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*TOWARDS*  
*NEW*  
*EDUCATIONAL PATTERN*

*K. G. MASHRUWALA*

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*NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE*  
*AHMEDABAD-14*

### *ABOUT THE AUTHOR*

Kishorelal Mashruwala is one of our rare workers. He is indefatigable. He is conscientious to a fault. No detail escapes his vigilant eye. . . He is singularly free from race, caste or provincial pride, or prejudice. He is an independent thinker. He is no politician. He is a born reformer. He is a student of all religions. There is no trace of bigotry in him. He avoids responsibility and publicity. And yet there is no man who having undertaken responsibility would discharge it with greater thoroughness.

—GANDHIJI (1940)

\* \* \*

We do not always perceive the greatness of those near us as we do of those far away. Kishorelal-bhai was a soul of the same category as Buddha.

—VINOBA (1952)

**DATA ENTERED**

**CATALOGUED**



TOWARDS  
NEW EDUCATIONAL PATTERN

BY  
K. G. MASHRUWALA



NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE,  
AHMEDABAD-14

First Edition, 1,000 Copies, June 1971

NEW EDUCATIONAL PATTERN

Rupees Three



Library IAS, Shimla



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370-1095+  
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Printed and Published by Shantilal Harjivan Shah,  
Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad-14

### *PUBLISHER'S NOTE*

In releasing this book on Education from the writings of Shri Kishorelalbhai, we feel we are only discharging our duty to the departed soul. India knew him as one of the best thinkers of Gandhian thought and a fearless crusader for every right cause. Often his thoughts emerged from the rare depth of his spirit and had a glow and vision all their own. His penetrating analysis often touched the core of the matter and that led him to present it in the right perspective. With this rare gift of mind, Shri Kishorelalbhai practically dwelt on all problems that confronted the country during his life-time—x-raying them as a human scientist. Ever since he joined Gandhiji in or about 1917, Education became a field of his activity. His approach to it was an integrated one, i.e. to create a new man for the new society—non-exploiting and wedded to peace. His work and experience were a rare contribution to the ultimate shaping of the Basic System of Education which Gandhiji presented to the Nation in 1937.

Shri Mashruwala's writings in this book mostly begin from this time till he breathed his last in 1952. To India such approach to Education<sup>7</sup> was quite novel and it gave rise to serious misgivings about the soundness of the Scheme pedagogically and about its utility as a whole in the present day of science and technology. Will it not put back the wheels of progress, argued the critics? Among those who tried to set these forebodings at naught, and most constructively, Shri Mashruwala, perhaps, stood above all. By his analysis of the entire educational practice in India, he could show that all the modern-day subjects of Education—be they science or arts—can be turned to far better use and to the good of all if they were woven correlatedly around a life-sustaining craft.



India still goes by the traditional path, and the Basic Education is only in name in the country's affairs of Education. Yet the fact remains that unless Education is revolutionized, there will be no salvation for the masses. How it is to be achieved without too much wear and tear and how it can be oriented to practical uses of the land is the main current of his thinking in this book.

13-5-'71

## FOREWORD

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala, a very distinguished co-worker of Mahatma Gandhi, was for many years the President of the Gandhi Seva Sangh whose membership covered many important constructive workers in the country. He was a very rational and analytical thinker and writer and made a valuable contribution to the critical study of Gandhian thought in all its aspects. He also served as editor of the *Harijan* after Gandhiji's passing away and fulfilled this work with rare distinction.

In this book are collected Shri Kishorelalbhai's articles on diverse aspects of Education in India. All these articles have been culled from different issues of the *Harijan*. They are divided into seven sections. The first two sections contain Shri Mashruwala's original ideas about the system of Basic Education which was the 'last gift' of Gandhiji to the Nation. The third section deals with Students and Teachers. The fourth is on Religious Instruction. The fifth section deals with various matters relating to our Language Problem. The sixth section is on Higher and Secondary Education and the last section relates to National Language.

I am confident that this new publication by the Navajivan Trust would be welcomed by educationists all over the country and would be helpful in evoking fresh thought and discussion on different aspects of educational reform in India.

Raj Bhavan,  
Ahmedabad

**Shriman Narayan**

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# TOWARDS NEW EDUCATIONAL PATTERN



## SECTION I: BASIC SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

### 1. *THE WARDHA SCHEME AS I SEE IT*

1. The Segson Method is the name given to the Principles and System of Education enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi.

2. It is the application of the law of Non-violence in the training of the child as a prospective citizen of the world.

3. It is claimed that the method is applicable, with appropriate changes, to children of all countries and classes where the military spirit is to be substituted by the peaceful. Anyway it is the only proper system for the people of India.

4. Its aim is to make the child share the obligations of citizenship from the earliest age at which it begins to show some power of discrimination.

5. The centre of the Method lies in a productive industry. All training will be principally through the medium of and in correlation with such industry. Thus history, geography, mathematics, physical and social sciences and general literature will centre round and be related to that industry. Other matters in the above subjects will not be omitted, but greater emphasis will be laid on the former.

6. Industry will not be only the means and medium of instruction; but, to the extent it is an inevitable condition of human life, it will also be an end of instruction. So that the aim will be to inculcate in the pupil a sense of the dignity of all manual labour—even scavenging—and the duty of earning an honest livelihood by labour.



7. It shall be the aim of the teacher to bring out the moral, rational and physical capacities of the child through the industry it is taught.

8. Social sciences and hygiene will not be taught as mere class-room subjects, but by planning joint and several programmes of service to the whole village not excluding dumb creatures. The school shall be the centre for the radiation of culture to the surrounding society.

9. The method may be shortly summed up in the phrase, "From the hand and the senses to the brain and the heart, and from the school to the society and God."

10. It is held that three to four hours' joint daily labour in the corporate life of a school is a healthy and educative engagement for children of both the sexes, whatever the class they come from. "In the interests of both science and industry, as well as of society as a whole, every human being, without distinction of birth, ought to receive such an education as would enable him or her to combine a thorough knowledge of science with a thorough knowledge of handicraft."\*

11. Under the present system, most pupils do not know even at the end of their college career what they will do after completing their studies. Young boys and girls, unless their material circumstances are hopelessly adverse, pass on from primary to secondary schools, and from secondary schools to colleges at an enormous expense, not for the love of cultural and other education which the schools and colleges profess to give, but simply because they do not know what else they should or can do. They go on with their studies merely in order to put off till the last day the difficult question of settling the main career of life. More than twenty years of the growing period of life spent in such aimless manner must inculcate in the pupil the habits of procrastination, hesitation, irresoluteness and inability to take decisions in the pursuits of life. The Se-gaon Method will aim to bring about in the child at as early an age as possible the determination of the future

---

\* Kropotkin.

career it should expect to pursue, and will arm him with at least one occupation, which will give him a wage enough for healthy subsistence.

12. In the Segaeon Method, literacy (that is, information on various matters through reading and writing, and capacity to follow logical or pseudo-logical controversy) is not considered knowledge or even the medium of knowledge, but is regarded only as a symbolical representation both of knowledge as well as accomplished ignorance. The knowledge of these symbols is necessary and useful if the sources of knowledge are alive. It will be the aim of the Segaeon Method to keep these sources alive. The means of doing so are work, observation, experience, experiment, service and love. Without these, learning through books acts even as a hindrance to the development of the spiritual and rational faculties of the student, and also impairs his physique.

13. The Basic Course under the Segaeon Method should include a good knowledge of the mother tongue, a fair acquaintance with its literature, a working knowledge of the national language of India, a general knowledge of such subjects as mathematics, history, geography, physical and social sciences, drawing, music, drill, sports, gymnastics, etc., as well as of a vocation to a degree which should enable an average student to start a modest career, and a zealous and bright student, if he wills, to take up a course of higher, general or vocational training. It should not include at that stage English or such academical courses of other subjects as are not generally required in practical life, or are not absolutely essential for the training of the intellect, or are not necessary as a fair background for further self-education.

14. The Basic Course should extend to not less than seven years, and may be a little more, if necessary. If the schools become self-supporting and if the guardians also get something out of it, the maintenance of boys for a longer period will present no obstacle to the parents.

15. Underlying the Segaeon Method, there are a few fundamental principles regarding the functions and duties

of the State and the minimum living wage. They are stated in the following paragraphs.

16. A State is not worth its name, if it cannot usefully employ all adults willing to work for it and trained by it under a measure of compulsion, and pay them the minimum wage necessary for healthy subsistence.

17. Under the present market rates, it is held that the living minimum wage for India should not be less than one anna\* for each hour of work at the average speed.

18. The present system of government and the structure of society do not come up to this standard. We are not, therefore, worthy of the name 'State'. Whether the deficiency is due to foreign domination or due to ourselves, it has to be remedied. It is claimed that the Segaoon Method, if rightly and courageously applied, will give us sufficient strength and means to bring about the necessary changes.

19. In order to achieve this, the Government must establish its hold over at least one such industry, in which it can employ practically an unlimited number of workers without loss to itself.

20. It is submitted that hand-spinning and hand-weaving is the only industry which can do so in India. It has all the natural advantages of raw material, small outlay and enormous man-power for specialization in that industry. It has also the tradition for it, having been for centuries the sole manufacturer of cotton fabrics for the world.

21. But the spinner's wage, which was never very satisfactory, suffered still more in trying to compete with machine-made goods. The Government as well as the public must remove the competition and, until that is done, entirely disregard it by supporting the Khadi industry at a price which will give the spinner the living wage.

22. It is also necessary that the wage should increase all round at least to the level of the minimum living wage.

---

\* At the pre-war price level.

The Government must gather strength and the people must co-operate to make this possible.

23. The minimum wage mentioned above is the adult's wage. For a pupil of a primary school it is taken to be  $\frac{1}{2}$ \* anna per hour.

24. Reckoning on an average three hours of work per day for about nine months in a year, the test of efficiency of a Segaon school should be that a full school of not less than seven classes, with an average of 25 pupils per class and eight or nine members on the staff, should be able to earn the annual salaries of the staff from the products manufactured in the school. The minimum salary of a teacher is expected to be Rs. 25<sup>+</sup> per month; (in no case should it be less than Rs. 20§).

25. The capacity of the pupils must be increased and the implements and methods of instruction must be improved until at least this standard of efficiency is reached.

26. With the school wage reckoned as above, there is no apprehension of the school products entering into competition with private artisans' products at the present village wage. By the time the village wages rise to the standard expected above, the same progress in the capacity and implements will have been made by the village artisan also. Consequently, the apprehension of competition seems groundless.

27. The school wage mentioned above must, for the present, be guaranteed by the State. At any rate, it should be on a par with the rates prescribed by the A.I.S.A. and the A.I.V.I.A. and progress with them, till it reaches, for the basic school, the standard of half an anna per hour.

For the present, this will seem like subsidizing the school in an indirect manner and, according to present market prices, be held as a financial burden on the Government. But it is felt that there is so much room for improvement in the capacity and implements of workers that, within a period of five years, it should be possible

\*+§ *Ibid*, footnote, p. 6

for the school as well as private artisans (who take to similar training and implements) to rightfully earn the minimum wage desired for them, without making the products appreciably more costly than what they are now.

28. The principle that the school must be self-supporting in the sense explained above, has not been laid down from merely economic considerations, but because it will also provide a practical test of the efficiency of the school as an educational institution on its vocational side.

29. The method as outlined above has been worked out mainly for the Basic Education through the Khadi industry. Other industries are not to be discouraged or neglected; only there are not enough data for working out other handicrafts.

30. The Principles of the Segson Method can be applied, with appropriate changes, to higher stages of education also. All education should have a self-supporting factor in its scheme. In the higher stages, either the institution must be supported by the pupils' labour or fees, or the pupil must be able to support himself from his school or other labour, if he does not pay his fees.

*Harijan, 4-12-'37*

## 2. NOT BASIC EDUCATION

Among those who feel that my criticism of the two Committees of Dr. Tarachand ought to have been stronger than it was, are some from the Madras province. Shri N. Kuppuswami Aiyangar, one of the old Basic educationists, regards the various steps taken by that Government, as meant "to sabotage basic education". He does not spare even the Hindustani Talimi Sangh for not offering spirited resistance to the Government policy. He says:

"You might remember that as early as 1941, as soon as I became aware of this state of affairs, I interviewed Gandhiji in Sevagram and requested him to give his view of the matter. I think you were with Gandhiji at that time. When Gandhiji asked Shri Aryanayakam as to why Congressmen accepted this proposal, he replied, 'If the rich people wanted a different kind of education for their sons, how could one prevent it?' To which Gandhiji replied, 'Whatever rich or foolish people may say, whatever Congressmen may do—I am clear in my mind that this diversion of pupils from Basic Schools to High Schools before their undergoing the full Basic Course is inconsistent with the scheme of Basic Education I have recommended.'

"This view was published widely at that time.

"Ever since I have been trying to persuade the Hindustani Talimi Sangh to declare openly and inform the various Congress Governments about this view, but without success."

