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ADULT EDUCATION

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CONTENTS

		Page
1. Notes and Comments	...	i-iv
2. Indian Adult Education Association—General Secretary's Report	...	1
3. Community Development Programme—The Role of the Social Education Organiser	— <i>Brahma</i> ...	5
4. Workers' Education—Need for Emphasis on Cultural Development	— <i>N. R. Roy</i> ...	9
5. Fundamental Education—Participation of Youth	— <i>Hansraj Gulati</i> ...	13
6. Community Education and Mass Education—A Mistake in Somaliland	— <i>Aurelio Pace</i> ...	17
7. Literacy in Delhi—A study of Voluntary Literary Campaigns	— <i>Mohan Lal Kaul</i> ...	22
8. Selection and Use of Visual Aids—The Training of Community Development Officers	— <i>T. R. Batten</i>	27
9. Adult Literacy and Language—A Fresh Look	— <i>Evelyn Wood</i>	30
10. Fundamental Education in Urban Areas—Work Among Youth	— <i>Peter Kuenstler</i>	35

The Indian Adult Education Association welcomes reproduction of articles from this Journal in all regional languages.

Notes and Comments

Fourteenth All-India Adult Education Conference

THE Fourteenth All-India Adult Education Conference which met in Calcutta on December 28, 1957, devoted itself to the Community Development programme, and considered the Fourth Report of the Programme Evaluation Board and the recommendations of the Team on Plan Project, appointed by the National Development Council. The Conference discussed the working of the Community Development Programme in the light of the findings of these bodies and adopted a number of resolutions which the delegates felt, would make the Community Development Programme successful in the country. The resolutions adopted by the Conference read as follows :

“This Fourteenth All-India Adult Education Conference

having taken note of the Fourth Report of the Programme Evaluation Board and of the observations of the Study Team on Plan Projects appointed by the National Development Council and considering that the essential purposes of the Community Development Scheme is to create those conditions which will stimulate in a community the initiative necessary to make itself efficient in all directions

expressing its regret that programmes in the Scheme to bring about changes in social attitudes or to associate people and their institutions in the implementation of the Scheme have met only with limited success and

believing that this is partly the result of the unspecified role assigned to social education in the scheme

recommends that the social education programme should devote itself exclusively to the task of creating social efficiency in the Community by furthering the creation of new social values and attitudes consistent with the ethos of the Community Development Scheme.”

The Conference also adopted the following resolution on the recommendations of the Balwantrai Mehta Committee :

“The Conference,

welcomes the recommendation of the Team on Plan Projects that responsibility for development should rest on local authorities and for the decentralization of powers for the realization of this objective and

draws attention to the significant and vital role that social education has in making local bodies efficient and capable of shouldering this important responsibility and

urges upon the Government to initiate such policies as would encourage the growth or the creation of the non-official institutions which will prove efficient agents to promote activities for the voluntary and intelligent participation of masses in the programmes of community development undertaken by the local bodies.”

Integration of Panchayat Departments with Rural Development

IT has long been recognised that Panchayats alone can provide the most appropriate institutional framework for the implementation of Community Development Programmes. Besides being spokesman of the people at the local level, Panchayats have constituted the only civic body existing in the village. It is, therefore, only in the fitness of things that Panchayats should be recognised as the natural agency for implementing development programmes of the village. The Second Five Year Plan had recognised this and had said : "Rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organisation in the village which can reach each family and bring all the people—including the weaker sections of the community—into the production and other common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of the administration. In order to secure these aims and for developing a new pattern of leadership in village society, Panchayats have to be placed on a sound footing and entrusted with a great deal of responsibility for co-ordinating different local programmes."

It is only recently that active consideration has begun to be given to translate this into reality and steps are being contemplated to hand over the responsibility to Development work to Panchayats. The Balvantrai Mehta Committee Report on Plan Projects gave added momentum to this trend and various steps are being contemplated at the Centre as well as at the States, which would make Panchayats responsible for development work.

For this purpose, one of the primary steps that was necessary was administrative integration at departmental level. This was brought out by the Balvantrai Mehta Committee Report which said : "We are aware that certain aspects of rural development cannot receive adequate attention in the Ministries in which they are

at present being dealt with. In particular, we mention cooperation and rural self-governing institutions. These two are so closely connected with the programme of Community Development that we consider it would be useful if they are brought under one Ministry—the Ministry which deals with the co-ordination of rural developmental activities all over the country, namely, the Ministry of Community Development."

The need for integrating the work of these two departments has been mentioned in the press as well as on public platform from time to time. A forceful plea for this integration had been made in the Parliament also during the debate on budget grants of the Ministry of Community Development last year. The decision of the government to transfer Panchayats from the charge of the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Community Development is, therefore, a welcome step taken by the Government.

The Ministry of Community Development is stated to be considering the administrative set up which would be necessary to strengthen, expand and integrate village Panchayats with development programmes. A number of practical difficulties need to be faced if this integration is to be successful and effective. Among the difficulties the basic ones are concerned with problems of efficiency and integrity of conduct. These would depend on the extent to which the village population is aware of the ways and means through which Panchayats could make their lives prosperous and harmonious. To bring about that awareness is fundamentally responsibility of Social Education. Social Education must, therefore, emphasise this aspect in the course of its programme.

New Schemes of the Central Social Welfare Board

THE Central Social Welfare Board has announced its decision to give grant-in-aid to agencies which would be willing to undertake training of women of the 20-35 age group to equip them to attain "the minimum qualification of 8th class or vernacular final" within "a year or two". This decision, the Board has explained, become necessary because "this is the minimum qualification necessary for a large number of workers for various plans and schemes like Gram Sevikas, school teachers etc." The Board believes that its decision would help voluntary agencies undertake appropriate programmes as a result of which more women personnel will be forthcoming for work in rural areas.

This decision of the Board will raise many doubts among educationists and those engaged in work among rural women. For one thing, the *communique* does not say whether those who are to be admitted for training need at all possess any minimum educational qualification which leads one to conclude that such a qualification was not considered necessary. However, if we assume minimum qualification to be primary school, the minimum age limit stipulated by the Board would mean that only such candidates would be admitted who have discontinued their studies at least for a period of eight or ten years. This would involve equipping trainees almost from the scratch and that it would be possible for any agency to undertake training to equip the almost illiterate women to the level of the 8th class in the course of "a year or two" is indeed difficult to believe. Educationists will, therefore, be justified if they believe that this scheme would only result in the growth of a number of spurious "teaching shops" which have become a serious problem in many parts of the country.

Institutions engaged in rural reconstruction might have benefitted from the scheme if it was

not, as the *communique* would lead us to believe, examination centered. Since the primary objective of the sponsors of this scheme appears to be to make women of this age qualify to become Gram Sevikas, the entire perspective is, oriented to school education. This would not render the trainees particularly fit for work in rural areas if they are from urban areas, nor make them proficient to undertake the type of work that Gram Sevika is expected to do if they are from rural areas.

Thus the scheme would please neither the educationists nor those interested in rural reconstruction. It would be well if the Central Social Welfare Board recasts it in a manner in which the money earmarked would be well spent and serve the purpose it is intended to. The Board, for instance, may insist that the training imparted by qualifying institutions is job-oriented.

Another scheme of the Board is to set up 100 pilot projects for welfare extension in urban areas for which it has earmarked 25 lacs of rupees for the remaining part of the Plan period. The Board proposes to utilise this amount by offering grant-in-aids to voluntary agencies who would be willing to take over as many these projects which, the Board says, is necessary "to secure more direct cooperation of other voluntary organisation".

In formulating this scheme, it would appear that the Board has drawn on its experiences from the welfare extension projects which unfortunately, for various reasons have not proved a happy experience. It has rightly set the aim to "instil a will of better living" than "spend directly on some of the necessary measures." It has also set down in principle that this assistance is merely "to support the appropriate welfare agencies a little beyond the marginal point, on a sustained basis

so that all the efforts and resources that they are now spending on urban welfare programmes would not be wasted either for want of just that bit of cash assistance which may otherwise be difficult to raise and maintain" and has wisely refrained from setting up Project Implementation Committees which the Board neither properly guided nor left them free to be voluntary in spirit.

While the scheme of the Board is good as it stands, the experience of voluntary agencies with the Central Social Welfare Board during the years since its inception, have been such as will make them think twice before accepting the responsibility of chalking out their programmes on the promises of the Board. The amount of red-tap involved in securing assistance was fantastic, delays involved in the actual receipt of money much too long and nerve racking as a result of which many agencies began to feel that the grant-in-aid scheme

by the Board was more of a curse than a blessing. If correctives are not forthcoming during the implementation of this scheme, it would be a sad tale of good money not going where it is needed most.

Another thing the Board would do well to avoid is to insist on is too wide a coverage by the centre to which grant is being made available. In the case of the welfare extension projects in rural areas each project was expected to cover twenty five villages through five centres. In actual experience, however, the effectiveness of this coverage was almost negligible. In overwhelming majority of the projects, the only centre which functioned at all was the one where the Gram Savika was stationed. This difficulty may not arise in the case of urban centres where facilities for transport etc. are more readily available than in villages, but it would be well, nonetheless, if effort was encouraged to be intense.

INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION—General Secretary's Report for 1956-1957

I have pleasure in presenting to the Annual Conference a report of the activities of the Association during the year 1956-1957.

Before I proceed to a review of the work of the Association during the year, I am happy to welcome the Merchant Navy Training Club, Calcutta, which became a member of the Association.

Thirteenth Annual Conference

The 13th Annual Conference was held in Udaipur last December under the presidentship of Dr. V. S. Jha. Prof. Humayun Kabir was to have inaugurated the Conference, but due to unavoidable reasons he was unable to be present on the inaugural day. He had, however, sent a written address which was read at the Conference.

The Conference considered some of the ways of extending adult education in urban areas and adopted a number of resolutions. One of these called upon the Executive of the Association to undertake a programme of organising lectures through affiliated agencies or through agencies created for the purpose with a view to bring about a diffusion of knowledge on as wide scale as possible.

Another resolution called upon the State Governments to set up schools

to enable adults to study and complete their high or higher secondary education and proceed to the University.

The Conference also requested Universities to provide opportunities of higher education to adult education workers by opening evening classes.

By another resolution, the Conference directed the Executive Committee to institute a fund to build up a reserve of at least Rs. 50,000, which would provide the Association the confidence necessary for it to move forward and assume new responsibilities which devolve on it.

Alongside the Conference, a symposium on Urban Social Education was also held. A number of social education workers from urban areas participated in the symposium and discussed a note which had been prepared on the subject by Shri B. M. Kapadia. Based on the discussions, the General Secretary of the Association was authorised to formulate a memorandum to be submitted to the Central Government. This was subsequently done.

Seminars

During the year under review the Association convened two seminars; the Seventh National Seminar on Social Education in Rural Reconstruc-

tion which was held at Dabok from December 12-18, 1956 and a regional seminar in collaboration with the All-India Mass Education Society. The regional seminar was held at Rishikesh from September 9 to 14 on problems of social education workers. The Seminar succeeded in highlighting many of the problems faced by workers in the field.

Foundation Stone of Shafique Memorial

It is a matter of gratification that the Government handed over to the Association the plot of land for the Shafique Memorial Building. The foundation stone of the building was laid on the death anniversary of Shafique Saheb on April 2nd. Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the function and a neo-literate who had been a student of Shafique Saheb, laid the foundation stone. Blue prints are ready for the building which is estimated to cost about 6 lakhs of rupees.

Clearing House Activities

It is a matter of gratification to us that the Government of India have recognised the Association formally as a Clearing House of Social Education. A grant has been sanctioned to meet the extra expenditure involved in working out the scheme.

Publications

The Association's activity in the direction of publishing literature for workers was given special emphasis during the year. Four publications of Unesco were translated into Hindi. These are :

1. *Praudh Shiksha me Samajik Aur Rajnaitik Uttarditve.*
2. *Samudayik Vikas me Prauth Shiksha.*
3. *Praudh Shiksha Aur Aadharbhoot Shiksha Ke Liye Pustakalaya.*
4. *Shakari Samatyayan Aur Aadharbhoot Shiksha.*

The Association also launched Hindi quarterly, *Praudh Shiksha*, meant primarily for social education workers in the field. The journal was inaugurated on the 2nd of April.

The Association brought out a number of publications in English also. These are :

1. *History of Adult Education during British Period by Sohan Singh.*
2. *Highways and Byways of Adult Education in Russia by Sohan Singh.*
3. *Development Work Among Rural Women—Report of a National Seminar (Hindi & English).*
4. *Social Education in Rural Reconstruction (Report of VII National Seminar)*
5. *Social Education—Ten Years in Retrospect by S. C. Dutta.*
6. *Directory of Agencies of Recreation and Cultural Activities in South Asia.*

7. *A Survey of Reading Material for Neo-literates—Report of the Unesco Survey.*

This year the Association brought out a special issue of the Indian Journal of Adult Education on the eve of the National Seminar on Workers' Education. The issue contained a number of exclusive articles by eminent men.

The Abstract Service, initiated in 1955, was also intensified during the year. 40 Abstracts were issued and we propose to increase the frequency in the number of Abstracts. A new feature introduced in the Abstract Service is to supply a bibliography of articles appearing in journals on adult education and other allied fields. This year we had included 3 such bibliographies on Literacy, Community Development and Workers' Education.

Research

The Association's activities in the field of research were also maintained. During the year the Association completed its joint project with Jamia Millia on Literature for Neo-literates. The project which was sponsored by Unesco consists of a study of the literature produced for neo-literates in Hindi.

Another project sponsored by Unesco which the Association undertook was the compilation of a directory of agencies engaged in cultural and recreational activities in some of the countries of South Asian region. In the directory are included information on cultural and recreational agencies from India, Burma, Ceylon, Pa-

kistan and Malaya and contains over 200 names of agencies.

The Association also undertook during the year an evaluation project of social education agencies in the Delhi area. Field investigations have been completed and tabulation of data is in progress.

The Association in conjunction with Jamia Millia is working upon a scheme of establishing permanent Adult Schools, taking the students up to V standard, instead of the present system of literacy campaign. Units are being set up for experimenting upon the scheme of Adult Schools and carrying out relevant research work in different languages.

Currently, the Association has in view two other activities of considerable importance. The first one is a project for the study of social education vis-a-vis the caste system. The purpose of this is to find out what sort of social education programmes need to be and can be undertaken for the eradication of caste system. The project envisages a field study of the caste system in respect of public participation and we hope to be able to deduce from this the nature of programmes that need to be undertaken by social education for the eradication of the evil influences of the system.

The Association proposes a seminar to define the scope of public participation in plan projects other than community development schemes. The Seminar to which it is proposed to invite social scientists, planners and

social education workers will consider what programmes of social education are necessary to enhance public participation. The Public Co-operation Division of the Planning Commission has been approached for their assistance to us to convene the Seminar and we hope they will provide.

A Brief Review of the Movement

During the year, the Programme Evaluation Board published its Fourth Report on the progress of the Community Development Programme. The Report came at a critical juncture of the Community Development Programme, for during the year, it passed on from the incubation period into the phase of its becoming a normal feature of Governmental activities. The Report is, therefore, an important document.

The Evaluation Board, it would appear, had borne in mind the special significance of this juncture. Its Report is a frank and forthright document and has posed for the authorities challenging problems in clear and unambiguous terms. It is a matter for concern that findings of the Report reflect a lack of will to embody the basic principles of Community Development into the movement. For instance, the Report points out that there has been conspicuous failure of the programme to stimulate self-help and initiative among people or associate peoples' institution with the programme. The Report found the vast majority of the rural population in Community Development areas still expected "too much Government initiative and assistance." The magnitude of this failure may easily be

estimated if it is borne in mind that Community Development Programme has failed in precisely the purpose which it was expected to promote.

That activities directed to the social changes have been a dismal failure is matter of deep regret. "Readiness to go for Community Centres, Youth Club and different organisation," the Report says, "are generally speaking, least successful." Calculating the average of population covered by Community Centres activities the Report has estimated that the average number of active centres was 14 per hundred thousand while corresponding figure for youth clubs and women's organisations was 18 and 4 per hundred thousand respectively.

This finding of the Board poses an obvious challenge to social education, and it is surprising that this has not been adequately realised by the Government. The Report has done well to examine the causes for the failure of Social Education Programme, and has reiterated—what has almost become trite—that "targets and number of activities approach is particularly unsuitable." The Report has also done well to state emphatically that if villagers succeeded in doing one just activity on its own initiative, it may be considered a greater advance than "taking on half a dozen activities primarily on the initiative of the Project Staff."

The Report has suggested many correctives to the social programme in operation in project areas. These, again, are not anything new. For instance, the Report has pointed out how

(Continued on page 25)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME—The Role of Social Education Organiser

Brahma

The Union Minister for Community Development, Shri S.K. Dey, in a message to a recent conference said that "Of all the functionaries in our programme, the Social Education Organiser has been the most misunderstood and the object of the greatest of controversies" and ascribed this primarily to the comprehensive character of the assignment which has been associated with the S.E.O. To one who has been attending various conferences of Social Education Workers, it is quite evident that there is still a great deal of vagueness and confusion about the concept of Social Education itself. Almost every report has a different view about it. Many of the workers have extremely hazy notions in regard to it and several complain that the concept in the manner in which the SEO understands it does not provide him a good basis for developing a practical programme of work and this, to some extent, is responsible for the maladjustment of this functionary in the Block team. Most workers are agreed that somehow the SEO has not found a suitable place into the Block team. Some think this is also due to the other members of the team having not been given a correct understanding of Social Educa-

tion and the SEO's role. Therefore a re-definition in concrete terms of the role of the SEO in the C.D. programme is necessary.

