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## INTRODUCTION

Often the reports of Government committees and commissions remain confined within Secretariat Offices or are studied only by specialists and experts or persons who are, in some way, officially concerned with them. Education is, however, one of those significant national activities which have, and should have, an appeal for every intelligent person who has the welfare of the country at heart and any report bearing on it should have the widest publicity. Above all, it should come within the knowledge of, and be studied and discussed by, the thousands of teachers who will have to implement its recommendations eventually. Whatever may be done by Governments or Education Departments or educationists and educational administrators, it is ultimately the teacher in the class room, the playground, the workshop, the community—who can either quicken the cold printed words of the report into life or kill the report through his indifference or lack of understanding or sympathy with its approach.

It is to be hoped that the Report of the Secondary Education Commission, which has been just published, will receive careful attention on the part of all teachers and their organizations and will be studied in their conferences and discussion groups. It has been written, not primarily as an official document with emphasis on statistics and informational data, but as something addressed directly to teachers and educationists with the object of winning their cooperation in the great task of educational reconstruction. The Ministry of Education is, however, anxious that, so far as possible, *every* single teacher in the Secondary School should have an opportunity of acquainting himself with the basic ideas of the Report in so far as they relate to his day to day work. It may be that *all* the teachers are not interested in the problems of administration, organization and finance and they may even be unable to do a great deal *directly* for the reconstruction of the curriculum or the system of examination. But there are some problems with which they are directly concerned and about which they can do something on their own, even before any large-scale measures of educational reconstruction are taken in hand—if only they can be completely won over to the new concept of the secondary school as embodied in the Report. For this purpose, the Ministry is publishing in this brochure—specially for the use of secondary teachers—three chapters

from the Report which, taken together, will give them a fairly clear picture of the secondary school as the Commission would like to see it develop. These chapters deal with the re-orientation of aims and objectives, the methods of teaching and the general concept of the Secondary School as it emerges from the various recommendations and proposals made in the Report. A comprehensive note dealing with the problem of Indiscipline in educational institutions prepared by Dr. V. S. Jha (till recently Secretary of the Education Department, Madhya Pradesh), has been included in an abbreviated form as an Appendix, because it analyses this problem competently and links it up with the wider question of educational organization. If our teachers could see clearly the objectives of their activity and appreciate the dynamic methods of teaching and discipline which they can adopt to achieve them, they can contribute effectively to the building up of the school as the Report visualizes it. In spite of their limitations, which are genuine, they can do much to give a new, better and more generous deal to Secondary Education, which means in effect a better deal to the tens of thousands of children who are being educated in their schools.

It is proposed to send complimentary copies of this brochure to *all* secondary schools in the country in the hope that every teacher in them will have not only the chance but the readiness and the sense of duty to study it, to discuss it with his colleagues and to think out practical ways and means of putting at least some of its ideas into practice.

K. G. SAIYIDAIN,,

New Delhi;  
November 2, 1953.

Joint Educational Adviser to  
the Government of India.

## CHAPTER I

### REORIENTATION OF AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### Defects of the Existing System

During our tour many witnesses expressed disappointment with the present set-up of Secondary Education and referred to various defects which, in their opinion, made it wasteful and ineffective and hindered the realisation of its true aims and objectives. They pointed out that this education was too bookish and mechanical, stereotyped and rigidly uniform and did not cater for the different aptitudes of the pupil or for pupils of different aptitudes. Nor did it develop those basic qualities of discipline, cooperation and leadership which were calculated to make them function as useful citizens. The stress of examinations, the over-crowded syllabus, the methods of teaching, and lack of proper material amenities tended to make education a burden rather than a joyous experience to the youthful mind. The unilateral scheme of studies which concentrated almost entirely on preparing students for entrance to the University, was not calculated to bring out the best either in the teacher or in the pupils. Again, the failure to provide diversified courses of study made it difficult for many students to secure suitable employment at the end of the course. In most cases, a rigid time-table, unsuitable text-books of poor quality and the unduly detailed syllabus prescribed did not give the teachers sufficient opportunity for self-expression or for developing self-reliance and did not create the habit of independent thinking in their pupils. Another great handicap was the large number of pupils in each class, making it impossible for the teacher to establish close personal contacts with his pupils or to exercise proper educative influence on their minds and character. On account of the educational expansion that has taken place during the last few decades, many children now seeking education come from homes where there is little of an educational atmosphere and consequently little or no opportunity of supplementing the education given at the school. This fact adds considerably to the responsibility of the school which it is not at present in a position to discharge. Nor can we overlook the fact that the teaching profession does not attract a sufficient number of the right type of teachers with the requisite personal qualities and aptitudes and a spirit of devotion to their work. Because of the large number of teachers required, recruitment has been haphazard and a careful selection has been the exception rather than the rule. Again, there are inadequate facilities for those co-curricular activities

which provide an excellent medium for training the mind and emotions as well as the practical aptitudes of students, promote their physical welfare and inculcate in them social qualities necessary for successful community life. Few schools make proper provision for playing fields or for group games and other recreational activities which give vitality and joyousness to school work and help in the education of the children's total personality.

One could go on adding to this list of defects enumerated by the witnesses. But it seems unnecessary since all who have had any contact with these schools as teachers or parents can enumerate many other defects and handicaps of the present system. It would, however, be useful to view them coherently and spot-light what we consider to be the basic shortcomings and defects of the present secondary schools because that would provide the starting point for a discussion of the methods of reform and reconstruction.

Firstly, the education given in our schools is isolated from life—the curriculum as formulated and as presented through the traditional methods of teaching does not give the students insight into the everyday world in which they are living. When they pass out of school they feel ill-adjusted and cannot take their place confidently and competently in the community. Unless the school is itself organized as a community and is in vital rapport with outside community life, this situation cannot be remedied. *Secondly*, it is narrow and one-sided and fails to train the whole personality of the student. For many decades, it has provided only academic instruction which meant teaching him a certain number of subjects which either gave information which the adults considered useful or trained him in certain skills like reading and writing. The “non-cognitive” aspects of his personality—his practical aptitudes, his emotions, his appreciation, his tastes—were largely ignored. Recently, games, crafts and certain types of social activities have been given a place in the school programme, but they are still not regarded as an integral part of the curriculum. On the whole, it is still true that our education caters only for a segment of the student's whole personality. *Thirdly*, until comparatively recently, English was both the medium of instruction and a compulsory subject of study. Students who did not possess special linguistic ability were therefore greatly handicapped in their studies. If a student did not fare well in English he could neither pass the School Final Examination nor find any post in Government Service. The other subjects, which were psychologically and socially important or congenial, were not given greater attention. *Fourthly*, the methods of teaching generally practised failed to develop in the students either independence of thought or

initiative in action. They stressed competitive success rather than the joy of cooperative achievement. It is a matter of common complaint that lessons are imparted in a mechanical way giving information which is reluctantly memorized by the students. *Fifthly*, the increase in the size of classes has considerably reduced personal contact between teachers and pupils. Thus, the training of character and inculcation of proper discipline have been seriously undermined. The situation has been further aggravated by the fact that the average efficiency of the teachers has deteriorated; their economic difficulties and lack of social prestige have tended to create in them a sense of frustration. Unless something is done quickly to increase their efficiency and give them a feeling of contentment and a sense of their own worth, they will not be able to pull their full weight.

*Finally*, the dead weight of the examination has tended to curb the teachers' initiative, to stereotype the curriculum, to promote mechanical and lifeless methods of teaching, to discourage all spirit of experimentation and to place the stress on wrong or unimportant things in education.

In this chapter we have naturally focussed our attention only on the defects of the present system, because sound reconstruction depends on their proper diagnosis. It should not, however, be taken to mean that it has no good features or that it has played no useful role at all, in the life of the nation. Its main handicap has been that it started with a limited and wrong objective. Naturally, therefore, its later development took place within the limitations of that objective. Many piecemeal reforms and improvements have been introduced from time to time as we have hinted above, but they were not coherently and consciously related to the right aims and objectives and, therefore, their total impact on the system was unimpressive. What is necessary now—and this is what we are anxious to ensure—is to take bold and far-sighted measures to give a new orientation to secondary education as a whole, in which all these individual reforms may find their proper and integrated place.

### **Aims of Secondary Education**

The aims of education have been formulated in general terms in numerous books on education and in the Reports of Committees and Commissions and, therefore, so far as such general aims are concerned, it is not possible to add anything significant to what has been repeatedly expressed. But there is undoubtedly room for formulating these aims in more specific terms and with special reference to



the needs and the ideals of our country in its actual situation. As political, social and economic conditions change and new problems arise, it becomes necessary to re-examine carefully and re-state clearly the objectives which education at each definite stage, should keep in view. Moreover, this statement must take into account not only the facts of the existing situation but also the direction of its development and the nature and type of the social order that we envisage for the future to which education has to be geared.

### **Educational Needs of Democratic India**

The most outstanding and educationally relevant facts that have to be taken into account may be briefly summed up as follows. India has recently achieved its political freedom and has, after careful consideration, decided to transform itself into a secular democratic republic. This means that the educational system must make its contribution to the development of habits, attitudes and qualities of character, which will enable its citizens to bear worthily the responsibilities of democratic citizenship and to counteract all those dissipated tendencies which hinder the emergence of a broad, rational and secular outlook. Secondly, though rich in potential resources, India is actually a poor country at present; a large majority of its people have to live at an economically sub-human level. One of its most urgent problems—if not the most urgent problem—is to improve productive efficiency, to increase the national wealth and thereby to raise appreciably the standard of living of the people. Thirdly, partly as a result of this oppressive and widespread poverty, there is a serious lack of educational facilities and the bulk of the people are so obsessed with the problem of making some sort of a living that they have not been able to give sufficient attention to cultural pursuits and activities. Hence there is need for reorienting the educational system in such a way that it will stimulate a cultural renaissance.

From this necessarily sketchy analysis of the dominant needs of the present situation, it is clear that we shall have to formulate our aims with reference to these broad categories—the training of character to fit the students to participate creatively as citizens in the emerging democratic social order; the improvement of their practical and vocational efficiency so that they may play their part in building up the economic prosperity of their country; and the development of their literary, artistic and cultural interests, which are necessary for self-expression and for the full development of the human personality, without which a living national culture cannot come into being. We propose to consider each one of these briefly in order to indicate their implications in more concrete terms.

## Role of Education in Developing Democratic Citizenship

Citizenship in a democracy is a very exacting and challenging responsibility for which every citizen has to be carefully trained. It involves many intellectual, social and moral qualities which cannot be expected to grow of their own accord. In any kind of regimented social order, the individual does not need to indulge in the travail of independent thinking or of chalking out his own lines of action. The authorities relieve him of that onerous responsibility! But in a democracy—if it is anything more than the thoughtless exercise of the vote—an individual must form his own independent judgment on all kinds of complicated social, economic and political issues and, to a large extent, decide his own course of action. The Secondary Education, which would be the end of all formal education for the majority of the citizens, must assume the responsibility of providing the necessary training for this purpose. The first requisite in this connection is to develop the capacity for clear thinking and a receptivity to new ideas. On the intellectual side, the school should perhaps accord the highest priority to the cultivation of this quality, which is the distinguishing mark of an educated mind. A democracy of people who can think only confusedly can neither make progress, nor even maintain itself, because it will always be open to the risk of being misled and exploited by demagogues who have within their reach today unprecedentedly powerful media of mass communication and propaganda. To be effective, a democratic citizen should have the understanding and the intellectual integrity to sift truth from falsehood, facts from propaganda and to reject the dangerous appeal of fanaticism and prejudice. He must develop a scientific attitude of mind to think objectively and base his conclusions on tested data. He should also have an *open* mind receptive to new ideas and not confined within the prison walls of out-moded customs, traditions and beliefs. It should neither reject the old because it is old nor accept the new because it is new, but dispassionately examine both and courageously reject whatever arrests the forces of justice and progress. We shall discuss later, in dealing with educational methods, how such a mind is to be developed through education. What we wish to stress here is the need for teachers to appreciate that this is one of the most important aims that should consciously inspire their educational ideas and technique. They should realize that the type of lessons usually given in our classrooms, which only call for passive assimilation, can make no contribution to the development of this type of mind.

