, in an education which takes count of the organic wholeness of human individuality that needs for its health a general stimulation to all its faculties, bodily and mental. In order to have the freedom to give effect to this idea we started our work with a few boys who either were orphans or whose parents were too destitute to be able to send them to any school whatever.

Before long we discovered that minds actively engaged in a round of constructive work fast developed energies which sought eager outlets in the pursuit of knowledge, even in undertaking extra tasks for such a mechanical result as the perfecting of hand-writing. The minds of these boys became so alive to all passing events that a very simple fact made them at once realise the advantage of learning English which was not in their programme. The suggestion came to them one day while posting their letters as they watched the post-master writing on their envelopes in English the address that had already been written in Bengali. Immediately they went to their teacher claiming to be taught English in an additional hour and what is still more amazing, these brave boys do

not yet repent of their rashness in this choice of their lesson. Do I not remember to this day what violently criminal thoughts possessed my infant mind when my own teacher of English made his appearance at the bend of the lane leading to our house?

For these boys vacation has no meaning. Their studies, though strenuous, are not a task, being permeated by a holiday spirit which takes shape in activities in their kitchen, their vegetable garden, their weaving, their work of small repairs. It is because their class work has not been wrenched away and walled-in from their normal vocation, because it has been made a part of their daily current of life, that it easily carries itself by its own onward flow.

Most of our boys when they first came were weak in the body and weak in mind; the ravages that malaria and other tropical diseases had made in them through generations of fatal inheritance had left them like a field devastated by years of savage warfare which had turned the soil into anæmic barrenness. They brought with them an intolerable mental perversity, the outcome of vitiated blood and a starved physical constitution. The Brahmin was supercilious, the non-Brahmin pitiable in his shrinking self-abasement. They hated to do any work of common good lest others besides themselves should get the least advantage. They sulked because they were asked to do for their own benefit the kind of work that according to their idea of fitness, should be done by an ordinary *coolie* or by a paid cook. They were not ashamed of living upon charity but were ashamed of self-help. Possibly they thought it unjust that we should gain the merit and they should pay at least a part the cost.

It might have been thought that this meanness and selfish jealousy, this moral lethargy revealed in the utter want of beneficence in them, were inherent in their nature. But within a very short time all these

have been changed. The spirit of sacrifice and comradeship, the disinterested desire to help others, which these boys have developed are rare even in children who have had better opportunities. It was the active healthy life which brought out in a remarkably quick time all that was good in them and the accumulated rubbish of impurities was swept off. The daily work which they were doing brought before them moral problems in the concrete shape of difficulties and claimed solutions from them. The logic of facts showed to them the reality of moral principles in life, and now they feel astonished at instances when other boys do not understand it. They take the utmost delight in cooking, weaving, gardening, improving their surroundings, rendering services to other boys, very often secretly, lest they should feel embarrassed. In ordinary messing organisations members generally clamour for more than is provided to them, but these boys willingly simplify their needs, patiently understand the inevitableness of imperfections. They are made to realise that the responsibility is mostly theirs, and every luxury becomes a burden when a great part of its pressure is not upon other people's shoulders. Therefore instead of idly grumbling at deficiencies they have to think and manage for themselves. To improve their dietary they must put extra zest into their vegetable growing. They have their tools and their mother wit for their small needs and though their endeavour is sure to have crude results yet these have a value which exceeds all market prices.

I wish, for the sake of giving an artistic touch of disarray to my description, I could speak of some break-down in our plan, of some unexpected element of misfit trying to wreck the symmetry of our arrangement. But, in the name of truth, I have to confess that it has not yet happened. Possibly our tropical climate is accountable for this dull calm in our

atmosphere, wherefor that excess of energy may be lacking in our boys which often loves to make a mess of things that are tiresomely pointed out as worthy of protection, like the beautiful peacock pointed out by Indian villagers to the Western lovers of sport. Possibly it is not even yet too late to hope that this newly built experiment of ours is not going to be too tame a copy of a model paradise for harmless boys. I am sure, before long, some incalculable problems of life will make their appearance to challenge our theories and to try our faith in our ideal with rude contradictions.