Social Education, as defined in the Manual on Social Education brought out by C.P.A., is beyond the SEO's capacity to achieve or even attempt. At one place in the Manual, the SEO tells the BDO that his job is to help the BDO to develop an educationally sound programme while the latter tries to make the programme administratively feasible and possible. It is a claim which does not take account of the quality of the human material that is being attracted to the post on the salary it carries. Social Education as sought to be defined in this Manual really becomes co-terminus with Community Development itself. In fact, this is what has been said in one place in the Manual. This was also said in the First Five Year Plan. Social Education cannot, therefore, obviously be the concern of only one functionary on the Block team. It has to be the responsibility of all the Extension Workers and of all institutions dealing with this and allied matters, and the result of several policies and programmes of Government many falling even

outside the orbit of the Community Development Programme. At best one can expect the SEO to promote only some activities and institutions. In fact, when proceeding to deal with the job of the SEO, this is exactly what the Manual does, except for inclusion of some very vague and generalised items in the job chart, e.g. No. 1 about programme of people's participation.

Much of what has been said in the Chapter on "The Approach" in the Manual amounts really to an exposition of the general Extension philosophy and approach and not particularly of Social Education. Extension methods and techniques must be learnt and used by all Extension Workers of the CD programme and for this the SEO's specialised knowledge, however great it may be, can never be a substitute. But this seems to have been ignored when determining the role of the SEO. There has been failure to retain the distinction between Extension and Social Education, between Community Development, as comprising of programmes in various spheres co-ordinated into a single programme, and the comparatively limited sphere of Social Education as forming only a part of the overall programme, and between the role of the Social Education Organiser as one of the team and the role of the entire team.

The correct view as regards Social Education should recognise the following :—

- (a) That in its larger sense Social Education and Community Development are both essen-

tially educational processes and have the same objectives. Social Education is as much the result of Community Development as Community Development is of Social Education.

- (b) All workers of an Extension organisation are in a sense social educators and each has to follow the Extension technique which is an educational process, yet each has to have his own subject and separate sphere of work. To give to the Social Education Organiser the position of an Extension Officer *par excellence* will not be tenable. We have to note that he has to be an Organiser of Social Education activities as his name itself suggests.
- (c) When put in concrete terms the programme of Community Development in each of its facets has to consist of certain activities and cannot be described as consisting of a process, educational or otherwise. At the same time the overall programme has to be a coordinated one and therefore developed through the combined effort of all the workers. This requires that all the workers should have a common understanding as to what the objectives of Community Development are, what broadly speaking has to be

the nature of the programme for achievement of these objectives and what methods and techniques have to be employed for implementation of the programme. Each member of the team has also to have a clear understanding of the role of the other.

- (d) Social Education in its wider meaning has to be promoted not only through the activities that may be undertaken under this name in the Community Development as such but it will also be the result of the activities of various other institutions and of many other policies and programmes of the Government and non-official organisation. For example, among institutions Janta Colleges, among policies that of land reforms, among programmes that of rural electrification, will all promote Social Education in the larger sense.

It can only lead to confusion to try to lay down a narrower concept of Social Education as an educational process specially applicable to Community Development. The philosophy and techniques of Extension satisfy that need adequately. What is needed is to lay down the role of the S.E.O. as one of the functionaries in the Block team. The S.E.O. cannot look after Social Education in the wider sense.

In the light of the above clarification it may be stated that the role of the Social Education Organiser should be the following :—

- (i) It should promote certain educational type of activities, create a favourable climate for it, such as literacy work, promotion of village library service, village leaders camps, radio listening.
- (ii) Promote community organisations, such as farmers clubs, women's clubs, youth organisations which can activate to participate in the community development programme and assist in building up local leadership and create enthusiasm in the people.
- (iii) Promote recreational and cultural activities to fulfil the need for this among people and help in creating a better social atmosphere for cooperative work among them.
- (iv) Assist in communication of ideas to the people in the sphere of work of the other members on the team, through techniques in which the Social Education Organiser will specialise, like for example, cinema shows, audio-visual aids, Kisan Melas, exhibitions etc.

In these matters there will be no difference between the Social Education programme and the pro-

gramme in any other sphere, such as Agriculture and Public Health. Agricultural activities, for example will have increase of agricultural production as the immediate objective, but the economic well being of the rural people as the ultimate consequence.

To sum up, the following may be the chief activities of the Social Education Organiser :—

- (1) Promote literacy, post-literacy, village library service.
- (2) Organise community organisations, such as panchayats, farmers' clubs etc. We are attempting to organise the Panchayat as the most important organisation of the village community and a separate worker needs to be given for this. I think the S.E.O. must give this work high priority.
- (3) Organise Community Centres.
- (4) Develop the village school teacher's role in Community Development Programme.
- (5) Help in organising Village Leaders Camps.
- (6) Organise radio listening groups.
- (7) Use special communication techniques, such as audio-visual aids, for assisting the other workers.
- (8) Organise cultural and recreational activities like bhajans, kirtan and dramas.
- (9) Organise Sharmdan.

There may be no objection to making the S.E.O. responsible for

undertaking special study of village economy, social life, social problems and allied matters. There is need for such an overall study in addition to the sectional study which each worker will be required to make in his own separate sphere of work. But this role should not give the S.E.O. any superior position over other members of the team.

In the training course of the S.E.O. it should be worthwhile to include the following items. The contents of each item will have to be worked out in detail :

- (1) The philosophy, objective and overall programme of Community Development.
- (2) The concept of Social Education and its relationship with Community Development.
- (3) Principles and techniques of Extension and their application to Community Development.
- (4) The nature of the N.E.S. Organisation, role of the different functionaries, the need for team work and how this can be brought about.
- (5) Training for the nine jobs which have been included as the SEO's responsibility in the earlier paragraph. The necessary understanding and skills, both theoretical and practical, will have to be imparted in respect of each job. The SEO must clearly understand the purpose

(Continued on page 26)

WORKERS' EDUCATION—Need for Emphasis on Cultural Development

Nikhil Ranjan Roy, Chief Inspector Social Education,
West Bengal.

SINCE 1949, the year in which the Unesco Seminar on Rural Adult Education was held in Mysore, here in our country the emphasis has primarily and consistently been laid on social education for the rural population. That emphasis is still there, and has been further reinforced and pin-pointed by the launching of the countrywide N.E.S. programme. This is both natural and logical in the context of the fact that "India lives in villages," 83 percent of the population of this sub-continent being dwellers in villages, and sustaining themselves more or less on agriculture and allied avocations. Against this obvious and overall background of the predominance of rural element in our population and culture, there can be no two opinions that education and uplift of the village-dwelling population should continue to enjoy priority of consideration.

But at the same time, we have to consider, and consider seriously indeed, the emergence of a new situation—the revolutionary changes through which India is passing at the

moment. India is turning a new leaf in her history. The rapid development and expansion of industries as envisaged in our Five Year Plans has posed problems with immediate bearing upon social education. This is a broad fact and can hardly be over-emphasised far less overlooked. History of the 18th and 19th century Europe teaches us a very clear lesson. I will try to explain what this lesson is.

A question has been asked on the floor of the Lok Sabha as to why the programme of adult literacy in India is not progressing satisfactorily. The answer to this question, I presume, is neither too difficult nor too simple to give. To my mind at least the position boils down to two things:

- (i) The masses of people for whom the programme of adult education is intended are still lacking in that urge for education, which may be called motivation;
- (ii) The programme is still being pursued on purely voluntary

lines, without the force of compulsion or obligation.

It is historically true that adult education on a mass scale has never been a reality, nor is a felt necessity, in the pre-mechanical stage of civilization, i.e., so long as the masses of people remain wedded to the traditional type of agriculture, and allied occupations for their subsistence, and the social pattern remains rural. It is difficult indeed to motivate the rural adult. What attraction can we hold out to an aged cultivator to go in for literacy instruction at an advanced age? The need for adult literacy began to be keenly felt when the facet of culture and social pattern changed from rural and agricultural to urban and industrial.

The Industrial Revolution in Europe in the 18th and the 19th centuries is really to be reckoned as the starting point of adult education on a mass scale. The need for specialized knowledge and techniques divided up the vast masses of industrial workers into *skilled* and *unskilled* groups. Naturally, industrial efficiency needed more and more not only literate but educated and skilled workers. There were other contributory factors in this regard too. The most mentionable amongst them is perhaps the growth and spread of the Trade Union Movement. The worker's rights needed to be safeguarded. The worker was more and more motivated to go in for education in his own interest.

There is no gainsaying the fact that conditions in India to-

day resemble in many respects the conditions that prevailed in some of the Western countries in the 18th and the 19th centuries. There is no gainsaying the fact that India is fast developing her industries in a planned way. It is true that 'India lives in villages.' It is equally true that a part of India and for that matter a vital part, lives in towns and industrial areas. It is true that more and more towns and industrial centres are coming up in the wake of India's industrial development. The townward drift of the population has been quite remarkable in recent years. The percentage of town-dwelling population in India according to 1951 Census is of course 17. But so far as West Bengal is concerned, the drift is perhaps more marked than anywhere else. The percentage of urban population in West Bengal is estimated at 30, and vocationally, 47% of the total population are non-agriculturists. About two million workers, as I have it from our Labour Commissioner, are engaged in industries of various sizes and kinds in West Bengal. Of these, over 7 lakhs are employed in the mills and factories crowding the two banks of the river Hooghly, and in the industrial belt round the city of Calcutta. This indeed poses a problem of immense magnitude for the social educator. The question of Workers' Education, therefore, is a question of primacy.

The expression "Worker" is a generic term. Is not any one who works a worker? In that generic sense everyone of us may legitimately claim to be called a worker. But

the fact remains that the term "Worker" has come to be associated with a limited and specific connotation. A "Worker" in the professional parlance is one who is employed in some kind of manual work. Not only the manual workers of mills and factories but also workers of various other denominations come under the category of the "Worker" according to the Industrial Act.

Workers' Education to-day is generally interpreted in two slightly different ways :

- (i) Life throughout is a process of adjustment—adjustment to changing environs, to vocational responsibilities, marriage, parenthood, and to social and civic obligations. Workers' Education, therefore, is considered a part of the general adult education pattern. It is considered to be the continuing education of the adults rather than remedial education for the workers as such. The most notable exponents of this school of thought are the educational leaders of the Scandinavian countries, especially Denmark in the last century. Their fundamental aim was to provide for a balanced development of the personality, a deeper appreciation of life and the fostering of a sense of social responsibility. This broad, and in a sense philosophic outlook on education still holds the field in the Folk High School system of those countries. Significantly enough, the Folk High School

leaders maintain that cultural education not only cultivates the mind, but also increases vocational and technical efficiency of the worker. This may apparently sound paradoxical, but taking into account the overall contributions of the Scandinavian Folk High Schools towards the elevation of the cultural level of the people, as also their industrial advancement and economic prosperity, it is hard to repudiate the claim. Humanities and social studies, social laws, music and fine arts, crafts and industries, specialized branches of science and all manner of subjects constitute the content of Workers' Education in these countries.

- (ii) The other point of view prevails notably in the United States of America. In the U.S.A. "Workers' Education" is defined less broadly than in the countries of Scandinavia. Workers' Education here is usually not meant to include cultural studies or study of the humanities. Even vocational education and apprenticeship programme are out of bounds. In the American usage, Workers' Education stands almost exclusively for education in Trade Unionism. The basic idea is to help the Trade Unionist to understand the history and aims of the labour movement. Matter-of-fact subjects like collective bargaining, the lodg-

ing of complaints, and public-speaking and parliamentary laws by way of methodology find a prominent place in the Workers' Education Programme. Educational projects with direct relations to the workers' interest such as consumer-guidance, medical costs and facilities, and social problems such as inter-group relations, housing and community services are also included. But by and large, nothing not directly bearing upon the specific problems of the workers is covered by the programme. This may be very largely explained by the universal and comprehensive system of general education provided for the masses of people in the States. The broadbased system of general education is considered quite sufficient for the general body of the workers. Workers' Education in America has, therefore, been developed on the specialised lines of Trade Unionism.

The problem of Workers' Education in the special context and background of Indian, conditions needs to be studied in a somewhat different way. India, in spite of her great size, population and past heritage is still considered to be one of the economically and educationally under-developed countries of the world. She

is, however, trying hard to catch up with the other comparatively advanced countries. India is rapidly industrializing and urbanising herself. The problem of Workers' Education is a necessary corollary to these developments. When millions of India's citizens—both men and women are being daily employed in the great industrial undertakings of the country, their education surely, is a problem of far-reaching importance. In working out a programme of education for the workers, the fact that the teeming millions of India are still steeped in illiteracy can by no means be ignored. Of the seven lakhs of people employed as mill and factory workers in and around Calcutta not more than two and a half lakhs or roughly 30% are registered as literate. We have to plan for the education of these workers. Apart from literacy as the indispensable 'Open Sesame' to greater education, our plan must above everything aim at developing the latent human potentials in the worker. Our plan should not only look forward to increasing the workers skill and efficiency but should give clear precedence to man as a man, over any other role that he may be called upon to play. Study of humanities and cultural studies along with vocational training wherever possible must, therefore, be pursued and cultivated in the Workers' Education Centres.

FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION—The Participation of Youth

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IN traditional Indian society, festivals offered a very good opportunity for youth to participate in Fundamental Education. They provided the occasion for arranging different types of social, cultural and constructive activities. Some festivals required the staging of dramas based on the great classics, while others were celebrated by holding concerts of both classical and folk music. Some festivals were associated with constructive activities like cleaning and decorating the houses and the streets. During others, exhibitions of tools and implements were arranged. Travelling to holy places also exposed the pilgrims to different influences and experiences.

Modern influences have seriously interfered with this mode of life. The traditional arts and crafts cannot compete with modern industry and this has resulted in their decay and the poverty of craftsmen. Traditional methods of agriculture also need to be revised in the light of modern technological developments. The impact of modern social and political movements has greatly weakened the faith of the more thinking sections of the people. The present system of education intro-

duced by the British, based on insufficient understanding of the culture and needs of India society, has only helped to produce a new class of people with aspirations which cannot be satisfied by traditional society.

The result has been that the traditional social and cultural activities neither meet the moods of the newly educated, nor have much meaning for the rest of the population. A widening gulf seems to be developing between the newly educated sections of society and the rest of the people. This has deprived society of the contribution which the more educated sections could make to the spread of culture and refinement. While the educated sections are deprived of the opportunity of mixing with the common people they possess neither the sturdy common sense of the so-called "uneducated" nor their unsophisticated approach to life and its problems. There being hardly any regular communication between the two, neither is able to learn from the other.

Industrialization, resulting in large-scale migration from the villages to the cities has also created a number

of difficult problems. The newcomers to the city are usually huddled together in slums where living conditions are almost intolerable. There is the great problem of social and cultural adjustment with the new life of the city. Adjustment is also necessary between different groups of migrants themselves. The traditional cultural and educational opportunities are no longer available to them and are replaced by the unhealthy attractions of the commercialized cinema and gambling. Workers' children are usually compelled to work from a very early age. Family ties are weakened accordingly as they spend a substantial part of their working hours outside the home. They are unable to take advantage of the educational facilities in the city.

That section of the city youth which has had educational opportunities also suffers from a form of frustration. They have a proud record of active participation in the movement for national independence. They still retain their idealism and spirit of social service as well as the "rebel mentality" which they developed during the pre-Independence days. The misery around caused by acute unemployment, poverty, ignorance and disease is overwhelming. It is no wonder then that they lose patience and consider the solution of the above problems nearly impossible through educational and other community building activities alone.

In this situation what is essential is that the people should be enabled to regain faith in themselves and their co-operative effort. The whole work

of education and community development should be made as interesting, creative and joyful as it used to be in the traditional society. Most of the activities of those times perhaps need to be revived—though probably with suitable adjustments, to meet present-day needs and aspirations. Those techniques and methods may be selected which not only provide the maximum opportunity for active participation and initiative but also ensure the mingling of peoples of different cultural and educational standards.

For the last two years, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) has been conducting a Workers' Education Centre in Calcutta. The Centre is an associate project of the ICFTU Asian Trade Union College. Its main function is that of a demonstration centre for methods and techniques in workers' education for students of the College.

Probably the most popular and educative of the traditional cultural activities is the drama. In view of this, the techniques of dramatisation and acting have been adapted to the local circumstances. Young people interested in drama are brought together to evolve a drama. Some of them recount personal experiences relating to a social problem and which they wish to be dramatised. The group selects one of those and discusses it thoroughly. Then the roles are allotted and the person whose story has been selected accepts the responsibility of directing it.

The whole process has great educational value for the participants,

They regain faith in themselves, develop their powers of self expression and initiative, become conscious of the social problems facing the community, and acquire training in co-operative work.

Most folk literature is in the form of poetry, as is the religious literature sung during festivals and on special occasions. The holding of poetic symposia at regular intervals has proved very popular and educative. Some members compose their own poems and these are highly popular. They generally express the feelings and aspirations of the audience as the poet himself comes from the same social class. At the Workers' Education Centre a number of such poems have been set to music by the music group and are sung with great enthusiasm. The educated youth participate in such programmes and enrich them by their contributions. They also begin to realize that they, too, have much to learn from the so-called "uneducated" people.

As regards illiteracy, it has been found that before making arrangements for teaching literacy, a strong desire to acquire it must be created. This comes with the development of higher interests. For example, a person interested in drama, music, poetry, literature, trade union or political movements can easily be encouraged to acquire literacy.

It has been observed that once the desire for literacy is created, the progress is very rapid. The adults, especially the young workers, take it very seriously and devote all their spare

time to studies. By studying two hours daily, they usually cover in four months what a child learns at school in four years. The teacher has to be a mature person, who does not treat grown-up students like children and pays individual attention to each student. The advanced students often take pleasure in teaching the beginners. The educated youth should undertake activities which may develop the desire for literacy rather than actual teaching work. By organising and actively participating in such activities the educated will not only be making these programmes more interesting and educative, but by their own example of a culturally richer life may create in others the wish to be literate.