Closely allied to clarity of thought is clearness in speech and in writing. This is not only an important social asset, it is also an essential pre-requisite for successful living in a democracy which is based

not on force, but on free discussion, persuasion, and peaceful exchange of ideas. To be able to make one's influence felt and to assist in the formulation of healthy public opinion, an educated person should be able to express himself clearly both in speech and writing.

A democracy is based on faith in the dignity and worth of every single individual as a human being. This innate "worthfulness" cannot be eclipsed either by economic or racial or social consideration. The object of a democratic education is, therefore, the full, all-round development of every individual's personality. This requires that education should take into account all his needs—psychological, social, emotional and practical—and cater for all of them. The view of education that emerges from this basic concept transcends the narrow academic approach and broadens out into an *education for living*, i.e. an education to initiate the students into the many-sided art of living in a community. It is obvious, however, that an individual cannot live and develop alone. Both for his own wholesome development and the good of society, it is essential that he should learn to live with others and to appreciate the value of cooperation through practical experience and free interplay with other personalities. No education is worth the name which does not inculcate the qualities necessary for living graciously, harmoniously and efficiently with one's fellow men. Amongst the qualities which should be cultivated for this purpose are discipline, cooperation, social sensitiveness and tolerance. Each one of them has its own special part to play in the humanizing and socialising of the personality. Discipline is an essential condition for successful group work. An undisciplined person can neither make any effective contribution to the completion of any corporate project, nor develop qualities of leadership. For various reasons, which we have discussed elsewhere, standards of discipline have become deplorably lax in recent decades and a special effort needs to be made to improve them. If this is done through the adoption of intelligent and psychologically sound methods, to which we have referred in another chapter, it would be a most valuable contribution to the development of national character and would provide an important guarantee of the success of our democratic experiment.

This discipline cannot, however, be developed in a vacuum; it is the fruit, the valuable by-product of cooperative work, willingly undertaken and efficiently completed. The school must aim at strengthening the desire for cooperation and afford students opportunities to translate it into practice. This cooperation must, however, be inspired by the faith that social purposes are worth striving for, that life in a democratic set-up is not playing for one's own hand but

calls for a strenuous endeavour to equalize opportunities for all and an unremitting fight for justice for the under-privileged. A passion for social justice, based on a sensitiveness to the social evils and the exploitation which corrupts the grace of life, must be kindled in the heart and mind of our people and the foundations for it should be laid in the school. Through it the child and adolescent should not only get a coherent picture of the world in which they are living but also be introduced to the standards by which its customs, practices and institutions are to be judged. This social sensitiveness is the ethical basis of good character; without it efficiency, discipline, cooperation and many other fine qualities may either remain unfruitful or may be corrupted for baser purposes. And, finally, we must stress the importance of *tolerance*, without which it is impossible to preserve the health and even the existence of a democracy. The essence of a democratic society is not only the tolerating but the welcoming of differences which make for the enrichment of life. Dragging different beliefs, ideas, opinions, tastes and interests into uniformity may possibly make for efficiency in a narrow and inferior sense but it inevitably impoverishes life and curbs the free expression of the human spirit. If a democracy like ours is to survive—a democracy which harbours so many faiths, races and communities—education must cultivate in our youth an openness of mind and a largeness of heart which would make them capable of entertaining and of blending into a harmonious pattern differences in ideas and behaviour. It is possible for every school to do so, not only through the proper presentation of the various school subjects—particularly the humanities and social studies—but also by utilising the resources and opportunities provided by the fact that its students are drawn from different castes, creeds and classes. If they can first learn to live pleasantly and peacefully in the small community of the school, this training will enable them to do so later in the larger community outside. Another important aim which the secondary school must foster is the development of a sense of *true patriotism*. In the proper interpretation of this aim, the adjective ‘true’ is as important as the noun! The propriety of inculcating through education a deep love of one’s own country is too obvious to require any justification, but in doing so it is necessary to take care that this love does not degenerate into nationalistic jingoism. True patriotism involves *three* things—a sincere appreciation of the social and cultural achievements of one’s country, a readiness to *recognize its weaknesses* frankly and to work for their eradication and an earnest *resolve to serve it* to the best of one’s ability, harmonizing and subordinating individual interests to broader national interests. The school must address itself to building up this rich, threefold concept of patriotism. Through a proper orientation and presentation of the curriculum it can make

the students appreciative and proud of what their country has achieved in literature and science, art and architecture, religion and philosophy, crafts and industries and other fields of human endeavour. This feeling can be quickened and made more vital through the organization and celebration of suitable functions and extra-curricular activities. It has to be linked up, however, with a critical appraisal of the total picture of national life and—to the extent that such appraisal is within the mental capacity of students at this stage—it should be inculcated and encouraged by the school. The capacity for clear and objective thinking, that we have commended as a significant educational aim, should be brought into play in this connection—particularly in connection with the teaching of social studies—and the students should learn the great truth that an appreciation of what is good in one's heritage is one aspect of patriotism, but equally so is the rejection of what is unworthy and the desire to improve it. There is no more dangerous maxim in the world of today than "My country, right or wrong". The whole world is now so intimately interconnected that no nation can or dare live alone and the development of a sense of world citizenship has become just as important as that of national citizenship. In a very real sense, therefore, "Patriotism is not enough" and it must be supplemented by a lively realization of the fact that we are all members of One-World, and must be prepared, mentally and emotionally, to discharge the responsibilities which such membership implies. We need not discuss here the various methods that can be employed to achieve this object. A number of very interesting and significant experiments have been, and are being, tried in many schools throughout the world to develop international understanding and these can be studied with profit.

### **Improvement of Vocational Efficiency**

So far as the second major element in our national situation is concerned, we must concentrate on increasing the productive or technical and vocational efficiency of our students. This is not merely a matter of creating a *new* attitude to work—an attitude that implies an appreciation of the dignity of *all* work, however "lowly", a realisation that self-fulfilment and national prosperity are only possible through work in which *every* one must participate and a conviction that when our educated men take *any* piece of work in hand they will try to complete it as efficiently and artistically as their powers permit. The creation of this attitude must be the function of every teacher and it must find expression in every activity of the school. Students must acquire a yearning for perfection and learn to take pride in doing everything as thoroughly as they can; likewise teachers should learn to reject, firmly but with

sympathy, all work that is half-hearted or slipshod, or casual. We shall revert to this point again in our discussion of educational methods. Side by side with the development of this attitude, there is need to promote technical skill and efficiency at all stages of education so as to provide trained and efficient personnel to work out schemes of industrial and technological advancement. In the past, our education has been so academic and theoretical and so divorced from practical work that the educated classes have, generally speaking, failed to make enormous contribution to the development of the country's natural resources and to add to national wealth. This must now change and, with this object in view, we have recommended that there should be much greater emphasis on crafts and productive work in *all* schools and, in addition, diversification of courses should be introduced at the secondary stage so that a large number of students may take up agricultural, technical, commercial or other practical courses which will train their varied aptitudes and enable them either to take up vocational pursuits at the end of the secondary course or to join technical institutions for further training. These measures will, we hope, result in equipping educated young men—psychologically and practically—to undertake technical lines and raise general standards of efficiency, thereby helping to increase national wealth and ultimately to improve the general standards of living.

### **Development of Personality**

The third main function of Secondary Education is to release the sources of creative energy in the students so that they may be able to appreciate their cultural heritage, to cultivate rich interests which they can pursue in their leisure and so contribute, in later life, to the development of this heritage. In the past, our schools have left whole areas of the pupils' personality untouched and unquickened—their emotional life, their social impulses, their constructive talents, their artistic tastes. That explains why a majority of them emerge with no inner resources or interests which can be cultivated and pursued as pleasant or useful hobbies. It is in view of this serious shortcoming in our educational programmes that we have recommended in the chapter on 'Curriculum,' that a place of honour should be given to subjects like art, craft, music, dancing and the development of hobbies. We hope that, as education is organised on the basis of freedom and its scope is widened to include many new subjects and activities and as the pupils go out with more sensitive and quickened minds that can respond readily to the numerous stimuli in the world of Art and Nature, they will be able not only to enjoy their cultural heritage more keenly but also help in its enrichment.

## Education for Leadership

In discussing these aims, it is important to bear in mind the special characteristics of this particular stage of education. Secondary Education, in its ideology and approach, should grow from the education that is being given at the mass level and should consequently be closely integrated with Basic Education. The child should not feel on passing from the Basic, or activity-motivated primary school that there is a violent break in methods of work and teaching or in the concept of the curriculum. The ideas of productive work, of the vital relationship of the curriculum to life, of community living and community service must all find a place in it, with such modifications as the psychology of adolescence may render necessary. Secondly, as a stage leading to higher education, it may also be reasonably expected to develop the knowledge and skill and the mental habits required for independent work at the University level. But, as has been pointed out elsewhere, the integral unity of Secondary Education as well as the entire outlook of teachers and parents towards it has been seriously vitiated by the fact that they have been apt to regard it as mainly a stepping stone to the University. It has consequently been geared almost entirely to the passing of the Examination which will open the gateway to the University. This has inevitably resulted in many other important aims being ignored or side-tracked. It must be remembered that, for a large majority of students, it marks the completion of their formal education and, therefore, it should be viewed primarily as a stage complete in itself with its own ends and special purposes. On passing out of the Secondary School, such students, as do not propose to join college or technical institutions, should be able to enter on the various walks of life and fill the role of, what may be called, leadership at the intermediate level. A democracy cannot function successfully unless *all* the people—not merely a particular section—are trained for discharging their responsibilities and this involves training in discipline as well as leadership. The Primary or Basic School will inculcate in *all* the capacity for disciplined work while the University will train leadership at the height level in different walks of life. The special function of the Secondary School, in this context, is to train persons who will be able to assume the responsibility of leadership—in the social, political, industrial or cultural fields—in their own small groups of community or locality. This does not, of course, mean that primary education will not throw up leaders—in fact, with the proper functioning of democracy, it is to be hoped that leadership will be increasingly drawn from the masses. But leadership in the wider sense of the word (which is not synonymous with *political* leadership) calls for a higher standard of education, a deeper and

clearer understanding of social issues and greater technical efficiency. All these must be provided by our secondary schools in increasing measure. The secondary school must make itself responsible for equipping its students adequately with civic as well as vocational efficiency—and the qualities of character that go with it—so that they may be able to play their part worthily and competently in the improvement of national life. They should no longer emerge as helpless, shiftless individuals who do not know what to do with themselves and can only think of either crowding the colleges—which, for the majority, are a *cul-de-sac* or, as a last and reluctant resort, take up some clerical or teaching job for which they have no natural inclination. It is true that the economy of the country is still undeveloped and there are not sufficient ready-made openings for educated youth. Obviously, however, this situation will *not* be eased if, to the paucity of openings, is added the further handicap of a type of training that fails to develop initiative, resourcefulness and practical aptitudes and a type of mind which passively accepts things as they are instead of trying to forge new openings. In any case, with the new schemes in hand, this situation is improving and Secondary Education must address itself to the training of competent personnel for this expanding scope of opportunities.



## CHAPTER II

### DYNAMIC METHODS OF TEACHING

#### Need for Right Methods

We have discussed the question of the reconstruction of the curriculum in the preceding chapter. But every teacher and educationist of experience knows that even the best curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remain dead unless quickened into life by the right methods of teaching and the right kind of teachers. Sometimes even an unsatisfactory and unimaginative syllabus can be made interesting and significant by the gifted teacher who does not focus his mind on the subject-matter to be taught or the information to be imparted but on his students—their interests and aptitudes, their reactions and response. He judges the success of his lesson not by the amount of matter covered but by the understanding, the appreciation and the efficiency achieved by the students. In building up, therefore, a picture of the reorganized secondary school, it is necessary to indicate the kind of methods to be adopted and popularized if the curriculum that we have recommended is to develop into the kind of educational medium that we envisage. It is really the function of training colleges to introduce these methods in our schools through their trained teachers and we do not propose to cover here the ground that training courses are expected to do. We shall confine our attention to the most outstanding defects in this field and to indicate the general principles and approach to be adopted to eradicate these defects.