Though I do not remember the interview above referred to, I have no doubt about Gandhiji's views in the matter. Bifurcation of education, particularly for linguistic purposes, before completion of the Basic Course is unsound educationally as well as socially, whether the education is for the rich or poor, the town-dweller or villager, or for the boy or girl. I put forth this view not because that was Gandhiji's personal view but because of the soundness of the principle on which it is based.

But it is possible that the Madras Education Ministry might, in this respect, say that it has only followed the decision of the All-India Educational Conference recently held at New Delhi. One of the conclusions arrived at that Conference was that "the period of compulsory basic education (which is eight years in the Sargent Report) must be reduced during the first stage to five years." The Ministry might also say that though the educationists of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh might consider bifurcation at the end of five years to be educationally unsound, there are other educationists who think otherwise, and as it is a matter in which there is a difference of opinion among experts, the Government is entitled to accept what opinion it regards as more appropriate. The Wardha Scheme educationists have not the monopoly of understanding the principles of education.

I agree. But in that case the proper course would be to drop the word 'Basic Education' altogether. Like the word Khadi the term 'Basic Education' has come to mean a particular system of education, enunciated by Gandhiji and promulgated through the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. It should be regarded as a sort of special terminology to be respected as a registered trade mark in commerce. If the term is dropped, the discussion would take place on a different level. Here, the people are deliberately confused.

It is open to the Government to say that while it accepts some of the conceptions of the Wardha Scheme, it does not accept the fundamental points of that system. For instance, (1) Gandhiji laid all his emphasis on education *through* craft which should be so organized that a school with the full number of pupils in all the forms should pay the salaries of its teachers out of the price of the articles produced. The Government do not accept it. They are prepared to give the craft a place along with other subjects, and not more. Then, (ii) Gandhiji's system is inconsistent with the introduction of military training in schools (and even colleges), inasmuch as *Nai Talim* is based on the principle of evolving a society based for non-violence and peace, while the Congress Governments have not abjured

militarism and adequate armament. Again, (iii) the Gandhian system would almost do away with English, except for a very limited number. The view of the Government is that the knowledge and importance of the English language must not be diminished to a considerable extent. Also, (iv) the *Nai Talim* of Gandhiji would not make much difference between the urban and the village students. He would, if possible, make the urban people more rural-minded rather than the villagers more urbanized. The Government view, which it might claim to be progressive, is that even the villagers ought to be more urbanized than what they are now. Lastly, (v) even if Gandhiji gave some scope for industrialization, he regarded it more or less as an inescapable evil. He did not welcome it. That is not the view of the Government. Thus it is this difference of ideology which accounts for different ways of approaching the problem of education by the Government.

If the Government put it so frankly, it would be all understandable. But that is exactly the reason why the Government should adopt a different terminology for their system of education and not call it Basic Education or the Wardha Scheme of Education and should not use Gandhiji's name in association with it.

*Harijan*, 18-7-'48



### 3. KROPOTKIN ON COMPLETE EDUCATION

The following quotations from Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops* seem quite in season when so much is being thought and written about education through handicrafts:

"In olden times men of science, and especially those who have done most to forward the growth of natural philosophy, did not despise manual work and handicraft. Galileo made his telescopes with his own hands. Newton learned in his boyhood the art of managing tools; he exercised his young mind in contriving most ingenious machines, and when he began his researches in optics he was able himself to grind the lenses for his instruments, and himself to make the wellknown telescope which, for its time, was a fine piece of workmanship. Leibnitz was fond of inventing machines. . . Linnaeus became a botanist while helping his father—a practical gardener—in his daily work. In short, with our great geniuses handicraft was no obstacle to abstract researches—it rather favoured them. . . ."

"We have changed all that. Under the pretext of division of labour, we have sharply separated the brain worker from the manual worker. . . . The men of science . . . despise manual labour. . . most of them are not capable of even designing a scientific instrument, and when they have given a vague suggestion to the instrument-maker, they leave it with him to invent the apparatus they need. Nay, they have raised the contempt of manual labour to the height of a theory. . . ."

As regards the masses of workmen of Europe, Kropotkin says:

"They do not receive more scientific education than their grandfathers did; but they have been deprived of the education even of the small workshop, while their boys and girls are driven into a mine or a factory from the age of thirteen and there they soon forget the little they may have learnt at school.

"At the outset of modern industry, three generations of workers have invented; now they cease to do so. As to the inventions

of the engineers, specially trained for devising machines, they are either devoid of genius or not practical enough. Those 'nearly to nothings' of which Sir Frederick Bramwell spoke once at Bath, are missing in their inventions—those nothings which can be learned in workshops only and which permitted a Murdoch or the Soho workers to make a practical engine of Watt's schemes. None but he who knows the machine—not in its drawings and models only, but in its breathings and throbbings—who unconsciously thinks of it while standing by it, can really improve it. Smeaton and Newcomen surely were excellent engineers; but in their engines a boy had to open the steam valve at each stroke of the piston; and it was one of those boys who once managed to connect the valve with the remainder of the machine, so as to make it open automatically, while he ran away to play with other boys. . . ."

At another place he says:

"While industry, especially by the end of the last century and during the first part of the present, has been inventing on such a scale as to revolutionize the very face of the earth, science has been losing its inventive powers. Men of science invent no more, or very little. Is it not striking, indeed, that the steam engine, even in its leading principles, the railway-engine, the steam-boat, the telephone, the phonograph, the weaving machine, the lace-machine, the light-house, the macadamised road, photography in black and in colours, and thousands of less important things, have *not* been invented by professional men of science, although none of them would have refused to associate his name with any of the above-named inventions? Men who hardly had received any education at school, who had merely picked up the crumbs of knowledge from the tables of the rich, and who made their experiments with the most primitive means—the attorney's clerk Smeaton, the instrument-maker Watt, the brakesman Stephenson, the jeweller's apprentice Fulton, the millwright Rennie, the mason Telford, and hundreds of others whose very names remain unknown were, as Mr. Smiles justly says, 'the real makers of modern civilisation', while the 'professional men of science' (except in the domain of Chemistry) provided with all means for acquiring knowledge and experimenting, have invented little in the formidable array of implements, machines, and prime motors which has shown to humanity how to utilize and to manage the forces



#### 4. SEGAON SYSTEM NOT SLOYD

In Gandhiji's scheme, industrial education does not merely mean manual recreation to accompany book-learning. It is not also mere laboratory work in an industry. But it is the teaching of an actual productive occupation of the people. The pupil will produce the same kinds of goods as any manual artisan working for living may, and, so far as possible, with the same implements. Only the output of the child will necessarily be less, and it will have to work under expert guidance. Also, all other training will centre round and be linked with that industry. These do not seem to be the features of the Sloyd, where according to Kropotkin, they 'teach the pupil to make some insignificant work of house decoration.' The difference between Sloyd and Segaon is the same as between a spinning wheel made from a *meccano* box and that made in a workshop of the A.I.S.A. It is necessary to point out this difference because *sloyd* and *meccano* have already found place in several city schools and homes, and it may be imagined that this is 'education through industry' as Gandhiji advocates. There is much educative element in these things. Nevertheless, they fall short of the Segaon method.

*Harijan*, 18-12-'37

## 5. THE EXAMPLE OF THE WARDHA SCHEME OF EDUCATION

Opposite the window of my house facing the courtyard, was standing a trunk of the withered tree. Yesterday, the landlord's servant and his mate pulled it on the ground, and until midday, chopped it into long pieces. His wife and a five-year old son had also accompanied him. The wife helped him to carry and collect the pieces at one place. As the work was over, he gave a piece of wood and a saw to his wife to carry and carried the another piece by himself. Thus they must have spent three to four hours in this work. All this while, the little son also busied himself with some work or the other. For a while, he would pile up the tiny chips of wood running helter skelter with the action of the saw. For another while, he would watch with interest the buzzing romance of the saw at work. No sooner did his father lay the saw aside, than the child ran to it and gripping it firmly by his hands, reposed it on a flat and round log of wood. At first, he put its edged part above. Some thought ran through his mind and he reversed the position. Yet another thought, and the side was changed anew. And lastly he so watchfully rested it on the ground! Then he rolled a piece of string lying by, and held it in his tiny hand. He did this all on his own initiative. As he went on with his work, his lips would open to speak to himself. All then left for home.

The servant and his spouse were both unlettered. I could never imagine that they would even dream of teaching the child through work. Nor had they brought him there with such an intention. He had simply come after the mother. But he took interest in their heavy chore.

He must have imagined too that this work had something to do with their bread and butter and that it must be useful some way. So he noticed the work with deep interest and also played his part in it as he understood it. With the result, he not only spent his time without bother to his parents, but also amused them amidst toilsome job by his gay and innocent chatter.

If this very example is presented in a scientific manner, it becomes precious knowledge and will emerge from it the Wardha Scheme of National Education.

(Adapted from the original in Gujarati.)

*Shikshan Ane Sahitya*, April, 1940

## 6. NEW RULE, NEW SCHOOL

Shri Vinoba\* in the *Sarvodaya* monthly (Hindi) of November 1950, writes.:

“In the course of several of his speeches since the Nasik Congress, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel has expressed his extreme dissatisfaction with the present system of education. He calls the ‘bookish education’ now in vogue as utterly worthless, nay, harmful.

“If such a statement were made by an ordinary man, it would not be so important even if the speaker were a distinguished thinker. But when it emanates from one who is not only a great leader of the nation but also holds the reins of Government, one would naturally ask the question: ‘Why does he not change the present system of education if it is so rotten in his view?’ Sardar Patel has answered this question also in his Ahmedabad speech. He has said: ‘We are not able to introduce the revolutionary changes that we should in education on account of the cobwebs of the past difficulties that cling around us.’

“It is also clear from his speech that whatever might be the difficulties in the way, the obstructions have to be removed as quickly as possible. I have more than once expressed my views on this matter. If the system of *Nai Talim* placed before us by Gandhiji is not acceptable, and if the evolving of another suitable system should take some time, let all educationists sit together and discover it and till they do so let all schools and colleges be closed. The closure of schools will not cause as much harm to the nation as will be done by continuing the old harmful system.

“Once in the course of a discussion with some friends, I put the question: ‘When an old Government changes and yields place to a new, will the old flag continue?’ ‘Certainly not,’ was the prompt reply. Then I added, ‘So also in education. As a new flag follows a new Government, so also new education must follow

---

\* Vinoba Bhawe, eminent constructive worker, profound thinker and father of Bhoodan (Land-gifts) movement.

a new Government. If old education continues in spite of it, we should take it for certain that the Government is new only from without—the inner condition remaining unchanged.’”

This reminds me of what took place at the Sabar-mati Ashram, *circa* 1920. The experiment of the Sabar-mati school did not give satisfaction to any one. It was found that though the teachers (i.e. we) were good men individually we did not possess those qualifications which would make for the success of a true national school. So Gandhiji ordered the school to be closed for an indefinite period, retained all the teachers who were prepared to stay, and asked them to train themselves in spinning, weaving, agriculture and also reconsider various subjects of literary study and the system of pedagogy from the standpoint of national education and *ahimsa*.

Of course, there is the apprehension that Vinobaji's suggestion—which I too put forth some months ago—also comes within the purview of Shri Vallabhbbhai's remark that this too is a cobweb, which we cannot easily get our release from. When several 20th century educationists meet together, they might agree to differ on most points including the one of closing the present institutions!

But this seems to be a necessity. Nothing else would happen, if there were chaos for a few years. Willy-nilly we would have to submit to suspension of these activities. If we can do so boldly and consciously, to prepare ourselves for a new life, a few years spent in self-preparation will give us better results afterwards. The worm does not change into a beautiful butterfly until it shuts itself in a cocoon for several days. Apparently it looks as good as dead, but is intensely alive and evolving inside. So, too, education will not cease to evolve during the period of its apparent suspension. But it requires boldness, faith and earnestness of the heroes of political and religious revolutions.

*Harijan*, 25-11-'50



## SECTION II : SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

### 1. EDUCATION THROUGH CRAFT

The proposition that education is defective unless industrial training forms in it a necessary and normal part, may now be taken as generally accepted by educationists. But the method of approach is not quite clear. There are several sides to the question, which might be more fully considered. If the ideas connected with "education through industry" are made clearer, they may also give us a clue to the right way of approach. I give here some of my thoughts on the subject.

We know the vast majority of human beings have to lead a life of hard physical labour. It is their only means of life. And even the microscopic minority, who do not need to labour for their bread, need the physical capacity to use their limbs, in order that they may keep their health. All children should, therefore, be brought up in such a way that they become physically and intellectually fit for manual work. Most of us, so-called educated people, have only to look at ourselves to realize the defectiveness of our present system of education in this respect.

Industrial educationists are inclined to class occupations as "productive" and "unproductive" without taking into account the physical strain involved. To my mind, we should consider three things when thinking of industrial education—Productivity, Labour and Usefulness of the Labour where it is unproductive such as that of the washerman, nurse, etc.

Work involving more or less hard muscular effort may be conveniently classed under three heads:

- (a) Work involving monotonous mechanical operations, "unskilled labour";
- (b) Work requiring more or less training, "skilled labour";
- (c) Work requiring theoretical and technical knowledge and calculation, "expert and engineering skill".