The more difficult problem in connection with literacy is its follow-up. The possibility of relapse into illiteracy is very great. Scarcity of suitable literature is the real problem. Literature in simple language has, in most cases been produced for children only ; and what literature is available on subjects and problems in which the adults may be interested, is usually in technical or difficult language which they cannot easily follow. In these circumstances, pictorial charts and wall newspapers can satisfy a real need. Even when literature for adults become available in sufficient quantity and variety these may still have a definite place in educational literature as they may be more suited to the local needs of a particular community. These charts and wall newspapers can be easily and cheaply prepared. Suitable pictures may be selected from pictorial magazines and pasted on a sheet of plain paper with

an explanatory text in very simple language and bold handwriting.

Reference has already been made to the educational value of festivals in traditional Indian society. And perhaps they can still be used in this way. Perhaps it may be more appropriate today to arrange secular rather than religious or sectional festivals. The Independence Day or the Republic Day for example, can be an occasion for enabling people to know the history and culture of their country. All the techniques mentioned earlier—exhibitions of charts, poetic symposia

etc. could be used. Similarly, international days like May Day or United Nations Day could be celebrated to broaden the outlook of the people and to take them away from narrow nationalistic prejudices towards a broad humanistic outlook.

If the youth of the country would participate in such activities India would not only be ensuring that its future leaders would be persons of vision, integrity and understanding but also that its adult citizens would become increasingly conscious of their great responsibilities and privileges.

*—From Material Supplied by
Education Clearing House,
Unesco, Paris.*

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND MASS EDUCATION*— A Mistake in Somaliland

Aurelio Pace

OLD-fashioned colonialism cannot be credited with having realized that the cultural development of Africans might strengthen the bonds between Africa and Europe. Only fairly recently, therefore, have European Governments been interested in the education of Africans. When racist doctrines prevailed, either openly or under the guise of humanitarianism, they spread the idea that peoples of inferior intelligence should be excluded from the evolutionary trend of other peoples. This idea, it would be explained, was based on the dogma of the cycles and epicycles of the "chosen nations". As a result, the religious missions were alone left free to perform the "miracle" of converting people who, being intended by their human substance for "rectilinear motion", could but with difficulty be expected to enter the order of "superior motions".

Probably, many Africans, after coming into contact with more developed peoples, had long felt the need or the desire to better their living conditions but, mercilessly kept in

the dark as to the essential means of improvement (including, first of all, written forms of their languages), went on living side by side with more civilized peoples, without developing their astonishing natural resourcefulness and abilities.¹

It was not until after the First World War, for example, that the Government of the United Kingdom began to take action to face its responsibilities with regard to civilizing its Equatorial possessions. After the Second World War, the proclamation by the United Nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly placed before all Member Governments similar responsibilities. Between 1925, however, when the Government of the United Kingdom issued a coherent thirty-point educational programme for the peoples of Tropical Africa² and the present time, important experiments and unquestionable progress have discredited preconceived notions about the capacity for education of the less civilized Africans. It is, moreover, beyond question that the rapid spread of civilization and democratic education, particularly in Africa, has al-

* From *Scuola e cita* (March 1956, No. 3)

ready opened up an unexpected field of interest to History of Education. The "thirst for culture" more or less acutely felt throughout Africa is certainly related to the fact that Africans have become aware of human rights, which they are, however, acquiring within the limits of their traditional indigenous linguistic, religious, artistic, social, juridical and other positive values. This aspiration is fraught with significance with regard to the actual or potential values of civilizations hitherto considered to be on a lower plane, and has compelled "basic education" to abandon any educational tendencies reduced to terms of purely quantitative knowledge. Actually, after some thirty years of experience, the general principle that "mass" education, i. e. that of an anonymous collectivity, is without foundation, has generally been admitted in Africa as well as elsewhere : to establish educative relations with even the most primitive and uncivilized human beings (as with children of any age), the "individual" must first be taken into account, and he will not recognize that any abstract "minimum" of knowledge and of "standard" interests can satisfy his wants. The fact that basic education is specially concerned with the social problems related to the education of culturally backward peoples does not really imply that the principle is overlooked. Besides, this might appropriately be confirmed by a cursory description of the teaching methods recommended and disseminated by the United Nations. Such methods, whose applications and results are described in Unesco's many and

varied publications, clearly testify to the increasingly widespread achievements of the "active school", as the most suitable means of rapid civilization. The limograph, for example, is used with practically the same applications as are current in France and Italy ; the systems of agricultural, trade and other co-operatives, of working groups, of tests and of audio-visual aids are now better known than would be expected in distant countries and in communities that are swiftly developing³. In places where unsound didactics and unprofitable antiquated methodological prejudices have suddenly been ousted by the urgent need for progress, the spirit and teaching principles of these methods are inherent and recognizable in their action. In any case, they undoubtedly combine the education of the individual with that of the community in which he lives. The difference, if any may be observed, lies in that in Italy, the novel features of the methods can only with great difficulty be introduced outside the school (while an attempt is made to extend them to every aspect of life, they tend, owing to various forms of opposition, to merge with particular systems of instruction) but, in places where the experiments have been most vigorously carried out, the social, political and economic reform of the community takes place *concurrently* with the foundation of its schools⁴. Thus, in certain cases at least, the precious balance between school and society, which is still far from being achieved by our high and complex standards of European living, may be said to have been reached.

The Fascist education policy in Africa, however much it innovated, was widely different. During the three year period from 1936 to 1939, while it was supplanting the religious missions in all its territories, particularly Eritrea and Ethiopia, it entrusted indigenous education to political and military organizations, such as the Militia and the Fascist Native Youth. At Addis Ababa, Oletta, Jig Jiga and Diredawa, after the conquest, the new school buildings bore the inscription "Scuola—Gioventu indigena del Littorio" (School—Fascist Native Youth), and the terms used revealed an entire policy. Meanwhile, a register, equivalent to the teacher's register of the United Kingdom, for teachers in elementary schools attended by Colonial subjects was established and the principles set forth in the Education Charter (*Carta della Scuola*) were declared applicable to Italian Africa, with the necessary adjustments to local requirement. The aim in view was to make the indigenous population a working class ("trained in its own and in imported trades") of farmers, craftsmen and lower-grade technicians. If these provisions are compared with the second, 1935, United Kingdom *Memorandum*, which formulated a programme for raising the level of the community as a whole (and clearly outlined the principles of basic education, through co-operation between schools and other economic and social educative institutions), the difference is less striking than the incompatibility of divergent principles: in one case, a mass of people turned into regimented working classes under Italian technical management; in the other, the forma-

tion of farmers' and craftsman's co-operatives, adult education, encouragement of enterprise, cultural centres and campaigns against disease—a series of provisions designed to foster local government. Moreover, the two programmes necessarily belonged to opposite methods of education which, in turn, expressed opposite political conceptions. The basic education programme essentially implied forsaking the policy of strength and domination.

The war put an end to the Fascist efforts and ex-Italian Somaliland, where very little had been done until 1939 to educate the Somalis², was placed under British military government. On 1 April 1950, the transfer of authority from British Administration to Italian Trusteeship Administration again raised the problem of Somali education in an extremely pressing manner: nobody could fail to see what education meant to a people aspiring after self-government and political independence. The political success of the Trusteeship Agreement, however, largely depended, and still depends, on the formulation of a coherent education policy, and the use of educational methods which are both intrinsically democratic and suitable to the Somalis' actual living conditions and to their effective capacity for social and cultural improvement.

In short, basic education could and should influence the general scheme of government, and not only the school system; many of the political and administrative bodies would have to become identified with the "technical

authorities". The opposite tendency of subordinating the latter to imaginary "political reasons" or, worse still, of improvising them is the sore point of the whole question. The training of the Somali teaching profession, for example, is obviously an urgent requirement, but if, for "political reasons"—one of which might be the need to prove by statistical data that a programme has been accurately carried out—Somali teachers are improvised instead of being trained, it would be tantamount to ordering bakers—for political reasons—to sell loaves made of chalk or cardboard, instead of flour⁴.

Whatever the present position may be, Unesco experts stated in 1950 that "The people are already desirous of maturing rapidly, and taking the helm as soon as it can be relinquished. There is no prejudice against schooling and a lively interest in education in wider sense....The burning desire of schooling which is so marked a feature of Somaliland is in part an indication that the people are very alive to the implication of a Trusteeship for this Territory with a certain term of office to run". The Report was, consequently, optimistic with regard to Somali capacity for education, but made a few cautious reservations concerning the means at Italy's disposal: "Qualified teachers are needed. ... New techniques must be put over in such a manner that the watchful peoples may see that the new methods are generous, are skilled and are suited to their needs." Finally, for the organization of the most comprehensive basic education programme possible, the Administering Authority

was explicitly invited to become acquainted with experiments performed in other African countries, since Somaliland was, unfortunately, from that point of view, "an untouched field"⁵.

It is to be regretted that the first report of the Italian Government to the General Assembly of the United Nations (April 1950 — December 1950), while fully describing the action taken during the first year of administration which might be considered satisfactory with regard to the number of primary and secondary schools and of total enrolments (6,718 pupils, including adults), merely declared, in connection with the problem of teachers qualified in new subjects, that both primary and secondary teachers were duly certificated (paragraph 231); the report suggested nothing more than a vague project for dealing with the question of basic education. It follows that, while we, as the Administering Authority, had adhered to the principle of "mass education", which is explicitly mentioned in the report, the Technical Assistance Mission's report had invited us to follow quite another education policy. That policy, in the first place, called for the utilization of *all* the environmental natural resources, not only from the industrial and economic standpoints, but also from the cultural point of view.

Language is nowadays looked upon as an environmental natural resource. To teach Arabic or Italian or, worse still, both languages, and completely neglect Somali, is like trying to import, at all costs, a little wood and a few

bricks to build houses where clay and forests are plentiful.”

No political, or even serious technical, difficulties prevent the use of Somali in the Latin alphabet (this does not, of course, apply to Osmania), at least for text-books and school literature in general. The question of the official language of the future State of Somaliland is quite another matter, and might even be of no interest to the present Administration which should, however, since first assuming its task, have concerned itself with the Somali language as spoken and written for educational purposes. Had provision been made at the proper time, at least the educational scandal of bilingual (Arabic and Italian) instruction being given in the first elementary classes to pupils whose only mother-tongue is Somali would have been avoided. On this point, since 1950, the UN Mission was fully justified in regretting that the Administering Authority's attention had not sooner been attracted to works, such as that of Professor Maino for spreading the Somali language, although it had aroused great interest in the University of London. The fact that, late in 1950, the problem of writing and Somali was shelved, and that its solution has not later been considered essential for preparing a comprehensive education programme for the Somalis⁶, indicated that since then, the Italian Government's education policy has been unconnected with the "community education" policy now being implemented and consolidated by the United Nations throughout the world. A plan for "mass education" which implied pu-

pil-and-teacher relationships permanently consisting in the placing of schoolmasters behind desks, opposite "masses" sitting on benches, has taken precedence over Somali community education, which implies a keenly democratic educational outlook. Mass education should not be confused with community education; to overlook the difference would be an unpardonable mistake.

There is a pertinent Somali proverb which says that "A Somali and a man who does not speak the Somali language are foes", and proves, if proof were still needed, that a wise teacher always has something been from his pupils.

—From material supplied by *Education Cleaning House, Unesco, Paris.*

(1) Thus, for instance, in East Africa, European civilization has been added to the two "co-existing" Moslem and pre-Moslem, civilization, but the language and many judicial customs of the ancient Somalis have been preserved until now.

(2) Vide. Nuffield and Foundation and Colonial Office. *A Study of Education Policy and Practice in British Tropical Africa.* Oxford 1953.

(3) The Unesco Quarterly *Fundamental and Adult Education* contains valuable information on the subject.

(4) Achievements in this direction are described by Maurice Colombian, *Les Co-operatives et l'éducation de base*, Unesco Paris, 1950: e. g. the steps taken by the Nigerian Government, Bernard Huss's work with the Bantus in Natal and in Zululand, or the similar organization in Jamaica (pp. 126 & sq.).

(5) For the detailed observations of the Technical Assistance Mission concerned, Vide. *The Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration*, UN Technical Assistance Programme, New York, 1953, pp. 235 & sq.

(6) It should, indeed, be noted that, of the three five-year plans presented to the United Nations by the Italian Government, only the third (1953-1957) was drawn up with assistance of a Unesco adviser, and alone mentions "refresher courses in the language of the country" for Italian and Arab teachers. I have no knowledge of the courses having been regularly started.

LITERACY IN DELHI—A Study of Voluntary Literacy Campaigns

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The Social Education Department run by Delhi Municipality has been conducting every year a voluntary literacy campaign in Delhi. These campaigns are organised with the help of student volunteers from high-schools. This is a study based on data collected from the student volunteers who participated in the campaign. The writer who has been in charge of one of the Social Education Centres, wishes to thank the student volunteers—over 66% of whom cooperated with him in making this study possible.

The campaign started in the beginning of May 1957, when the Headmasters and Principals of High/Higher Secondary Schools respectively were approached. Students volunteers who filled in the form-cum-applications attested by the Principals were given one week's training in theory and practice at the Headquarters of Social Education Department and then sent to their 'nearest residence unit' in the City and finally helped to find out the place of working with the adults, around the unit. The units were the Social Education Centres of the Department.

The respective age-groups of stu-

dents who volunteered for the campaign were: 15 years to 18 years : 75%; 18 years to 21 years : 25%.

The adolescent age-group thus formed the bulk of volunteers and so far as the channelising the energies of this important age-group is concerned, the object has been fulfilled. Higher age-groups have to be attracted for better results.

Caste : Khatries 45%, Brahmins 25%, Vaish 25% and Scheduled Castes 5%. The locality, where scheduled castes form a large percentage of the entire population has contributed only 5% from amongst the scheduled castes. This may be due to the very small percentage of educated among the scheduled castes and even from amongst the educated, the volunteers have not come forward. This section has to be attracted to make the campaign more popular.

Another interesting feature is that only 17% of the student volunteers were from the joint families, although the bulk of the student volunteers came from low-income groups i.e. Rs. 50-150, 45% ; Rs. 150-300, 45% and

above Rs. 300 ; 10%. 50% came from the families of 4 to 7 members. 45% belonged to families of 8 to 11 members, only 5% came from 16 member family.

The percentage of student volunteers from big families is very low. So much about their personal history and background.

50% of the volunteers came from the schools, out of which 55% came from the recognised schools and 45% came from the Government Schools. Only 10% came from the Colleges. The rest i.e. 40% came direct. 37.5% amongst the direct volunteers were unemployed, 37.5% attended typewriting classes, whereas 25% studied privately. The Government Schools and Colleges can contribute more. The direct volunteers being 40% show that there is another source for providing volunteers. This source can provide more, if properly approached.

10% came to know about the campaign through posters, 15% from newspapers, 15% directly from the Social Education Centres, 30% from Schools and colleges and 30% from their friends etc. Some of the friends had already volunteered for the campaign or worked for the last campaigns. More planned publicity is required to get the maximum number of volunteers.

Only 85% of the volunteers applied and filled in the application forms. 15% came without any application. Amongst the volunteers who had applied, 42% applications were without any verification. 41% applications

were signed by Principals and 17% attested by class teachers. Some uniform policy has to be adopted and to ensure efficiency and safety of the equipment supplied.

Only 25% of the volunteers knew about the training through Principals; Social Education Centres informed 25%. Friends etc., informed 44% and Headquarters informed 6%. Planning is lacking somewhere, as only 25% have been informed through Principals, whereas the efforts were to inform 100% through the Heads of the institutions.

50% of the volunteers felt that the training was satisfactory. 6% had no comments to make. 6% felt that the training was too short. 38% felt that the training was short. Lectures on Health, Civics and tackling children were suggested for inclusion in the training course. Talking points during the actual campaign and short notes on lectures delivered were also suggested. 2 weeks were suggested for the duration of the training. Exhaustive lectures on the existing topics were stressed.

40% of the volunteers who attended the training suggested social education centre, as the suitable place for training.

55% of the volunteers attended the training in full. 30% attended partially. 15% were absent. This aspect also needs a thought. Better results are sure, if 100% take the training.

90% of the volunteers were satisfied with supply of equipment from the Social Education Centre. 5% wan-

ted the same to be supplied at the place of their work and 5% at their residence.

65% of the volunteers said that with proper adjustments, the equipment supplied can be satisfactory. 30% said that the equipment is defective and 5% were of the opinion that it is unsatisfactory. Supply of only one kind of book, the same quality of slates, tested hurricane lamps, adequate and early supply, were some of the suggestions.

20% of the volunteers felt that the literacy has no problems; 45% said that adults do not participate, 25% said that adults are difficult to be retained and 10% said the non-availability of a proper place is also a problem.

70% of the volunteers could not work without the help and guidance of Social Education Centre Staff. 30% said that they could work without their help and guidance. 85% felt that the centre staff never interfered in their work and 15% felt that their regular visits wasted the time of volunteers. 100% said, that the centre staff behaved like friends and not like policemen during their visits to the campaign classes.

8% of the volunteers felt that these campaigns can eradicate the illiteracy. 15% said, to some extent and 5% were of the opinion, that it is not a means to eradicate illiteracy.

83% of the volunteers would like to be approached in the 2nd week of April and 17% in the first week of April as the examinations end by that time and the students are free. College students should be approached in the last week of March.

30% of the volunteers offered their services for the campaign, because of the opportunity it provided them for experience in teaching. 30% volunteered for help in national reconstruction, 20% came for getting a certificate 10% volunteered for profitable use of leisure, 5% volunteered as somebody asked them to do so.

The duration of this campaign (37 working days) was felt satisfactory by 25% of the volunteers; 5% felt that the duration was too short. 70% that it was short. 67 days were suggested as suitable.