#### Objectives of Right Methods

In discussing the problem of right methods, it is necessary to take a broad and comprehensive view of their *objectives* which are really closely related to the objectives of education that we have already discussed and which we must to some extent recapitulate from the point of view of methodology. A method is not merely a device adopted for communicating certain items of information to students and exclusively the concern of the teacher, who is supposed to be at the "giving end." Any method, good or bad, links up the teacher and his pupils into an organic relationship with constant mutual interaction; it reacts not only on the *mind* of the students but on their entire personality, their standards of work and judgment, their

intellectual and emotional equipment, their attitudes and values. Good methods which are psychologically and socially sound may raise the *whole* quality of their life; bad methods may debase it. So, in the choice and assessment of methods, teachers must always take into consideration their *end-products*, namely, the attitudes and values inculcated in them consciously or unconsciously. Good methods of teaching should aim at the following objectives, which have not only intellectual but also social and moral implications for, in the domain of education, it is impossible to draw rigid lines of demarcation. Whatever impact education has on one aspect of the personality tends to react on other aspects.

The highest value that all methods should try to inculcate is *love of work* and the desire to do it with the highest measure of efficiency of which one is capable. There are only two real educative mediã, **contact with a rich and well integrated human personality** (whether of the teacher or the parents or personal friends) and sincere, whole-hearted pre-occupation with worthwhile *work*, intellectual as well as practical. If education fails to develop in the students a real attachment to the work that they are doing in school and the will to put the best of themselves into it, it can neither educate the mind nor train the character. For various reasons, which we need not analyse here, this attitude to work is not common amongst our students—either in schools or in colleges. According to our evidence they are content with the minimum of effort, slipshod in their work, and tend to confine themselves to the study of “Notes” and “Summaries” rather than text-books, and to text-books rather than significant books of wider interest. The secondary school can render no greater service to the students (and ultimately to the nation) **than by raising their standards of efficiency in everything** and creating the necessary attitude for the purpose. The motto of every school and its pupils should be “Everything that is worth doing at all is worth doing well”—whether it be making a speech, writing a composition, drawing a map, cleaning the classroom, making a book rack or forming a queue. From this point of view, it is more valuable to take up fewer projects and to complete them with thoroughness and efficiency than to attempt a larger number haphazardly and superficially. In this connection, it is well to remember that good work, habits, and skills are not acquired theoretically or in a vacuum; it is proper habits of work and insistence on them in every detail and over a long period of time that create the requisite attitudes and values. Discipline or cooperation, for instance, cannot be instilled into students through lectures or exhortations; they can become part of an individual’s normal technique of life only when he has been given numerous

opportunities of participating in freely accepted projects and activities in which discipline and cooperation are constantly in demand for achieving the ends in view.

Another serious defect which vitiates present-day teaching is its excessive domination by *verbalism* i.e. the tendency to identify knowledge with words, the delusion that if a student is able to memorize or repeat certain words or phrases he has grasped the facts or the ideas that they are meant to convey. The use of an imperfectly understood foreign language as medium of instruction has greatly accentuated this evil and students have usually been content, or compelled, to *memorize* whole paragraphs or pages from their text-books in History, Geography and even in Science and Mathematics. In spite of the change in the medium of instruction in recent years, we are afraid there has not been much improvement in this situation. The stranglehold of verbalism is still confused with the grasp of knowledge—knowledge, which is the fruit of personal effort and purposeful, intellectual and practical activity. Consequently many students leave school with a certain amount of information as their equipment but neither well assimilated knowledge nor wisdom, which is the grace of knowledge. We felt strongly, therefore, that only such methods should be adopted as will give concreteness and reality to learning and help to break down the barriers between life and learning and between the school and the community. We shall have something to say later about the nature of such methods.

On the intellectual side, the most important objective of teaching methods should be to develop the capacity for *clear thinking* which distinguishes every truly educated person and has become increasingly important in the modern world of "plural possibilities", where every one must learn to make up his mind and judge issues and problems without prejudice or passion. A majority of our citizens will not receive any education beyond the secondary stage and if they cannot learn to think straight and dispassionately at this stage, they will never be able to play their part as responsible citizens of a democracy. Some of the objectives to which we have referred above will, if achieved, assist in training students in this valuable capacity. But that is not enough. It must also form the conscious objective of every single teacher, no matter what subject he is entrusted with. Whether a student is asked to make a speech in a debating society or to write an essay or to answer questions in history, geography, or science or to perform an experiment, the accent should always be on clear thinking and on lucid expression which is a mirror of clear thought. All students cannot become eloquent speakers or good stylists but there is no reason why—if proper

methods are adopted—every normal student should not be able to learn to speak and write in such a way as to convey his ideas lucidly and intelligibly. In this connection we would like to discourage the present practice of giving excessive homework. It is not only a great burden to the children but is likely to be a threat to their health and a hindrance to the development of proper habits of work. Whatever homework is given—and we are of the opinion that this should be confined to the higher classes—should be carefully and scrupulously corrected and the mistakes discussed with the students so that their confusions of thought and expression may be gradually eliminated. When a great deal of homework is given and it is not properly scrutinized by the teacher, the mistakes of spelling, of grammar, of expression, of involved presentation and, above all, of confused thinking, remain undetected and are likely to become ingrained. That is why a little homework, well and willingly done and carefully corrected, is far better than a great deal of slipshod work, reluctantly accomplished. Here as elsewhere, quality is more important than quantity. This does not, of course, mean that children will do no study at home. If interest has been aroused and reading habits have been cultivated, they will read many books of general interest, they will pursue their various hobbies, they may prepare charts, models, diagrams, or perform simple experiments and study their text-books in various subjects. But the difference is that all this will be work, spontaneously undertaken and stemming from the students' natural interest, not imposed on them from outside.

Finally, it is desirable that the methods of teaching should expand the range of students' interest. A cultured man is a person of varied interests and, if healthy interests are fostered, they will enrich the personality. The normal adolescent is naturally interested in many things and, in the classroom, on the playground during excursions and in their social and extra-curricular activities the intelligent and wide-awake teacher has numerous opportunities to kindle new interest, to expand and strengthen existing ones and to satisfy their innate desire to touch life at many points. It is by exploring different avenues of interests and activities that he can truly discover himself and begin to specialize in due course. We would urge all schools to provide in the time-table at least one free period every day in which students may pursue their favourite hobbies and creative activities individually or in groups, preferably under the guidance of some interested teacher. We need hardly add that the success of this proposal would largely depend on the requisite accommodation and equipment being available for the purpose.

## Value of Activity Methods

Our own observation of many schools-at-work as well as the evidence given by experienced educationists lead us irresistibly to the conclusion that the methods of teaching in use are still dominated by routine. There is still too much of cramming and the teaching in the school is not related to life, nor is there any determined attempt to check deterioration of standards of expression in speech and writing. The point of departure for all reforms in method must be the realization that knowledge has to be actively acquired by every individual student through independent effort. The basis of teaching must, therefore, be the organization of the subject-matter into units or projects which would create opportunities for self-activity on the part of students. These should largely replace the formal lessons which often lack proper motivation and, therefore, fail to arouse real interest. Students can put in their best effort only when the relationship between their life and their lessons is made manifest, for this will create the necessary feeling of interest and provide the requisite motivation. So the business of the teacher should be to re-establish the link between life and knowledge, to share the aims and objects of teaching with his pupils and to plan the programme of work in such a way that pupils will have varied and ample opportunities for self-expression in speech, writing, collective reading, independent research, constructive activities and other projects that bring the hand and the mind into fruitful co-operation. Such a conception of the school day programme is far removed from the stereotyped routine of the present day in which verbalism predominates—the teacher talking and dictating notes and the children listening passively in the classroom and memorizing things at home for the sake of passing tests and examinations. There is no opportunity or desire to acquire knowledge either for the sake of life or for its own sake—the dominant motive is to scrape through the examination. If the self-activity approach is adopted, if there is imagination in planning work and freedom in its execution, the present bookish schools can be transformed into “work schools” or “activity schools” and they can become genuine centres of education for the whole personality of the child. This approach also postulates that practical and productive work should find a prominent and honoured place in the school programme. We have already provided for it in the *curriculum* but what we are concerned with here is the principle that the *teaching methods* in all subjects should be inspired, as far as possible, with the spirit underlying good craft work. This implies that, in the teaching of every subject, opportunities should be afforded for pupils to apply practically the knowledge that has been acquired by them. In Geography it may take the form of drawing maps, making models,

illustrations, organising excursions, keeping weather records, constructing in appropriate materials scenes from the life of different regions of the world etc. In History, in addition to the preparation of suitable illustrations of the type mentioned above, they may prepare and stage historical plays—making the costumes, the stage effects, fixing the lights etc., themselves or cooperatively study local history or set up a small history museum and, in fact, take up any projects that will bring history to life. In connection with the study of languages—particularly the mother-tongue—they may undertake to write small booklets on subjects of special interest to them. The collection of material from relevant sources, its editing, its actual writing, the binding of the booklets attractively will all form part of a joyous project. Illustrated charts about great writers may be prepared—containing their pictures, short notes on their life and works and brief appropriate quotations in prose or poetry from their writings—or they may possibly attempt translations of some easy books and articles in English with the object of providing rich reading materials for their fellow students in the Library. The school magazine is another project which can become the nucleus not only of creative writing but of a number of academic and practical activities which may widen the interests and quicken the whole intellectual pace of the group of students concerned—provided, of course, it is not organised as a compulsory task imposed on the students from above but is envisaged as a creative activity initiated and directed by them spontaneously and with zest.

There is another important principle which may be borne in mind by the teacher in planning his methods of teaching. It is not the amount of knowledge imparted or learnt in class that matters but the efficiency and thoroughness with which it is acquired by the students. With the great increase in knowledge that has taken place in every single field, it is quite impossible for a student—not only in the secondary school but even in the University—to acquire even one-hundredth of the most essential knowledge in any particular field of studies. Any attempt, therefore, at an encyclopædic approach, however watered down is foredoomed to failure. The teacher must concentrate on two things—quickenng of interest and training in efficient techniques of learning and study. If, through proper presentation and the realisation of the relationship between the student's life and what he is learning at school, his curiosity and interest have been aroused, he will always be able to acquire necessary knowledge, on the spur of felt need, in his later life. On the other hand, the static, ready-made knowledge, which is forced on him, not only fails to irradiate his mind but is also quickly forgotten—as soon as it has been unburdened in the Examination Hall!

The emphasis therefore shifts from the quantum of knowledge to the right methods of acquiring it. For this purpose, it is essential that every student should be trained in the art of study. We consider this absolutely essential and wish to stress it in particular because, in a large majority of schools, no attempt is made to train students in this basic skill. It seems to be presumed that any one who can read a book, in the sense of passing his eyes over words or pronouncing them with his lips, has *studied* it. This is an untenable presumption. Study implies several mental processes—interpretation of words into their appropriate meanings, the art of building up ideas, and sifting the significant from unimportant detail or illustration or from incompetent “padding”. These study skills cannot be acquired automatically but have to be consciously practised. It is not necessary for us to discuss the methods that should be adopted for this purpose and for assessing whether the students have acquired the habits and capacities needed for intelligent study. But we do feel that, with reference to *every* subject of the curriculum, the teaching of appropriate methods of study must form an important part of the school programme. One approach which has been successfully tried in some schools, is to organize, at the beginning of the session, a “How to study week” in which all the pupils concentrate on this problem, are made conscious of it and are initiated into proper methods of study. But obviously this can only be useful if care is taken to see that the habits, skills and attitudes acquired during this intensive training are used throughout the year, and if every teacher cooperates in this project. One essential part of this programme must be a training in the use of reference materials—such as the list of contents and the index in books, the dictionary, the atlas and reference books like the Encyclopædia or the Book of Knowledge.