The dislike for physical labour which we have developed as a part of our "civilization" has taught us to attach progressively higher values to these three forms of work in their above order.

But whether industries are mechanical or manual, there will always remain to man a large amount of monotonous, unskilled labour. In fact, mechanization of labour tends ever towards the increase of unskilled work, leaving the skilled processes to the machine. Therefore, to cultivate a dislike in the young for monotonous labour, is to unfit them for one of the unavoidable conditions of human life.

Consequently, the phrase, "education through industry" should imply, amongst other things, the developing and maintaining of the physical and mental capacity of the pupil for hard unskilled labour. Naturally this should not be taken to mean that training for skilled and expert labour has to be given a subordinate part in education.

Thus my vision of an average primary and secondary school is an institution in which students become familiar with hard and unskilled labour, get a skilled artisan's training in some useful vocation and, at the same time, gain general education and culture.

This aim has been very well expressed by Prince Kropotkin in his admirable book, *Fields, Factories and Workshops*. . . . It not only makes out a strong case for the subject under discussion, but also makes valuable suggestions for executing the idea.

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In passing, a caution should be given with regard to physical culture. Athletic exercises, games, drills, etc., are necessary and proper in their own way, but it should be understood clearly that they are not a substitute for physical labour.

Now, the question is whether it is possible to make such a school self-supporting, i.e. whether the money realized from the pupil's labour will be sufficient for running the school efficiently. Failing this, there are two other alternatives. One, that the pupil should be able to feed and clothe himself out of his school earnings; the other, that at least the industrial section of the school should become a successful business concern. I would like to feel that it is possible to fulfil one of these three conditions, but I must frankly admit that up to now I do not clearly see the way to it. I would simply say that in a poverty-stricken land like ours a scheme which would return part of the wages to the pupil himself, and take only part as an income for the school, is likely to result in more satisfactory and rapid progress.

But in any event we want education to spread, and we should be willing to save every pie from other departments to this end. We ought to look upon this educational expenditure as an investment which will yield large material and moral returns in the future. Up till now we have regarded even our purely literary education as a good investment; how much more then should we prize the value of vocational education.

In any case, education must become efficient. Gandhiji says, let that efficiency be not only in the pedagogical sense, but also in the economic and physical sense. Surely, there is nothing to find fault with in that. Even if we do not succeed in making individual schools economically efficient in the profit-making sense, we shall, by keeping an eye on that factor, at least reduce the loss, and we may be able to make some types of schools fairly self-supporting. In any event, we are thereby going to add to our resources and not reduce them. Gandhiji is too good

an educationist to force the profit-making side of the problem beyond the efficiency point educationally. Has he not launched the Spinners' Association into financial risk by making the already costly Khadi costlier because he was not satisfied with the earnings of the spinner?

In conclusion, it is clear to me that we shall help ourselves best by directing our thought and energy towards mentally working with him in finding out ways and means, rather than in striving against him.

*Harijan*, 9-10-'37

## 2. THE LIGHT-HOUSE

The reader will remember the historic march of Gandhiji from Sabarmati to Dandi (literally, light-house or lamp-post) in 1930 for breaking the Salt Laws. Karadi is the village nearest to Dandi and has been for more than quarter of a century now a centre of national education and Khadi. The population of the village is about 1200. It is a village of seamen and agriculturists. The national school (Bharat Vidyalaya), under the able management of its two successive principals, Shri Manibhai Patel, and Shri Labhshankar Vyas, carries on constructive activity among children. It has now entered upon making experiments in the field of Basic Education from the point of view of making it a self-supporting school. For instance, in October last, the teachers and pupils of Standards VI and VII made a project of going on a journey to Vedchhi about 60 miles on foot. They decided that they should earn the money needed for the travel. This is the report of the experiment:

“The experiment was so very successful that I have begun to feel that it will be possible for us to realize in actual life Bapu's dream of self-supporting Nai Talim. 32 pupils spun for 1½ hrs. daily for 23 days. The remaining hour and a quarter was given to weaving. (As we have not yet acquired proficiency in weaving,

we had to get part of the yarn woven by artisans.) The Khadi thus produced, on sale, fetched us Rs. 127. The cost of cotton and weaving charges was Rs. 56. Our travelling expenses including railway fare for our return journey were Rs. 68-12-0. So the result has been very encouraging.

"Thereafter during 33 days of work from November to January last (there was vacation for about a month), 104 boys studying in Standards III, IV and V produced collectively 185.5 sq. yards of Khadi (width 45"). After deducting the cost of cotton, weaving charges and miscellaneous expenses, we have realized Rs. 250 in cash. During the current year 210 boys of the lower standards, who are still plying the *takti*\* will begin to ply the Charkha. Necessarily the out-turn of yarn will be greater with their help. I, therefore, believe that we shall surely be able to reach the ideal of self-support. We shall know the result more definitely at the end of the year. The monthly paysheet of the teaching staff of the school is Rs. 800. If we succeed well, we may not have to go a-begging before the Government or other donors for funds . . .

"Shri Vinoba was pleased with our efforts and remarked: 'The experiment is good.' He explained to us that co-ordination of knowledge with work was the central principle of Nai Talim, and if we could prove that the school can earn the salaries of the teachers fully or at least 50 to 70 per cent thereof, it would be qualified to be regarded a Nai Talim school. I am trying to make the school fit for this test."

The letter also related another experiment:

"The Gujarat Nai Talim Sangh was founded at the Gujarat Basic Schools Conference held here in August last. It was decided that the whole school should work for one full day every year and pay its entire earnings as its fee for the membership of the Sangh.

Our school observed 30th March for the purpose. The boys made various proposals for getting the best returns; such as, fishing, collection and sale of salt, digging, sewing, etc. Ultimately we did the following:

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\* A simple contrivance for spinning.

Work	No. of workers	Hours of work	Measure of work	Value Rs. As.
Spinning	175	1145	23 srs. 5 tolas (yarn)	86-4
Digging	25	90	525 cft.	10-8
Sewing	4	22	30 shirts	11-4
Carpentry	1	8	A cupboard	3-0
Total	205			111-0

"Of the 205 boys, 54 were quite young. The older boys worked for 7 to 8 hours each; digging was done for 4 hours only by each worker.

"The value of yarn (Rs. 86-4-0) represents the net gain after deducting the cost of cotton, weaving charges, etc.

"The accounts for February and March for the students of Standards III, IV and V show that the boys earned Rs. 225 collectively. The salaries of the teachers for these three classes are Rs. 200. We have yet to see what the result of the whole school will show in relation to the entire budget."

While this is going on, the Gandhi Kutir founded by Shri Dilkhush Diwanji has organized a strong Khadi centre among the villagers of Karadi and round about. Shri Dilkhush Diwanji is also a teacher and his whole outlook is educative and not professional. His speciality is that he has carried on his work mainly through the local boys trained by himself.

Shri Vinoba visited Karadi during his itinerary recently. The following report of Khadi work placed before him shows what well-employed leisure can do in terms of production and money:

### Spinning

Age of workers : From 7 yrs. to 103(!)

Period of report : 50 months

Hours of work : Leisure only

Number of spinners: 103

Daily average production : 80 hanks

Total production : 51 mds. (very nearly)

### Weaving

Weavers : 20

Engagement : 21 months' full employment

Khadi produced: 11227.5 sq. yards weighing 53.3 mds.

Total value of yarn and Khadi produced: Rs. 30,089--8-0

Wages earned : Rs. 6,837--6-9

Net profit of the village : Rs. 5,794-14-3

This is exclusive of the production of Khadi for self-sufficiency. The figures relating to this activity are:

Period : 21 months

Spinners : 235

Yarn produced: 27.3 mds.

Khadi produced : 4946 sq. yards.

Production per capita: 20 sq. yards.

Advantages secured by the spinners: useful employment of leisure; freedom from the worry of getting ration cards for cloth, and standing in queue; conquest over idleness; creative activity; satisfaction of self-reliance; sense of dignity; love of labour; moral awakening; and solution of the cloth problem.

It is a village which leaders and other doubters in the message of the Charkha should visit and see for themselves what Charkha can do.

The following message given to the people of Dandi by Shri Vinoba is worthy of record.

"I am glad to see your achievements. But there is much yet to do. You must not get even an inch of cloth from outside. Dandi means light-house or lamp-post. It must give its lustre to the whole country. It was Dandi that awakened the whole country. The first battle of India's freedom was fought at this place. You know its history. You have seen Bapu with your own eyes, have heard him with your own ears. You saw

how he electrified the whole nation. In course of years the story will appear like those we hear in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Dandi will be made world-famous. People of the world will come to visit this place. They will like to see what you do, how you live, and to what extent you are united, clean and healthy, etc. All these gifts will come to you through your industriousness. You must stand on your own legs. You must produce all you need normally in your own village: your food, milk, cloth, fruit, education, sanitation and other necessities.

“This is Rama Raj. It is the installation of Rama in every heart. He cannot be installed if passion and anger reign in the heart. May your schools and families develop all those virtues which are needed for the establishment of Ram Raj.”

Wardha, 18-5-'49

*Harijan*, 12-6-'49



## SECTION III : STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

### 1. STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

A correspondent sends an item from *The Mail* (Madras) of 7th December 1949, from which the following is condensed:

“The students of the Mrs. A. V. N. College celebrated their College anniversary by holding an ‘Andhra Day’ and a ‘College Girls’ Day’ with various engagements and functions.

“On the ‘College Girls’ Day’, the boys were refused entrance. They protested that it was an insult to them not to be admitted to the girls’ function while theirs was open to all, and boycotted the function. Attempt was made on behalf of the management of the college to pacify the students, promising that they would be allowed on the Women’s Day. As the students wanted the Principal to apologize, no settlement was reached.

“Two dramas were staged. At the close of the function the boys, who were till then peaceful, became unruly and indulged in stone-throwing. With great difficulty, the police conducted the visitors outside the College. Anticipating further trouble, the Principal cancelled all other functions.”

It is difficult to understand from the report why attempt was made on behalf of the management to pacify the students by promising that they would be allowed on the Women’s Day. It appears to me that the demand to be allowed to participate in the function as well as of apology from the Principal were impudent and ought to have been resisted.

But unfortunately such occurrences have become but too frequent and widespread. The intimate spiritual and respectful relation between teacher and student has altogether disappeared in the present-day schools and colleges; and educational institutions have become training centres of *goondas*\* and bad characters. Decent, peace-loving and

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\* Hooligans, ruffians.

studious students are finding it increasingly difficult to feel happy in the college atmosphere. Student life, instead of being felt as the happiest period of one's life has become to the serious student a waste of time, money and energy.

I must also remark that junior, youthful teachers as well as the lewd type of reading matter, which is often prescribed in studies, in the name of literary studies, along with the flood of sex-literature, novels, detective stories, cinemas, etc., are also responsible for this loss of moral balance of the youth.

But over and above these causes is the fundamental defect in the character of what we provide in the name of education. "Youth is the time for practising austerity and residence in forests," said Swami Ramadas, the great *guru*\* of Maharashtra, meaning that youth should be a period of discipline with hard physical and mental labour and should not be one of comfortable, pleasure-seeking life. Cities, cinemas, fashionable dresses and modern luxuries will not create those leaders, who will make the people a great nation.

Nor will military training provide the proper type of hard life and discipline, because modern military training is a mixture of one part of hard work and discipline, and one part of wine, woman and licentiousness. It is not creative. What is needed is the hard life of a productive worker and the simplicity and regularity of a student of *yoga*§.

The country will not lose much if all colleges are closed for a period of ten years as preparatory to their removal to fields and forests for new type of education. But this realization is not likely to come until mercantile and Communist civilizations have played themselves out.

Wardha, 12-12-'49

*Harijan*, 1-1-'50

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\* A seer, a preceptor.

§ The Hindu system of philosophy and practice of esoteric meditation, having as object the union of the individual human spirit with that of the universe.

## 2. THE SUPERIORITY COMPLEX MUST GO

The following is taken from the "Uttar Pradesh Newsletter" of *The Times of India*, dated May 22, 1951:

"Last year, 80,000 boys and girls sat for the High School Examination. This year, their number rose to 1,00,000. And in the coming year it may reach—so the educational authorities estimate—1,50,000.

"And as the number of undergraduates and ex-high school boys jumps, their 'price' slumps.

"How much is a school-leaving certificate worth these days? Let an ex-high school boy who works as a 'water-sprayer' answer.

"He says: 'It is Re. 1-8 a day, during summer and none during the rest of the year. Because that is what I earn by spraying water on *khas tattis* during the summer months.'

"And how much is an undergraduate worth these days? If you put this question to one of the tribe who has just secured the job of a *chaprasi*,\* his reply will be: 'Formerly it was Rs. 85 a month; now it is only Rs. 45. I was then a clerk and now I am only a *chaprasi*.'

"But there are not as many *khas tattis* to spray water on as there are ex-high school boys without work; nor is the job of a *chaprasi* waiting for every unemployed undergraduate.

"What is the outlook for the luckless lot? 'Bleak'—if you look at the lengthening waiting list at Lucknow's employment exchange. On an average 2,500 more people crowd the queue before the exchange every month. And the exchange officials are able to find jobs for barely 500 of them. Result: The queue for jobs that do not exist is getting longer.