85% of the volunteers would offer their services next year. 10% were not sure. Only 5% said no.

Among suggestions to improve the campaign were better facilities for follow-up work; Mohalla Panchayats need to be approached well in advance before starting the campaign to ensure local co-operation. Syllabus may be suitably revised. In case of financial difficulties private agencies and individuals should be approached to contribute. The data collected provides some ideas to make the campaign more effective.

General Secretary's Report

(Continued from page 4)

standardisation of activities has stopped local initiative from expressing itself and how as a result the Community Centres wither away. It may be recalled that the Indore Seminar of the Association on Community Centres held in 1951 had recommended that Community Centres must be built round felt needs and that standardised patterns must not be imposed. The PEO Report has also pointed out that Community Centres can be really effective and create a powerful influence only if their activities are such as to constitute a natural medium of expression of the people.

As regards literacy programmes, the Report points out the anomaly of indifference existing side by side with eagerness of villagers for education of their children. The Report explains that this might be accounted for "by some major deficiency either in extension methods followed by Social Education Officer or in the technique adopted for imparting Adult Education". Here again the Association has just completed a joint project with the Jamia Millia on this problem and we hope that findings of this project will help to remedy the defect.

A perusal of the Report brings clearly that at the core of problems with which the Community Development Programme is faced rests on finding proper institutional structure for the movement. Here again the only solution appears to be to evolve a structure which would allow itself to

be moulded by the impact of local needs and allow for local initiative to express itself fully. Much thought has been given to this and the Association has time and again drawn attention of the authorities concerned to the appropriateness of non-official agencies for this task. It is only when the Government gives serious thought to this would the chances become bright of the Community Development Programme flowering into a real movement of the people.

In this connection, the Association welcomes the recommendations made by the Balwantraji Mehta Team on Plan Projects. This Team which was appointed by the Committee on Plan Projects set up by the National Development Council has recommended that responsibility for development work should rest with local Panchayats. It has also recommended that the Block instead of the District should become the administrative unit. This, it believes, would make the unit viable administratively and yet not so large as to remove the source of authority from the village people. This, the Team also feels, would enable the common man to name the person to whom power has been given by the villager and which will act as deterrent to corruption.

This recommendation of the Team is of far-reaching consequences and imposes a special responsibility on social education workers. It is they who would have to see that the common man of the village exercises this power wisely and well for common good.

One major recommendation of the Team with which many would disagree is that it has advocated a shift of emphasis from welfare to increase in production. This is regrettable for to dissociate production from social welfare aspects is to introduce elements which will destroy the ethos of the Community Development. If the villages have not even been able to understand what Community Development is it is surely not because of wrong emphasis on welfare activities as the Team argues but because of defects in the operation of programmes which have been pointed out by the Programmes Evaluation Board.

Workers' Education

The year under review was an important one in the development of the Workers' Education movement. The Government of India with assistance from the Ford Foundation had invited an International Team of Experts on Workers' Education. This Team toured the country and made recommendations for launching a scheme of Workers' Education which were later discussed at a Seminar of representatives of workers and others concerned with Workers' Education. A result of the Seminar was the setting up of an Advisory Committee on Workers' Education on which the Association is represented; it is in the process of the launching of programmes of workers' education in various industrial centres.

The Association has just concluded a Seminar on Workers' Education and it is hoped that the recommendations

of the Seminar will influence the work of the Committee.

Extra Mural Classes

The Delhi University launched a series of extension classes in Delhi. These classes which were headed by some of the eminent scholars in Delhi proved immensely popular and the Delhi University deserve our congratulations. We hope that other Universities will also take steps to launch similar schemes elsewhere.

Role of Social Education Organiser

(Continued from page 8)

and objectives in each case, the follow-up work that will be required and the need for evaluating the results and how he can do the evaluation.

- (6) Study of village life, economy, social pattern, cultural needs etc. and their bearing on his special field of activity. How a survey in these can be conducted and how the problems must be found out and properly understood.
- (7) Techniques of conducting meetings, group discussions, how to promote group and co-operative working. A very broad understanding of how groups are motivated and held together, etc.
- (8) Programme building for Social Education, including an understanding of planning and its role in modern development.

SELECTION AND USE OF VISUAL AIDS—The Training of Community Development Officers

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THE University of London Institute of Education's training course is primarily intended for experienced officers in responsible positions, and its main purpose is to help them to make comparative studies of the ideas, methods, and techniques associated with community development work. This training purpose is achieved partly in seminar and group discussions and partly in the individual studies each officer undertakes. Its general effect is to provide the members of the course with a very broad background against which they can examine their past experience and develop ideas about the conduct of their future work.

One main subject of study is communication, for in one way or another every worker depends on being able to communicate ideas and information to the people among whom he works. It is only by this means that he can hope to change existing attitudes and modify people's behaviour, and it is only as these changes occur that the worker knows that he has succeeded. It is for this reason that communication rather than visual aids now pro-

vides the main focus of study, for in our training experience on the course it is only too easy to concentrate attention on visual aids, while failing to give sufficient attention to analysing the other factors which affect the communication process: factors which, if neglected, can cause failure, however good the visual aids, and however well the worker uses them.

One such factor is the worker's judgment of what the people need: for however well-intentioned and enthusiastic he may be, and however good the visual aids he may employ, he will fail if people find his message irrelevant to their needs, in conflict with their major values, or unrealistic in terms of their local skills and resources.

A second factor is the complexity of the total message the worker wishes to communicate. While some, like, 'Get vaccinated against smallpox', may be relatively simple to get accepted since they demand from people only a brief and almost effortless response, others, such as 'Boil your drinking water', or 'Build better houses', are

highly complex communications which must be broken down into a whole series of messages, some to arouse interest, some to provide detailed information, and some to teach new skills. In such cases, effective communication also involves the planning of a series of situations, each favourable to the transmission of a particular kind of message : crowd situations at exhibitions, public demonstrations, or filmshows, perhaps, for the arousing of initial interest, but small groups for promoting discussion and assimilation of ideas, and for the detailed teaching of skills. Attempts to communicate complex messages will fail unless they are planned as a series of messages each to be given in its most appropriate situation.

Since almost every complex message involves the worker in teaching and discussion in groups, another factor affecting his success in his ability to contact, or create, groups of the people who are most likely to value and benefit from his message. The wider the range of groups available to the worker, and the better his choice of groups with which to work, the better will be his chances of communicating successfully, and thereby affecting people's behaviour.

In addition to these major factors, others also need to be borne in mind. For instance, people will be less ready to consider a message at times when they are busy on their farms, or particularly preoccupied with their own local affairs. Again, if they have reason to mistrust or dislike the worker, they are the less likely to

consider on its merits the idea he tries to communicate.

Many attempts at communication have failed because one or more of these factors has not been taken into account. The prime job of the worker is to create for himself favourable situations in which to work, to choose the appropriate messages to communicate, to develop affective methods of presenting them, and to get people to discuss them, form opinions about them, and decide on what action they will take about them. Few visual aids can stand by themselves. Their prime function is to help the worker at *one* stage only of the process of communication—the presentation of information and ideas. They cannot free the worker from his main task of selecting the message and getting it assimilated and acted on.

It is for this reason that a good deal of the work in the communications seminar at the Institute is concerned with the analysis and assessment of field programmes, especially of programmes for which officers have been responsible or in which they have participated ; and it is against this broad background that the more specific studies of visual aids are made. These studies take several forms.

Separate studies are made of the different types of aids. The special advantages and disadvantages of each type are discussed in relation to the purposes of the worker, his resources for designing and producing them, and the kinds of situation in which they can be most appropriately used. Discussions are based on the field ex-

perience of the officers participating and on the reading they are currently doing on the course. Demonstrations, live and puppet drama, models, pictures, flip-charts, flannelgraphs, magnetic blackboards, filmstrips, films, and posters are all separately considered in this way.

In addition, detailed studies are made of specific visual aid materials produced in the tropics for a variety of purposes. Each example, film, filmstrip, poster, or printed material is situated for appropriateness of content, design, and basic appeal in relation to the kind of audience for which it is intended. Both good and bad examples are demonstrated and discussed, the purpose being to help officers to become aware of the many factors which can contribute to, or detract from the help a visual aid can give the worker. This kind of systematic assessment by experienced field workers brings many of the examples, superficially attractive and effective as they may appear at first to be, into a perspective which reveals them as quite unsuitable for the purposes for which they were designed and the situations for which they were chosen. A film, for instance, may depict the people's existing situation in such an unfavourable light that the people will reject its message as not intended for themselves. Another will transmit so many messages that people cannot take them in. Many filmstrips, even, are too long and deal with too many points in one presentation. The most useful filmstrip makes only one major point and leaves the worker ample time for subsequent teaching and discussion. Many films and filmstrip appear to be

designed to supplant the worker (which they cannot do) rather than help him in his work.

The seminar also does some practical work, notably the production of a sound filmstrip. This is carried right through from the initial selection of a topic depicting some problem of relations between worker and people for use in human relations training, to the development of the story, the selection and design of suitable frames, and the actual 'shooting' of the script and recording of the dialogue. The main purpose of this project is to provide officers with opportunities for putting into practice the conclusions they have reached during their earlier discussions.

In connexion with the seminar most officers take a course in projective techniques at the Audio-Visual Aids Unit, Wandsworth Technical College, where they learn to handle and maintain project apparatus of many types. They also visit organisations and institutions specializing in the production of use of visual aids.

This seminar started as a 'visual aids' seminar. It has developed into its present form as a result of regular discussion with the members of seminar on how it can best help them to study the actual problems they encounter in their work. It is this that has shifted as the focus of study from visual aids to the broader, more inclusive study of communication which is the real centre of interest.

The seminar now serves its members in three ways : (i) it helps them

ADULT LITERACY AND LANGUAGE—A Fresh Look

Evelyn Wood

So far as world-history is available for record, the wide spread of a *written* language always follows two streams of development. It is as if communications between men were represented by a river. In that river's bed an island is formed; the stream divides and re-unites afterwards. Often the island rises in the river bed from silt brought down by a tributary stream, or more than one tributary. This extension of the analogy is probably also sound.

The two most obvious examples may be chosen, as being within the range of a layman's knowledge of history. First comes the development of written Chinese—primarily in the so-called Mandarin, or universal script, which gave shape to several very different spoken languages of the same, tonal family.

It should be noted that until the present period of People's China, the written Chinese seems never to have been assigned for the millions. The thousands of combined ideograms which are formed from the basic Chinese characters could obviously not be standard equipment for peasants. We may therefore say that a true People's Chinese and a literature in such a language still remains to be evolved.

Perhaps a preview of this evolution is available in Japan; but popular studies of the nature of the material to meet Japan's universal literacy remain to be published in European languages. What has been published is too scholarly for the ordinary reader.

The second example is more familiar to most people; partly because it is better documented and partly because of the bias in history-teaching which has constrained most of us to see human development from a Western viewpoint. We all know something about the spread of written language in Europe, beginning with the Pax Romana. It will be necessary to draw a parallel between the period around the fall of the Roman Empire in A.D.475, when the Dark Ages began, and the present day. Today, of course, there is a perceptible weakening of the cultural hold of Europeans (and Americans, who derive from them) upon the people of Asia. This parallel may not be wholly sound; it is not yet definitely known that the linguistic influence exerted by Portuguese, Dutch, French and British colonization is dying out in Asia—and Africa. But it looks as if this will happen soon.

The assumption that these languages will be wholly replaced for most Asiatics by pure, traditional forms of the local languages is almost certainly unsound. Somewhat as Latin persisted a structural form in Europe ; as Arabic continued more as a source of vocabulary in North Africa and Spain, and as Greek survived in the growing jargon of science, it seems probable that English, French, German or perhaps Russian will enter—some would say as a pollution—into the newly flowing streams of language in India, the Islamic countries, and so on to Indonesia.

We need not be too concerned about the nucleus of the proper or improper growth of people's languages in what were the colonial empires of European powers. What should concern us far more is how to fill the demand for ready materials which is already rising from the new literates in these countries. This is where the broader parallel with the Latin and Greek persistences in Europe will help us.

It is simplest to concentrate one's attention on France, which was probably the first country to develop a written vernacular, as the monopoly of Latin faded out of the field of European communication. It will be remembered that a recognizable French (*langue d'oil*) was being written two hundred years before the English Chaucer.

Without a doubt, this growth of a "national" language stimulated literacy among quite ordinary people who would never have bothered with

Latin. French then became the same written language from the South of England to Lyons, half-way down the present France.

Of course the vast majority of French people remained illiterate. Yet the new, written vernacular created a new field of second-hand but accurate communication for illiterates, by providing new written material which could be read out or sung to illiterate audiences. It became possible to spread news, which replaced what had been, at best, vague rumour, and at worst a stolid disinterest in the affairs of the world outside the small group. The similarity of the state of rural France previous to the written vernacular there with the state of Village India to-day is very strong. In mediaeval France, a sort of miracle of communication was performed by the written vernacular. News could then be controlled ; it became an instrument of power, far more precise than the manipulation of rumour. This development seems almost certain in India from now onwards.

But news cannot have been the peasants' primary interest in a written and therefore stabilized French language. It is quite possible that they were already familiar with news, or proclamations, perhaps with what we should call propaganda. Doubtless such matter was served out orally in its imperial Latin, and translated by one of French listeners into their own language. Maybe the heralds or other crisis speakers of the local vernacular besides being

readers of the imperial Latin. We must look deeper for the interest of the illiterate people of France in the new written French, in which they probably had no desire to acquire a reading proficiency—still less the skill of writing. The latter especially continued to be a profession of competent lantinsts, the clerks of mediaeval times.

There is no doubt, though, that the written French did greatly enrich illiterate lives. The drama came into common performance; once they were written into a play, the familiar themes could be better presented. The gags and the accounts were local, but the plot and the moralities of the drama were for the first time universally French.

Poetry had perhaps a greater influence than any other art, especially on the illiterate people. The *jongleur*, reciting a *chanson de geste*, was passing on the composition of a poet—perhaps a school of poets—in exactly the same words to all French people. These compositions told the glorious history of the whole people in a uniform way for the first time. Of course, India has its *charans* and other bards, some of whom are rather similar to the *jongleur* of mediaeval France, but not to the extent that they reproduce the written poetry of India. The reciting of poetry remains the poet's local privilege here.

From the *chanson de geste* grew the passionate nationalism of the French people, before five per cent of them could read a word. By the second hand communication of the written word in an oral manner which appealed to

them, the people became steeped in their history and traditions—or the best side of those mental possessions.

The parallel to this mediaeval French situation is fairly clear to see for modern India. The *charans* or *bhats*, particularly for the Rajputs, and other bards for some of the other peoples of India, have already sung of history, legend and tradition in verse form. Yet these recitations have never been standardized upon a written text. A better model drawn from other practices would be the chanting of the immutable Vedas. Yet neither of these forms of communication have lit fire in the millions illiterates. The bardic songs of chivalry were addressed more to the orders of chivalry. The Vedas treat of profound religious matters and do not contain anything calculated to inspire illiterate folk towards progressive (though tradition-based) living in a new world.

Inspiration has reached the peasants of India through the Ramlila dramas and the Kathakali of Malabar, to take only two extreme examples. Poetry, without the aid of drama, has mostly concentrated on more devotional aspects of history or legend. It has, of course, also persisted as local commentary in the villages. But poetry, too, can be inspired and inspiring; it can stimulate to great deeds, to progressive action, without loss of traditional values.

This is exactly what happened from about the 12th century in France. Is it too much to imagine that poetry and the drama may likewise revivify illiterate—particularly rural India, provided we open the channels for such

communication ?

The question resolves itself into a consideration of two aspects of possible progress. In the first aspect of guided prediction, the illiterates of India will all learn to read and write. But what will they read ? Who will write for them until they can write for themselves, and what will be written ? It is easy to talk of creating a new, rational, progressive literature which will stimulate the desire for more knowledge and its critical appreciation. In fact, however, this has not happened in any other country where literacy has swept like a delayed forest fire across the people. The literature which has in fact been produced for new literatures has, in all countries so far, been degenerate rubbish. Fortunes have been made from "yellow" newspapers and other cheap periodicals, sensational fiction and the like ; but the growth of mass-taste for better fare in ready material has everywhere been slow and painful.

It could probably be demonstrated that those countries with a considerable habit of public recital of poetry and of drama have fared better in the transition which new literacy brings.

This possibility brings us to the second aspect of consideration. Might it not be better to avoid forcing literacy on a people who have done spiritually very well without it for so long ? In the more gradual cultivation of literacy in India, it would be possible to build up in parallel a literature which could be profound yet simple in its form. The spread of such creation could then be reasonably geared to the needs of the new readers

without forcing the need for literacy.

In the interim, perhaps of several generations, there are two ways of communicating with the illiterate majority. One way is to develop audio-visual educational methods. The sculptured temples of South India and the sonorous recitals of the Vedas have already used this principle ; but, for the new world which India is entering, more portable media and more rational texts will be required.

Another way is to encourage the development of drama and poetry for public presentation. Here, too, new themes are needed. If history is any guide, the verbal forms of verse are always more efficient than prose with illiterate folk. This relative efficiency of verse is also the impression which the writer has, with regard to what village-folk in India recognize, like, accept emotionally and understand intellectually.

In many parts of India, the rural players are still a beloved institution. But they need more and better plays, better costumes, stage-mechanics and scenery. Then the current problems can be presented as dramas (or comedies) with maximum effect. It may be that the drama is not the most powerful of all means of communication to illiterates. We have never tried the power of the village poet in a big way. Nearly every village has at least one. Locally, he can always command some attention, mostly on topical subjects. In a wider field than a dozen or at most fifty villages, his very local idiom falls flat. With written text, common over a much wider area—say of a whole language group like *Bhojpuri*

the village poet could greatly extend his influence. It is worth an experiment.

enthusiasm for low standard literacy for all.