### **Adaptation of Methods to suit different levels of Intelligence**

Having stressed the value of *activity methods*, we should like also to put in a plea for individualized work and instruction, in order to train the students in the habit of working independently. If students are trained to do so, it will discourage cramming and make it necessary for the teacher to cover the entire course or teach the whole book through formal oral lessons. He could then concentrate on the essentials, show the inter-connections of topics and arouse intelligent interest leaving some parts of the course to be studied by the students independently. There will always be certain types of assignments in the school programme which can be best carried out on the basis of individual activity. Such training is necessary not only to develop their capacity for independent work but also to adapt instruction to individual differences. These differences are a most significant part

of the psychological data with which the teacher has to deal and, if he fails to adapt his methods of work and presentation to the psychological needs and mental range of different types of children, he can neither win their interest nor their active cooperation. The present practice of mechanically applying the same method to dull, average as well as bright children is responsible for much of the ineffectiveness of the instruction given in schools. If these various groups of children are allowed to proceed at their own appropriate pace and the method-approach as well as the curricular load are properly adjusted, it will be good for all of them—it will save the dull children from discouragement and the bright children from a sense of frustration. We commend for consideration in this connection a scheme that has been tried in schools in the United Kingdom. The curriculum is arranged in “three streams”, A, B and C. For the dull children, the curriculum as well as the syllabus in each subject are simpler and lighter—that is the C stream—and include only the minimum essential subject-matter. If they can complete that with thoroughness and efficiency they will gain more intellectually than if they were dragged behind the chariot wheels of their brighter colleagues. For the bright students the curriculum has richer content and, after they have completed the common basic contents, they can go on to study the additional subject-matter. We have not considered it necessary to work out the curriculum or the syllabuses on these lines, because it will have to be done by State Departments of Education and, to some extent, by each individual school according to circumstances. But we recommend that this idea of adjusting the curriculum to students of varying ability should be explored and, what is equally important, methods of teaching should also be similarly adjusted. The brighter children will, for example, be able to respond better to methods involving greater freedom, initiative and individual responsibility than the dull or the average children who may require, at least in the early stages, a greater measure of planning and guidance by the teachers.

### **Balancing Individual and Group Work**

A wise teacher must, however, balance the claims of individual work with cooperative or group work. In actual life it is just as important to possess qualities of good tempered cooperation, discipline and leadership as to have the capacity for personal initiative and independent work. The former qualities develop best in the context of well-organized group work which is not at present given its due place in our schools. The normal basis of work in a large majority of schools is competition—competition for marks and grades and prizes. This has its uses within limits but does not by any means



provide the proper training for the art of living in the community. The genuine training of emotions, attitudes and social capacities takes place best in the context of projects and units of work undertaken cooperatively. It is the give-and-take of shared experiences that brings out the quality of leadership, inculcates habits of disciplined work and takes the individual out of his potentially dangerous mental and emotional isolation. We recommend, therefore, that teachers should be so trained that they are able to visualise and organize at least a part of the curriculum in the form of projects and activity—units which groups of students may take up and carry to completion. Another advantage of such projects would be that they will break through the academic isolation of the school and bring it into vital *rapport* with the life and the activities of the surrounding community. The chemistry of purification of water may blossom into the study of the municipal water system; the lesson in Civics may lead to a study of the working of the Local Board or a campaign for the improvement of local sanitary conditions. In fact, there are numerous resources in the life of every community which can, and should, be utilised for educational purposes. Such an approach will vitalise the school and also help to improve the conditions obtaining in the community. We would like to refer in this connection to a significant educational movement that is under way in the United States under the name of *Learning by living*, the object of which is to link the school and the community into a mutually enriching unity.

### **The place of Library in Schools**

We have referred in an earlier part of the chapter to the importance of cultivating the habits of general reading, of reducing the stress placed on text-books and making increasing use of the Library as a repository of reference books, standard books and books of general interest. A text-book usually adopts a specific approach conveying information and knowledge as systematically and briefly as possible. Such an approach has its own advantages but it cannot provide adequate training for the growing mind of the adolescent which often craves a wider and more challenging presentation and appreciates contact with more creative minds than text-book writers are generally gifted with. Moreover, the standard of interest and general knowledge is so deplorably poor in secondary schools—the examination “howlers” and the reports of Public Services Commissions are an irrefutable proof of the latter—that it has become a matter of the highest priority to promote the desire and the habit of

general reading amongst our students. This means, in effect, the establishment of really good libraries in schools and the provision of an intelligent and effective Library Service. In fact, without it, many of the recommendations and proposals made in this chapter and elsewhere cannot possibly be implemented. Individual work, the pursuit of group projects, many academic hobbies and co-curricular activities postulate the existence of a good, efficiently functioning library. The library may well be regarded as an essential instrument for putting progressive methods into practice. In view of its crucial importance, we consider it necessary to devote some space to discussing how the school library must be organized if it is to play its part effectively in the improvement of secondary education. We should like to state at the outset that, in a large majority of schools, there are at present no libraries worth the name. The books are usually old, outdated, unsuitable, usually selected without reference to the students' tastes and interests. They are stocked in a few book-shelves, which are housed in an inadequate and unattractive room. The person in charge is often a clerk or an indifferent teacher who does this work on a part-time basis and has neither a love for books nor a knowledge of library technique. Naturally, therefore there is nothing like an imaginative and well-planned library service which could inspire students to read and cultivate in them a sincere love of books. What makes this situation particularly difficult is the fact that most teachers and headmasters and even the educational administrators and authorities do not realize how unsatisfactory this position is and, therefore, they have no sense of urgency in the matter. It is, necessary, therefore, to give some idea of the Library as we conceive it.

In the first place, the library must be made the most attractive place in the school so that students will be naturally drawn to it. It should be housed in a spacious, well-lit hall (or room), with the walls suitably coloured and the rooms decorated with flowers and artistically framed pictures and prints of famous paintings. The furniture—book-shelves, tables, chairs, reading desks—should be carefully designed with an eye to artistic effect as well as functional efficiency. As far as possible, the open shelf system should be introduced so that students may have free access to books, may learn to handle them and browse on them at their leisure. In decorating the library, the full cooperation of the students should be obtained in order to give them the feeling that it is their *own* library.

Secondly, the success of the library depends largely on the proper selection of books, journals, and periodicals. This should be the function of a small committee of teachers who have a genuine love

for books, can study book reviews, consult catalogues and visit book shops, if possible. It would be useful if the same committee could be entrusted with the work of studying children's reading interests. Both with this work as well as with the choosing of books, some senior students who are interested in reading should be associated. They are, after all, the consumers and their cooperation is likely to be very enlightening. The guiding principle in selection should be not the teachers' own idea of what books the students *must* read but their natural and psychological interests. If they feel more attracted, at a particular age, to stories of adventure or travel or biographies or even detection and crime, there is no justification for forcing them to read poetry or classics or belles-lettres. Of course, the teacher's skill and teaching efficiency will consist in his being able to direct what they are reading now towards what they *should* be reading in due course. Literary education postulates the gradual elevation of taste and the refining of appreciation but the teacher's tact will lie in not forcing them but in unobtrusively guiding them on the way. In this endeavour, his own example and contagious enthusiasm can prove very potent allies.

The library being attractively arranged and adequately supplied with suitable books, the next important thing is an efficient service. In most schools, as we have pointed out, there is no conception of such service. It would require the services of a highly qualified and trained librarian who should be on a par with other senior teachers in pay and status, and we definitely recommend that there should be, in every secondary school, a full-time librarian of this type. If his function is merely to maintain a register of books, keep the library open at odd hours and occasionally issue books to a few students, there would obviously be no need for a full-time and highly qualified librarian. But if the library is to be the hub of the academic and intellectual life of the school, if it is not only to meet but guide the reading interests of students, if it is to work as a centre of free and supervised study as well as group work on projects undertaken by them—if it is to do all these things, the librarian will surely have his work cut out. He will also be responsible for giving due publicity to good books, old and new, available in the library—preparing and circulating book lists suitable for different grades, displaying 'blurbs' and cuttings of book reviews on the notice board, arranging book exhibitions, perhaps conducting a group reading project when a few students of similar interests may come together to read aloud poems, or stories or dramas. Above all, he will be available for consultation in the selection of suitable books for general reading or references needed for individual or group projects, that they have to work out as part of their curricular or co-curricular work. It will,

of course, be necessary for him to have the assistance of all his colleagues in this work—and if in the Training Colleges some of them can be given a brief orientation and training in Library work, it will be a great advantage—but he will have to act as the pivot and the inspiration of this intellectual and literary ferment.

In this connection, it is recommended that such of those teachers as have not had any training in library work during the period of study in Training Colleges should be given opportunities for attending summer courses in librarianship for periods ranging from four to eight weeks.

We have recommended that every secondary school should have a central library under a trained librarian. School buildings being what they are, it will be sometime before provision can be made in every school for a big reading room and its adjuncts. Similarly it will take time to provide each school with a qualified and trained librarian. Hence our recommendation for training some teachers in the management of school libraries as a part of their training course. These partially trained teacher-librarians will, working in cooperation, gradually build up the central library and organise the library service, while, in the meantime, working the class libraries. The class library is an important and essential adjunct to the central school library. It is easily organised and in the hands of a teacher of imagination it can do within its own limitations as much good work as the central library. The important point about the class library is to change and replenish its stocks at frequent intervals so that even within the four walls of a classroom the children have a wide variety of intellectual fare spread before them. A wise class-teacher can use the class library effectively to develop correct reading habits and for various other educative purposes. In a way he is in a position of advantage as compared with other teachers and if he himself loves books he is sure to infect his children with his own love and enthusiasm.

### **Subject Libraries**

Besides the class library in every high school there should be subject-libraries in charge of subject teachers. Competent subject teachers can enrich their teaching greatly with the help of small collections of books on their own subjects. These should not be confined to text-books only. Advanced works, reference books, books on related subjects and allied fields, all these will find a place in that collection, so that handling them and browsing over them students get a wide view of the subjects in all its bearings. Nothing can be more inspiring than contact with a teacher who loves his own subject and who can present it in its proper perspective.

It is necessary for the headmasters and the teachers to keep their fingers, as it were, on the pulse of their students' general reading. At present, this is far from being the case and therefore—with the exception of the brightest students who may assume the initiative in consulting teachers about their reading—they do not receive any individual guidance in this behalf. Most teachers, in fact, have no idea of what a majority of students are reading or whether they are reading at all! This points to the need of maintaining proper records that can be easily and quickly scrutinized. We should like to make two recommendations in this connection. Where ordinary issue registers—rather than issue cards—are maintained, each student must be allotted a few pages of the register in which all books studied by him are entered date-wise so that the class teachers and headmaster may see at a glance what each individual has been reading and give him necessary advice and encouragement. Secondly, each student should be required to maintain a diary in which he may enter, date-wise, the names of all the books (with the names of the authors) which he has read, together with brief quotations or extracts that may appeal to him. Perhaps at a later stage, he may write short reviews or appreciations of these books. Such a diary, maintained throughout the school years, will provide a fascinating map of his intellectual development and literary growth which will not only be of value to him here and now but may be of interest even in later life.

We would like to make certain general suggestions in order to strengthen library facilities and to secure the maximum use of those that exist. In all public libraries there should be a section specially meant for children and adolescents which may supplement the resources of the local school libraries. Secondly, steps should be taken to keep the school library open during the vacation and long holidays for the benefit of the students as well as the local community, if possible. In places where there is no public library, the school should also consider the possibility of throwing the school library open to the public outside school hours. This may involve some extra expenditure but it would be eminently worthwhile because it will draw the school and the community into the kind of partnership that we have advocated in this Report. We are also of the view that, in States where a library cess is levied, the proceeds should also be utilised to strengthen and improve school libraries. In smaller places it may be more economical to build up the school library in such a way that it may also serve the function of a Public Library for the locality, thus avoiding the duplication of buildings and furniture, and, to some extent, of staff.

In some cities we understand that during vacations books of interest to suit different grades of students are collected from various school libraries and are placed in a central locality, the students being encouraged to visit such improvised libraries and to study whatever books they may be interested in. This is an interesting experiment that may be tried in large cities.