In the meanwhile having realised that this daily practice in the adaptation of mind and body to life's necessities has made these boys intellectually alert, we have at last mustered courage to extend this system to the primary section of our school which is furthest away from the military frontier of our University. The children of this section, under an ideal teacher who realises that to teach is to learn, have just finished constructing their first hut of which they are absurdly proud. I can see from their manner, they have dimly begun to think that education is a permanent part of the adventure of life, that it is not like a painful hospital treatment for curing them of the congenital malady of their ignorance, but is a function of health, the natural expression of their mind's vitality. Thus, I have just had the good fortune to watch the first shoot of life peeping out in a humble corner of our organisation. My idea is to allow this climber to grow up, with no special label of learned nomenclature attached to it; grow up till it completely hides the dead pole that bears no natural flower or fruit, but flourishes the parchment flag of examination success.

Before I stop I must say a few more words about a most important item of my educational endeavour.

Children have their active sub-conscious mind which, like the tree, has the power to gather its food

from the surrounding atmosphere. For them the atmosphere is a great deal more important than rules and methods, building appliances, class teachings and text books. The earth has her mass of substance in her land and water. But, if I may be allowed figurative language, she finds her inspiration of freedom, the stimulation of her life, from her atmosphere. It is, as it were, the envelopment of her perpetual education. It brings from her depth responses in colour and perfume music and movement, her incessant self-revelation, continual wonders of the unexpected. In his society man has the diffuse atmosphere of culture always about himself. It has the effect of keeping his mind sensitive to his racial inheritance, to the current of influences that come from tradition; it makes it easy for him unconsciously to imbibe the concentrated wisdom of ages. But in our educational organisations we behave like miners, digging only for things substantial, through a laborious process of mechanical toil; and not like a tiller of the soil, whose work is in a perfect collaboration with nature, in a passive relationship of sympathy with the atmosphere.

However, I tried to create an atmosphere in my institution, giving it the principal place in our programme of teaching. For atmosphere there must be for developing the sensitiveness of soul, for affording mind its true freedom of sympathy. Apathy and ignorance are the worst forms of bondage for man; they are the invisible walls of confinement that we carry round us when we are in their grip. In educational organisations our reasoning faculties have to be nourished in order to allow our mind its freedom in the world of truth, our imagination for the world which belongs to art, and our sympathy for the world of human relationship. This last is even more important than learning the geography of foreign lands.

The minds of children of to-day are almost deliberately made incapable of understanding other people with different languages and customs. This causes us, when our growing souls demand it, to grope after each other in darkness, to hurt each other in ignorance, to suffer from the worst form of the blindness of this age. The Christian missionaries themselves have contributed to this cultivation of insensitiveness and contempt for alien races and civilisations. In the name of brotherhood and the blindness of sectarian pride they create misunderstanding. This they make permanent in their text books and poison the susceptible minds of the young. I have tried to save our children from such a mutilation of natural human love with the help of friends from the West, who, with their sympathetic understanding, have done us the greatest service.

SIKSHA-SATRA

By

L. K. ELMHIRST

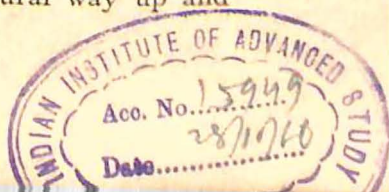
SIKSHA-SATRA.

The Sikshá-Satra is the natural outcome of some years of educational experiment at Santiniketan and of two years experience at the Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Sriniketan. The principles upon which it is based are little more than common sense deductions from the failures and successes of the past.

It is in their simplicity, in their capacity to grow, and in a certain native frankness that the charm of children chiefly lies. Untrammelled by tradition, driven forward by inherent instinct, they carry on their own research in the field of life, gathering knowledge from experience with an abounding joy that is rarely exceeded later.

With the young of domestic animals we notice in its simplest form this care-free exuberance, this capacity to treat life as a perpetual game and the world as a fairy make-believe, in which, for the kitten everything that moves is a potential mouse, and for the puppy no household article comes amiss so long as in the softness of its nature it may represent some rat to be worried. There exists apparently some driving force within, impelling growth along certain lines, yet ever seeking to direct the arduous gathering of experience towards self-preservation, with an overflow of life-energy in what seems to the adult to be the reckless joy-ride of youth.