Perhaps the often verbose instructions for new practices in village work and living which originate in heavy, official prose, could be given punch by dramatists and poets in far more succinct and generally acceptable forms. These and other methods should be experimented with. They would save much of the national effort and lighten at least one of their new burdens now laid on villagers' shoulders, if adult literacy were taken more slowly. Deliberation is a characteristic of most culture patterns in India. It is odd that this trait is so readily abandoned in the

(Continued from page 29)

to understand the many factors that affect success in solving communication problems, and to see communication as a result of work in a series of situations, each of which requires careful planning; (ii) it helps them to select the most appropriate purposes, methods, and aids for each kind of situation; and (iii) by developing their ideas about the scope and the proper use of aids, it enables them to contribute more fruitfully to a two-way traffic of ideas between the field worker and the specialist in the visual-aids unit.

The Bhudan Revolution a symposium

JANUARY 1958

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Gyan Chand	Bhudan as a Social Revolution
Josselyn Hennessy	Welfare and the State : an Indian View
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M.L. Dantwala	Institutional Base for Moral Ideas
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FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION IN URBAN AREAS— Work Among Youth

Peter Kuenstler

IN what are referred to as the highly developed areas of the world, many of the youth organizations were originally called into existence either by governments or voluntary effort in an attempt to provide remedies for the evil influences inflicted on young people by over-rapid or uncontrolled industrialization and urbanization. In time the increased wealth which these areas accumulated through industrialization could be used to finance a system of universal and free education, and it then became unnecessary for youth organizations to provide fundamental education for their members within their own programmes. For most of the world, however, process of industrial revolution is not a fact of past history but a present experience which a special challenge offers to youth organizations in the new and rapidly growing cities of the world.

By definition then, fundamental education is most needed and applicable in 'under-developed' countries or in the "problem" areas of 'advanced' countries. Due to its implications of inferiority, the word 'under-developed' is giving way to the phrase undergoing rapid development.

More often than not rapid development is synonymous with a process of industrialisation and urbanization.

The conference on the Social Impact of Industrialization and Urban Conditions in Africa, held at Abidjan (Ivory Coast) in 1954 (under the joint sponsorship of Unesco, the French Government and the Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa, south of the Sahara) was an attempt to meet the problems arising from such rapid development in a continent still known to many as a traditionally 'rural' one.

Urbanization

Even where urban life has for centuries been part of the pattern in the 'under-developed' areas, the rate of growth of these cities has immensely increased during the last decades. Dakar in French West Africa with a population of over 300,000 inhabitants, had in 1926 only 30,000. In fourteen years the population of Conakry increased from 13,600 to 57,000; that of Lagos, Nigeria increased by 80 per cent between 1931 and 1950. Elsewhere, as for instance in East Africa, urban conglomeration is a novel feature, but

cities like Nairobi, Mombasa, Kampala, Jinja, the towns of the Central African copper belt and Salisbury, suffer increasingly from all the social problems of industrial urban life, in some cases, all the more acute because they are entirely new problems in the life of both the indigenous and immigrant populations.

Professor Daryll Forde, in a summary report of the Abidjan Conference, distinguishes between "the social significance of migrant labour in a primary industry" (e.g. mining) and "that of unskilled labour of indefinite duration in an urban area of diversified economy". There are real dangers of social isolation, insecurity and delinquency. Family ties suffer severe disruption not only through geographical separation of husband and wife, father and children, but also owing to the break-up of the traditional extended family and kinship patterns. This is of special importance in relation to the social education of youth and their adjustment to, and understanding of, their role in society. In many areas, particularly those attracting great numbers of migrant workers, where there are large concentrations of young men, living in 'compounds' and forming a lop-sided and unnatural community with the concomitant of temptation to sexual irregularity and a sharp decline of ethical behaviour. The old traditional sanctions, which operated in the rural areas, no longer have effect; public opinion, among a mass of strangers drawn often from widely separated areas, ceases to be a heeded control. Authority resides, and is thought to reside exclusively, in the employer or

the metropolitan administrator and as such is to be evaded or flouted or cheated wherever and whenever possible. In all, an atmosphere or climate of 'delinquency' is engendered to which young people are specially susceptible.

Even where the population is a resident one, the atmosphere of a town in this rapidly changing 20th century presents many problems to face which young people need to be helped to face: problems of acquiring an education which will be relevant to their new and strange urban life; problems of unemployment, a field in which most of the experience of a swift and full industrial revolution which led to so much suffering in Europe and the United States five to ten decades ago is being recapitulated; problems of accommodation, in some cities so acute that the lack of accommodation or the low quality undoubtedly add yet another hazard to the many others which restrict life expectancy to thirty years or less; and the problem of the use of leisure time one which equally confront the young people of the great cities in the most 'advanced' and industrialized countries of the world.

Rather than embark on a theoretical exposition of what could or should be done in any particular set of urban circumstances, I shall cite a few practical examples of what is being done or has been attempted.

Self-Help

In the United States, the 'self-survey' approach is highly commended: in this, local residents organize them-

selves into teams to conduct an investigation into the social needs and deficiencies of their town. This almost always leads to action, either through the organs of local government or directly through the voluntary activity of the citizens. Thus in New Rochelle, a town of 60,000 inhabitants in New York State, some 300 volunteers from 67 different groups undertook the survey which among other things revealed the need for better facilities for children and youth. As a result "Kiddy Coops" or play spaces were provided, a Boys' Club in a slum area was enabled to have a hand-ball court and the whole position of teen-agers and the incidence of juvenile delinquency was more realistically faced by the people themselves.¹

In western Nigeria the prompting to action came from the Government Social Welfare Department but rather than take direct action themselves they first of all called into consultation some of the "key" men and women from different town neighbourhoods, those people who were natural local leaders and who had close and every day contact with the young people who were in social danger. These local leaders talked with the boys in their home areas and suggested to them the possibility of forming organized youth groups, at the same time making it clear that it was the boys who would have to take the initiative, particularly in finding and choosing adults who will help them as youth leaders. In this way a number of boys' clubs were formed which, from the start, were created by and "belonged to" their

members, rather than imposed on them by external adult authority.

These clubs benefited by the training camps run for young men where their capacity for leadership and service to the community was developed. Thus the boys took part in efforts to clean up the streets and buildings of the town ; they visited the hospital to cheer patients whose relatives were too far away to come to see them and in Ibadan, a university city of some half a million inhabitants, young men organized communal labour to build a football stadium and persuaded their elders, among them even some of the chiefs, to join in this shared and voluntary task.

Community Centres

In most countries some form of neighbourhood or community centre or house is to be found in the towns. Youth activities and needs of young people can occupy a major portion of the time and space in such a centre. Often, indeed, the house is started, for youth and is expanded later into a centre of activity for all age groups. This technique of providing a local building has been used also in villages and rural areas and among the first were the village "hearths" introduced into Turkey in the years after World War I. The point should be emphasized that in rural and urban areas alike great caution must be used to avoid thrusting a building on a local community without consulting the future users and without involving them personally and responsibly in the planning and, possibly, the actual physical construction. Certainly they

must be consulted as regards the policy of running and maintaining it. Some of the most successful youth centres and hostels are those which have been built by the young people themselves ; in this way they feel they have a real stake in them.

Starting at the Beginning

Even with the more difficult groups of young people, success is possible if great care is taken not to prevent from taking on the responsibility and cramping opportunities of service. This is well illustrated by the case² of a gang of bicycle porters (i.e. boys who carried passengers' bicycles over the railway bridge, at New Delhi), Y. M. C. A. youth workers had their attention drawn to the nature and operations of this gang by an article in the press. With skill and patience they made contact with the 20 year old leader. Eventually they won his confidence and provided him with facilities for giving the members of the gang, most of whom were some years younger, recreational activities which included football and traditional singing and dancing games.

The relationship became so strong that it was to these youth workers that the members immediately appealed for help when their leader was arrested on suspicion. His release was obtained and the gang was led into becoming a useful and socially acceptable youth group, and able to accept help without feeling that its self-respect and independence was being usurped.

In Hong Kong use was made of a traditional form of Chinese welfare

societies, the Kaifong. In the old days these groups of neighbours or residents in a particular street or locality undertook such varied social services as repairing bridges, mending roads, providing education, medical services and burial for the very poor. Although most of these associations had died away, they were revived in 1949 with the aid of the Hong Kong Social Welfare Department.³ By 1955 they were providing 20 free schools for 4,200 children, organizing, first-aid courses, running 29 free health clinics, organizing 65 basket ball and football teams and had equipped playgrounds for children and sports grounds for youth. They also provided a public library and organized a child health competition to encourage participation in the campaign against smallpox and diphtheria.

Perhaps the most important points about these Kaifongs are that they are made up of citizens themselves, organized on ancient and traditional lines, but providing the type of service urgently needed in 20th century urban life. They also carry on a wide range of social and educational work, including youth work, so that the needs of youth are recognized and met as part of the whole community situation rather than as a separate and particular demand.

Juvenile Delinquency

The problems of juvenile delinquency are to be found as one of the concomitants of urban life, transcending the different levels of industrial and technological achievement. Thus an issue of a journal⁴ devoted to

these problems contains articles from India, Netherland, U.S.A., France, Britain, Uruguay, Mexico, Japan, Malta, French Guinea and Mauritius. Although there may be a 'hard core' of seriously disturbed or maladjusted delinquents for whom only intensive or residential treatment will be of avail, the great majority of cases, especially among boys, are "environmental" or "pseudo-delinquents" of whom it has been said: "Abnormal exterior conditions can never make a real criminal of a person of a normal character, but may make a casual offender." (E. Frey).

City life provides just these kind of abnormal condltions, and youth work is particularly adapted to re-establishing the balance, to attracting and holding the young person who has been distracted into anti-social and criminal ways by the artificiality and superficiality of city life. In this sense the task of youth work in fundamental education may be more accurately called fundamental re-education. Often the need is to provide new and different standards. M. J. Chazal, a French juvenile court judge, who has been responsible for some important experiments among the delinquent children and youth of Paris, writes: "Children and adolescents in the district, boys and girls from 3 to 17, even up to 18, took to attending the 'club'. They called it their 'hut'. Very rapidly young people whose needs, aspirations and curiosity found as much outlet in their families as in 'organized' youth groups and movements, ceased to come to the 'club'. This is how it should be; the 'hut'

welcomed those for whom it had originally been created. It is hardly necessary to say that discipline was very lenient, that diversity was the keynote of the activities, that imagination and originality were always welcome. Any educational system had to be based on confidence, friendship, faith in the helping hand, trustworthiness and a multiplicity of interests⁵.

The Value of Youth Work

These last qualities will be recognized by all youth workers as indispensable for their work wherever it may be and whether or not it is attempting to face the challenge of town-bred juvenile delinquency. What is additionally important is that these essential factors of youth work are also seen as the foundation of an educational process. Because youth work is, or should be, based on voluntary participation and on the spontaneity of young people themselves, it can provide a type of education which will be accepted by a wide age range of boys and girls.

—From material supplied by Education Cleaning House, Unesco, Paris.

(1) M. M. Hunt "Let the People lead the Town" in *The Nation's Business*, 1953

2 N. J. Cornelius. "Jaggu is the Boss" in *Social Welfare India* Vol. II. No. 8. November, 1955.

(3) J. C. McDougall and K. Keen "The Kaifong Welfare Associations" in *Community Development Bulletin*, Vol. VII. No. 1, December, 1955.

(4) *Way Forum* No. 23. December 1956 "Delinquent Youth".

(5) *ibid* pp. 19-20.



A way to the moon

(AN ANCIENT INDIAN TALE)

"Our parents are always saying that we are too young to know anything," complained the young monkeys as they met in a forest. "We are *not* too young," they cried. "And we shall prove that," said their leader. "We will form ourselves into a band, and then we can do just what we like."

When the meeting was over, they all went home. That night, they didn't sleep beside their parents; they slept all by themselves, in groups, on the topmost branches of the trees by a lake.

Around midnight, one of the young monkeys woke up. Looking down from where he sat, he saw the bright moon shining on the lake below.

"Get up, get up, my friends!" he shouted. "The moon has fallen into the lake. Let us go and pull it out before anyone else does so."

"Oh! What a splendid idea!" cried his friends. "How very famous we shall be!"

"The only way to reach that moon," said the leader, "is for us to form a chain."

So a long monkey-chain was formed, each monkey firmly grasping the tail of another. With a splash that resounded throughout the forest, the whole band, leader foremost, jumped plump! into the water—and there they died!

MORAL : Beware of the advice of those who merely *think* they know; listen to those who *really* know. Consider vanaspati. Leading authorities on health and nutrition agree that vanaspati is a wholesome food and a valuable addition to the Indian diet.

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. NOTES AND COMMENTS	iii—vii
2. COMMUNITY LEADERS	
—Principles for their Training	— <i>Yakub Fam</i> ... 1
3. LIBRARIES IN SOCIAL EDUCATION	
—Activities of the Delhi Public Library	— <i>M. M. L. Tandon</i> ... 4
4. SOCIAL EDUCATION ORGANIZER IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	
—Two Views	— <i>A. R. Deshpande</i> ... 8 — <i>B. H. Mehta</i>
5. LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION	
—Emphasis on Values	— <i>T. R. Batten</i> ... 15
6. IMPACT OF INDUSTRIALISM OF INDIAN CULTURE	
—Need for Structural Re-thinking	— <i>Raj Krishna</i> ... 23, 37 & 38
7. THE LAMPLIGHTER	
—Review of A Guide Book for Develop- ment Work Among Rural Women	— <i>Dr. W. H. Wiser</i> ... 25
8. SOCIAL EDUCATION IN PLANNING	
—A Post Script to Comments	— <i>Prof. Charles Madge</i> ... 29
9. THE KATHAKALI	
—Its meaning to Social Education	— <i>Achutan Nair</i> ... 32

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of articles from this Journal in all regional languages.*

Notes and Comments

Social Education and the Plan

WHILE the basic purpose of our Plan is to raise the standards of living of our people and to usher in a measure of social justice, an equally fundamental factor is that it needs to be ensured in the course of the implementation of the Plan that the State does not lose its democratic character nor that the mechanism of the State apparatus functions in a manner which would smother the democratic impulses of the people. The Five Year Plan, formulated in the context of this perspective, thus, depends for its success on the measure of public cooperation that it evokes and on the extent of public participation that is forthcoming in the course of the implementation of the Plan programmes.

In the Community Development Programmes which constitute the hard-core of our plan programmes in the agriculture sector, appropriate activities form a part of the programme to secure such public cooperation and public participation and the social education programme is primarily designed to secure for the Community Development Schemes an understanding among people of the implications of the scheme. Although there had been some confusion in regard to the role of the Social Education Organiser, his functions and role, are now emerging with some measure of clarity. He is to promote and supervise appropriate programmes which would remove the inhibitive factors limiting the ability of the Community to participate in activities for its own development.

While the role of public participation in schemes like the Community Development are fairly evident, it is not clear in what manner public cooperation can express itself for the implementation of the scheme in the other plan

programmes. So far, public participation has not extended beyond constructional activities and local works nor has public cooperation found an avenue to express itself in a meaningful manner. Thus, what role social education has in the plan programmes is a matter that deserves exploration.

In this context, the debate that has been on in the pages of this Journal is significant and readers will recall an article on the Role of Social Education in Planning which had appeared in the June issue of the Journal last year. In the course of that article, "Ulhas" had worked out a perspective for social education and had indicated areas of planning in which social education can be effective. The comments on this article appear to have been as significant as the article itself and in this issue, Prof. Charles Madge of the University of Birmingham, has commented on the observations which had been made by Dr. Hoselitz of the Research Centre on Economic Development and Cultural Change of the University of Chicago.

The issues which have been under debate warrant closer investigation and raise certain very pertinent questions. At what point in planning do the people come into the picture? Dr. Hoselitz maintains that the formulation of plans is essentially the job of experts and masses have no role to play beyond accepting or rejecting at elections, those who are responsible for the formulation of the plans. While to certain extent, Dr. Hoselitz states the inevitable, yet it cannot be denied that formulation of the plans cannot be entirely the job of experts for unless the plan is formulated with the association of the mass of people, it is very likely that in the

course of its implementation it cannot have the support or participation of the mass of people, and in the absence of such participation democracy would find itself in a tight corner. Besides to argue as Dr. Hoselitz has done that because a particular party have been voted into power the plan it sponsors has also the support of the people may not be quite tenable for a number of factors irrelevant to plan play an important role in influencing the electorate. Thus while on a national level participation of the masses in the formulation of the plan cannot but be somewhat abstruse, local population do have a part to play so far as the formulation of the plan in that area is concerned and it is in this sphere that social education has its role.

Elsewhere in this issue is an article on the Impact of Industrialism on the traditional Indian culture, in the course of which Mr. Raj Krishna has examined the changes that are likely to result from an industrial development of the country. He has raised several issues sharply and these, because they pertain to certain basic factors of the human personality are of immediate import to social education. Indeed, the issues are at once, a challenge and a problem for social education. While in this context Dr. Hoselitz's observations questioning the ability of social education to bring about changes in the value-system of the people is a pertinent one, it is equally necessary that social education should have to follow basis on which the content of the programmes can be formulated. Obviously, the content will be related to a value system. What precisely is the system to which it need to be related, has to be looked at both from the point of view of desirability and efficiency. Mr. Raj Krishna points out, it is an open question whether the values which have emerged from industrial development of the West are consistent with our cultural traditions and whether such values have not created problems in Western society. Whether we can avoid these problems or whether it is inevitable for us to follow the path of the West, requires deeper thought if it is not to be fatalistically dismissed as inevitable.

Another question in the course of the plan programmes which deserves serious thought is the type of information and knowledge which people would need if they are to render the plan

and its achievements meaningful in their lives.