We may, in passing, make a reference here to the associated problem of the production of suitable books for children and adolescents. At present there is a great paucity of such books in practically all Indian languages and unless the Centre and the State Governments take well thought-out measures to encourage the production of suitable books for general reading the objective in view cannot be realized—books suitable not only from the point of view of contents but also of printing, binding and illustrations. This may be done by giving financial assistance to qualified and well established organizations engaged in the production of such books, by offering prizes to the best books published and by arranging translations of good children's books available in English or published in various regional languages. We believe that, if school libraries are better financed and are able to buy larger number of books and if a love of reading is created in the students and eventually in adults with the increased purchase of books, the law of demand and supply will come into play and more and better books will be published.

We have advocated in the preceding paragraphs several new approaches to methods of teaching and described the part a well organized library can play in facilitating their implementation. But in the evidence and the memoranda that were tendered to us, it was repeatedly affirmed that it is very difficult to apply such progressive methods in schools. Obviously, if these ideas and suggestions are not translated into terms of curriculum and methods and the difficulties that stand in the way are not removed, secondary education will make no headway. Some of these difficulties have to do with the general sense of frustration that unfortunately prevails amongst teachers. There is no enthusiasm, no creative urge to initiate an educational renaissance. We hope, however, that soon after the publication of this Report, the Centre and the State Governments will undertake to organize—for the discussion of all these problems—country-wide seminars, discussion groups and refresher courses for headmasters and teachers, conducted by educationists with vision. This will help to reorient the teachers' minds and their way of thinking and create a new and bracing climate of opinion. If the improvement in the terms and conditions of service and the general social status of teachers that we have recommended elsewhere is brought about and a sense of contentment is created, we have no doubt that,

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as a result of these conferences, etc., the present feeling of frustration will disappear and the biggest hurdle in the way of educational reconstruction will be removed.

Another measure which will be very helpful in this connection is a systematic attempt on the part of all Education Departments, to prepare suitable literature, suggestive programmes, teaching aids, etc. for the guidance of teachers. At present they lack definite guidance. It is not provided by the stereotyped notes of Inspecting Officers, which can neither inspire creative thinking, nor stimulate new methods of work. The production of such material requires that there should be a small "educational wing" attached either to the office of the Director of Education or to one of the Post-Graduate Training Colleges, which will devote itself exclusively to the study of educational issues and problems, with special reference to the teachers' practical difficulties, and produce pamphlets, brochures, accounts of new educational experiments and movements for their use. These should be so written that they will keep their knowledge up-to-date, introduce them to good books, inspire them to try new and better methods of teaching and give them detailed and practical suggestions for the purpose. The Department should also see to it that every secondary school has a small but select library of educational books and periodicals for the teachers' use.

Sometimes even good teachers with ideas and a sense of duty, are unable to put progressive educational methods into practice. Where this is not due to the uncongenial school atmosphere the reason may be either that the teachers have not been adequately trained in, and given practical demonstration and observation of such methods or the pressure and dread of examinations may be cramping their efforts. So far as the first reason is concerned, it is a fact that even the demonstration schools attached to Training Colleges often fail to put into practice the ideas and theories advocated by the College Professors. So the teachers come out of these institutions with rather vague ideas about things like 'activity methods', 'free work' and 'group projects' etc., but they have never seen them at work. This difficulty can only be overcome if good demonstration and experimental schools are established and given all the necessary facilities, material and psychological, to develop better methods of teaching.

### **Experimental Schools**

We should like to commend in this connection a new experiment undertaken in one of the States whereby a certain number of selected schools have been released from the usual Departmental regulations

about curricula methods and text-books and given the freedom to work on new experimental lines. If a few progressive schools are established in every State where experienced teachers would be free to work out an improved syllabus and methods of teaching and discipline, they might, in due course, help to leaven the whole educational system. The Education Departments may also perhaps explore the possibility of short-term exchange of really gifted teachers from one school to another—particularly of teachers drawn from such progressive schools who may be sent to other institutions. So far as the system of examination is concerned, we have made recommendations elsewhere which are calculated to minimize its dead-weight and to secure greater freedom for teachers.

We recommend that such experimental schools as are in existence or which may be established in future should receive due encouragement at the hands of the State and Central Governments.

## Museums

Museums play a great part in the education of school children as they bring home to them much more vividly than any prosaic lectures the discoveries of the past and the various developments that have taken place in many fields of Science and Technology. We have seen the great value that museums play in other countries and the great importance that is attached to visits by school children at periodical intervals to these museums. They can also supply a background of information in regard to history, art and other fields of learning.

At present there are (within our knowledge) no museums in India of the type that exist in some European and American cities. We believe it is necessary from the educational point of view to establish such museums in important centres at least, wherein both ancient and modern collections will be exhibited and in some cases even demonstrations given of the actual process of development of various scientific discoveries. Nothing can impress the students in the formative age so much as the actual visualising of these experiments in a graphic manner. We have seen exhibitions conducted in various museums from time to time and have been greatly impressed with their educational value. It will serve also to educate the public at large and to give them a realistic approach to scientific investigations and scientific discoveries. It will not be difficult for every State to concentrate on one such prominent museum at least. While on this subject, we may also refer to the desirability of providing small museums in the schools



themselves. It may even be possible to have a more comprehensive set-up in the museum of a particular town to which all the schools can contribute and thus make it much more attractive to school children and to the public. We feel that assistance from the Centre and the States should be forthcoming for the starting of such museums.

### **Audio-visual Aids: Films and Radio**

It is hardly necessary to emphasise the role that audio-visual aids, films and radio talks, can play in the liberalising of the education of the school children. In some States they have been developed to such an extent that most of the schools are able to obtain from the Department of Public Instruction the audio-visual aids and films and to correlate them with the particular subjects that are being taught. The students thus get not merely theoretical instruction but through these aids a graphic presentation of the subject. We recommend that a central library of educational films should be available in each State and that films of great value be sent from the Central Government to the States periodically. We recommend also that educational films suited to Indian conditions should be taken and made available to schools.

As regards the radio, we are glad to learn that through the All-India Radio, arrangements have been made for school broadcasts. It is hardly necessary for us to emphasise that such broadcasts should be by well-qualified persons and should create an interest in the subject so that the boy's curiosity can be roused to learn more about the subject. Nothing is so calculated to produce in the child an aversion for such broadcasts as the monotonous and none too graphic description that sometimes is given by persons not quite familiar with the psychology of the young mind. It should not be treated as a routine duty which can be discharged by any teacher in the area. Care must be taken to see that an expert panel of headmasters and teachers is constituted to decide on (a) the subject to be dealt with, (b) the manner in which it ought to be dealt with, and (c) persons competent to give such a talk. If school broadcasts are to be conducted on these lines, they will form a very efficient supplement to education.

We venture to hope that the adoption of the various suggestions that have been made as well as the practical measures that have been recommended will break through the vicious circle which holds our schools in its thrall and release forces which will eventually transform the educational system.

### Summary of recommendations

1. The methods of teaching in schools should aim not merely at the imparting of knowledge in an efficient manner, but also at inculcating desirable values and proper attitude and habits of work in the students.

2. They should, in particular, endeavour to create in the students a genuine attachment to work and a desire to do it as efficiently, honestly and thoroughly as possible.

3. The emphasis in teaching should shift from verbalism and memorization to learning through purposeful, concrete and realistic situations and, for this purpose, the principles of "Activity Method" and "Project Method" should be assimilated in school practice.

4. Teaching methods should provide opportunities for students to learn actively and to apply practically the knowledge that they have acquired in the classroom. "Expression Work" of different kinds must, therefore, form part of the programme in every school subject.

5. In the teaching of all subjects special stress should be placed on clear thinking and clear expression both in speech and writing.

6. Teaching methods should aim less at imparting the maximum quantum of knowledge possible and more on training students in the techniques of study and methods of acquiring knowledge through personal effort and initiative.

7. A well-thought out attempt should be made to adapt methods of instruction to the needs of individual students as much as possible so that dull, average and bright students may all have a chance to progress at their own pace.

8. Students should be given adequate opportunity to work in groups and to carry out group projects and activities so as to develop in them the qualities necessary for group life and co-operative work.

9. As the proper use of a well equipped school library is absolutely essential for the efficient working of every educational institution and for encouraging literary and cultural interests in students, every secondary school should have such a library; class libraries and subject libraries should also be utilized for this purpose.

10. Trained Librarians, who have a love for books and an understanding of students' interests, should be provided in all secondary schools and all teachers should be given some training in the basic principles of library work, in the Training Colleges as well as through refresher courses.

11. Where there are no separate public libraries the school libraries should, so far as possible, make their facilities available to the local public and all public libraries should have a special section for children and adolescents.

12. In order to improve general standards of work in school, necessary steps should be taken to produce text-books as well as books of general reading which are of distinctly superior quality to the books at present available.

13. Suitable literature for the guidance and inspiration of teachers should be produced by the Education Departments of all States and either the Office of the Director of Education or one of the Training Colleges should be adequately equipped for the purpose.

14. In order to popularize progressive teaching methods and facilitate their introduction, "Experimental" and "Demonstration" schools should be established and given special encouragement where they exist, so that they may try out new methods freely without being fettered by too many departmental restrictions.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SECONDARY SCHOOL AS WE VISUALIZE IT

In the preceding chapters, we have discussed the various aspects and issues pertaining to the reconstruction of secondary education. In this chapter we propose to present a composite picture of the secondary school as it would emerge if our proposals and recommendations are put into effect.

#### Provision of a Proper Environment

The first concern of the school should be to provide for its pupils a rich, pleasant and stimulating environment which will evoke their manifold interests and make life a matter of joyful experiences. This is not an easy thing to achieve; it demands a many-sided approach. To begin with, the physical environment of our schools with the exception of a few well-endowed schools, is generally so drab and depressing that it is not conducive to the building up of an *esprit-de-corps* or a sense of pride in the school. We realise that many schools work under considerable financial difficulties and it is idle to expect that they will be able to put up suitable buildings or provide proper furniture and equipment. But, we are not prepared to concede the point that it is impossible for such schools to do any thing to improve their present material conditions. In fact, our observations have convinced us that, where the staff and the management have shown some vision and have been able to win the active cooperation of the students and the local community, financial difficulties have not stood in the way of the schools becoming reasonably "streamlined." Educational authorities and teachers often fail to realize what tremendous resources they have at their disposal in the hundreds of eager, lively, constructively disposed youngsters in their school. If their enthusiasm and practical aptitudes are properly and tactfully mobilized, they can themselves change the general appearance of the school-plant almost beyond recognition and, in this effort, the parents and the local community can be of immense help. We have no doubt that, under proper encouragement, students all over India can, if necessary, carry out minor repairs, white-wash school rooms, keep the school garden and compound in good shape, paint and polish the furniture, decorate the bare walls of their rooms with charts, pictures and illustrations and enliven them with flowers,

wherever this loveliest of Nature's gifts is available. And, if the schools do become, as we have envisaged, an integral part of the life of the community and it begins to realize that their welfare is its own concern, the problem of resources will become much easier, for there is no community of persons that is too poor to make some contribution for the improvement of its own school. We have stressed this question of the decoration of schools at the outset not only because it can give the students a new feeling towards their school but also because it cultivates a love of neatness and beauty and artistic taste which are at present lacking in some of our youth. We are anxious that our schools should take the lead in the matter of improving their own physical environment. It is, however, essential that the students should actively share in this crusade for beauty—both in the matter of its creation and proper maintenance. If this is given to them ready-made like the furnished residence of a *nouveau-riche* it will not have the same educative effect; for education primarily consists, as we have stressed more than once, in making and creating things of beauty and utility by our own efforts.