With the growing tree, too, there is the same kind of exuberance in the joyful pushing upward of the young shoot. Such is the whirl of life packed within the tip of this first tender outgrowth, that cell is added to cell with an amazing rapidity whilst the food supply that has been packed away in the mother seed remains unexhausted. Even when this supply is gone, the growing point still finds its own natural way up and



out into the open air, and woe be to the tree of the future if some accident befalls and damage is done to that first shoot. Other branches may develop and try to replace the lead that has gone, but some driving force, some urgent desire to seek for life and growth will have gone too.

There is something of this same quality in the human child, and in the same way it is not difficult to inflict upon the child, as on the young tree, or upon the young animal, permanent damage by means of unnatural repression. The playtime of young life is not an unmeaning thing. It is intimately associated with the demands of a strenuous future, even though for the time being some of the worries of self-preservation may be borne by the parent.

We are too apt to forget this with our children. We prefer to provide them with a children's toy-world, lacking the imagination to remember that, even if it was make-believe, it was always a grown-up world that we chiefly craved as the plaything of our early days. To dig our own cave in the earth, where we could creep out of sight, much to the disgust of the matter-of-fact gardener, to chop sticks with a real axe, to be given a pair of boots to polish, a fire to light, or some dough to knead and bake—these were ever our keenest joys; yet only too often had we to be content with toy bricks, toy houses, toy tools or toy kitchens; or, if serious work was provided, it was in the nature of sweated labour, which fatigued without giving play to our creative instincts.

The aim, then, of the Sikshá-Satra is, through experience in dealing with this overflowing abundance of child life, its charm and its simplicity, to provide the utmost liberty within surroundings that are filled with creative possibilities, with opportunities for the joy of play that is work,—the work of exploration; and of work that is play,—the reaping of a succession

of novel experiences; to give the child that freedom of growth which the young tree demands for its tender shoot, that field for self-expansion in which all young life finds both training and happiness.

It is between the ages of six and twelve that the growing child is most absorbed in gathering impressions through sight, smell, hearing and taste but more especially through touch and the use of the hands. From the start, therefore, the child enters the Sikshá-Satra as an apprentice in handicraft as well as housecraft. In the workshop, as a trained producer and as a potential creator, it will acquire skilled and win freedom for its hands; whilst as an inmate of the house, which it helps to construct and furnish and maintain, it will gain expanse of spirit and win freedom as a citizen of the small community.

Only after it has stored up a certain amount of experience in these different fields, will the child begin to feel a need for their co-ordination, and therefore for the time to record, to relate, to dramatise and to synthesise the discoveries of the senses. Until the child has had intimate touch with the facts and demands of life, it is surely unfair to demand long hours of concentrated attention upon second-hand facts and figures wholly unconnected with anything it has hitherto encountered and taken note of in real Life.

There is a certain Farm School in the Philippine Islands where some three hundred boys own and work their own little holdings, build their own cottages, keep their own accounts, run their own municipality, tend their own livestock, and pocket their own profits. "All of our classroom work is in the nature of round-table discussions of stored-up experience, except the teaching of English," said the principal; "and because we are using a standardised course wholly unrelated with their own life, their English classes are lifeless too, and I cannot arouse interest in them."

Under the term housecraft, at the Sikshá-Satra, the following functions will be treated as of primary educational importance :—

Care and cleaning and construction of Quarters.

Care and proper use of latrines; sanitary disposal of waste.

Cooking and serving of food; Clothes washing and repair.

Personal hygiene and healthy habits.

Individual self-discipline; group self-government.

Policing and hospitality; Fire drill and control.

"In everyone of these, there is some art to be mastered, some business or organising capacity to be developed, some law of science to be recognised, and in all of them there is a call for the recognition of the need for individual self-preservation as well as of the duties, responsibilities and privileges of family membership and citizenship.

Much of what is termed housecraft is in the nature of handicraft, but, from the earliest years, it is well to introduce to the children some special craft, easily grasped by small hands, which is of definite economic value. The product should be of real use in the home, or have a ready sale outside, and thus enable the child to realise his capacity for self-preservation through the trained experience of his hands.

Any of the following can easily be mastered in a few weeks :

Cotton wick, tape and band making; Scarf weaving and belt making; Cotton rug and duree making (the looms can easily be made by the children themselves, out of bamboo).

Straw-sandal making. Straw-mat and mattress making.

Sewing; Paper making; Ink making.

Dyeing with simple vegetable dyes; cotton and calico printing with wood blocks.

Making sun-dried mud bricks.