These are some of the vital issues which social education faces if it is to play its role in the broader context of our national plans. Public participation and cooperation cannot be forthcoming in a voluntary fashion if an effort is not made to face some of these questions and provide the basis on which public cooperation can be sought and the resulting participation canalised to fruitful ends. If we insist on programmes of mere physical construction without supplementing them with programmes of social education to convey a wider understanding of the rationale for such public participation we might succeed in the physical constructional aspects of our plan programmes, but the plan would have little meaning in the lives of our people.

Rural Women and Community Development

AMONG problems facing the Community Development Programmes, perhaps, the most intractable has been that of initiating appropriate activities among rural women and very little headway has been made in projecting a suitable programme among them. Paucity of workers in rural areas appears to have been, by far the most difficult problem which has prevented the promotion of such activities, and it was revealed at a meeting of the Women's Advisory Committee which met in New Delhi, under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Community Development, that as against 2,360 women Social Education Organisers needed for implementing the programme in the existing 2,300 Community Development programme, only 860 were available. So far as Gram Sevikas are concerned, the position is even worse for out of the total requirement of 4,720 Gram Sevikas, only 716 have been recruited.

A number of suggestions, from the most sublime to the ridiculous, have been mooted from time to time, to overcome the difficulty. It has been suggested for instance, that deserted wives, widows and the like should be recruited for the post of Gram Sevikas for social taboos, which bedevil a woman worker, it has

been assumed, will not operate against these categories of women. Not only is this suggestion no solution but also it reveals an attitude of mind guided by a sense of values against which decency rebels; what is more, it indicates an acquiescence of certain social norms inconsistent with the society of progressive values we wish to create and a policy framed on the basis of this suggestion would only mean a pandering to undesirable prejudices. A suggestion made by the Advisory Committee for the introduction of a new functionary in the set up the Gram Lakshmi—who would be a local leader—is not new, for the scheme has been in operation in Uttar Pradesh. The scheme, which stipulates the recruitment of elderly women in villages who would be given a stipend and training under a Gram Sevika, would appear sound at first sight. The difficulty, however, is that it begs the question for there are not enough Gram Sevikas who could train Gram Lakshmis. Mrs. Durgabai Desmukh is reported to have drawn the attention of the Advisory Committee to the scheme of the Central Social Welfare Board under which grants to voluntary institutions is being provided to offer instruction to women of adult age. Such instruction, it has been stated by the Board would equip women, who have had to discontinue their studies, pick up threads and acquire proficiency up to the standard of 8 class or vernacular final. This scheme, as we had occasion to observe earlier, will be of very little help for the recruitment of Gram Sevikas. For one thing, there are hardly any institutions in the country which undertake work of this sort and besides the type of education sought to be imparted is not likely to succeed nor is it of a type which would help the trainees to become Gram Sevikas.

The crux of problems of woman personnel in rural areas reflects the paucity of educational service for women in rural areas. Because of the lack of such facilities, there are few—almost an infinitely a small number—rural women available for the professional services of Gram Sevikas. Hitherto our perspective has been guided by our efforts to import educated women from urban areas to rural work. This has not met with much success for not only are there no facilities in rural areas to which urban women are accustomed, but also because of the yawning gulf between urban and rural condi-

tions, urban women find it almost impossible to adjust themselves to rural conditions. It is, therefore, a moot point whether it is possible to have urban women work in rural areas and whether it is desirable, even if it was possible, considering the differences in outlook between urban and rural women.

Since the problems which have created these difficulties are of fundamental nature, only long term remedies would appear workable. These consist of providing more educational facilities and greater encouragement for the education of girls. The amount set apart by the Central Social Welfare Board under the scheme of which references have been made, would be spent most usefully if it could be utilised for the creation of rural educational institutes exclusively meant for women. At such institutes which need to be residential in character training programmes need to be chalked out which would be appropriate to equip young girls in villages to the tasks of leadership among rural women. Such training programmes require to be realistically formulated and free from the bondage of foreign concepts which has led to the promotion of programmes among women which are merely notional in character without relation to the needs of rural women.

In this context, those interested in work among women would welcome the efforts of the Planning, Research and Action Institute of Lucknow which has sponsored a pilot project to work out the content of programmes of work among rural women. The project which is action centred is based on an investigation of prevalent habits and customs of rural women and on a study of the availability of material resources, tools, equipment and social service facilities. The purpose of the project is to evolve a perspective which would help workers to develop programmes according to the context in which she is to work. The project will also indicate an approach to evolve a method of work among rural women. Because it represents the first effort of its kind to give indigenous meaning to concepts essentially foreign which we have integrated as part of our plan programmes, the project will be followed with anticipation by all those interested in work among rural women.

Programme Evaluation Report

ALL those interested in community development await with a sense of anticipation the reports of the Programme Evaluation Board and so far none of the reports have failed to justify their expectations. Lucid analysis, forthright observations and frank appraisal of achievements together with a discerning assessment of the causes of failure characterise the reports of the Board. The work of the Board thus help to give workers in community development and others concerned with its progress a pride of achievement as well as perspective to avoid pit-falls which experience brings to light.

The fifth report of the Programme Evaluation Board is no exception to the traditions set by the first report, although one notices a tendency to emphasise certain factors and ignore certain others. The reasons for this are perhaps unavoidable for the Programme Evaluation Board though an autonomous and an independent body, functions within limitations under which an organ of the government has to function. Accordingly, there is a tendency to equivocate interpretations to the dominant moods of those in authority. As a result the perspective to draw conclusions from the trends in the movement are adjusted to the pronouncements of policy makers rather than to the needs of the movement. This is perhaps inevitable for after all the Programme Evaluation Board does not function in vacuum but in the context of an institution and under the stresses and strains of different forces. Thus while the jault would not appear to lie with the Board it is only pertinent to observe that those in authority ought to possess greater faith in the essential principles of community development consistent with declarations made often for mere effect.

In this context, it is heartening to note that the Minister for Community Development is not afraid to admit defects in the movement but these admissions appear to be more to

disarm criticism for there is not much evidence to show concrete efforts to remove the defects. Thus despite repeated declarations that there are certain faults in the movement there is no indication that concerted efforts are being made to remove those faults and Report after Report of the Programme Evaluation Board reiterate almost in precise terms the same drawbacks in the movement and the movement continues to go merrily as it was before.

The Fifth Report of the Board comes in at a juncture in the history of the movement when what it has achieved so far will either unfold itself further or will fizzle out with a whimper. After the initial phase of the introduction of the movement, it was faced with the problem of acquiring an institutional base which would be of such a character as would not neutralise the enthusiasm created among people and would not deny the opportunity for people to acquire control of the movement. Thus the bold recommendation of the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee for the decentralisation of the administrative pattern of the movement in a manner which would allow local communities to guide and control the movement came not a moment early for, there was a very real danger of officialdom creating a vested interest in the movement and therewith strangle its life out.

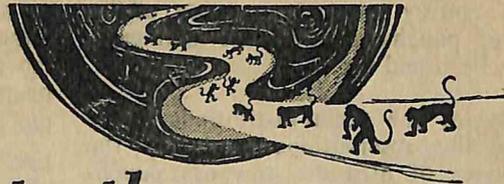
In this context the study of the panchayats made by the Programme Evaluation Report has a special bearing on social education. The Report brings data on the organisation and functioning of panchayats in the different parts of the country and has examined the extent of the resources, actual and potential available to them, the extent and the manner in which they have fulfilled themselves hitherto. The Report also surveyed the handicaps from which panchayats suffer on various counts. Paucity of internal resources, lack of adequate experience of panchayat mem-

bers in the new responsibilities that devolve on them have been analysed. The Board has done this so as to convey an understanding of the mechanism of panchayats and the manner in which it can be toned up.

The study of the social institutions in the country and the observations made by the Board on survey of attitudes towards panchayats, is a feature of the Report which will arrest the attention of social education workers. The findings of the Board that "suggestion for raising income and for increasing taxes are forthcoming much more readily from those blocks where panchayats have levied taxes, mobilised resources and shown some activities", should dispel misgivings and the cynical views of doubting Thomases and the bureaucrats on the wisdom of entrusting development work to panchayats.

While the analysis in the Report holds out obvious indicators for social education to find its sense of direction, it has not, as it has hitherto done, reviewed the accomplishment in the sphere of social education. References to people's participation and people's institutions like community centres, youth clubs etc. are pertinent to social education and an interesting finding of the Board that people's participation "declines as the block period moves to its end" provides both social education and community development with lessons which cannot be ignored. Indeed the conclusion of the Board that "educational effort and radiational influence have not been effective enough" has its morals for those who are willing to learn.





A way to the moon

(AN ANCIENT INDIAN TALE)

"Our parents are always saying that we are too young to know anything," complained the young monkeys as they met in a forest. "We are *not* too young," they cried. "And we shall prove that," said their leader. "We will form ourselves into a band, and then we can do just what we like."

When the meeting was over, they all went home. That night, they didn't sleep beside their parents; they slept all by themselves, in groups, on the topmost branches of the trees by a lake.

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COMMUNITY LEADERS—Principles for Their Training

Yacoub Fam, Social Welfare Specialist, Cairo.

THE training of leaders is a continuous process which lasts as long as a leader is active in social service. It is a process of growth in character and ability through service to others. It involves a community of values, co-operation, and exchange of knowledge and experience between three groups of people.

The first group consists of the leaders, i. e. those who are responsible for the organization's activities within a community. They form a link between the community and the organization's directing body. They must, therefore, be fully acquainted with the philosophy of the organization, its objects, and the means which it uses to achieve them. It is the extent of this knowledge, and the measure of harmony that exists between their organizational activities and their individual inclinations, that determine success and quality in social work. On the other hand, the achievement of the organization's aims depends on the good relations which the leaders may be able to create between themselves and the members of the community they are working for.

The third group consists of the recipients of service, of the people—men or women, boys or girls—among

whom the organization is carrying out its activities, whether they come from high or low economic strata. There will be no basic dissimilarity between the members of the group and the leaders who may be working among them. Each of them wishes to express his feelings, to like and be liked, to respect others and be respected by them, to modify his environment and bring it into harmony with his material and psychological needs, to consolidate his position among the members of his community. He wishes, above all, to find security in his surroundings and to enjoy the confidence of the people with whom he lives.

These feelings are common to every human being. The anxieties which fill the heart of man we intend to help, are the very anxieties which occupy the minds of the organization's board, its director, and its leaders.

Neither the director nor the leaders are masters of the people's destiny, nor are they a group with certain predetermined objectives which they want to achieve regardless of human considerations. On the contrary, they work with people, and if they wish to realize their aims they should have an approach which makes people's

response to them spontaneous and create faith in what they are doing.

The first factor in the training of leaders seems to be this spontaneous co-operation, which comes when they feel that the experiment is theirs and that they have the same right to it as anyone else. In other words, there must prevail—between the director of the organization, the leaders, and the people they serve—an atmosphere of mutual trust and unity of aims.

This, in our opinion, is the basis of democracy: that orientation of human relations which calls forth the people's best response to leadership and innovation. It is to work with people and not for them. Its fundamental factors are confidence in people and not an attempt to dictate to them, growing with people and not making them grow. It lies in understanding people's opinions and not imposing 'right' opinions on them, in strongly feeling their needs.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon anyone who assumes the task of training leaders to study his own character and to master it before setting it up as a pattern which his apprentice leaders should follow. The leaders should also possess an adequate measure of general culture, which is indispensable to the work they are called upon to do.

Modes of behaviour may be considered an open field for practice and training, and always remain subject to revision based on experience and experiment. The fundamental factors which the trainer should keep in mind

lie in the atmosphere in which the leaders work, which should be one of confidence and of common participation in both duties and privileges. The leaders should feel that the work is their own and that credit belongs to them all.

These general principles constitute the basic rules and the philosophy of social service. We must put them into practice if leaders are to become better qualified social workers. In other words, we should convey these values to the leaders so that they get used to living actively in this free atmosphere and thus grow in knowledge and effectiveness.

The first condition for training leaders and creating this atmosphere is the existence of a high moral tone. A spirit of justice and of equal respect for all members must prevail and the esteem felt for an organization must be won by efficient work, not by exaggeration or deception.

When the organization begins to enjoy a high reputation and people's respect for it grows from appreciation of its achievements, its members naturally feel proud of its high standards, strive to raise them further and abstain from activities which might injure its good name. The criteria of success for any institution are its effectiveness in reaching its goals, the pride which its members feel in it, the atmosphere which prevails there, and the relations which link those who work in it with those who profit from their work.

In no association or community can the individual help being influ-

enced by the prevailing atmosphere. Boys who like their schools cannot help spreading its atmosphere among their families and friends. Those of us who run an institution must do our best to make people proud of it, to provide freedom of expression and to impress upon them that justice and goodwill are its fundamental rules. We must strive to help them find in it the peace and security which are indispensable for self-development and personal happiness.

The atmosphere which prevails in the school or institute cannot but influence the new leaders, who are just as desirous of enjoying a purposeful life. This atmosphere will unfailingly act on the leader's spirit and influence his reactions towards his work and towards those who are profiting from it.

In such an atmosphere and on such a basis, community leaders should hold periodical meetings at regular intervals, with the chief aim of creating co-ordination of thought and practical activities. In these meetings they may discuss questions that arise in the course of their work. It should not be the object of such meetings to use direct methods for inculcating values and attitudes. Such results should be obtained in an indirect manner through exploring common problems and coming to agreement regarding the methods of solution.

The acquisition of critical understanding and of skill in handling situations should be the main objects of such meetings. In the course of free discussions, everyone should be able to express his opinion without restraint

as the participants look for solutions to their common problems. All will be in the same state of mind, equally probing in the dark for the best answers.

When trial shows that one method is not practicable, discussion must be resumed in the hope of finding another. There will, therefore, be no such thing as teacher or student, cultured or ignorant. All will be on an equal footing in accumulation experience, looking for probable solutions, and testing various methods of work.

In our opinion, then, training should be based on three principles, each of equal importance.

The first principle is that the leader always should be open-minded and ready to observe and learn. He must create a bond between his mind and the sources of culture, whether books or men. He must believe that his intelligence, abilities and skill are utterly dependent on continuous mental activity, stimulated by study and research. He must know that a leader loses his capacity to render social service, the moment his intellectual development stops.

The second principle is that the leader should bear in mind that he is carrying out his work in a community which has its established customs and traditions and that he constitutes an active member of that community, which may suffer if he fails to fulfil his duties towards it. The spirit of the community within which the leader

(Continued on page 7)

LIBRARIES IN SOCIAL EDUCATION—Activities of the Delhi Public Library

M. M. L. Tandon, Director, Delhi Public Library.

UNESCO'S Public Libraries Manifesto describes a public library as a democratic agency for education, a vital community force, the peoples' university and so on. We may call it by any name we like but the fundamental fact that a public library helps to diffuse knowledge stands true for all time.

The book and the printed pages have been and continue to be the principal tools of the library in the attainment of this objective. Public libraries, however, have long been accustomed to providing also still pictures, maps, and charts. Film and filmstrips which differ from a book only in that they are on celluloid rather than on paper, are now also regarded as necessary adjuncts to the conventional library service in Western libraries. The same is true of recordings and musical scores. But there is still controversy over whether a public library should be used as a community centre for group discussions, film showings and other social education activities as a regular part of library service.

The sponsors of the Delhi Library—Unesco and the Government of India—therefore, took a very bold

step when they decided that education activities were to form a regular part of the service to be provided for the citizens of Delhi.

In view of the fact that many of the Library's members have acquired the reading skill very recently, it was only natural that they should be encouraged to form groups and discuss and think about matters in which they were interested. Although it is difficult to obtain exact information about the change in the general outlook of the readers who have taken part in the social education activities of the Library, the history of the Delhi Public Library during the last six years shows that the film showings, group meetings, dramas, and music concerts conducted by its Social Education Department were attended by a cross-section of the members of the Library coming from all walks of life and from all age groups.

As to the actual working of the Social Education Department and its various activities, the Library auditorium has a seating capacity of 300. The stage is suitably furnished. The Department is equipped with a large number of audio-visual aids including

a 16 mm. film projector, epidiastope, tape recorder, linguaphones, slides, filmstrips, musical instruments and gramophone records which are frequently used for the benefit of the members of the library. Gramophone records are lent out to members free of charge. The Delhi Library Board has accepted the offer of the National Film Board of Canada to use this Library as a Film Deposit Station.

Formation of Groups

Ten or more members of the Library may inform the Library authorities that they have a common interest which they wish to develop and on which they would like to have regular discussions. A notice is put up for the information of other members to see if they are also interested. Thereafter, a regular group is formed with its own constitution, office bearers, fixed periodical meeting times etc. The Library provides them with a meeting place, short bibliographies and film showings dealing with the topics under discussion. It also arranges lectures to help the group members obtain a fuller grasp of the subjects.

The following groups for adult members meet regularly every week ; drama group, music group, literature study group, social studies group, elders' group (now called 'natural hygiene group'). There are two special groups, namely, Kishore Sabha and Shishu Vihar for children from 6 to 12 years and 13 to 18 years respectively.

The Drama Group

This group is interested in stagecraft, acting, directing, production and

management. The members meet every Friday evening and rehearse the plays they wish to perform in public. They have occasional play readings, and recordings, on the tape recorder which are later relayed to a bigger audience. Many members of the group who suffered from stage fright and could not utter even a single sentence in public do not now fear any gathering. The group also discusses new dramas published in Hindi and Urdu.

The Music Group

This is perhaps the best attended. Its members give musical performances, both vocal and instrumental, including occasional classical items. The Library has a few popular musical instruments which are at the disposal of the members.

Literature Study Group

In order to satisfy the natural craving of budding writers that somebody should read correct by and improve their work, a number of Library members were encouraged to form this group. In its weekly meetings unpublished stories, dramas, one-act plays and poems are read out, followed by mutual literary appreciation. Well-known writers in the city are invited from time to time to address the members of the group on different aspects of literature. Once a month there is a special meeting for book reviews.