"Meanwhile high schools—and intermediate colleges—are getting on with their job of producing more boys without jobs."

What is wrong here is not that a high school boy has to accept the job of a water sprayer at Re. 1-8 per day, or

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\* A peon, orderly.

that an undergraduate has to be a *chaprasi* at Rs. 45 per month. Indeed, if we want education to spread universally, having regard to the present standard of high school and collegiate education, no water sprayer should have less education than that of a high school boy, nor should a *chaprasi* be less educated than an undergraduate. And if different occupations are doomed to have different scales of payment, the two cannot complain if they receive the remuneration appropriate for their respective jobs.

The present condition looks 'bleak' for two reasons: (i) because only a few water sprayers and *chaprasis* are matriculates and undergraduates, and so a comparison is made on the ground of 'education'; and (ii) 'the educated' by their very training are made less efficient and sturdy water sprayers and *chaprasis* than their uneducated colleagues. The result is that both the employer and the employee are more satisfied when the worker is uneducated than when he is educated.

What is needed is (i) that the superiority complex of the educated must go; he must cease to think that a water sprayer's or a *chaprasi's* job is not a proper kind of employment for a matriculate or an undergraduate, or that it is less honourable than the work of a copying or a despatching clerk. If there is to be eight years' compulsory education the whole nation will be educated; every boy and every girl, even a road labourer, a sweeper, and a cart-driver will be a matriculate or an undergraduate, that is, will have the amount of information and literary equipment of the present-day matriculate or undergraduate. Since the illiterate cooly will disappear, all work will have to be done by 'ladies and gentlemen'; (ii) the education must, therefore, be improved so as not to decrease the educated person's efficiency and inclination for jobs requiring physical and unattractive labour; and (iii) the differences in scales of remuneration of different jobs must not be so wide as at present. Indeed, if differences are to be allowed, better remuneration should be paid for more strenuous or less attractive work than for less hard and more pleasant work. Thus a sweeper and a *chaprasi* are justified

in asking for better wages than a clerk, and if all are equally educated, there is no reason why the clerk should receive Rs. 75, the *chaprasi* Rs. 45 and the sweeper Rs. 30. The order might more justifiably be the other way. We might draw a lesson in this connection from the rules of remission and rations to prisoners in jails, where the sweepers and the hard-work prisoners get more remissions and rations than the medium and light-work prisoners. The jail system based on remissions and adequate provision of prime necessities of life is more natural and just than a social system based on money and liberal provision of sports, cinemas and drinks.

*Harijan*, 30-6-'51

### 3. A STUDENT'S DILEMMA

*Q.* It is said that the Transport Services of West Bengal advertised for about 300 situations vacant for drivers and conductors. About 50,000 candidates applied. There were several graduates among the applicants. Inevitably about 49,700 applicants will be disappointed and among them there will be hundreds of degree holders. Is this not a travesty of university education? Is there any use for such university training? I am a college student. Should I pursue my studies?

*A.* The type of present university education is certainly not suited for a great number of students thronging the colleges. Whether this particular student is fitted for it or no, I cannot say. But I wish to remove a wrong conception about the implications of university education. I do not see why degree holders should be ashamed of applying for the posts of drivers and conductors or even sweepers on the street. There need be no feeling of shame in pursuing any honest avocation, whatever may be one's educational attainments. Kabir\* was a weaver, Namadeva‡ a tailor, Raidas‡ a tanner; although they were intellectually highly qualified. Graduates have to study their writings to obtain degrees of Masters and Doctors. It is only because we have unnecessarily related university degrees with a particular scale of initial pay and style of living that we think that it is below the dignity of a graduate to drive a tram-car or a motor-bus. If there is no shame in driving your own car, there need be none in driving one for earning your maintenance.

Wardha, 9-7-'49

*Harijan*, 24-7-'49

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\*‡ Saints of India, lived between 13th and 15th century who though almost unlettered composed highly spiritual and mystical poetry.

#### 4. *STUDENTS' FEES AND TEACHERS' STRIKES*

##### **Students' Fees**

About a year ago, the Bombay Government raised the fees of their educational institutions. It created a strong agitation which was somehow settled. A few days ago the Saurashtra Government attempted to do the same. This led to a very serious situation in Rajkot on account of the entry of other elements into the students' agitation. The Government has been obliged to retrace its steps, at least temporarily. The situation in other States is similar.

The problem of fees is an intricate one. On the one hand, there is no doubt that the cost of the modern system of education has become prohibitive to a very great majority of the middle classes, who go in for it more religiously than they go in for religion itself. This costliness is in spite of the fact that the teacher-class is generally very much inadequately paid and has been agitating for better salaries in most of the States. They have a genuine grievance both in Government as well as private institutions. The teachers in the latter are in even a worse condition than in the former, although some of the private institutions have become a paying business. So far as I know, except the Bombay Government no other State has yet done anything to ameliorate their condition, and there is much dissatisfaction among them.

Their dissatisfaction leads not only to deterioration of the standards of education, but to positively harmful education. Not only Communism or communalism is bred there, but also dishonesty, fraud and sexual vices.

Then, where there is an all-round increase of costs and prices, the cost of maintaining and conducting schools is also bound to increase. I do not think that it is possible for any government in India to cope with the expenditure of the modern type of education, if the structure of society

remains what it is, namely, capitalist with a middle class clamouring for scholastic teaching only. If education in India is to spread it has to be self-supporting. It can be self-supporting in a correct manner only if it becomes productive. However, it can be seemingly self-supporting, if the Government does not make itself responsible for providing secondary and collegiate education and leaves to the industrialists and well-to-do people to meet its expenses, Government itself doing no more than provide some scholarships or chairs of particular types and grants of land, etc. This seeming self-supporting education would not be possible without fees, and would not be better than what it is at present. It may be described as one which no one is satisfied with and, yet, which hardly one has the courage to discard.

We are at present enacting a tragedy of education. The nation has to make a choice between the principles of *Nai Talim*, which is still in the process of development, and the current type. Both have to be self-supporting but in the former the Government would be able to play its full part. In the latter, governments may pretend to do so but are not likely ever to succeed.

### **Teachers' Strikes**

As stated above, school teachers have also been agitating for an increase in their salaries in several States. They have been organizing themselves and adopting the methods of strikes, etc., for the redress of their grievances as other workers. Writing in this connection a teacher says:

"In schools and colleges students' strikes are the order of the day. But of late it has been copied by the teachers to get redress of their numerous grievances. Teaching is the noblest of professions but the sorriest of trades, everybody will admit. It is high time for our Government to give proper attention to this matter. In any reorganization of our educational system the lot of the poor teachers must be given due and proper care. Unless and until their condition is improved, there is no chance of any substantial success in any new venture. Only a set of contented teachers can work wholeheartedly any new scheme.



“But, strange enough, Ministers conveniently ignore or shelve this question on the stock argument of lack of finance. They do find enough finance to give huge salaries to so many high officials both at home and abroad. But when it comes to the lot of the teachers, high talks of idealism, selfless service, renunciation and sacrifice for the sake of the infant nation are put forth. No wonder the teachers are driven to the verge of despair and they resort to Satyagraha methods.

“The doubt which prompted me to write this letter is, would Gandhiji have allowed strikes by teachers? I wrote to Gandhiji on this topic; but alas! before that note reached him he had left us. I remember reading in the *Harijan* an article by Gandhiji on the strike by *bhangis*\*. He has in clear terms said against it. Now, teachers are also *bhangis* in the sense that they remove the filth of ignorance from the minds of small children. As such I think Gandhiji would not favour the idea of strikes by them. Then what is the alternate course for them? They too must lead an honest life. The meagre salary they get at present does not suffice for a decent living. Resolutions and petitions of teachers' associations are found to be fruitless. They are tired of waiting and as days pass on the heavy burden of debts is becoming heavier and eats them literally. It is only out of sheer despair, therefore, that they resort to strikes.

“Personally, I do not like the idea of strikes by teachers. But for want of a better solution for their ills I cannot persuade any of my friends. Can you show us a way out? Please spare some space in your paper for this cause.”

Scavenging and teaching are no doubt such essential services as must be performed as a religious duty, irrespective of what remuneration they bring to the performers. But this is not true of these services only. A doctor and a nurse must also treat the patient irrespective of fees.

But when such duties are systematized into definite professions with definite payment on contractual basis, the duty part remains and the religious part is very much obliterated, if not altogether destroyed. A religious duty is unilateral. It does not depend upon the other side

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\* Indigenous term applied to sweepers, etc.

performing its part. A simple contractual duty presupposes that both the parties will duly honour their respective parts. Thus the due performance of the duties of the scavenger, the teacher, the doctor and the nurse presupposes that the employers will look to their proper remuneration equally dutifully. The troubles arise because the employers do not care to do so. Not only that, they do not care to pay any serious consideration to that side of the question until compelled to do so by actively organized movements.

Bad as going on strike by scavengers, teachers, postmen, railwaymen, etc. is, it is difficult to blame the employees for doing so, if the employers cannot be made to perform their part of the duty unless the employees resort to some kind of effective action. Non-violence is the only condition, which they should be expected to meticulously observe. Non-violence, of course, includes truth, and also arbitration and other peaceful methods.

This applies only to the type of schooling going on in the country. This system of education is prohibitive and will not succeed in our country. The whole of this kind of teaching from primary to university standard will have to be abandoned. Even if governments have no faith in the idea of self-supporting schools, sheer circumstances will compel them to take to it. In no other way will it be possible for the nation to educate its masses.

But this is not to dawn upon us without going through a long period of troubles and failures. Nor can the idea be taken up apart from the other parts of the Gandhian programme. So in the meantime I see no smooth sailing for either the teachers or their employers. Strikes and similar non-violent coercive methods, unbecoming as they are in connection with the noble professions of teaching, scavenging, nursing, etc., would have to be faced.

Wardha, 12-7-'50

*Harijan*, 5-8-'50

## SECTION IV: RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

### I. RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE STATE

[When Free India's Draft Constitution was being discussed in the Constituent Assembly Shri Mashruwala commented on the proposals relating to Religious Instruction in the State as follows:]

This question is likely to come up for discussion before the Constituent Assembly, when it settles the Constitution of India. The Draft Committee's propositions on the subject are as follows:

"21. No person may be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination."

"22. (1) No religious instruction shall be provided by the State in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds:

"Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the State but has been established under any endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.

"(2) No person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person, or if such person is a minor his guardian, has given his consent thereto.

"(3) Nothing in this article shall prevent any community or denomination from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in an educational institution outside its working hours."

The articles, as drafted, are, in my opinion, unsatisfactory. It will be noticed that Article 21 does not prohibit expenditure of taxes for the promotion and maintenance of

any particular religion or religious denomination. It prohibits simply imposition of a tax specifically for that purpose.

Then, as regards Article 22, it bans religious instruction completely only in institutions *wholly* maintained out of State funds. But, the word 'wholly' is capable of very wide interpretation. An institution depending on private funds only to the extent of a few rupees per annum cannot be regarded as *wholly* maintained from State funds; and it would have the right to impart 'religious instruction', whatever that term might mean. So, in spite of the Article, it will allow a Minister for Education who wants religious instruction to be imparted in all educational institutions, to so manage that within his State there is no institution which is wholly maintained by the State. The Proviso makes this clearer still. It enables the State to manage educational institutions burdened with the condition that religious instruction shall be imparted in them.

Thus while there is an appearance of providing education without religious instruction, there is the facility of imparting it in every institution. If not providing religious instruction is a 'freedom', the left hand takes away what the right hand appears to give.

But, I am one of those who do not subscribe to merely so-called secular instruction. I believe not only that religious instruction should be given in educational institutions, but that the entire atmosphere of the school should be religious and moral, and that instruction in no subject should be devoid of a moral and religious approach to it. And yet I am entirely at one with those, who do not want the educational institutions of India to be so many centres of religious dogmas and sects.

To explain this, it is necessary to say what I mean by religious instruction. This phrase, be it noted, is not explained in the Draft Code. If the language used in Article 21 is to be a guide to the expression, it would seem that what is meant by "religious instruction" is "instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination".

But I urge that it is possible to give religious instruction and to have sound religious atmosphere pervading all the activities of the institution, without making it "instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination", and I would say that every State institution must provide it. What has been a curse to the modern world is that on the one hand, there is want of pure religious instruction (or rather there is provision for definitely irreligious education) and on the other, there is freedom to impart traditional, unprogressive and reactionary instruction in particular religions or religious denominations. If we wish to raise the moral level of the people it is necessary to give the growing generation definitely religious atmosphere on the one hand, and to discourage sectarianism on the other.

In order to provide this and to bring out my meaning more clearly, I would suggest the recasting of the Arts. 21 and 22 as follows:

Art. 21. No part of the State funds shall be spent or specifically appropriated for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination, and no person shall be compelled to pay any taxes therefor.

Art. 22. (1) No instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination shall be provided by the State in any educational institution wholly or partly maintained out of State funds, and the State shall not accept any responsibility for administering an educational institution established under any endowment or trust which requires the imparting of instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination.