For elder boys and girls the following are suitable :

Wool work, shearing, washing, carding, dyeing and coarse blanket weaving. Knitting, darning.

Pottery; Carpentry and carving Smithy and tool making.

Building with sun-dried bricks; Rush and mud construction, bamboo construction; Thatching.

Tailoring and use of sewing machine.

Watch and Clock repair.

Cycle cleaning and repair.

Block making, typesetting, printing, typing and duplicating.

Musical instrument making (Drums, flutes, one stringed instruments).

Food preparation; Wheat and grain grinding; Oil extraction; Sap extraction; Soap making.

In the carrying out of everyone of these crafts, again, some art, some science some element of business enters in. Anyone of these crafts may offer an avenue of approach to the ultimate high road of self-preservation and to self-confidence in his or her own capacity to achieve economic stability in the future. Without such feeling of confidence in the power to face the fight for livelihood through the skill of trained fingers and hands, it is impossible to achieve that freedom of spirit upon which the fullest enjoyment of life is dependant.

There are few of the crafts mentioned above which are not in some way intimately bound up with the life of the country-folk. With each of them there is a grammer¹ of procedure which has to be learnt, but it is a grammer which is not detached from life and which has to be learnt at the beginning by trial and error and the bitterness of failure. There are always dry bones of some kind behind the finished product

of any skilled craft; and so often, especially in the class-room, is the original product forgotten together with the atmosphere which gave rise to it, and only these dry bones left.

Of all workshops the one provided by nature herself is the most commodious and helpful. Under skilled stimulation and guidance there is out-of-doors an unlimited field for experiencing and for experimenting with life. The schoolmaster here is an anachronism. He can no longer tower over his pupils from his rostrum and threaten them with his power to grant or withhold marks and certificates. He is forced to adopt his rightful place behind the student, ever on the watch, ever ready with a word of advice or encouragement, ever ready to be a student himself, but never in the way. Nature herself is the best schoolmaster and rewards the student according to his capacity and powers of observation. The teacher fails here when his student fails, and can no longer lay the failure of his pupil at the door of some inherent incapacity.

The following out-door crafts can be learnt and practised by small children, and yet be of economic benefit and have their intimate contact with life, their definite utility to the family or group :

Poultry keeping, and chicken rearing for egg-production.

Care of fuel and water supply.

Seed-bed preparation, manuring, and planting.

Cultivation of flowers and vegetables.

Drainage and Irrigation; Wood-cutting and Jungle clearing.

As the capacity of the child grows and his experience enlarges, there will come at a later stage a natural demand for that grammar of his art upon which depends more accurate observation, more precise inference, more fruitful knowledge, as well as a desire

for communion with fellow-workers in the same field whose experiences and thoughts, whose struggles and successes are stored up in books,—not in such case task-books to drudge over, but helpmates and friends carrying them out into newer and wider fields of human knowledge.

Already the Indian village boy is accustomed to take his part in the duties and privileges of family life, the herding of the cows, the watering and feeding of them. The inclusion of a small garden within his home compound, properly supervised provides an ample basis for the widest and best form of education by experience. So in the Sikhá-Satra it is the individual plot of ground which will be for both boys and girls the basis of much of their reading, of their writing and of most of their arithmetic.

From the first the child should feel that this plot is playground as well as experimental farm, where it will try its own experiments as well as carry out the planting, tending and harvesting of some definitely profitable crop. Under such a system, text books, class-room and formal laboratory go by the board. There remain the garden plot, the potting shed, and the workshop. Records are kept and reports and accounts written up, revised and corrected, giving scope for *literary training* in its most interesting form. *Geology* becomes the study of the fertility of the plot; *chemistry* the use of lime and manures of all kinds, of sprays and disinfectants; *physics* the use of tools, of pumps, the study of water-lifts and oil-engines; *entomology* the control of plant pests (ants, caterpillars, beetles) and diseases (leaf curl, wilt and bacterial attacks); *ornithology* the study of birds in their relation first to the garden plot and then to the world in general.

There is no room in the Sikshá-Satra for Nature-Study as an abstract subject, divorced from life and the needs of life by boards of education which sit in

cities and recommend questionnaires and examinations to suit their prescribed text books, with rewards to suit the examination results. In life the child has to face the mosquito nightly, perhaps the bug, or the flea, the bacteria of typhoid, of cholera and small-pox, as well as the forces of nature which attack his trees, his plants and his live stock. Nature study is thus transformed into the study of Nature in relation to life and the daily experiences of life.