It is to the credit of the group that a number of its members who started writing when it was established are now polished writers contributing

articles and stories to periodicals in vernacular languages.

Social Studies Group

This group comprises of library members who are interested in knowing more about the day-to-day events of the world. They discuss every conceivable subject. The approach to the subjects is not that of an expert but that of a layman. The group chalks out its weekly programme of discussion and debates for three months in advance. The Library prepares special bibliographies on the topics for discussion, which are frequently and profitably consulted.

Elders' Group

In India, and indeed in any other Asian country, the aged, retired and pensioned-off members of society find it difficult to spend their time usefully. It is a common sight, to see old people gather together at a physician's shop or at a betelsellers' shop to listen to tales of all kinds of physical ailments or sensational news. In order to provide them with a place where they can occasionally meet, form new friendships and discuss things of interest to them, the elder' group was formed four years ago. When we found that most of their talks and discussions centered round health and hygiene, the group was renamed the 'natural hygiene group'.

Film Shows

The Library arranges three regular film shows every week in addition to some special shows for the above-mentioned groups. A careful selection is

made some weeks before the actual screening of the films which are previewed and Hindi commentaries are prepared when necessary. Films and film strips are very successfully coordinated with the working of the groups.

Since the Ministry of Education has an excellent film library, the Delhi Public Library did not start one of its own. But recently, the Library has started issuing films to social, cultural and academic institutions in the city, out of the deposit of the films arranged by the National Film Board of Canada.

Gramophone Records Lending Library

Members of the Library may draw gramophone records up to a maximum of five records at a time. The collection offers first-class instrumental and classical music, and is very popular with the readers. Since the Library possesses a gramophone, instrumental music is piped down to different departments in the Library through an internal communication system to serve as background music. This experiment has been very successful because quite a number of our readers when questioned about the desirability of continuing it said that they were really disturbed when the music stopped.

The Library has Linguaphone sets of eight different languages and special recitals are arranged in the Library at the request of the members.

Exhibitions

Exhibition of maps, charts, press cuttings, photographs and similar ma-

terials are a regular feature of the Social Education Department's activities.

The Library exhibition room is lent out to various institutions and individuals for the display and exhibition of paintings and sculptures, etc. Similarly the Library auditorium is lent for social and cultural meetings at a nominal charge for the electric and other services provided.

Success of the Departments' Activities

In this article I have intentionally avoided giving statistics about the membership of the different groups, number of meetings and their average attendance. The figures for the year 1956-57, however, give some idea of their popularity. During the year, 225

meetings of the different groups were held in which 21,022 persons participated ; 78 film shows were arranged and attended by 12,080 persons ; 16 lectures were held, which 1,695 persons attended. Similarly 14 lectures were arranged by other societies to whom the hall was lent. Two major exhibitions were held and three plays were staged publicly. In all 44,582 persons participated in different activities conducted by the Library's Social Education Department.

The setting up of this Department in the Library has proved a very successful experiment which is being followed in the community development areas.

—From material supplied by Education Clearing House, Unesco, Paris.

Community Leaders

(Continued from page 3)

works is a very important factor. He should realize that success does not depend on him alone, but on the group of people who work with him—on their readiness to help and on their enthusiasm for and attachment to the project they are carrying out. The leader should, therefore, try to stimulate the active participation and loyalty of his fellow workers.

The third principle is related to the leader's personal behaviour and manners. The leader should try to improve his behaviour so that he may elicit a ready response from his fellow leaders and from the people he is serving. People's minds and eyes

are fixed on him, on his acts and his reactions to events, and on the way he deals with other men. They sometimes measure the leader's worth with unjust scales and expect him to rise above some act which they permit themselves. In other words, they overestimate the leader and vest him with qualities which may be far from real. He should by earnest endeavour try to reach the level on which they put him. This aim is doubtless hard to attain but an attempt to reach it is absolutely imperative.

In sum, the training of leaders, the service of people who are in need of service, and the self-development of the leaders are all closely interwoven and form parts of an invisible whole.

—Material supplied by Education Clearing House, Unesco, Paris.

SOCIAL EDUCATION ORGANISER IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT—Two Views

I. Is There Confusion ?

REACTIONS to something new are strange. One finds people accepting confused thinking and pretending to have understood it. On the other hand, they persist in remaining confused about the clearest statement lucidly explained. Why this happens is a research problem for the Psychologist. Such research may reveal that reactions, this way or that, have hidden connections with one's attitudes, tendencies to overspread one's orbit, concealed fears of encroachment on what one thinks is one's special sphere or just simple rivalry or tensions between individuals and groups.

An interesting reaction to Social Education after it began shaping in the Community Development Programme was that there was 'confusion' about it. Some said there was good deal of it while others kept on whispering there was somewhat of a confusion somewhere. It was difficult to catch where exactly what they said was. The eel-like substance evaded grasp.

In point of time, the doubts and disputes were not there when the new comprehensive concept of Social Education emerged in 1947 and began

developing till 1951 when it found a place in the First Five Year Plan and simultaneous inclusion in the all-round plan of Community Development as the crux of the action programme based on people's participation. In fact, after the dawn of independence, Social Education was applauded by one and all as a vital necessity for laying sure and sound foundations of a truly democratic State in India. The elements of the concept of Social Education and the genre of the detailed programmes have remained the same since 1947, though much elaborated now. It is, therefore all the more intriguing why a concept once fully understood and appreciated in the 1947-52 period, later on after its inception in the Community Development Programme began to evoke the criticism that it was confused. Such reactions began coming to the surface soon after the selection of the first batch of Social Education Organisers and the Chief Social Education Organisers and the beginning of their training.

Perhaps the connotation of the word 'confusion' can give us a clue. 'Confusion' is 'throwing into disorder or mixing up in the mind'. Let us see if these have been there. When

Social Education became part of the Community Development Programme, it entered into a different order of departmental hierarchy. So far as administration was concerned Social Education was dislodged from its parental moorings in the Education Departments and drifted away from accustomed channels of work. Its functionary, the Social Education Organiser, now became a member of a team of different subject-matter specialists. The head of this team at the area level was the Block Development Officer or the Project Executive Officer chosen, in the beginning, almost exclusively from the Revenue Department for its reputation of having been successful in delivering the goods in the pre-independence period, no matter by what methods. From the direct current of Police administration, he was believed to be capable of being switched over to the alternating current of extension philosophy.

Possibly, like the other complexes discovered by psycho-analysis there is yet another which may be called the Alladin complex. There lurks in the human mind an unrecognised longing just to rub a lamp to produce a genie to accomplish giant works in no time. The lamp was rubbed and the genie appeared and began producing results in terms of fulfilment of quantitative targets. The seasoned 'delivering the goods' personnel understood Community Development this way, at least in the beginning. The rather long process of creating right understanding became longer still because of the initial approach.

Social Education was bewildered in that context, not because it did not know what it was there for, but because it was received as an unwelcome intruder. Misunderstandings grow easily in such a climate. The four wheels of the coach were already there accomplishing targets. 'What is it that the Social Education Organiser does, which the other functionaries are not already doing?' was the question asked from the top to the bottom with minds already closed to receive the correct answer. So the Programme Evaluation Organisation recorded that Social Education was regarded as a fifth wheel in the coach. To this nice phrase the retort could be, "Yes it is the fifth wheel, to wit, the 'Steering Wheel' so necessary in a mechanical high speed four wheeler." But to say this was courting trouble and disdainful frowns from the administrative back-seat drivers of the coach.

Not given its proper location, Social Education had to take whatever place the administrative heads chose to give it. That depended on the understanding, misunderstanding or partial understanding of Social Education and its reception was in tune with the sound waves transmitted from the upper administrative layers. If the 'Head' thought Social Education was Drama and Song Publicity, there went the Social Education Organiser composing songs and staging dramas. If it was propaganda of the Community Development Programme, he had to become the drum-beater and the slogan shouter. If improvement of village sanitation or village in-

dustries was the pet emphasis of the 'Head', Social Education Organiser became an additional Health Worker or Cottage Industries man. Such activities which had to parade as Social Education, had at least some semblance of it, but where there was no understanding at all the Social Education Organiser became an odd jobs man. He was ordered to distribute Takavi and to keep accounts, take measurements of the roads, sell cottage industries produce, and scores of other similar things for which he was supposed to come in handy. If he protested, he was chastised, for not working as a member of the team. A high officer was once overheard saying about Social Education Organisers, "Put the fools to distribute Takavi. They will do something useful and learn a little at least".

If this was what the administrative supervisors made of the Social Education Organiser, one can imagine how his co-workers and village level workers reacted. The outstanding administrative feature of Community Development, the multipurpose Village Level Worker, became in practice an uni-purpose worker, to wit, an Agricultural Assistant's assistant. He seldom paid heed to the work of the Social Education Organiser, unless it was presently supported by the full administrative force emanating through the Block Development Officer. This was where the shoe pinched the Block Development Officer but the administrators above kept on saying there was a tension between the Village Level Worker and the So-

cial Education Organiser. Such tensions could be produced between the Village Level Worker and any other subject matter specialist if the former even smelt that his administrative boss did not care much for that programme. All the same, one and all proclaimed that everything to be done in the village must be done through the multipurpose Village Level Worker.

Did such things happen because there was something confused or vague in the concept of Social Education, or because the functions or role of the Social Education Organiser were not defined or his jobs were not specifically laid down? One hears remarks like these at all levels, high or low and they creep into foreign experts' reports and those of the programme Evaluation Organisation also.

When one hears some one saying that the concept of Social Education is not clear it may have two imports: (a) the concept is not clear to that individual, which may be due to several reasons and even to incapacities in himself. This can be remedied by studying with an able guide; (b) the concept is not clear because the statement of it is defective and does not carry sense. Now if the remark has the import (b) the burden lies on the person making it to show where and in what respect the statement of the concept is defective. When it comes to this not even one in hundred takes up the challenge, and it comes out that he is not well-versed in what has been said about the concept of Social Education in the publications of the Ministry of

Education, the First Five-Year Plan, the draft handbook of Community Projects or the Social Education Manual.

One also finds the person without knowing that the meaning of the word 'concept' is "general notion", criticises it for not giving details of the role, the functions and the jobs of Social Education Organisers. Such details are necessary indeed but not in the 'concept' of Social Education, the statement of which is bound to be general.

Others say that the 'Role' of the Social Education Organiser is not clearly defined. Now 'role' is one's function, what one is appointed for or is expected or undertakes to do. This too has been indicated in the Social Education Manual and explained under two categories : (a) the general or integrated role and (b) the separate or special role. Under the first, the Social Education Organiser is to operate a broad based Educational Service for all the technical services. Under the second he is to carry on activities such as organizing literacy classes, rural libraries, and others which are enlisted in detail in the programme of Social Education. It can be said that there are difficulties and limitations in playing the integrated role, but to say that the 'role' of the Social Education Organiser is not clearly defined is to disclose one's own ignorance.

Till recently it was also being said that the jobs of the Social Education Organisers were not laid down. This was another proof that those who ought to know did not

really know. Jobs mean the work one was to do to bring his function into action. Such jobs were exhaustively listed and finalised in consultation with the State Governments long ago in December, 1952, even before the first Social Education Organiser entered the area. Not one conference pleaded that they required alteration or modification. Faced with these facts, one should feel vanquished, but one argued.

This much about the genesis of the confusion caused by throwing Social Education into disorder. Now let us look to mixing up in mind. Social Education is in the final analysis 'Education for betterment of life'. That being so, it covers almost all the aspects of life of the people in which betterment can be brought about by education. Its comprehensive programme, therefore, includes educational activities relating to agriculture, health, cottage industries, co-operatives, community organization, group work, social work, home economics and several others. But it often happens that the Agricultural Expert thinks it is all Agricultural Extension and nothing else and the Social Worker thinks it is just social work, community organisation and group work, so on and so forth. Social Education thus gets mixed up and mistaken with what is only a part and the emphasis on education whittles down to mere physical activity. Such mixing up is present to some extent even in the Training Centres for the Social Education Organizers, which are under the direction of institutions largely committed to a particular ideology. Small wonder the product of the training,

the Social Education Organizer gets mixed up and loses clear insight of the concept of Social Education. It is, thus, difficult to shape him into a complete Social Education Organizer.

It is indeed surprising why with all this, Social Education still remains in the Community Development programme and why someone does not pro-

pose in all seriousness to throw it out. Instead, of late, conferences and seminars have recorded that Social Education is the crux of the programme. Why? Is an understanding of Social Education developing or is it that stock-taking has shown that without Social Education, we have built what we have, on foundations of sands?

A. R. Deshpande,
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II. Social Education or Community Organiser ?

THE Social Education Organiser has now come to be accepted as a multi-purpose functionary. His functions cover, broadly speaking, the supervision of the work of personnel concerned with the organisation of Community Centres, Social Education, Social Welfare and Youth Welfare, Social Service Administration, formal educational activities and investigation for social research.

While, this is the area covered in terms of functions, his actual performance of work limits itself to the needs of a priority. Thus, as a beginning to achieve Community Development through community organisation, the first charge of the SEO lies in the initiation of programmes and activities that will lead to an organised participation of the community which would finally result in the development of the community. Therefore, in my personal opinion, the Social Education Organiser should really be

called the Community Organiser. This would emphasise the rudimentary activity that is necessary before the programme of Community Development unfolds itself.

How this is to be done is a question that deserves the greatest emphasis. For one thing, there are only one or two Social Education Organisers in a block area. Real Community Development can be achieved only at the village level. This implies that the Community Organisers must be capable of discovering quickly potential workers and leaders in their blocks. The SEO must, furthermore, be equipped to harness them to activity. Thereafter, the SEO would function over the various types of activities carried out by these workers for the benefit of their community. Unless this basis is laid, the Community Development Programme will not sustain itself on the initiative, leadership and organisation of the Community

nor would programmes leave behind the impress of a permanent character. Consequently, the chief role of a Social Education Organiser at this juncture, when the rural people have lived under oppressive and neglected conditions and to whom Community Development programmes are a new experience, is that of a Community Organiser and his functions, the promotion of training programmes for local community workers.

This work of the Social Education Organiser involves initiating social process to achieve a change in mental attitude and behaviour patterns of individuals and the community. Consequently, Social Education has been claimed to create "informed" human being as against the ignorant individual who is supposed to personify the masses. These great aims are, however, misunderstood or misinterpreted, as a result of which the functions of the Social Education Organiser get mixed up and he is utilised in diverse ways to serve the exigencies of local problems and needs.

Social Education, to my mind, has a definite and specific content which is :

- i. Education for work, employment and improvement of personal efficiency.
- ii. Literacy.
- iii. Education for social and community participation ; Civics.
- iv. Health education, including

education for sex and family life.

- v. Education for recreation and culture.

While this indicates the character of Social Education, the content of concrete programmes will differ depending on sex, age, class group, etc. of the members of the community. However, it must be recognised that methods in Social Education, such as audio-visual aids and the like, should project various programmes for these purposes.

The science of Social Education based on a knowledge of psychology and using methods and principles of formal education can devise integrated techniques wherein recreation, education and activated participation can form a comprehensive programme. But it is difficult for large numbers of Social Education Organisers to master complex techniques in brief training programmes without constant participation in the day to day life of the community. Consequently it will take many years before India has a cadre of true Social Educators who can achieve the complicated and fundamental objectives of Social Education although it would be possible for him to achieve the simple and yet more useful immediate objectives of Community Organisation.

Thus, while primarily the role of the Social Education Organiser is that of a Community Organiser, his functions would naturally touch upon a number of other ancillary services, which would fulfil the needs of the

community and it will necessitate his being concerned with activities like social welfare, programmes of youth organisation and activities relevant to the economic development of the region.

At present the emphasis of the functions of Social Education Organiser has been on his role as a Social Educator rather than a Community Organiser. It is, therefore, but natural that his association has been with the education departments of the states and its formal educational activities. In many cases, he has been saddled with educational functions and has tended to become an added functionary to Educational Inspectors and such other personnel of the Education Department. This is unfortunate for it will weaken community programmes which are yet in their infancy. Under

the circumstance, since the community constitutes the basis of Community Development, it would be most desirable if Community Development itself becomes an additional Social Service in every state, over and above and separate from Health and Education Services. India can give a lead to Asia by developing Community Development as a major Social Service.

Planning and development, if they are to be effective, need constant evaluation to measure the content and quantum of success which in turn, require frequent investigation, survey and research. This function, in the absence of any other functionary in the administration appropriate for the purpose, should be carried out, partially or wholly, by the Community Organiser-cum-Social Educator.

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION—Emphasis on Values

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The words 'leader' and 'leadership' are often loosely used to describe a very wide variety of relationships between the individual 'leader' and the group with which he is associated. Thus, the leader may be an 'institutional' or traditional leader who derives his authority from some recognized role which he has inherited or achieved in his society; or he may be a 'natural' leader chosen by the group because he has qualities or skills which it values highly in relation to its current needs and purposes.

The nature of the relationship between the leader and the group may also vary within wide limits. At the one extreme, there is the authoritarian leader who aims to force or mould the group to conform to his purposes. At the other we have the leader who is *primus inter pares*, and who helps his group to frame its own purposes, and to define and reach its own goals in relation to them.

In the first case we see the group subordinated to the leader's power, and its members achieving their satisfaction only through identifying themselves with the leader and accepting his successes as their own. In the

second case—in the democratic group—we see the leader as the group's servant, helping the group to achieve its own satisfaction, and to realize and increase its own freedom.