### **Promotion of Extra-curricular Activities**

Given a clean, pleasant and well maintained school building, we would like the school to see if it can provide a richly varied pattern of activities to cater to the development of their children's entire personality. It has to formulate a scheme of hobbies, occupations and projects that will appeal to, and draw out, the powers of children of varying temperaments and aptitudes. Putting the problem in these words obviously implies that we do not visualize this school as merely a place of formal learning, whose main concern is to communicate a certain prescribed quantum of knowledge, but rather as a living and organic community which is primarily interested in training its pupils in, what we have called, the gracious "art of living". Knowledge and learning are undoubtedly of value but they must be acquired as a by-product of interested activity, because it is only then that they can become a vital part of the student's mind and personality and influence his behaviour. What this implies in terms of educational method we have discussed at some length in the relevant chapter. All that we need recall here is that the secondary school of the future must be transformed into an "activity school", because activity has an irresistible appeal for every normal child and is his natural path to the goal of knowledge and culture. But the "art of living" is a much more comprehensive concept than the acquisition of knowledge, however intelligently planned. It includes training in the habits and graces of social life and the capacity for cooperative group work; it calls for patience, good temper,

sincerity, fellow feeling and discipline. These can only be cultivated in the context of the social life and the many curricular and co-curricular activities that must find a recognised place in every good school. We have already discussed their place in the school programme and the many educational values that they can serve if they are organized intelligently and with vision. What we would like the teachers to bear in mind is that *these* have a double function to perform—on the one hand, they provide an opportunity for students to develop their *individual* talents and capacities and self-confidence and, on the other, they lend themselves to being made the leaders in cooperative work which trains them in the division and integration of functions and in the allied qualities of discipline and leadership. We would like to see these schools humming with activities in which each student will be able to discover himself. One great advantage of the activity methods, that we have advocated for teaching curricular subjects, will be that the present rigid line of demarcation between the classroom and the extra-curricular activities—carried on in leisure hours, on the playground or in the hobbies room or in the library—will disappear and all work will partake of the quality of play. We do *not* visualize that these schools will have dull, routine-ridden, formal lessons in the class *plus* a number of independent, unrelated ‘extra-curricular’ activities which have no intrinsic relationship with them either in contents or methods. The entire programme of the school will be visualized as a unity and inspired by a psychologically congenial and stimulating approach, the so-called “work” being characterized by the feeling of joy and self-expression usually associated with play and hobbies, and these latter having something of the meaningfulness and purpose which are normally considered a special feature of academic work.

In the planning of these activities, it is important to remember that they should be as varied as the resources of the school will permit. Academic activities like debates, discussions, dramas, school magazine, social magazine, social activities like the organizing of different functions for the school community as well as the local community, sports activities, manual and practical activities, social service projects, art projects, must all be woven into a rich and unified pattern, within which every child will be able to find something to suit his tastes and interests. In the actual working out of these various activities, academic, social, practical and sporting—the teachers will find that there are really no rigid boundary walls between them. The production of a school magazine, for example, involves a number of activities and processes, which can coalesce together to form a most valuable experience to train the personality of the pupil. And the impact of a really well worked-out project, whatever its nature, does not remain confined to its own special field

but spreads out to irradiate various facets of personality. Thus, by planning a *coherent* programme of these different activities, rich in stimuli, the school will not be frittering away either the time or the energy of the pupils but will be heightening their intellectual powers also side by side with training them in other fine qualities.

### **Provision of Craft and Productive Work**

We expect this school to devote special attention to craft and productive work and thus redress the balance between theoretical and practical studies which has been upset for many, many years. It will have a lively appreciation of the basic truth that "the education of a mind is essentially a process of revivifying in it the latent values contained in the goods of culture". In this process, educationally productive work, both intellectual and practical, plays a very important part; in fact, it is the finest and most effective medium of education. It will, therefore, be reflected *both* in its curriculum and methods—that is, on the one hand, different practical subjects and craft work will find a place in the curriculum on the same status as the so-called "liberal" studies and on the other, the teaching methods will partake of the nature of activities and stimulate independent work. Every well established and reasonably well financed school will have workshops and craft-rooms where students will learn to handle tools and to fashion different kinds of materials into form. They will not be merely "firting" with something called hand-work, which often offer little stimulating challenge to their practical aptitudes, but will actually be confronted with real jobs of work which will genuinely stretch their powers. These craft-rooms, workshops (and farms), no doubt, are specially meant for students who offer practical subjects like agriculture, engineering, domestic science, etc., but they will also provide suitable practical occupations for *all* students including those who take up sciences or humanities or art subjects. Likewise, the school laboratory will not be a toy-affair, where a few simple and carefully planned experiments are performed under the vigilant eye of the teacher who sees that the prescribed routine is followed. It will endeavour to give them something of the thrill and the joy of discovery and the educative experience of learning through trial and error. It would be wrong to imagine that practical work of this type cannot be carried out in secondary schools. It has been done by many progressive schools in different countries and one of the finest and most stimulating accounts of what has actually been accomplished, in this way will be found in the story of the Public School at Oundle (England) as it developed under the inspiring leadership of its Head Master, Sanderson.\*

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\*The story of a great school "Master" by H. G. Wells and "Sanderson of Oundle", a biography written by his colleagues.

### School Library Service

This school of ours will also endeavour to build up a living library and an efficient library service. We have already stressed the importance of school libraries and given a few practical suggestions which can help to quicken the present dormant and depressing libraries into life. The library will be the hub and the centre of the intellectual and literary life of the reorganized school and play the same part *vis-a-vis* all the other subjects as the laboratory plays for science subjects or the workshop for technical subjects. In fact, even in the case of scientific and technical subjects it will have a very important role. An intelligent teacher and an interested class will raise, or find themselves confronted with, many issues and problems in the course of their work—in history, geography, science, literature etc. No text-book could possibly provide the solution to all these problems or offer the information necessary for the purpose and no intelligent teacher will commit the folly of trying to do all the thinking, or discovering all the material, for his pupils. They will, therefore, naturally have recourse to the library as the source of the desired knowledge and the trained and understanding librarian will meet them half-way, direct them to the books and reference sources, provide comfortable facilities for them to read and take down notes and cooperatively draw up their plans of work. Thus they will be trained in the art of purposeful reading and making their own way in the world of ideas. In addition to this purely utilitarian function, the library will also provide facilities for developing their taste in reading for pleasure which is a most valuable and meaningful hobby. We feel that, if the teachers and the pupils are keen about it, they can certainly do a great deal to improve the physical environment of the library resources and to ensure its proper use even within limited finance.

### The School as a Centre of Community

Another thing which will distinguish this school from most of the existing schools is that it will be organized *as a community*. We have discussed the *raison d'être* of this transformation at some length; we have stated that the starting point of educational reform must be the re-linking of the school to life and the restoring of the intimate relationship between them which has broken down with the development of the formal tradition of education. How can that best be done? We would like this school to become a centre of actual social life and social activities where the same kind of motives and methods are employed as operate in the life of any normal and decent human group. It will not confine itself to book learning and the teaching



of prescribed knowledge and skills but it will give full room for the expression of the pupils' social impulses. It will train them, through practical experience in cooperation, in subordinating personal interests to group purposes, in working in a disciplined manner and in fitting means to ends. Discipline in the school will not be a matter of arbitrary rules and regulations enforced through the authority of the teachers helped by the lure of rewards or the fear of punishment. The students will be given full freedom to organize functions, to conduct many of the school activities through their own committees and even to deal with certain types of disciplinary cases. In this way, discipline will be maintained through the influence of the social group and it will gradually lead to the development of self-discipline. Above all, discipline will be ensured by providing for the students psychologically congenial types (and methods) of work which will fully capture their interest and thus impose their own inherent discipline on them. Many teachers must have seen how, when a group of students is working on a really interesting project like staging a drama or arranging a prize distribution function, there is usually no problem of discipline. The sincere and spontaneous desire to do the work as satisfactorily as possible ensures discipline automatically and, if some members of the group interfere in any way with its smooth working, the group opinion asserts itself and puts them right. It is this kind of discipline that we should like to see built up in the school.

The school will, no doubt, be a community but it will be a small community within a larger community and its success and vitality will depend on the constant interplay of healthy influences between it and the larger community outside. What we would like to see is a two-way traffic so that the problems that arise in the home and community life and the realistic experiences gained there should be brought into school so that education may be based on them and be intimately connected with real life, and on the other hand the new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values acquired in the school should be carried into the home life to solve its problems, to raise its standards and link up the teachers, parents and children in one compact and naturally helpful group. This principle will have other implications too. It will mean that students will take an active part in various forms of social service for the good of the community and the school will not only inculcate the ideas and a desire for social service but also provide opportunities and the necessary material facilities. If the village or the town or the particular area of the city in which the school is located is unclean or happens to be infested with mosquitoes and flies carrying disease or is compelled to use water that is impure, it will be the duty of the students to rouse the

conscience of the local community to those evils and handicaps; through effective forms of educative propaganda and also to do whatever they can to improve this state of affairs and to win the enlightened cooperation of the public in this task. Likewise, interested members of the community, engaged in various useful vocations and professions will be invited to the school from time to time to talk about their particular work, to show its place and significance in the life of the community, to discuss its difficulties as well as its rewards. In this way, outside life will flow into the school and lower, if not knock down, the walls which at present isolate it from the currents of life operating outside. There will also be a close parent-teachers association in the school—not the usual kind of formal relationship which means inviting the parents to the school once or twice a year on the occasion of the Prize Distribution or the Parents' Day but continuous contact and exchange of ideas which will help them to understand each other's point of view. They will thus learn to cooperate in the common task of giving a better, more rational and more sympathetic deal to the children.

One of the dominant aims of the school in the provision of all these social and practical activities and in organizing class-work on a new basis will be to educate the character and inculcate the right kind **of ideals and values in the students**. It will be earnestly interested in the problem of moral and social training but will not hug the fond illusion that this training can be provided through lessons in morality or civics or exhortations by the teachers or headmasters on important occasions. It will utilize fully the only two media through which character and personality can be really formed—the living force of personal example and the organization of every single item of school work in such a way that it will have the desired impact on the personality of the pupils. The teachers will realise that they cannot train character or inculcate discipline in the students unless they set before them an effective example of personal integrity, social sense and discipline. But their example will only point the direction and the goal; the actual process of training will consist in the students' discharging all their duties in such a way that it will irresistibly build up the requisite ideals and qualities of character. These will not remain "pinned to the wall", but will find hour-to-hour practical expression in the way they carry on their studies, play their games, organize their social activities and perform all their tasks in and out of school. It is only when this supreme purpose inspires their hearts and minds and enters into every day activities that character can be built on enduring foundations and stand the strain and stress of later life. The teachers should, therefore, constantly think of how the academic and other activities of school life are reacting on the student's character and

should frequently discuss this problem amongst themselves and formulate concerted plans of action.

### **Reorientation of Teachers**

Teachers must develop a new orientation towards their work. They will not look upon their work as an unpalatable means of earning a scanty living but as an avenue through which they are rendering significant social service as well as finding some measures of self-fulfilment and self-expression. They will work as a team engaged in a high endeavour—with the Headmaster as a valued and more experienced member—and, as new problems and difficulties arise, they will be constantly conferring amongst themselves and using their collective wisdom and experience to find their solutions. They will not be dominated by routine but will keep an open mind—receptive and experimental and look upon their work as a great social and intellectual adventure. This would naturally imply an eagerness on their part to continue their study of psychology, of educational literature, and new educational ideas. Their relations with the students will be free and friendly; they will try to study their psychology and their individual differences with sympathy and help them in their difficulties with tact. No school can develop into an educative community, capable of releasing the students' creative capacities, if the teachers maintain a stiff, forbidding attitude towards their pupils and try to maintain their authority through various kinds of punishment whilst the pupils, on their part, stand in awe of them and are not prepared to share their problems and difficulties with them. That is an unnatural relationship which brings out the worst in both parties. It is not only a false but dangerous conception of prestige which builds up a wall between teachers and students. It is usually the weak and the diffident or the temperamentally handicapped teacher who takes refuge behind that kind of artificial prestige. The good teacher, in our reorganised school, will endeavour to win the love and confidence of his children and establish his prestige on sincerity, integrity, hard work and a sympathetic handling of their problems.