Almost unwittingly we have wandered into the field of human service and of citizenship, with its privileges and its responsibility for human welfare. By a little practical training and experience seventy-five per cent. of the ill-health of rural Indian could be eliminated within a few months through the activity of the children. Such is their willingness to absorb by experience, to experiment and to learn from hard facts, that the children become the natural and immediate agents in the education of the adults, who by the very responsibilities of their position as bread-winners or house-workers are precluded from launching out into a world of adventure in experiment and who have in all probability lost, through years of struggle and drudgery, that initial equipment without which experiment is impossible,—a fruitful imagination.

It is in fact, through the children in our own neighbourhood, that new life and hope have flooded the villages, which had been lost for two generations past in a slough of despair. We left the village pundit to carry on his drilling in the three Rs., the pupils chained to unnatural benches, and at the mercy of his jailor's arm. They needed first aid, and with that we gained the trust of the parents: the boys revelled with us in our simple games and thus their own devotion was won.

Out of the fruitless attempt of the unorganised adults to stem a village fire, came the training of the

boys as a Fire Brigade and with it drill, discipline, and a sense of the utility of immediate obedience to a leader in case of emergency. Ninety per cent. of the village was attacked with malaria, but through this need of life came the mapping of the village, its tanks, its dwellings, its pits and its drains, and then the digging of water channels,—geography in fact with a vengeance. Not chemistry, not zoology, not bacteriology, not physiology,—but the study of anopheles, the kerosining of tanks, the disinfection of wells, the registration of fever cases and the keeping of health records.

There was a local fair to be policed without cost, and our boys, many of them not more than children, took over the responsibility. There were latrines to be dug and visited regularly, carts to be parked, the water reservoir to be guarded and the whole area to be cleaned up every morning. There were calls for first aid, for sympathy and kindness, for observation and watchfulness, and in the supervisor for perpetual attention, for a keeping himself in the background, for stimulation and encouragement. Out of this grew a movement of the young men in the neighbourhood to take over the responsibility for the watch and ward of their own village, so that funds might be obtained for more and more ambitious experiments in the realms of health, education and civic enterprise.

Lack of fresh vegetables and the insanitary wastage of manure, opened the way for home gardening and the initiation of small garden plots within the home courtyard. Attempts to introduce new crops among the adults had failed because only the worst farmers, who could not succeed anyhow, toyed with the novelties held out to them, whilst the best farmers waited to watch the results. On the other hand, if the boys failed, the parents did not take it seriously because, after all, they were boys. If they succeeded there was a tendency to follow their example. Through

such avenues a road to new health, new life, and a new freedom has been opened, and this by the children themselves.

From the workshop to the garden, from the garden to the field and the farm, and from the farm into the neighbourhood, and so through the Excursion, the Pilgrimage and the Camping Trip, out into the wider field of life. Here for instance, within but two miles of us, are all kinds of activities going on, intimately related to our daily existence, which we tend to take for granted and therefore to leave out of our educational programme :

The Post Office and Telegraph system.

The Police Station, and local Gaol.

The Law Court, and Local Dispensary.

The Station and Goods Yard.

The Rice and Oil Mills.

The Brick Yard.

The Smithy and Wheelwright.

The Carpentry and Timber-yard.

The Potter, the Copper-smith and the Brass-smith.

The Home Weaving Industry.

The Watch-maker and Jeweller.

The Shoemaker and the Tailor.

In each of these there is an art, a science and some element of business. There are tools to be mastered and men to be handled. Each calling opens up a wide horizon for the stimulation of the imagination, for emulation in embryo, for composition and dramatisation and even for more serious apprenticeship in the future. It is only through familiarity and experiment with the existing methods of policing, punishment and discipline, that we are ever going to find some simple path out of the existing maze of law, chained as it is to

outworn tradition and precedent, and the Home-School is the proper and natural place for such experiments to be carried out under careful guidance and stimulation.

To try and build up an institution for its own sake only results in cutting off the children from life. If education means anything it must surely include the provision of means for experiencing every phase of adult life in embryo form. The school must be a laboratory not merely for absorbing knowledge, or for producing sheltered hot-house growth, but for giving out, for adventure into the realm of practical economics and self-preservation, of self-discipline and self-government, of self-expression in the world of spiritual abstraction and human welfare.