In case of any such responsibility in existence before the date of this Constitution the State shall take steps to hand over administration of any such institution to a proper body.

Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to imparting general religious instruction, which is free from or not confined to any particular religion or religious denomination, in any educational institution wholly or partly maintained out of State funds or administered by the State under any endowment or trust, whether or not such endowment or trust requires that such general religious instruction should be imparted in such institution or

even if it requires that instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination shall be imparted in it.

(2) It shall not be compulsory for any person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds to take part in the instruction of or receive instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination, or attend any religious worship of any particular religion or religious denomination, that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto. (I believe that even a minor may not be compelled even with the consent of his guardian to do these things.)

(3) *Subject to the aforesaid*, nothing in this article shall prevent any community or denomination from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in an educational institution outside its working hours.

Before closing the article, let me add a few words in respect of articles 19 and 23, which relate to the same subject.

Art. 19 (1) reads as follows:

“Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

“*Explanation*—The wearing and carrying of *kirpans* shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion.”

I suggest that in lieu of the explanation, the following words should be added in the main clause after the word ‘religion’, namely

and to carry any badge, symbol, mark or other thing on or about their persons as a sign of their religion.

Art. 23 runs as follows:

“23. (1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script and culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

“(2) No minority whether based on religion, community or language shall be discriminated against in regard to the admission of any person belonging to such minority into any educational institution maintained by the State.”

“(3) (a) . All minorities whether based on religion, community or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

“(b) The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion, community or language.”

I suggest for consideration the following provisos to this Article:

*To Cls. (1) and (2):* Provided that the State may require the knowledge or study of any particular language or script as a necessary condition for admission in any educational institution maintained or recognized by the State.

*To Cl. (3):* Provided that the State may require the imparting of instruction of any particular language or script to every person taking instruction in any such educational institution, whether it receives State aid or not.

*Harijan, 25-4-'48*

## 2. THE PRAYER IN SCHOOLS

[These are relevant extracts from Shri Mashruwala's article entitled *Common Prayers*, appeared in the *Harijan* issue of Jan. 19-'52.]

I have always been of opinion that all prayers should be in the spoken language of the people. The reciter or reciters should be able to follow the meaning of the texts recited. . . The essential thing to be seen is whether the text of the recitation contains any idea, not acceptable to the followers of other religions. The tagging of religion to a particular language is an unusual sing-song manner of reciting it, is a die-hard superstition, and has to be removed. Naturally, the school and other public prayers should be the first place to start this reform.

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The great thing, therefore, to be done is to remove the superstition that a religion must accept also a particular language for praying to Gods. One way is to select universally acceptable noble thoughts and prayers from every scripture, put them into the regional language, and adopt that as the text of the prayer.

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If my views are accepted, there need be no quarrel about the prayer—except, perhaps, for those who are fanatical adherents of either of the theory of no religious education or of that of a single denominational religion. The prayer would be neither in Sanskrit, nor Arabic, Avestha, Pali, Prakrit, etc. The prayer would be equally of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Parsi and every other religion, and also of none of them. The text of any religion, if unobjectionable, would have place in it in a spoken and easily understood language of the country.

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The Constitution of India has laid down a few principles regarding religions. This is one safeguard. The very fact that the prayer contains translations from texts of every religion will be another moderating influence. Public opinion will be a third one. Suitable text-books, giving ennobling stories and literature from various religions would be a fourth and so on. While all safeguards may be adopted against intoleration and proselytization, moral and religious education must not be neglected in schools.

Bombay, 6-1-'52

*Harijan*, 19-1-'52

## SECTION V : THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

### 1. THE MOTHER TONGUE MEDIUM

The mother tongue theory about the medium of education is not so simple as is often assumed. It requires to be examined a little closely.

The fact is that God has not gifted man with any natural language. The young of a cuckoo is popularly supposed to be brought up in a crow's nest. But the young cuckoo learns to *cuckoo* and not to *caw* as soon as it is able to yell out. It is so because the two birds have two different sounds ordained for them by Nature. They are their respective languages or 'mother tongues'. Indeed, they are so universally their particular tongues that all over the world all the cuckoos *cuckoo* and all the crows *caw* in the same way. They do not need to make such distinctions as, mother tongue, provincial language and so on. It is not so in man. A child of Gujarati parents if brought up in a Marathi home will begin to speak in Marathi, and if in an English home in English. If it is brought up in an environment where two or more languages are spoken as a matter of course, it will pick up all those languages fully and may unconsciously create for itself a mixed language. Indeed, it may not speak any human language, but *caw* and *cuckoo* if brought up with birds. Except for the shrill sound which a human child makes at the time of its birth all the world over in the same manner, a human being has no natural language of its own. It acquires later the language or languages which it hears round about itself. It may be the mother's tongue or the father's tongue, or neither. It must be a local language nevertheless.

Shri Devdas Gandhi's\* language is Gujarati; his wife Shrimati Lakshmi Gandhi's is Tamil. They have settled

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\* Mahatma Gandhi's fourth and last son who was Managing Editor of *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, died in 1957.

down in New Delhi. Their children have been brought up to speak Hindustani. It has become the children's own tongue. Shri Aryanayakam\* is a Ceylonese Tamil. Shrimati Ashadevi is a Bengali; their daughter has been brought up in Sevagram among Marathi-speaking people, and has been trained in a Marathi Basic School. She speaks Marathi as well as any Sevagram inhabitant, though she also speaks Bengali perfectly well—having come down to Sevagram after she had already learnt to speak. A few hundred Gujarati families have settled down in Khandesh (Maharashtra) and Berar for more than two hundred years now. They speak a sort of Gujarati at home. There is a considerable mixture of Marathi in it. Apart from admixture of words, that vocal peculiarity which marks out a man's original inhabitation has undergone such a complete change in them that even if one of these Gujaratis spoke grammatically correct Gujarati, he would be found out to be a Gujarati of Maharashtra. So also would the Gujaratis, who have settled down in C. P.‡ Hindi and U.P., be detected as belonging to a Hindi province. The same thing could be said of such Maharashtris, Marwadis and others who have settled down in another province. Though there are scores of apparently distinct languages among men, men are not incapable of giving up one language and adopting an entirely different one, as cuckoos and crows are.

Thus viewed, the word 'mother tongue' is not an exact term. Indeed, it is a misnomer. A child's own tongue is the language which is spoken round about it, that is, the local language. It may be the mother's, the father's or the neighbour's.

It is educationally important and sound that the child should receive its training through *its own language*.

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\* The late Shri E. W. Aryanayakam, who was Secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram.

‡ Central Provinces, now a part of Madhya Pradesh.

The word mother tongue must 'therefore' be understood to mean the child's tongue.

But, even so, the term must not be understood in a narrow sense. 'Tongue' must be interpreted to mean its literary form and not the actual dialect or local form of the language which a child learns to speak in its natural environments. Otherwise, the tongue of a Gujarati child in the Surat district could be regarded to be different from that in Ahmedabad or Kathiawad. But, I believe, no reasonable man would urge that the children of Surat should be taught the Surat-form of Gujarati, while those of Kathiawad, the Kathiawad-form. It would be agreed that the Gujarati language to be taught should be the established literary form of the language of Gujarat. That the literary form itself might undergo gradual changes in course of time is a different matter.

It is true that it is difficult to give up one's home or ancestral language. People migrating to other provinces cling to their ancestral tongue, may be in a disturbed form, for centuries after all their relations with the original home have become severed. But, that it is difficult to give it up does not mean that it cannot be so done even if one so wishes. Not only the children of Indians who have settled down in England have fully adopted the English language, but even some Indians living here have deliberately given their children that language from the very commencement. But most people are unwilling to do so even when it has become obviously necessary.

As a matter of fact, none is able to preserve one's ancestral language intact even in one's own province. In another province the regional language has to be accepted sooner or later. It seems to me a natural and proper consequence of migration. I do not think that it is necessary to cling to one's own language, after one has decided to take up his permanent abode in another linguistic region. At any rate, the second generation should be brought up in the language of the region. The doctrine of "education through mother tongue" should be modified to mean "education through the literary form of the child's

environmental language". If in spite of change of province, the linguistic environment has remained practically unchanged, it would mean the language of the child's ancestral province or, so to say, the 'mother tongue'. Otherwise, it would generally be the literary language of the region.

There is no and there ought to be no politics involved in this. It is based on sound principles of education, and convenience. Under sound patriotic sentiment all Indian languages are ours, even as all Indians are our countrymen, and the whole country is our fatherland. Every year hundreds of families all over the country migrate from one province to another. Almost every province has a few inhabitants of every other province. Some of these migrations are temporary; some are permanent. The insistence on the part of these to cling to their respective original languages is dichardness. And a demand on the part of the people of their former provinces that the children of such emigrants should be trained through the language of their ex-province is unreasonable. A philological study of the dialects of Bhils or other Adivasis resulting in interesting information about the amount of mixture of one or other of the major languages in their dialects may be a good literary engagement. But it is unwise and unpatriotic to make use of the results of the investigations for starting an agitation for getting a taluka or a district transferred from one province to another. Against the background of the country and the nation, it matters very little that a few lakhs of Gujaratis become speakers of Marathi or vice versa. A change in the length of arms does not alter the measurement of the angle contained by them. And if that angle is the right Indian angle, whether the Gujarati arm is longer or the Marathi one, does not matter.

Indeed, a young correspondent—a Gujarati merchant—asks, "Will it be a great loss, if in course of time, all the provincial languages of India become as obsolete as Sanskrit, Pali, or Prakrit and only a common Indian language subsists?" I own I have no answer to this except

that it is difficult to persuade provincial politicians, linguists and educationists to adopt such an attitude. I would personally not feel sorry for such result. But since this is a matter not merely of reason but also of deep sentiment, even a right step cannot be imposed from above. The people have to be reconciled to it through appeal to reason and persuasion. It is also the way of non-violence and democracy. Until then it may be necessary for every province to arrange for giving education through more languages than one, in spite of administrative and other difficulties.

*Harijan*, 10-10-'48

## 2. THE MEDIUM OF EDUCATION

On the question of Medium of University Education some friends say that I congratulated the Dr. Tarachand Committee\* for a step which was forced upon it and not taken by it, inasmuch as the Committee was expressly told by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad§ that the Government had decided that English was to remain the medium of education for five years only and that the question to be decided by it was whether thereafter education should be imparted through the federal language or through the regional languages. Thus the Committee had no choice left to depart from the five-year period. But it is alleged, the Committee did not see eye to eye with the Maulana Saheb's policy, and what they have done is to do their best to frustrate that policy so that at the end of five years Government should be compelled to allow a further period for the English Medium. If the Committee had accepted Maulana Saheb's direction heartily, it could not have, with any show of reason, proposed that English should be exclusively the medium of instruction and examination for five years. It should have, the critics say, seen what I have suggested, namely, that they must make the

\* More about this in Sect. VI.

§ The then Education Minister in the Central Cabinet.

beginning of imparting education through Indian languages from the very next year or at the latest after two, in the First Year classes. But they have simply recommended that they should make preparations for the change during the next five years. How will they do it? Is it possible that, if they do not begin teaching through an Indian language from an earlier period, it would be possible for them at once to take the final year students of the year 1953, to classes where lectures would be given in Indian languages? If the intention is that after five years they will begin from the First Year class and then proceed year after year to a higher class, it means that they are making preparations for making out a case for extension of the English medium for a further period of five years.

I confess I did not read this meaning, as they say, "between the lines". I am unwilling to entertain the suspicion that the Tarachand Committee's resolution was not intended to be seriously carried out, though I saw some defects in it and also propaganda in the Press by educationists who are unwilling to give up English and who feel nervous about the results ensuing from the abandonment of that language as the Medium of Education. They almost think that India will revert to the dark ages the moment it gives up the English Medium. Some of them think that India will cease to be one if English was given up. They also seem to have curious notions about the development of a language. They seem to think that a language has to be first developed in a lexicographer's or philologist's library before it can bring out respectable literature or deal with technical subjects of Science or Law. They do not seem to have an adequate idea of the contribution, which peasants, labourers, artisans, petty traders, etc., make in coining technical terms and enriching the vocabulary. They forget that language develops with actual use and the necessity to use it. They do not realize that education could be given in the mother tongue or the national language although the actual text-books to be read as also the technical terms to be used for the time being are either English or English and Indian both.

I would like to place before them the experience of the Gujarat Vidyapith\* in this connection. Though the experiments were of short duration and the workers were only a handful, and though it too suffered from not having all its professors earnest enough to teach through an Indian language so that English persisted in some of the subjects, yet the progress it made was fully satisfactory. During the few years of its active working, one professor published a translation of a text-book on Economics. Though that book was not original, it laid the foundation of thinking on economic subjects in the mother tongue, with the result that we have now an original text-book on Economics by Shri Narahari Parikh†. Maybe, as is the case with books written in Europe, this book will be considered as representative of one particular school of Economists. But it is, nevertheless, a complete text-book. Another professor, Shri R. V. Pathak‡ produced an original book on Logic and a third on Advanced Accounting. There were also good books on Commercial Geography and Statistics, and original works on Education, Philosophy, etc. Some of these books are prescribed as text-books by the Bombay University and the Education Department. The Gujarat Vidyapith also produced, besides its popular dictionaries of the Gujarati and Hindustani Languages, glossaries of technical terms on Physics, Chemistry, Economics, Mathematics and some other subjects. Without the knowledge of English, Muni Jinavijayaji¶, Pandit Sukhalalji‡ and Pandit Becharadas§ edited works in the Prakrit language. Some of these received high encomiums from scholars in Germany and England. The late Professor Dharmanand Kosambi+ who had lived

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\* The National University which Gandhiji started in 1920 for the spread of National Education.