The school will also considerably modify its methods and system of examination. At present, as we have pointed out, teaching is entirely dominated by examinations. Students are educated not so much to acquire knowledge and understanding or the right attitudes as to pass examinations. In this school the emphasis will shift from examination to education; teachers and children will concentrate on the real purpose of the school and will take examinations in their stride. It is true that the pattern of the final secondary school examination is beyond their control and it may take some time before that is appreciably modified. But there is no reason why, for the lower

classes, there should not be a more rational and intelligent examination technique, as it is the Headmaster and the staff who largely decide the matter at this stage. Much greater credit can be given to the actual work done by the student from day to day, of which careful and complete record should be maintained. Moreover, in assessing his progress and his position, factors other than academic achievement should be given due weight—his social sense, initiative, discipline, co-operation, leadership, etc. Even in assessing academic achievements, they should not use one rigid yardstick but judge them with reference to the individual capacity and intelligence of each student. We are confident that, when the teachers' whole outlook on education is changed and they learn to appreciate the real purposes of the school, they will be able to make necessary adjustments in the methods of examination and make it an ally, rather than a hinderance, in the process of education.

### **Freedom of School**

Above all, this school will enjoy a much greater degree of freedom than is vouchsafed to schools at present. We have pointed out in our Report that there is a general complaint from headmasters that they are unduly fettered by the rules and regulations of the Department and are not able to put any new and creative ideas or suggestions into practice. The teachers have, similarly complained that they have not enough freedom to work out their ideas and, in their case, it is stated that often it is the headmasters who stand in the way. We trust that the Education Departments and their Inspecting Officers will see their way to giving greater freedom to schools in the matter of organizing the syllabus, selecting text-books and adopting teaching methods. But in addition to that—or even before this is done—there are certain elements of school work which the teachers and headmasters are really free to effect improvements in. We have already referred in this connection to class examinations. They have certainly to follow the general pattern of the curriculum but there is no reason why they should not, for example, enrich it by encouraging greater use of the library and the reading of significant books of general interest. They can adopt methods of work in the class-room which will allow students to work more freely and progress at their own pace. They will be given full freedom in organizing their various activities and extra-curricular projects. This freedom, which will embrace within its scope both staff and students, is a very exacting responsibility and all will have to be gradually trained to bear it worthily. But there is no other way of doing so than giving them the chance to work under conditions of freedom and to accept the risks that may be involved in the initial stages.

This is the picture of the reorganized secondary school as we visualise it. We realise that all schools may not be able to work up to it immediately. But it is not an impossible or unduly idealized picture and it does point the correct direction of advance. If the educational authorities and the teachers accept this conception of the school, we are of the opinion that, in spite of the many difficulties and handicaps that exist, it will be possible to bring about many welcome improvements in our schools. For, after all, what we have advocated is, in brief, a transformation of the schools into social communities where the healthy, normal motive and methods of group work are in operation and children have an opportunity of learning by doing, of gaining meaningful social experiences, and thereby being trained in the supreme "art of living". All the changes in the methods of teaching, in discipline and examination, all the improvements in the physical environment of the schools and its general atmosphere are meant to assist in this basic transformation. We repeat that it is a difficult, but not an impossible task and, if faith and enthusiasm are kindled in the teachers, they can move whole mountains of difficulties. For the teachers there can be no greater or deeper joy than providing for their students an educative environment in which they can lead a rich, joyous and meaningful life and not only acquire knowledge and skill but also find a release for their creative capacities.

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# Appendix

A NOTE

ON THE QUESTION OF INDISCIPLINE IN  
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

BY

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The main purpose of this note is to consider measures necessary to check growing indiscipline among pupils in schools and colleges, prevent their active participation in politics and protect them from the unhealthy influence of anti-social and anti-democratic forces operating in the country. It should be our purpose to direct the energies of youth into creative and constructive channels and to instil into them a faith in the essential values of refined and democratic living.

I have discussed the matter in conferences of Principals of Colleges, and with the officers of the Department of Education and the Secondary Education Board. I have also informally discussed it with Vice-Chancellors of Universities, Deans of Faculties, guardians of pupils and leaders of student organisations, head-masters of schools and inspecting officers. I have returned from these discussions, with a feeling of alarm at the superficial and unreal way in which this vital problem is being treated by those who are most vitally concerned with it.

It has become fashionable to bewail the growing decline in the standards of education and attainments in schools and colleges and to lament the steady deterioration in discipline. The fact that there is deterioration is taken for granted, without proper objective examination. A few sporadic instances of student activity, high-lighted by newspapers are enough to provide cause for gloom to the otherwise weary administrator. The entire guilt of the presumed decline is laid at the doors of the pupil, the teacher and the school. Popular criticism comes most easy when it relates to Education. As a person long connected with education and with youth in schools and colleges, I do not agree with the rather glib assumption generally made that everything is wrong with Education. Our youths have on the whole, been fairly steady and dependable in spite of circumstances which for many of them have been extremely difficult. There are, however, signs that if matters do not improve, rapid deterioration may follow. It must be realised that the tendency to blame pupils and schools can do little good and may possibly do irreparable harm. Loyalties defy one-way traffic. If pupils in educational institutions must be loyal to society, society must also manifest its concern and loyalty to students. Has society done well by the student? The solution of the issue depends upon the answer we give to this question. To an educationist and a teacher, the pupil's inherent goodness is an article of faith. For him there can be no bad pupil. In the words of Frederick Burk, "There are misfit schools, misfit tests and studies; misfit dogmas and traditions of pedants and pedantry. There are misfit homes, misfit occupations and diversions. In fact, there are all kinds and conditions of misfit clothing for children, but in the nature of things there can be no misfit children." This attitude



provides the robust optimism which alone can, and should, inspire those whose lot it is to deal with the youth of the Country. In fact, as will be indicated in the subsequent parts of this note, the main-spring of indiscipline and lack of seriousness in youth lie in their feeling of being "not wanted". We have to ask ourselves seriously whether we do want them and, if so, why?

It is obvious that the problem of discipline in educational institutions is not an isolated problem. Its roots lie deep not only in the system of education but in the state of society as a whole. The treatment of the problem cannot, therefore, be local; its remedy will, of necessity, have to be sought in a proper over-hauling, on the one hand, of the system of Education and, on the other, of the way of life and thought of the people. The educational institution can no longer be treated as a mere meeting place of teacher and taught for formal instruction; it should be considered as a laboratory in which social life, ideally conceived, is reconstructed and rehearsed. Education in the proper sense is training in the art of living, and nothing may be expected of schools unless this new purpose is consciously realised by them and they are re-oriented to serve their proper social function. The state of indiscipline, frustration and chaos obtaining in schools and colleges is just a mild reflection of a worse state of affairs obtaining in society at large. Social temper, social emotions, social urges, social dissatisfaction—real and imaginary—social habits of thought and estimation and the prevalent values of life are found to colour those of the pupil in educational institutions. Unfortunately, we have not yet settled down to any superior national tastes or national sense of values, or what, in brief, may be termed national character. We are in a state of being formed—a very critical state indeed. The remedy for the present unsatisfactory state of indiscipline will need to be sought in programmes of social education directed not merely against illiteracy, but purposively designed to eliminate social tensions, to create faith in democratic methods of solving social problems, to awaken a sense of understanding and strengthen the moral fibre of the social structure.

The main defects of the existing system from this point of view may be summarised below:

### **Heads of Institutions**

We do not have the right type of heads of institutions—Headmasters and Principals of Colleges who command the confidence and respect of their pupils. A good Head Master or Principal is not merely a scholar; he is a man of sound character, deep sympathy and under-

standing and considerable tact and experience in dealing with pupils. He should be profoundly sensitive to the physical, mental, moral, intellectual and spiritual needs of the pupil and should know how to minister to them. The present system of recruitment does not permit really able persons to be drawn for this work.

Existing emoluments and the status of the Head Master and the Principal are such that the best man never can be drawn into the posts of Principal and Head of educational institutions. The remedy lies in exercising great care in the selection of the right type of heads of educational institutions and in giving them proper wages, social status, freedom and the confidence necessary to enable them to play their role properly.

### **Academic Standards**

The academic standards of schools and colleges are at best poor. Teaching suffers from the domination of a formal external examination and the feature, above all, that characterises instruction in colleges and schools is discovering 'short-cuts' and easy methods of passing examinations. The 'short-cut' attitude is not merely unacademic: it is also immoral. The result of this attitude is that only very rarely does a pupil feel inspired to learn a subject and very seldom does he cultivate a devotion for it. The tendency to discover short-cuts for the examination—some approved and others contraband—leaves the student with ample leisure. Ordinarily, he works hard only for the two or three months preceding the formal examination; during the other long months of leisure when he has nothing to be serious about, his mind is adrift, indolent and credulous, and he becomes an easy prey to sparkling expositions of ideologies which promise utopian comfort and 'freedom-from-want' by taking the line of least resistance. In the interests of discipline and of the pupil himself, it is essential that he should feel inspired by the problems presented by the subject of his studies and devote himself to honest and hard work. Serious attention to academic work and the strenuous pursuit of various problems presented by the subject of study constitute the essence of training in discipline. Each branch of study and each activity of school or college life, if taken seriously, has a very special discipline to impart to its devotee, and this discipline constitutes the highest excellence that a human being can attain. This objective can be achieved only if—

- (a) the teachers are really competent;
- (b) the institutions provide the proper atmosphere and opportunities for honest and serious studies;

(c) the system of examination in vogue at present is considerably modified and proper scientific methods of evaluation of the attainments of students are adopted;

and (d) the students are kept constantly alive to the purpose for which they are in schools and colleges.

We are at present experiencing a great dearth of the right type of teachers. Moreover, owing to the quick expansion of education, a large number of young teachers without experience and proper grounding have had to be engaged. The older ones, who were hardly better, are retiring. Moreover, the best teachers, particularly in colleges, have failed to provide the inspiration and guidance that is necessary to creating the right attitudes in the minds of their charges. The Heads of Departments in all the subjects taught in colleges under the Government should be recruited from among the best men available, if necessary from abroad, whatever be the price. They should be brought here on a contract basis and charged to train our men in organising studies and in establishing what are known as "schools of thought" in various subjects. If this is done a refreshing change may be expected in colleges in the course of the next five or ten years. To my mind, it is essential to realise the fundamental weakness in our system and to adopt bold and, if necessary, unorthodox methods in remedying it. Given good teachers, it will not be difficult to cure these defects.

It may be pointed out in this connection that discipline in educational institutions passes through several characteristic stages. In the first stage discipline is directly the outcome of obedience to the will of the teacher and to the requirements of the school. The word "discipline" is derived from the same root from which the term "disciple" is derived. Later, when boys mature a little, the sense of discipline is aroused by a growing social consciousness. The next phase is that of self-direction. At this stage the youth endeavours to plan and order his life and conduct according to his accepted moral ideals and philosophy of life. By the time he reaches this stage he has cultivated certain convictions and adopted certain values which guide his conduct. The last, and, perhaps, the most mature stage of discipline, is that which he derives from the work that he has to do. All constructive and creative work—whether it be study or the performance of practical work—requires special discipline. The discipline which comes to a man by his devotion to the work, which becomes his calling, is the highest type of discipline to which a man can aspire. The perfection of human excellence was visualised by the Gita as the acquisition of skill in doing one's job "योग : कर्मसु कौशलम्" These

various phases of discipline are discernible, but not separate phases, which succeed one another. The heads of institutions and teachers have to keep a watch over the pupils. They should enable them to cultivate a high sense of duty and the conscience of the artist which will not be satisfied—if it can be satisfied at all—with anything less than the best and the noblest. The teacher's own example in this matter is vital, and appreciation of lives, devoted to exacting duties and mighty causes cannot fail to provide the necessary inspiration. In brief, discipline is the outcome of the diligent cultivation of a moral way of life and honest devotion to work and to play.