To omit this function of neighbourly service is to deprive the child of one of the greatest privileges of the home, where certain service is taken or granted, and already too many schools exist for the depriving of children of the privilege of helping themselves or their fellows and for the encouragement of an unnatural spirit of competition. It is in fact, just out of such self-centred institutions, concerned primarily with their own success in scholarship or games, their own wealth in numbers of students or size of buildings, and run in competition with neighbouring institutions burdened with similar obsessions, that arises that spirit of sectarianism, of nationalism, of selfish individualism and self-assertion which produces in the world the most insidious form of dissension and spiritual blindness.

The Home School, through its extension side, is brought instantly into touch with life. Meteorology becomes the study of the weather in its relation to crop production, and history the examination of date collected in the neighbourhood concerning local industries and crafts, customs and religious expression, traditions of music and drama, but especially concern-

ing forms of social organisation and of that co-operative enterprise which is so slow of growth and yet so significant for progress in the future. Only on such a basis is it likely that a Renaissance of the countryside will come, not at the expense of the past, but firmly based upon all the wealth of previous experience and in association for a common end.

Once kindle the dry relics of the past, rapidly disintegrating to-day under the influence of new forces and agencies which have caught this ancient civilisation unawares; once fire the enthusiasm, the will-to-experiment of youth, and the new day will dawn.

So much of our education in the past has disregarded the fundamental law of nature, the cycle of life. Where nature is ever shortening the weaning time of the developing organism, we insist upon extending it indefinitely, through school-days and college. From the moment the mother-supply, in seed or egg, is exhausted, down must go the roots, searching and experimenting, up must go the young stalk and spread its leaves into the sky, or the young chick venture out alone in search of its own food. From the first also, in nature, there is a giving up, a pouring out, in preparation for the time when the organism will devote its whole energy to some great act of self-sacrifice, some service on behalf of its own kind, the result of which may bear no direct benefit to itself.

We do not claim that the Home School should be self-supporting from the start. That would be a desecration of Nature's own law. But this is no reason for depriving the child of the privilege of working for his own self-support, so far as his ability allows, taking into full account his need for physical, mental and moral growth and enjoyment. So long as the motto of the Home School is "Freedom for Growth", there need be no fear that the powers of the children will be overtaxed.

Freedom for growth, experiment, enterprise and adventure, all are dependant upon Imagination, that greatest of gifts, that function of the mind upon which all progress depends. To release the Imagination, to give it wings, to "open wide the mind's caged door," this is the most vital service that it is in the power of one human being to render to another, and one to which the Superintendent of the Sikshá-Satra must pay constant and undivided attention. It is this gift of imaginative power which distinguishes man so markedly from the eating, preying, procreating animal, and which like the lamp of Aladdin endows him with the power to create a new world for himself after his own fashion.

Of all conflicts in the field of education, that between Imagination and Discipline is the most bitter and prolonged. On the one side stands the child, relieved so often of all responsibility for his own self-preservation, of the worries that accompany the winning of a livelihood, craving the fullest freedom to satisfy the fertile imaginings of his brain, imaginings which like tender plants can so easily be crushed and mutilated, revolting against the bonds of what seems so often an unreasoned discipline, and on the whole much preferring the rule of a simple anarchy, which means no rule at all. On the other side stand the parent and schoolmaster,—practical people of the world, with full experience of its toil and hardship, lovers of law and order, of routine and the common place, because they represent the known in the struggle for life, their imagination long ago crushed out in the struggle for practical ends,—determined to save the child all trouble of experiencing for himself.

If a child is to have freedom for growth it must have freedom to regulate its own life, freedom from interference and supervision; but such sheer anarchy may lead to a licence of growth which may endanger the whole structure. Of all problems, then, this one

of finding the minimum of discipline that is necessary for the preservation of the maximum of liberty is the most difficult. To encourage the children to set their own bounds and to reason out their own discipline needs a real faith in their capacity and a real courage,—the courage to stand by and watch mistakes being made without constantly interfering to set everything right.