† Well-known constructive worker and educationist of Gujarat, died in 1957.

‡ Popular Gujarati writer, died in 1955.

¶ § Gujarati's oriental scholars, who have original contributions to their credit.

+ The man with little education and no money roamed far and wide in quest of Knowledge, wrote many valuable works on the life and teachings of Buddha, died in 1947.



in U.S.A. and Russia, and knew both English and Russian, never thought that he could not deliver his best lectures on Buddhism in Hindi or Marathi. The Constitution of the Gujarat Vidyapith was drafted originally in Gujarati and its wording has not raised any difficulty in its interpretation.

I confess that during that period, most of us held views about the coining of technical terms similar to what several protagonists of Indian languages hold today, namely, of coining as far as possible Gujarati or Sanskrit words for even international and current foreign words. Consequently, some of these books were couched in new technical terms. We have revised our opinions since and come to hold that in the best interests of the nation, the rejection of every foreign word was advantageous neither to the growth and enrichment of our own language, nor to our people, nor to the cause of education. So our attitude towards foreign words has become more liberal than what it was about 25 years ago.

We have grown to these opinions by experience. And so, when I say that the introduction of an Indian language as medium of instruction at any stage whatsoever is not an unsurmountably difficult task, I say so with a degree of confidence. I believe that the professors and teachers of the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapith\* and the Kashi Vidyapith§ will fully support my propositions from their own experience. The contribution of the professors of these Vidyapiths in the shape of excellent text-books in their respective languages is by no means mean. All that is wanted is the will. Given that, within a few months, the professors and teachers, unless they themselves had not merely crammed their prescribed text-books, would find that teaching in their own tongue was the easiest and the most natural way and that the want of text-books and of ready-made technical terms was not, after all, so great a handicap, as they think it to be. Apart from the fact that

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\* § Both these were started, more or less, on the pattern of the Gujarat Vidyapith to espouse the cause of National Education.

perhaps more books are already available in the various Indian languages, than the learned professors are aware of, and that at any rate there are sufficient books for making a beginning, I submit that until you begin actually to teach through your own languages, you will never be able to produce good text-books, whether original or translated.

I wish to warn the authorities ruling the various Universities and the Governments concerned that they would be doing the greatest harm to the people and to their own reputation if they thought of deceiving the nation by resolutions which they did not mean to work out.

*Harijan*, 4-7-'48

### 3. THE PLACE OF ENGLISH

Basic Education demands that education must not be bifurcated for a period of at least 8 years, if not more. It should mark the completion of a stage, after which majority of students are not expected to take further training in regular teaching institutions. This means that whatever training is imparted to them must be fairly sufficient in itself, and that they should not be made to begin a study which will necessarily be too poor to be of practical use.

English is a subject of this type. One or two or three years' study of English is quite insufficient by itself; and it cannot be taught without prejudice to the teaching of craft, which is the centre of Basic Education. Hence it has become a controversial issue between two schools of educationists and nationalists.

If we examine this issue well, the whole thing boils down to finding room both for craft education and linguistic education. We are so placed or so developed that I do not know whether we are more language-mad, or more compelled to learn several languages under the force of circumstances. The mother tongue, a provincial language (including Urdu), Hindi, Sanskrit, English—all prefer their claims against us. Then, if the student is a Muslim,

Arabic has a special claim upon him. A South Indian language must not also be neglected by a good citizen. Now, either we have to stop somewhere, or devise a scheme which will provide for everything.

If we can persuade ourselves to extend the system of Compulsory Basic Education to 9 or 10 years instead of 7 or 8, it would not be impossible to give more languages than two (the mother tongue and Hindi) to everyone. Nine or ten years' course of Basic Education would not only equip the pupil with better knowledge of the craft, and make the school more completely or better self-supporting than now, but would also make it possible to teach at least two of the following languages: English, Sanskrit, a modern Indian language (besides the mother tongue and Hindi). Science, Mathematics, etc., would also be better taught and grasped. Those whose capacity for languages is poor could have alternative branches of study. If along with this we can persuade ourselves to reduce the number of our scripts, the study of languages would become easier still.

Our present conservatism again and again throws us back into old and rejected grooves, with the result that we make no progress.

Controversies are good when they are aimed at finding the truth. The present controversy about the place of English and the stage at which it should be introduced is not so. It serves only to create factions. There are two ways of resolving it. Either, as I have suggested above to extend the Basic Education period to 9 or 10 years, or to make English compulsory for all, whatever the standard at which it is introduced. High and low castes in education should be definitely avoided as very harmful. If English must be taught before the end of the accepted basic period, it is far better that even basic school pupils are made to learn it than that they should carry the feeling that they belong to an inferior type of school. No doubt, the knowledge of English, which they will get may not be more than that of the English primer and be perfectly useless; nevertheless it is better than the development of an

inferiority complex. Really the whole Primary *cum* Secondary course should be treated as a full and indivisible unit; so that there is no abandonment of three hours' craft at any stage.

*Harijan*, 12-3-'50

#### 4. TEACHING OF REGIONAL LANGUAGES

Referring to "the resentment expressed by the Gujarati-speaking public of Chinchani village in Thana District against the order issued by the District School Board, Thana, enjoining the primary schools there to teach Marathi as a compulsory subject", the Government of Bombay has issued a statement explaining its policy. It states that the order is in accordance with the unanimous recommendation of the Provincial Education Ministers' Conference convened by the Government of India in August 1949. The rules framed in pursuance of that recommendation require, *inter alia*, that if in a particular linguistic region people speaking a language other than the regional one desire that their children should be given education (up to standard IV) through their own mother tongue, the District School Boards would have to do so, provided that the number of such pupils is not less than 40, and provided further that "in order that the children should not be divorced from the main stream of the regional social life, the regional language is taught compulsorily from standard III onwards. Thus, for instance," the Press Note says, "in a Marathi school in Surat District, the medium of instruction is Marathi, but Gujarati is compulsorily taught from standard III onwards as an additional language, as it happens to be the local regional language."

I think that, apart from the question of detail as to whether the teaching of the regional language should commence from standard III, or IV, or V, the principle underlying the policy is quite proper. And if educationists are

of the opinion that it should commence from standard III, people should bow to it, as one might bow to the opinion of a body of experts in any other field.

But I take this policy as sufficient for a whole linguistic province in general. Broach, Baroda, Ahmedabad, etc., cannot be regarded as any but Gujarati regions by normal men; similarly Poona, Satara, Nasik, etc., must be regarded as purely Marathi regions. Dharwar cannot be regarded as anything but pure Kannad. But it cannot be said so about Bombay, parts of Thana, Súrât, Belgaum, Dang, etc. People with no political or other bias must regard Bombay to be a multi-linguistic region, and parts of Thana, Surat, Dang and Belgaum to be bi-linguistic ones. Whether the State of Bombay remains a composite State as at present, or divides into smaller units, such multi- or bi-linguistic areas must always be regarded as multi- or bi-linguistic, and the people in these regions (i) should have the facility of receiving all the education through their respective mother tongue (subject to provisions regarding number of pupils, etc.) and (ii) must learn also the other language of that region. This obligation in a multi-linguistic city like Bombay would have to be restricted to knowing either Gujarati or Marathi for pupils whose mother tongue is neither the one nor the other. Thus the pupils of a Tamil, Telugu or Sindhi school in Bombay should learn either Gujarati or Marathi as the regional language; and every Gujarati pupil must know Marathi, and every Maharashtri, Gujarati. Hindi will stand apart as the common language for all.

I admit that this suggestion casts some extra burden upon the pupils. But it must be accepted as inevitable in the peculiar geographical and environmental circumstances of these regions. And, after all, it is not so heavy a burden as to be regarded as unbearable. A majority of people in such regions do speak both the languages with perfect ease, if not with right accent and perfect grammatical accuracy. Teaching imparts to them only grammatical accuracy and tries to correct the accent. It does not burden them too heavily with an unfamiliar vocabulary. It

gives them also enjoyable and valuable literature of both the languages, besides broadening their outlook. It will establish goodwill much better than the goodwill missions trying to do so in an artificial manner. The ill-will between the Bengalis and the Biharis would not have been there and would disappear, if Bihar would treat Manbhum as a bilingual area, where everyone must know both Bengali and Hindi, and public offices recognize both equally. But no; Biharis will first coerce Bengalis, and the Bengalis of Calcutta will retaliate; and after some heads have been broken, goodwill missions will start trying to repair the mischief. Can we not stop the mischief from the start?

*Harijan*, 21-10-'50

## 5. WHY LINGUISTIC CONTROVERSIES ?

When there is a desire to evade the implementation of policies thrashed out after mature deliberation, a controversy is restarted after a brief rest. The controversy about the medium of instruction in Universities is one of these. So far as *Harijan* is concerned, its stand has been repeatedly made clear, and I do not think any useful purpose can be served by rearguing the subject.

In the view of *Harijan*, the regional language should normally be the medium of instruction even in the University.

Exceptions:

(1) the medium in institutions of an all-India nature would have to be Hindi, wherever the institution might be situated; and whether it is of a university type or lower grade;

(2) professors, specially employed or invited from other provinces, if they are unacquainted with the regional language, may be permitted to use Hindi either for a period of transition or for the full term of their employment;

(3) students of other provinces may be allowed to answer their questions in Hindi, instead of the regional language. But they may not claim to be instructed in Hindi; and would also have to study the regional language.

It goes without saying that Hindi can never be neglected as a language to be studied by every student. The command over Hindi must be greater than a modern graduate has over English.

I believe that the above position is natural and practical, and in accordance with the sound principles of education. However, I would make the following offer to all University professors and teachers:

Take it that English is to be discarded on 31st December 1951. You are allowed to choose between the regional language and Hindi in order to make the start on 1st January 1952. Make your choice and begin the work. If you think that Hindi will suit you better than the regional language, go ahead with it, and let us watch the results of our experiments for a sufficient period.

I would not much bother with technical terms in the start. Let the professors coin any terms they like and use them along with the foreign terms to avoid confusion. If they are unable or unwilling to coin or accept a term suggested by others, I would allow them to use the foreign terms at this stage. The immediate and first task should be the abandonment of English without loss of time; because it is unnatural and against the principles of education.

*Harijan*, 21-10-'50

## 6. STUDY OF SANSKRIT

*Q.* Even if the knowledge of Sanskrit may not be quite necessary for attainment of Truth or efficacy of prayer, the retention of Sanskrit in prayers, rituals, ceremonies, etc. even without understanding it, has saved it from total extinction even under extremely adverse circumstances. Now that we have gained our own, shall we not encourage the language of our ancients, who have given us the Vedas\*—the stores of knowledge? To say that the Vedic hymns and other compositions in Sanskrit should be recited in their translations into modern languages is to rob the soul of our country.

*A.* There can be no intention of neglecting or not encouraging the study of Sanskrit. It is to a very great extent the raw material of Indian languages, and a good study of it will always be needed. But it should form part of our literary activities, and get a place of honour in the study of languages. I do hope it will be studied by a greater number of people than now. But, having regard to the very great number of subjects which form part of studies in modern education, the number of those who can attain even moderate scholarship in Sanskrit, will, I am afraid, be not very large even with greater spread of education. Millions of people will go without knowing even the correct pronunciation of Sanskrit words. If religious prayers have to be effective—i.e. provide real spiritual food to the praying individual, and if religious scriptures are meant to enlighten those who read or recite them, they should cease to be unintelligent semi-superstitious practices. Prayers and scriptures whether original or translated, must reach the people in a language which they understand and can master—not through study of

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\* The earliest Hindu scriptures in superb lyrical form containing perennial source of wisdom. They are the Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda.



grammars and books so much as through their use in ordinary life.

The respective needs of literary attainments and religious growth should not be confused. There need be no fear of the soul of the country being robbed or lost if the character, intelligence, and knowledge of the people is enhanced, even though they do not understand a word of Sanskrit. What the questioner regards the soul of the country, is really its conservatism.

*Harijan*, 13-6-'48

## SECTION VI: HIGHER AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

### 1. HIGHER EDUCATION

According to the *Associated Press of India* report the Committee on the medium of instruction at the University stage which met at New Delhi in the first week of May under the chairmanship of Dr. Tarachand has passed, among others, the following resolutions.