### **Depressing Environment**

School and college surroundings and equipment provide little that is attractive. Generally speaking, classrooms are dreary. There are no comfortable reading-rooms where books and periodicals are easily obtained and read in comfort. Books are few—most of them of the text-book variety—and they are not displayed so as to inspire interest or enthusiasm. There is not one college in the whole state which has even one original painting or piece of sculpture of anything of usual beauty that a youth can proudly claim as his own. The few gymnasia that do exist are ill-equipped and by no means attractive. On the contrary, most schools are over-crowded and classrooms crammed. School surroundings are unhealthy. There are many private school buildings which provide insufficient light and ventilation in class-rooms. The youth of India are entitled to pleasant surroundings, they do not find them and are unconsciously but positively depressed, frustrated and fatigued. In the interests of discipline, it is necessary that youth should be surrounded by healthy influences and an environment in which they may breathe beauty and good cheer. The proviso of a proper environment is a *sine qua non* of education. Unfortunately, the demand for good accommodation—not rich but healthy and tasteful—is usually unheeded and not infrequently overlooked.

### **Absence of Social Life**

Student social life in India is dull. "Extra-curricular" activities are never seriously taken to be integral aspects of sound education. They are suffered as forms externally imposed. It is rarely that a teacher contacts the pupils or *vice versa* with informal ease and mutual pleasure. The tutorials that are arranged do not answer their purpose and provide little real participation between teacher and taught in the inspiring adventure of learning. The environment such as exists today usually provides an uncongenial, barren soil for cultivation of strong human ties and the right social and intellectual relationships.

In consequence, pupils fail to cultivate the social regard, *esprit de corps* and reverence that are essential to sustaining higher social and moral values.

### **Examination: their pivotal role and inherent unreliability**

I have already referred in passing to the domination of the "examination" in the system of education. The University Commission Report has given much space to the evil consequences of the system of examinations as it obtains today. They have rightly suggested the need to temper the existing system of "subjective" examinations by some more scientific and "objective" methods which counteract the whimsical and inescapable "personal factor" of examination. There can be no system of education without proper tests, and examinations will continue to dominate the system as long as society continues to give them the value. An improvement in the system of examinations is the real instrument of all educational reform and readjustment. It is essential to find out some scientific, valid and reliable method of assessment of a pupil's worth and this can be done only if we have a sufficiently large personnel trained in modern psychology. Sir Philip Hartog has done great service by his exposition of the vagaries of the existing system of examination and its unreliability. It is for the Universities and the Secondary Education Boards to devote themselves to revolutionising methods of examination. It is not less imperative that team researches and experiments in this field be undertaken by training colleges, and advantage be taken of the most recent developments in the science of Psychology.

It has to be admitted that the existing methods create insecurity in the life of students. There is one aspect to which I may in passing draw special attention by way of illustrating this particular point, namely that the examination comes once at the end of two or three years and the pupil's worth and his achievements in the subject are estimated by what he does in a few hours. His daily work, his attempts at learning for himself, acquiring knowledge in various fields, and expressing himself through the knowledge he has acquired—all very important factors in the process of education—remain totally unconsidered. These factors have a psychological effect and they tend to weaken the morale of the students. They have no desire left to think for themselves and to test and apply their own knowledge to new situations. Their attitude is "cram" and "take your chance" in the big examination gamble. Their minds, when they are ready for examination, are packed store-houses of unassorted, unconnected and unapplied knowledge of what Dr. Whitehead described as "inert ideas".

It is essential to reconsider the entire method of holding examinations. The Norwood Committee Report on Secondary Education has rightly pointed out that the most urgent need of education at the moment is to divert researches into methods of maintaining school records which will be reliable and lead to a correct and valid estimation of a pupil's worth. It is also necessary to introduce a human element into the system of examination.

### **The Security Factor**

A sense of fear and insecurity lies at the root of all indiscipline and of gullibility to 'isms' which promise a cheap panacea for all social ills. There is little to make the young in schools and colleges feel that he is wanted and cared for. Uncertainty clouds his future. Welfare activities available for pupils, such as they exist in schools and colleges, are inadequate. Many pupils are never sure that they will be able to go through their programme of education. Attention to health is nominal, and in illness and suffering, the pupil is left entirely to himself and his resources—which are often negligible. Penury remains unremedied in the case of the brightest pupils. There is no certainty of employment at the end of the educational career and the pupil is often left unguided to tackle the difficult problem of making a living. Even with the professionally and technically qualified pupil, prospects of employment suited to his special training and promising reasonable emoluments are bleak. Those who have no support have to choose unsuitable employment, and those who cannot afford to wait till they discover employment to their liking (and they may be required to wait a long time) go under. In the prevailing circumstances, lack of care, the feeling of being "not wanted", and fear and insecurity drive the youth to recklessness and indiscipline. I refer below to some of the more urgent conditions that bear upon the problem of security:—

### **Health**

Universities and high schools provide compulsory physical education. It has, however, to be admitted that physical education is nominal and ineffective. The only significant change that has been introduced in recent years is the establishment of the National Cadet Corps, in which sphere, work of the highest quality is being attempted. In this field, too, insufficient time is devoted to training. Medical examinations are also conducted in schools and colleges, but they again are hastily conducted formalities of small value to pupils. What the pupil requires is not merely annual or half-yearly mass-scale medical inspection, but a regular watch on his physical development and the habits of life which affect his health. All-round medical

attention to the pupil is absolutely essential if his health is to be properly looked after. In the present set-up, there is no real school medical service and no attention is given at all to defects that are to be found abundantly in school-going children and pupils in colleges. The problem of nutrition and the proper feeding of the pupils remains completely ignored. Formation of proper habits of health and attention to maladies of growing children is the soundest insurance for national security, and for certain economy in the field of public health expenditure as a whole. There is a strong case for providing free and organised medical service to pupils in schools and colleges.

### **Living Conditions**

The living conditions of pupils either at home, in hostels or in lodges are, to say the least, appalling. There is no means of providing an effective check on their living conditions. Even in hostels attached to the best colleges, little attention is paid to the creation of organised and efficient student-life. Problems of food and nourishment receive no attention at all. In some colleges, messing contracts are given to contractors and this eliminates the last chance of improving the quality of food. Conditions of life among those, whose lot it is to live in private rented rooms, are distressing. There is no evil to which they are not exposed.

### **Finance**

A large number of pupils in educational institutions are constantly worried about their financial conditions. Only a few have the means to buy books and equip themselves for proper education in schools and colleges. The economic condition of most parents is such that the continuance in the college of quite a few students becomes speculative. This creates a feeling of insecurity in the minds of pupils who not infrequently tend to become desperate, particularly, when they compare their own lives with those of their more fortunate comrades who spend money lavishly and enjoy greater comforts. I have also felt that the problems of clothing in school and college requires urgent consideration. While some undergraduates can hardly cover their bodies, other dress gaily and flauntingly. These are small but significant factors in living conditions that contain the germ of great dissatisfaction. In universities abroad the tendency on the part of all is to dress as simply as possible. Bishop Berkeley once observed: "If you wish to ruin a young man, teach him to dress well". It is essential that some welfare organisations in colleges and schools should look after, and even control, all aspects of students' living conditions.

## **Guidance**

It is no exaggeration to say that students in many of our schools and colleges receive no guidance whatsoever in matters touching their careers. In other countries, there are psychological experts who keep full records of students during their school life and of their attainments and aptitudes. They give them, and their parents, sound advice in the selection of, and preparation for, careers. Lack of guidance is one of the most serious defects in our system of education.

I might, in passing, refer to the urgent need of emotional training and guidance. This is most necessary during the period of adolescence. The characteristics of the period of adolescence are (i) that the growing youth seeks freedom—social and economic—so that he may be able to assert himself; (ii) that he seeks a mate, which factor colours his entire emotional make-up; and (iii) that he seeks a philosophy of life, that is, an understanding or sense of values which will enable him to interpret whatever he encounters in the course of his experience and see it in its proper perspective. These three factors occasion considerable stress and create considerable emotional tension among students. At no time in one's life does one need guidance more than during the period of adolescence. Neglect of emotional training leads to serious cases of indiscipline and even delinquency. Dr. Whitehead has pointed out that that race alone has the best chance of survival which has vast reserves of nervous energy. Our stocks in this regard are becoming depleted. We must, as a nation, build up our stores of nervous energy, and this can be done only by the training of tempers, removal of tensions, fears and complexes and the building up a strong and dependable character. This cannot be done without provision in schools and colleges of special expert vocational guidance.

## **Employment**

While education is for life and not merely for living, the latter cannot be ignored. Whatever be the content of education, it is for some organisation to see that pupils fit in properly somewhere in life and are enabled to earn a living. There must be some agency, to see that pupils either go in for higher studies for which they are suited, or are placed in employment in which they may reasonably hope to succeed. The Report on the Post-War Development of the Central Advisory Board of Education laid considerable stress on the creation of a student's employment bureau. The establishment of such bureaux should have an admirable effect on the life and attitudes of students.



## Recreation

There are four main directions in which the recreational activities of students are ordinarily directed with profit. They are:

sports and athletics; students' unions and societies; scouting and creative activities, *e.g.*, exhibitions of various kinds and dramas elocution, production of magazines, etc.

## Sports and athletics

Universities and school authorities provide some opportunity for games and tournaments, but it has to be admitted that organised games are gradually deteriorating. Absence of proper play grounds and of games material is largely responsible for this steady deterioration. A large number of students in schools and colleges have no opportunity to play organised games and to participate in physical education and health programmes.

## Unions

The universities, colleges and even schools, have their unions. Unions, if properly run, can be instruments of great good and can confer responsibility. Unfortunately, the element of elections in unions and the manner in which these are conducted, corrupts the life of the pupils and creates undesirable feelings. It would be no exaggeration to say that most unions reflect the parties and factions of local politics. Local politics not infrequently makes serious inroads into the administration and affairs of educational institutions. Imitation of the methods and standards of political conduct in the country destroys school coherence and the ineffectual school administration gazes helplessly at landslides in discipline that occur with alarming frequency. School and college authorities look askance at unions, which in turn get little guidance or direction from the heads of institutions and their staff. It is necessary that the big organisation of unions should be cured of its harmful elements and that it should be directed to undertaking responsible activities for the good of the student community as a whole.

## Scouting

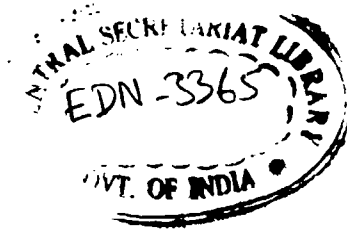
One of the most valuable contributions to the maintenance of discipline and good feeling among pupils is the creation of the National Cadet Corps. It is a pity that all students cannot be brought under N.C.C. training. Limitations of finance and personnel (Army) restrict the growth of this organisation. It is a pity that an equally important organisation—scouting—has been held up for

reasons that are all too well-known. Scouting is one of the most urgent educational requirements that stands completely ignored at present. It is the one organisation which, like the National Cadet Corps, provides a continued, intense and useful field of activities for the student world.

### **Creative Expression**

There is sporadic activity in the organisation of school exhibitions and dramatic performances. The school or the college stages functions roughly once a year, and that, on the occasion of the annual prize-giving. The school or college stage, in the real sense of the term, does not exist at present and its absence creates a vacuum in the field of recreational activities. Music of the superior variety is tending to disappear as a social factor. In our scheme of values, music is the Cinderella of the educational system. School exhibitions are rare and lack variety. In fact, there is no systematic effort to organise regular school exhibitions to display the creative work of pupils in the field of art, science, workmanship, literary endeavour, geography, history and other fields. The recent attempt to encourage the formation of science clubs in this State is a step in the right direction, but it lacks vigour in organisation. Dancing, another form of training in rhythm and discipline, is almost totally absent.

The analysis attempted above of the conditions of school and college life suggests its own remedies. It is unfortunate that schools have no control over other educative influences in the social life of India *e.g.* the press, popular literature, cinemas and even the radio—all of which tend to play havoc with the lives of the young. These can as well be instruments of real good.



CSL-100

IO113404



373.54

EDU-N, 1953

29 JUL 1958 (607)

PRINTED IN INDIA BY THE MANAGER, GOVT. OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI  
AND PUBLISHED BY THE MANAGER OF PUBLICATIONS, DELHI, 1953