There is unquestionably a legitimate field for the setting up of rules. Certain functions, included under the heading of housecraft, and intimately related with the task of self-preservation, have to be performed by every citizen every day. Upon their proper performance depends the well-being of the individual as well as that of the group. They include, cooking, eating, washing-up, bathing, sweeping,—in a word the general care of the body and the dwelling. Until the body is free it is hard for the mind to soar, and thus the body itself is a serious obstacle to anarchy of an extreme kind. Each of these duties, with the help of strict discipline, can be performed in a rapid and efficient manner, thereby adding to the hours of freedom. Children have sufficient common sense to recognise the need for such discipline and can make their own rules prescribing penalties for breaches of it.

On the other hand the ideal behind the running of the workshop must be one of freedom from super-imposed restriction, for craftsmanship has its own standards of excellence, and supplies its own discipline. Provided that the endeavour is intimately related to life,—whether co-operative, as it often will be, or merely individual,—the fullest satisfaction can only be gained in the most perfect manifestation of the capacity to create. The boy's own self-respect in the first instance, followed up by the opinion of the group, both flavoured by a spice of market value,—all these in their own way will provide sufficient discipline.

How often do we stifle the child's imagination for fear that he will never grow up a practical man. Like the brethren of Joseph we have an inborn dislike for brilliant dreamers, who upset the even course of our conventional existence. Yet it is just to the men of imagination that we owe our progress in discovery,—to those who, while recognising the necessary grammar, were willing to leap out into the dark of the unknown, to dream and to imagine new worlds of their own creation. Steering by the light of an anarchic discontent, man has explored and is still exploring every sea of human knowledge, driven forward by the breezes of his fertile imagination. But with the child we insist that he shall not start out on his voyage until he has learnt off by heart the chart we have drawn for him out of our own experience whilst his little ship of life, anchored within the school-room, wallows in the untroubled calm of the conventional, the artificial and the unimaginative.

It is only through the fullest development of all his capacities that man is likely to achieve his real freedom. He must be so equipped as no longer to be anxious about his own self-preservation; only through his capacity to understand and to sympathise with his neighbour can he function as a decent member of human society and as a responsible citizen. In the course of the slow growth of the spirit of detachment he will also eventually succeed in finding a natural outlet for his inborn capacity for creative expression in that world of abstraction which is also the world of spiritual truth. To have discovered the best means of self-expression as an individual, as a citizen and as a creative agent, and to experience daily the delights and the difficulties of perpetual growth,—this is true freedom.

Any scheme, then, which fails to present to the child the opportunity to make these discoveries for itself, is seriously at fault. Education is sometimes

called a tool and is thought of as a factory process. Much of it is perhaps so, and the raw material, the child, is caught and moulded into the desired product as with a machine. But education implies growth and therefore life, and school-time should be a phase of life where the child begins to achieve freedom through experience. By taking it for granted that a child can be taught freedom we deny it life.

There is a world beyond the walls both of home and workshop, outside even the ken of Nature, which can be entirely a man's own, where anarchy is supreme. This is the world of abstraction and of emotion. Having attained self-confidence as to his power to subsist by the labour of his hands, and thus to survive within the human family, both adult and child are free to pass into this other region where there is no grammar except that which the adventurer makes for his own convenience, nor any rules or regulations.

There are very few children to whom this realm of abstraction and emotional expression, this world of the spirit, this kingdom of creative enterprise for its own sake apart from economic or ulterior motive, is not a very real thing indeed. We may stimulate, we may encourage and sympathise, we may provide the means and the opportunity, but if we are honest in our desire to give the child freedom to grow we shall be very careful not to superimpose our own rules, creeds and regulations. The spirit of childhood, like its gift of imagination, bloweth where it listeth, and like the wind it comes and goes, and knows no man-made law. To be real it must be spontaneous. Complete freedom then the child must have, to adventure in the realm of song, of music, of poetry if it wishes, of drama and dance, to revel in the expression of ideas through colour, line or form, or to wander on the limitless horizon of solitary

thought and meditation, in touch with the still small voice within.

To imagine that we can teach the child religion is as reasonable as to think that we can teach an orchid to grow and produce flowers to our taste. A suitable soil we can give, some stimulating fertiliser, some source of moisture and a temperature properly adjusted so that Nature may take her own course. But the law of life is growth, and a recognition of all the principles of growth is essential before we can decide what is good for the plant. To try and compel growth, to infuse life from outside, that is the way to bind and destroy.

Life, to be life at all, has to be lived; and the parents' or professors' sins of repression and deprivation, of rod and ironbound rule, are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation, and may yet lead civilisation to its doom.