“ (1) that there should be a five-year period of transition, during which English would continue to be the medium of instruction and examination in the universities, and that this period should be utilized to prepare for the introduction of the regional or the State language of the area concerned;

“ (2) that a test in the federal or national language of India should be obligatory for all students, but the result of the test should have no effect on the career of the pupil;

“ (3) that the process of replacement of English by the regional languages should be gradual and by stages and that the English language should be a compulsory subject in all universities;

“ (4) that a board of philologists and scientists should be appointed to prepare a common scientific terminology for all Indian languages, making use of international terms as far as possible and in consultation with provinces and universities. The Board should be directed to complete its work within five years;

“ (5) that the Central Government should examine the question of allowing extra-territorial jurisdiction to the various universities in order to help in the solution of the language problem of linguistic minorities within a region;

“ (6) that the script eventually adopted by the Constituent Assembly should be accepted by all the universities—a minority holding that the Roman script should in any case be an additional script for federal as well as other Indian languages.”

I make a brief comment on these items.

Having regard to the various hurdles that have to be crossed before English could be displaced, I think that

the demand for a five years' period of grace for effecting the transition is fair. But the period should be looked upon and adhered to strictly as a pledge. We all know that a three days' period of grace is allowed on negotiable instruments. But it is expressly understood that three means three and the period of grace allowed cannot be exceeded.

This reminds me of the day on which I first saw and heard Gandhiji in 1917 at a public meeting in Bombay. The meeting called upon the Government of India to put an end to the system of indentured labour then in vogue by a particular date. Gandhiji warned both the Government of India and the audience to take him seriously in regard to the date. The date was not meant as a mere bluff. If the date passed off before the Government put an end to the system, he would not rest until the grievance was removed. And be it noted, the system was put an end to as demanded.

Let us also remember another occasion when a date was fixed and strictly adhered to. At the 1928 session of the Congress, a period of one year's grace was allowed to the British Government for granting Dominion Status to India. If Government allowed the period to lapse the Congress creed was to be altered from one of Independence to that of Complete Independence. The period came to an end on the midnight of 31st December 1929, and along with the announcement of the birth of the year 1930 came also the announcement of the change in the Congress creed. The various movements which followed the announcement for the achievement of that creed are well known.

In the same way I hope the Government of India and the various universities will regard the five years' period as a solemn promise to the people of India that when schools and colleges reopen after the summer vacation of 1953, every institution will give the highest education available in the country in the regional or State language of the institution. (I assume that the meaning of the latter phrase is that assigned to it in the Draft

Constitution of India. That is to say, if a State or member of the Indian Union is a single-language region, the medium of instruction would be the language of that State; and if it is a multi-linguistic region it would be the language of the region in which the institution is situated.)

If this promise is to be implemented the third item mentioned above would have to be taken to mean that as a matter of fact instruction through Indian languages will have to be commenced in the first year college classes by at least June 1949, and every year an upper class would have to be added to it. And if I am right in thinking so, I suggest that it would help the process of transition and be a boon to students if the examinees are allowed even by now to answer their question papers in the regional or State language of the university even if they have read or have been instructed through English. In the earlier years, this language might take the form of an Anglo-Indian mixture but it would help to form in the mind of the student necessary grooves for thinking out the subject in his own Indian language. It is a habit which takes a long time to form and requires to be inculcated. From this point of view it appears to me that the decision to continue English as also the medium of examination requires modification.

The second item in the resolution refers to the place of the federal language in the studies. If that language is to be a fully developed inter-provincial language of India capable of standing on a level with even English in course of time, it will be necessary to give it the same place of prominence in schools and colleges as has been hitherto given to English. It can be so done with less expenditure of time and energy than English, because of its affinity to the various Indian languages. I do not look upon examination as a very desirable institution in its present form. But since it holds an important place in all regulated teaching, if the idea goes among the students that the study of the federal language may be safely neglected, that language will always remain unsatisfactory and undeveloped. It is well known that when the University of

Bombay gave Regional Language, Geography and Science a place of certification instead of examination, these subjects were found to have been neglected. Really, it would have been more appropriate to substitute the words *English Language* in place of *Federal* or *National Language of India* in item 2, and the opposite in item 3.

The fourth and the fifth items appear as necessary corollaries . . . .

On the whole, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Tarachand Committee deserye to be congratulated for the work they have done. I hope the various departments and professors of the various universities will work hard for making the resolutions a perfect success. Since the resolutions are the result of the combined efforts of all universities and Governments, this policy will, I believe, be regarded as accepted by and binding on all universities, and I hope there will be no attempt to escape from it.

Bombay, 14-5-'48

*Harijan*, 23-5-'48

## 2. BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Last week I congratulated the Dr. Tarachand Committee for their progressive resolutions regarding the medium of instruction at the University stage. I wish it would have been equally possible for me to extend the same to his Committee on Secondary Education. I regret to observe that the resolutions as reported by the *Associated Press of India* are extremely disappointing. Let me first give some of the items of the resolutions:

"1. That before joining the first year of a degree course, the student should undergo a course of education for twelve years;

"2. that with regard to the period of gradation of secondary education, after a compulsory junior basic course of five years there should be a senior basic or pre-secondary course for three years and then a secondary course for four years;

"3. that the teaching of the federal or national language should be started at the end of the junior basic stage and should be compulsory throughout the pre-secondary stage but may be optional thereafter;

"4. that English should be optional in the senior basic course except for those who take up the pre-secondary course;

"5. that English should be compulsory at the secondary stage as well, as long as it remains the medium of instruction in the universities;

"6. that the federal language should become a compulsory subject at the secondary stage when English ceases to be medium of instruction in the universities."

I have nothing to say on the first. With regard to the other items it appears that the Committee worked in entire ignorance of the decisions arrived at by the other Committee\*. For, if it had known that that Committee had already decided that at the end of five years from now all education in Indian universities would be given through regional or State language it should have known that no student of the pre-secondary or the secondary classes would be able to enter a university before the medium of instruction in that language had changed into an Indian language. As I observed in my article on that Committee's

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\* Under the same chairmanship but for recommending medium of instruction at the University stage.

resolutions\*, the implementation of its resolutions required that the first year courses in colleges would have to begin instruction through an Indian language by the middle of the next year, as there were some degree courses which took five or more years for completion.

Another impression created by the resolutions of the Secondary Education Committee is that the Committee was unwilling to leave the unscientific rut which the system of pre-university education has been following in this country for several years. Giving up a rut means new adjustments and radical changes, and the organizers of the Secondary and Primary Education do not seem to desire it. This is regrettable. As has been pointed out by the Basic Education Conference held at Patna§, any attempt to reduce the period of seven years prescribed for Basic Education is educationally unsound and should be resisted. Apart from the fact that permanent literacy cannot be achieved within a short period, it is impossible to realize the objectives of social and civil education before the child is at least fourteen years old.

The Patna resolution is the result of careful examination and experience of several years. The unnecessary haste and short-sighted desire of middle-class people to see their children cram English words and recitations as quickly as possible, is the cause behind the demand to bifurcate Basic Education after the fourth or the fifth year. It is unscientific and not in the interest even of the pupils of the class by which it is made and is positively detrimental to the majority.

There is another defect also in this bifurcated resolution. The Committee appears to require the pupil to decide at the end of five years whether he was going to complete his studies at the end of the basic education course or whether he was going to the secondary stage also. If the former, English was to be optional for him. If the latter, it was to be compulsory. Since most pupils would be

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\* *Ibid*, pp. 61-64.

§ The Fourth All-India Basic Education Conference held in April 1948.

unable to decide at that stage whether they would go in for the secondary course or no, and most of them would also fondly hope that they would do it if they could, the practical result will be that English will have to be compulsorily taken by almost all school children. It would have been simpler to say that at the end of five years, English will be a compulsory language in the basic course than to make this semblance of option through bifurcation. It would seem that we are not satisfied unless we create somewhere a sort of caste. At the end of five years, pupils have to be divided into an English knowing caste and a not-English knowing caste.

This is not the end of the confusion. Item No. 3 makes the study of the federal or national language compulsory at the end of the senior basic stage and throughout the period of pre-secondary stage, that is to say, for a period of three or more years. But thereafter it will be an optional subject. This means that during the four years of the secondary course, time will be given to pupils to forget what little they may have studied during the three years. So this is to be the fate of the study of the *lingua franca* of the country!

We, who have passed through the present unscientific system, ought to know the great amount of waste of time and energy involved in this practice. It might well be called the "learn and forget" method of education. For, students are taught for five years, and the bifurcation enables several to give up learning thereafter, with the result that they lapse into illiteracy. Then some are taught English for three years, and several of these will bid goodbye to schools at the end of that period with the result that most of them will remember no more English than what is needed for reading postal addresses. This system, according to the Committee, is to be made applicable to an additional subject, namely the federal or national language. I strongly feel that the non-acceptance of the advice of the Basic Education Conference, which being a body of experts particularly devoted to this problem is entitled to great respect, is unwise.



To turn again to the resolutions. Item 5 says that at the secondary stage English would be compulsory as long as it remains the medium of instruction in the universities. Even if this Committee did not know what the other Committee had decided, it ought to have known generally that sooner or later the policy of the country would be to give more and more importance to the regional, State or federal languages than to English. Apparently, the Committee does not believe in the seriousness of this policy and assumes that whatever faddists might say, English would continue to enjoy the place of prestige as at present.

Both Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhiji had great dissatisfaction for the organizers of the Primary and Secondary Education in our country on the ground that instead of building up education from below and making university education to start from the point where secondary education left, they had fallen into the habit of following higher education in their organization of the lower one. This is evident from the Committee's resolution that the federal language should become a compulsory subject at the secondary stage when English ceases to be the medium of instruction in the universities. It should have been just the opposite. It ought to have been said that they could not hereafter guarantee that they would be able to provide students for the universities capable enough to follow the English medium of instruction, as they were more interested in giving the basic knowledge a sound foundation. They wanted to see their students well advanced in the knowledge of the regional and the federal language rather than in English. If the universities required better knowledge of English for acquiring higher education, they might make adequate provision by special classes or sessions for teaching that language. The function of secondary education was not to be feeder institutions of the universities but it was the function of the latter to continue the thread of education from where it had been left by the secondary schools.

I am sorry to feel that the Committee's work has been so disappointing.

*Harijan*, 30-5-'48

## SECTION VII: NATIONAL LANGUAGE

### I. THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE—I

The task of framing our national constitution is nearing completion. It is a noble edifice that we have built. It stands for a secular democracy in which all the constituent elements of our nation and culture have got an equally honoured place and all these elements are expected to be loyal to the spirit and the core of this composite nation and its variegated culture. Among some of the important subjects still remaining undecided is the name and structure of India's national language and its script or scripts. Knottier problems than this have been decided with commendable mutual goodwill and broad vision. Let us decide this subject also in the same spirit and width of outlook. We feel that here too we have come to a large measure of agreement in regard to several of its most debated points. We request now that in the same spirit of seeking unanimity and common ground, all schools should agree to the following propositions and end this controversy.

#### A COMMON LANGUAGE

“A Common Language for all-India purposes is necessary. It should be studied on a fairly extensive scale by people all over the country, whatever their own language may be. It cannot be English.” (Dr. Rajendraprasad\*). All laws, etc., must be framed in that language and the text in that language should be regarded as authoritative for purposes of interpretation, where there is a doubt about its meaning as read in other languages.

#### NAME

The designation of the National Language should officially be Hindustani at the Centre, whether it is referred to as Hindustani or Hindi in popular language and in any

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\* First President of the Indian Sovereign Republic, who was also the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly.

province or State. No objection or controversy or criticism should be made against the use of either of these names non-officially.

### STRUCTURE

Regarding the structure of the National Language, (a) its grammar and syntax should be generally that of the language spoken in Delhi and the surrounding parts; (b) pedantic grammatical forms and styles of Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic language should be avoided; (c) there should be no policy of boycott of words, phrases and ideas of foreign origin as such—particularly such as have become current in popular language—either as general or technical words. Rather it should “make its door open for entry of words from other languages”; (d) new words, whether they are to be coined for technical purposes or accurate rendering of special words and expressions of other languages, “should come in the first place from the various provincial languages and from dialects. Even words of purely foreign origin may not be altogether excluded”; (e) “With all the additions to the vocabulary that can be made with the help of other languages, there will still remain the need for coining a large number of words. The source from which these additional words have to be derived (should be) Sanskrit. . . . In this matter pedantry should be avoided as far as possible” and our efforts should be to “coin such as would fit in with the structure and genius of the spoken language and be lovable for their simplicity”. (Dr. Rajendraprasad).

The rest should be left to the natural growth of the language. No limitations can be placed on any litterateur writing in what might be called highly Sanskritized or highly Arabo-Persianized style or anything in between.

### SCRIPT

The Nagari Script should be accepted as the principal script of this language and used for all official work at the Centre and for inter-provincial communications. Its knowledge must be compulsory for everyone working in public offices, whether as servant or elected office-bearer. But the

Urdu Script should also be recognized for purposes of applications and representations made by the public and there should be adequate arrangement for reading and transliterating Urdu writings. Official notifications, proclamations and documents meant for the general public and issued in the National Language should be in both the scripts—Nagari and Urdu.

We earnestly urge the acceptance of the above formula by the Constituent Assembly and fully hope that the Nation will support our appeal.

KAKA KALELKAR\*  
VINOBA  
K. G. MASHRUWALA

*Harijan*, 24-7-'49

## 2. THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE—II

It would not be in the fitness of things for those who make an appeal to enter into argument in a spirit of contest with those who file a caveat against it. For this reason, we wish to refrain from giving anything savouring of a rejoinder to the joint statement of Dr. S. K. Chatterji ×, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma §, Shri Rahula Sankrityayan + and Shri Jaichandra Vidyalankar †, who have disapproved of our appeal and recommended its rejection. They are great and eminent scholars and their views will necessarily be considered by the public as well as the members of the Constituent Assembly. What we say, therefore, is just for clarification of doubts and misunderstandings.

### NAME

The name *Hindustani* is not preferred merely to please the Muslims. It is also the name which appeals

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\* Eminent Gandhian scholar, educationist and Gandhiji's erstwhile associate.

× A well-known linguist.

§ + † Protagonists of Hindi in the Devanagari Script as the National Language of India.

to Parsis, Christians, Anglo-Indians and also to a large section of Hindus. We refrain from going into a scholarly retrospect about the names *Hindi* and *Hindustani*. It is the present generally understood connotation of these terms that is important.

### STRUCTURE

We have already clarified the words "the language spoken in Delhi and surrounding regions". We note that Dr. Chatterji and his friends also agree that "it is no doubt true that that form of Hindi which is known as *Khari Boli* will form the standard in the matter of syntax of the National Language." They further say, "It is plain that in matters of vocabularies and to a certain extent in the matters of grammar and syntax a conscious attempt will have to be made to approximate to the 'common core', which is found in all the languages of India—that is to Sanskrit."

We agree that the language will grow and the growth will also affect its grammar and syntax. We do not know what exact shape it will take a generation hence, since it will be influenced by people of so many provinces who themselves will be under the influence of various political, social, economic and external as well as internal forces. These all will affect the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of their own languages as well as the common language. Sanskrit will certainly be one of these influencing forces. It is sufficient, we feel, to fix the starting-point.

### SCRIPT

Even on the question of script we speak on behalf of the present generation. They consist of a number of Hindus of the Hindi provinces, Muslims of several provinces, Sindhis, Punjabis (both refugees as well as residents), and others who have been brought up to read and write in the Urdu Script alone. Even today there are newspapers, periodicals, correspondence, etc., in the Urdu Script. It was allowed in public offices till the other day in several Northern provinces and possibly is still allowed in some parts. It is but just and proper that they should

not be inconvenienced. In course of time, as the knowledge and practice of the Nagari Script increases, it is possible that the Urdu Script might drop off in practice. But we need not speculate into the future. It is sufficient if we do what is right today. The question of other regional scripts does not arise, since those scripts have never been used in any of the provinces which claim to be the home of the National Language. All those who have different provincial scripts have always learnt the National Language in any of its forms through the Nagari or the Urdu script.

#### APPEASEMENT

Ours is not an appeal in a spirit of appeasement of Muslims. Not that there is anything against one's self-respect in even trying to please a section of our countrymen, if it is necessary. But the present appeal, as we have conceived it, is meant to placate the protagonists of Hindi; subject to what we consider to be just and equitable in the interest of all Indian sections, we have been trying to approach as near as possible to those who advocate the name and cause of Hindi. We earnestly repeat our appeal hereby.

KAKA KALELKAR  
VINOBA  
K. G. MASHRUWALA

*Harijan*, 14-8-'49

## APPENDIX

### *BASIC AND PSEUDO-BASIC EDUCATION*

[The following carefully studied note was contributed to the *Harijan*, at Shri Mashruwala's request, by one who was once closely associated with education in a major province.]

#### I

As far as I know the word *Basic* was first used by Mahatmaji in connection with education and his seven years' scheme of education was called Basic. He enriched the term Basic Education with many meanings and gradually it came to have connotations and associations. It came to mean education, which (1) lays and forms the foundation of the character of the child as an individual as well as a unit of society, (2) is given through a basic (productive) craft—a craft which supplies some fundamental or essential need of the locality, (3) is a common foundation for all children of the nation without any discrimination in principle between the rich and the poor, urban and rural—a system of universal free and compulsory education, (4) is to be the foundation of all education for the later structure of the specialized and higher education, and (5) is to serve as a foundation for all progress and culture of the country, leading on to his conception of Sarvodaya.

The term has become for all purposes—rightly or wrongly—a proper noun for Mahatmaji's system of education and when any education system is called Basic Education system, people take it to be the Mahatmaji's system.

The Central Advisory Board\* in taking over the term *Basic* has created some confusion and misconception also.

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\* A body attached to the Union Ministry of Education to co-ordinate and guide educational policies and programmes in the country.

As far as I understand, the Central Advisory Board's Basic Education is just an improvement in line with the English and American progress in education in the elementary and middle school education of today—an improvement and expansion in administration and structure.

#### RECENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CENTRAL ADVISORY BOARD

1. The recent recommendations of the Central Advisory Board adhere to the old recommendations without any change, except that while the provisions and safeguards recommended by the Sargent Report\* ensured some opportunity to the children of the poor and those who mature later, find no place as yet in the present one. The system advocates in practice the English system of education prevailing before the 1944 Education Act. The 1944 Act provides for an easy transfer from one type of school to another type after two years of common syllabus in the middle stage years of the school education. It also makes it clear that all types of schools of the secondary stage will have the same status and the child will have opportunities according to its age, ability and aptitude with no reference to the paying capacity of his guardian so far as secondary education stage is concerned.

2. The Government of India is to be thanked for shortening the period of universal compulsory education from 40 years to 12-15.

3. There is one other point which needs attention. The Central Advisory Board has recommended the national language (Hindustani or Hindi whichever the Constituent Assembly accepts) to be compulsory for the middle three years only and then optional in the four senior high school years. If the national language is not made compulsory today throughout the high school stage and the college degree course, it is difficult to see how it is going to replace English and take its rightful place in the intellectual academic life of the nation and its administration even after five or ten years. It is no doubt an easy

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\* Sargent's Post-war plan for Educational Development (1944).



language for the areas of Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi speaking people. But still unless it is accorded proper status and recognition by the educationists and the intelligentsia of the country, it will remain crippled. For the development of a language, sympathy of the masses as well as deliberate efforts from the intelligentsia are the two inescapable preconditions—more especially so when a country is no more under foreign domination.

What is done today will affect children under 15 who will begin to take their place as workers and leaders of the nation after 10 years. If the national language is not given its proper place today in the educational system, only confusion will result, because it is impossible that the masses will permit English to be continued as the national language for long. Then there is a vicious circle which has to be broken. The Government says they have not the necessary staff and the personnel to run the administration in Hindustani and the Education Department says that unless administration is changed over to Hindustani, they are not willing to take the risk of creating maladjustment for the child. A plan of five years and a definite date should be fixed for the beginning of the change-over and during the interim period the Government should take up the question firmly on both the fronts even at the cost of some inconvenience.

Of course, we have to be thankful for the Central Advisory Board Report which concentrated the attention on the vastness and importance of the problem and collected valuable data and information and planned the whole structure and administration of education. But, a comparison of the two schemes will show that the Wardha Basic Education Scheme differs in important and fundamental principles from the Central Advisory Board's Basic Education Scheme.

*Harijan*, 29-5-'49

## II

[The following columns show the principal differences between the Wardha and the C. A. B. schemes.]

### WARDHA SCHEME [Dr. Zakir Hussein Committee Report\*]

1. The Wardha Scheme always and everywhere has laid down 'some craft' and 'productive work' as the *medium of education* and not as an additional subject, the value of the articles produced being sufficient to cover at least a major portion of its running expenses not merely incidentally but also as an important and integral test of efficiency.

*Vide* Zakir Hussein Report:

*P. 8:* The basic idea of this scheme is that education if sound in its principles should be imparted through some craft or productive work which should provide the nucleus of all other instruction provided in the school.

*P. 10:* Greater concreteness and reality can

### CENTRAL ADVISORY BOARD SCHEME [Sargent Committee Report]

1. Activity principle—preferably it may take the form of craft or a productive craft but it is not an inalienable precondition as in the Wardha Basic Education Scheme. Production is not given any weight.

*Vide* Central Advisory Board Report:

*P. 10 (a): Recommendation* No. 6 — The Wardha Scheme of Basic Education is in full agreement with the recommendations made in the Abbott Wood Report§ so far as the principle of learning by doing is concerned. This activity should be of many kinds in the lower

\* First submitted to Gandhiji in December 1937.

§ On General and Vocational Education.

be given to the knowledge acquired by children by making some significant craft the basis of education.

Two necessary conditions:

(1) The craft should be rich in educative possibilities.

(2) Productive work should not only form a part of the school curriculum—its craft side—but should also inspire the method of teaching all other subjects.

*P. 13:* "... This good education will also incidentally cover the major portion of its running expenses."

*P. 14:* Apart from its financial implications we are of opinion that a measurable check will be useful in ensuring thoroughness and efficiency in teaching and in the work of the students.

2. Craft, social environment and physical environment will be centres for correlation and will be closely related to life.

*Vide* Zakir Hussein Report:

*P. 50:* "... All teaching should be carried

classes and later should lead to a basic craft—the produce from which should be saleable and the proceeds applied to the upkeep of the school.

2. Craft, social environment and physical environment are not to be the centres or media of instruction as laid down in the Wardha Scheme but they will be important subjects and correlation should be aimed at as much as possible.

on through concrete life situations relating to craft or to social and physical environment . . .”

3. No English in the first seven years.

3. Introduction of English in the sixth or the fifth year—compulsory in Secondary Schools and optional in Senior Basic Schools.

*Vide C. A. B. Report:*

*P. 8:* Nor are they (Board) satisfied as to the desirability of introducing it at the Senior Basic stage but they recognize that there may be a strong public demand for it in certain areas and they feel that the final decision in this case must be left in the hands of the Provincial Education Department. (Second Basic Committee's recommendation.)

*P. 11: Recommendation No. 13*—English should not be introduced as an optional subject in *basic* schools. (First Basic Committee's recommendation.)

4. A common course of seven years for all children—no selection at 11—selection only after seven or eight years of school.

4. A parallel system of admission to Secondary instruction in the three upper Primary standards.

*Vide* Zakir Hussein Report:

*P. 57:* "This (seven years' scheme) is a scheme of universal and compulsory basic education for all children to be followed in due course by higher education for those who are qualified to receive it."

*Vide* C. A. B. Report:

*P. 10: Recommendation* No. 3—Diversion of students from the *basic* school to other kinds of schools should be allowed after the 5th class or about the age of 11.

*P. 7:* Basic Education while preserving its essential unit will consist of two stages — the Junior (or Primary) stage covering a period of five years and the Senior (or Middle) stage covering three years.

*P. 15:* Any reorganization of the High School system therefore should treat High Schools as distinct units differing in outlook and objective from the ordinary Senior Basic Schools in which most children will complete their full-time education. . . .

*P. 21:* 50% of the pupils will have to be provided with free places or total or partial remission of fees.

5. The bifurcation or specialization may not be desirable before 13 when

5. Children on the completion of the fifth class of the Junior Basic

the ability and aptitude are more pronounced and recognizable.

*Vide* Zakir Hussein Report, *page* 57, quotation above.

Schools be diverted either to Senior Basic or to High Schools according to their abilities, aptitudes and general promise.

*Vide* C. A. B. Report:

The following are the conditions of bifurcation to ensure that deserving children of poor parents are not denied Secondary Education:

(a) A selection test at the end of the Junior Basic School—5 years.

“The High School course will cover the middle stages” for the selected children. Primary departments should be regarded as entirely distinct units and organized accordingly.

(b) Only those who are found fit in the test will be eligible for admission to Secondary Schools.

*P. 15: High School Education* — The chief purpose of higher education is to form an *elite* not for its own sake but for that of society—hence the selective principle by which children

should be picked out for higher education on completion of the Junior Basic stage is of the greatest importance. At present admission to High Schools is mainly determined whether parents or guardians are in a position to pay the fees.

(c) 50% free studentships for children poor but eligible.

If pupils are to be admitted by selection only, those without the necessary financial resources will have to be provided with free places and in many cases with maintenance allowances as well.

Facilities will have to be provided for the transfer of suitable children from the Senior Basic to the High Schools at some later stage, particularly where they show signs of later development.

(d) Children who are not thus selected will pay full cost of fees to the schools if they want to join Secondary Schools—Government will not give any grant on these children.

Parents of children who fail to reach the standard, may continue the study of their children provided they "are required to pay the *whole* cost of the education provided".

(e) For children who develop later, some arrangement for selection and easy transfer at the end of the Upper Primary Course will be made so that these children also get the full benefit of equal opportunity.

Special arrangements should be made in these schools for assimilating pupils who decide to continue their education after completing the full course in the *basic* school, i.e., after reaching the 8th class.

6. Character building and attitude towards life is a most essential and integral part of the system.

7. This system is based entirely on educational principles which find a different expression and application as related to Indian conditions.

6. The emphasis on the attitude towards life, on manual work, etc., is not there.

7. The system is wholly the English system of education in its outlook, principles, contents and structure.



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