Leadership of one or other kind is a characteristic of nearly all human relationships, and if we wish to train leaders we must first decide what kind of leadership we are aiming to develop. This is especially important in the field of fundamental education and community development. Training for leadership in this field is usually devised by people educated in a Western cultural tradition and accustomed to life in a wealthy industrial urban civilization. Such training is directed at "leaders" who will work among "backward" and "under-developed peoples" as they would call them, whose life is characterized by "ignorance and illiteracy, disease and poverty". To the trainers of fundamental education leaders, therefore—and all the more if they are inspired by a strong humanitarianism—one main purpose, if not the main purpose, stands out very clearly. It is to train leaders to alleviate ignorance, illiteracy, disease and poverty.

This is so obvious and desirable an aim, so necessary and so unexceptionable, that there is a real danger, I believe, that other equally vital, but less obvious and less easily achievable aims may be wholly or partially neglected.

If we think primarily of the need to spread literacy, reduce disease, and increase wealth, we shall devise our training programmes mainly or solely, with these ends in view. Thus we shall see our problem largely as one of teaching certain knowledge and skills, and of providing our students with practice in using them.

If we think it equally important that men should, as citizens, live together in harmony in their communities and, as individuals,¹ “develop self-respect through spiritual, moral and mental progress”, then we must enlarge or recast our training programmes to ensure as far as possible that the leaders we train will so behave as to help, not hinder, the growth of harmonious and participant relationships in the societies in which they will work, and help, not hinder, the development of values conducive to the growth of self-respect and of respect for others. And if among our ends, we include the enlargement of individual freedom and enhancement of self-respect, then we must train leaders who will eschew the use of power and the arts of human manipulation to achieve their ends. We are committed to the training of

democratic leaders, and our problem is to find out how to train them.

Training in democratic leadership is first and foremost a matter of education in values—values which apply as much to the *means* as to the *ends* pursued. The democratic leader neither compels nor manipulates. Strictly speaking, he has no purpose distinct and separate from the group he serves. He claims no special, inherent, authority. The authority, for him and for the group, is “the authority of the situation”² in which the group lives. He, jointly with the group, attempts fully to explore that situation, and he sees his main function in helping the group to face it more realistically and constructively than in the past. His purpose is that the group shall develop purpose—a purpose which is essentially its own. Thus, the leader both respects and serves the group. He encourages participation, self-respect and respects for others by consistently demonstrating these qualities in his own behaviour.

It is difficult for any leader to act consistently in this way, willingly divesting himself of power, and resisting the temptation to manipulate others to his purposes, however, good such purposes, may be. Most of us have acquired some authoritarian traits, and any such leanings towards authoritarian types of behaviour are likely to become more evident in fundamental education situations, where

1. Fundamental Education, Bulletin No. 13 P. 1 Washington Federal Security Agency, 1948. (Reproduced from Unesco Document 6c/PRG/32)

2. See A.G. Hughes, Education and the Democratic Ideal, Longmans, 1951 pp. 38-39 and M.P. Follett, Dynamic Administration, Management publications Trust Ltd, 1941. p. 59.

the people to be educated are usually the products of a different culture, often poor and illiterate, and sometimes stubborn and suspicious.

If we plan our leadership training programmes to give leaders knowledge and skills, but fail to plan specifically for training also in democratic leadership, we may indeed spread literacy, improve physical health, and increase material prosperity. But we run the risk that, while the leaders we train may raise the standard of material well-being, they may fail to promote—may even hinder—the growth of self-respect and of responsible and participant relationships.

Coping with the Problem

It is one thing to state a problem but quite another to solve it and this particular problem may seem well-nigh insoluble. The personalities of those who take the training courses are already formed, and the basic personality factors which control behaviour are very resistant to change. Yet few of us are wholly authoritarian in our behaviour, or wholly democratic. Most of us embody traits of both kinds and we can, perhaps, most realistically view this aspect of our problem as one of strengthening democratic and weakening authoritarian tendencies. Even partial progress here represents a solid gain.

We have seen that if we are really in earnest when we claim that fundamental education must educate in harmonious relationships, in self-respect and in respect for others, we must seek to train leaders who will live and teach

according to these values. We can help to ensure this in two ways. First, we can use well-established psychological techniques for weeding out authoritarian and immature personalities from among those who present themselves for training. Secondly, we can try to strengthen the democratic traits of the students during the training course itself.

In an article³, I ventured to suggest that the practice of fundamental education in some ways lagged behind the theory, in that less attention seemed to be given to the practical problems of developing values than to the techniques of spreading the knowledge and skills needed to raise levels of material well-being. I pleaded for a more balanced approach, in which the problem of values should receive in practice as much emphasis as the problem of developing material welfare. I also suggested that, if this view were accepted, there was a need for developing for all leaders, "some basic training in human relationships, so that the trainees would go out equipped, as they are not equipped at present, with some clear conception of their responsibilities and functions as effective educators in democratic citizenship and individual responsibility."

Enrique A. Laguerre, commenting from Patzcuaro, the Fundamental Education Training Centre in Latin America, agrees that this sounds good and logical, but, he says, the "how" is

3. 'On Reconsidering Fundamental Education' Vol. XVII No. 2 June 1956.

missing. And he concludes, if I understand him rightly, that however desirable in theory the moral and spiritual aims of fundamental education may be they are in fact impracticable, or at the best, must be left to chance. He says, "There has perhaps been too much talk about the need of spiritual progress for the people ; in the meantime, the majority of the people are suffering from poverty and fear. We have to start from the beginning—the betterment of the physical conditions."

Here I think, is the crux of the situation. We are full of good intentions. We recognise that values are important, but we can see our way clearly only to achieving some betterment of physical conditions. Since this is itself an immense and urgent task which alone far outstrips our available resources, must we not, however regretfully limit ourselves to this realizable objective ?

I believe that this view is wrong and a counsel of despair, and that Unesco is wholly right in stressing the importance of developing moral and spiritual values equally with material welfare. Our most urgent need is to find out how, and having done so, to incorporate our findings in leadership training courses at all levels.

This is the problem that I am trying to investigate and it may be of some interest to readers if I briefly describe the form that my investigation has so far taken.

London Institute Course

I normally have a very mixed group

of students ranging from some whose formal education has been restricted to little more than the full primary school course, to others who have taken good honours degrees at universities. Most of the students hold appointments in the Senior Civil Service of some British administrative territory, either as administrative officers, or as officers of certain professional or technical departments. Usually about half the students are natives of the United Kingdom, while the remainder are natives of the West Indies, Africa or of Far Eastern and Pacific countries. All have a considerable first hand experience of field conditions.

The course begins in October, and students may attend for one, two, or three terms. Some are whole-time students, others study Community Development as a subject subsidiary to such other subjects as Local Government, Agricultural Economics, Anthropology, or Law. The course is non-residential and at present only a minority of students specifically prepare themselves for community development or fundamental education posts. Most students return to their former administrative or departmental work.

The wide variation in the cultural background, interests, occupations and educational attainments of the students, and in the time they are able to spend on the course, naturally presents many problems. To a considerable extent each student pursues his own special interests and his own particular line of study. But all stu-

dents are members of a discussion group which meets weekly and which forms the true core of the course. It is at the meetings of this group that the basic problems of values and of leadership are studied and discussed against the background of the students' own first-hand administrative and professional experience.

The group sets its own pace and is given the minimum of directives. Its members have a common interest in the subject for study—community development. It has available a wide range of knowledge in the experience of its members, in the files of the Mass Education Clearing House of the London Institute, and in the special 'human relations' section of the library which is being built up to support and inform the work of the groups.

Methods of Work

The discussions are based on only a very general plan, itself flexible, which presents itself to the groups as a series of problems or topics for investigation. This plan can be briefly stated as follows :

1. To study and evaluate community development programmes (and general administrative practice). This includes evaluation not only of aims, but also of the means adopted, and of the effect on the people of the kind of human relationship thus established between them and the agents of the programme.
2. To study and define the main field in which difficulties occur

in achieving the aims and purposes which the group has defined as 'good'.

3. To investigate possible, practicable solutions to the problems thus defined by the group.
4. To study, practise and acquire the necessary skills for putting such solutions into effect.

The group works informally and democratically. There is no set syllabus. There are no lectures. No specific reading is *a priori* laid down. Groups have, in fact, approached their problems differently in each of the three years the course has been in operation. The groups have help, encouragement and advice as they require it, but hardly any specific directives. The group leader sees his function in serving the group rather than in teaching it. He acts as a 'resource person', indicating where study material relevant to the problem under consideration may be found ; and as a chairman, summarizing the course of the discussion, defining areas of disagreement between group members and indicating, if necessary, any incompatibility between conclusions reached on one topic with those already reached on others. In addition, like other group members, and as far as possible on the same basis, he accepts a responsibility for contributing to group discussions from his own experience.

I cannot, within the bounds of this paper, deal at all adequately with the content of the discussions, which in

any case varies widely from year to year and from group to group. I can only indicate some of its main characteristics.

First, all groups at one stage or another have had to spend some time in closely defining the terms they use to reach, for example, some clear-cut understanding of what they mean by such terms as "community" and "development". Without such an agreed definition group members find themselves talking at cross-purposes, and discussion gets nowhere.

Secondly, a great deal of time is spent in describing, analysing and comparing concrete problems and situations (from the point of view of community development as defined by the group) with which one or more students have first-hand knowledge and experience. These are supplemented by studies of written accounts of community development work in many different countries.

Thirdly, all this factual description and analysis is related back to the care of the group's work to illustrate, support or disprove the conclusions the group is groping towards in its more theoretical study and discussion of human relations in general and of human relations in connection with their own colonial work in particular : elementary studies of personality and culture, motivation, values, conflict, power, manipulation and of the means by which changes in values and modes of behaviour may, with the least difficulty, occur. In their group discussions students tend to approach these

topics, not as highly theoretical and abstract problems, but as topics which have a direct and conclusive bearing on the success or failure of their future work.

Conclusions reached at this first stage, which cannot be hurried however tentative they may in fact be, provide the basis on which the work of the second stage is done. Students have studied some of the problems of personality and of human interaction — at a very elementary level, it is true, but in a form that makes sense to them—and they have defined their values and reached conclusions which they feel are relevant to their own work. They are now encouraged to study as individuals the possibilities that are open to them for implementing their own conclusions effectively in their work. They see themselves in a particular role in a particular social structure, and they study the radiating pattern of relationships : upwards towards their more senior officers, horizontally towards colleagues on the district or provincial teams, and downwards (in terms of status and authority) to juniors and assistants, and through them to the population of their administrative area. And they see the community development problem, from their own personal viewpoint, in realistic terms.

The community development problem thus ceases to be an external problem which can be theoretically and impersonally discussed. It involves the student in attempting to establish for himself a consistent scheme of behaviour-controlling values, and

points the need for him to acquire skills in effectively communicating with others to the extent of affecting their behaviour.

At this stage, the group tends to turn in upon itself. It studies the way in which its members have interacted one with another. It examines its successes and failures in reaching a consensus of values, a common motivation and a common purpose. It analyses the function of the group leader and critically evaluates his successes and his failures in leading the group. The group makes, if it wishes, some study of group dynamics, and it may investigate and practise the techniques of role-playing and social drama. At this stage, too, it may study human relations problems in community centres, neighbourhood clubs and similar social organisations.

In the last and final stage, group members who have made some considerable individual study of some special aspect of community development or fundamental education (either of a specialist topic such as literacy techniques or broadcasting, or of one special area) may put forward their conclusions about it for discussion in the group.

I find these discussion groups worrying, unpredictable and extremely hard to lead. From time to time, as leader, I may be criticized for allowing the group to "waste time" for not doing some lecturing, for not giving a clear lead. "How much further we could have got," some members of the group will say, "if you had told us

this in ten minutes instead of allowing us to spend a whole morning on it!" It is, on the face of it, surprising how many men and women who hold very responsible positions in the underdeveloped countries at first feel uneasy in a situation in which they expect, as students, to be in a sense subordinate to their 'teacher', but which is, in fact a democratic situation in which each group member jointly shares with the others responsibility for the direction and the progress of the work. Equally noteworthy is the interest and motivation which tends to develop; the amount of work which many students put in in spite of other claims upon their time; the development of a strong feeling of group loyalty and of what might almost be called a 'missionary spirit' in support of ideas worked out in the groups. Motivation as well as growth of knowledge appears to result from the work of the groups.

Work on the lines I have described began almost fortuitously because of my own considerable ignorance of the subject of community development when I was first asked to supervise a few students who wished to study it. It continues on those lines from a conviction that active participation in a truly democratic group provides a valuable medium for the investigation of values and a most useful approach to understanding human relations problems, including that of effective communication with ones fellowmen. The idea behind the course is that the course itself shall demonstrate, values of self-respect and respect for others—that the means em-

ployed on the course shall be consistent with the ends. Thus the method and process of the course are attempts to demonstrate the basic methods and process of community development. In spite of their varied backgrounds, group members find themselves able to work democratically together and to reach a surprising measure of agreement on the values and on the principles that should govern their administrative methods and behaviour. By achieving this as a group they acquire a first-hand knowledge of the democratic process that may enable them to apply it in other situations. The group demonstrates for them both the difficulties and the possibilities of really democratic interaction with their fellow men.

Aims of the Course

In conclusion I will venture to set out briefly what are to me, the aims of the course while freely admitting that achievement are uneven and in some cases very inadequate.

These aims are to help students :

1. To examine the values which control their working behaviour.
2. To understand more clearly some of the cognitive and emotional factors which may effect and limit effective inter-personal communications, i.e. communication which actually results in desired changes of behaviour.
3. To develop greater skills in effective communication.
4. To experience in practice, problems and difficulties of democratic interaction by providing the students with a democratic work group as a study medium.
5. To be aware of the effect on others of various types of behaviour, especially administrative behaviour, e.g. through socio-drama and role-playing.
6. To consider problems of helping others to train themselves democratically e.g. colleagues and assistants.

—From material supplied by Education Clearing House, Unesco, Paris.

IMPACT OF INDUSTRIALISM ON INDIAN CULTURE—Need for Structural Re-Thinking

Raj Krishna, Lecturer in Economics, Delhi College.

This article, based on a paper read by the author at an Unesco Seminar on the impact of Economic and Industrial Development on Traditional Indian Culture provides an analysis which has relevance to the social education movement.—Ed.)

ECONOMIC development comprises a very large number of inter-related processes. For the purpose of this discussion which centres round its socio-cultural effects, I should like to invite special attention to six of these processes. These components are (1) mechanisation (2) monetisation (3) mass production (4) specialisation (5) urbanisation and (6) the growth of the acquisitive-competitive spirit.

Much thought has been devoted to the effect of these processes on social institutions. I should rather like to discuss their direct psycho-cultural and valuational effects on the human person as such, for ultimately their impact on a culture, in its deepest, strata is mediated through its impact on the personality. There is a certain inevitability and universality about these direct psychological consequences. No matter in what traditional culture in Europe or Asia or Africa or America

the process of economic development is set in motion, it tends ultimately to produce more or less the same kinds of behaviour-pattern and abnormalities.

It is also immaterial whether the process is carried out under capitalist or socialist auspices, because its essential constituents are largely independent of the institutional mechanism responsible for it. We might, in fact speak of a 'classical' 19th century Euro-American pattern of economic development, being universalised and tending to produce homogeneous cultural tendencies.

Main Effects

About the main effects, there is a general consensus. Mechanisation, for instance, apart from the concentration of economic power which it inevitably involves, means loss of creative joy and aesthetic sensibility on the part of the overwhelming majority of workers. It means that work, having been reduced to the performance of a tiny sub-process of the whole productive process, becomes repetitive, boring, monotonous and meaningless.

Monetisation again, apart from facilitating the expropriation of, and the extraction of surplus value from the peasant and the artisan (which is given the exalted name of capital formation) means monetisation of human relations, so that the I-and-Thou relationship is replaced by I-and-Thy-Money relationship not only in the world of business, but even in the family. The value of a relationship tends to be assessed more and more by its potentiality for yielding a large monetary credit. Money tends to intrude as a decisive measure of worth even in realms where a different order of valuation is appropriate.

Mass Production apart, again, from its income and power-centralising effects, produces the well-known phenomenon of 'man's loneliness in a crowd', and the compensatory abnormalities of crowd behaviour. Human relations are inevitably diluted and impersonalised; one meets so many people that one really 'meets' nobody.

Specialism necessarily causes a fragmentation of the personality. Such fragmentation is the very principle and secret of its economic efficiency. The whole man, with all his values, and faculties, is not required and mobilised. Only a few conditioned reflexes are called into service. The consequent repression of many creative urges, again, produces psychological abnormalities.

Urbanisation involves the hasty tearing away of millions from their natural and cultural milieu (a cruel process, sought to be vindicated in

in the name of the supreme economic value of unrestricted occupational and geographical 'mobility'). Apart from the social pathology of the city with its overcrowding, slums, crime and delinquency, there are the much more important psychological phenomenon of the complete atomisation and isolation of the individual, his lack of satisfactions of group solidarity, and again, the dehumanisation of human relations and the compensatory sub-humanity of mass excitements.

The whole process of development, of course, requires the growth of the acquisitive, aggressive, competitive, and calculating personality, pursuing with religious fervour the quantitative infinity of a monetary magnitude with which Weber and Sombart made us so consciously familiar.

Man and the Environment

I suggest that there is here a whole symptom-syndrome which accompanies classical industrialism wherever it goes. It involves the upsetting of the four vital relationships into which man enters—his relationship to nature, his relationship to his work, his relationship to his fellow-beings, and his relationship to his own self. We have inherent in this process all the conditions required for producing neurosis in the widest sense of the word—in the sense of a divergence between belief and socially necessary conduct, repression of vital urges, loss of the sense of vocation, of belonging, and of integration.

The rate of environmental change

THE LAMPLIGHTER—Review of A Guide Book for Development Work Among Rural Women

Dr. W. H. Wisner in Collaboration with Mrs. Charlotte Wisner and Kumari Dita Kashyap

“DO you know the Gram Sevika who will tell you how to make a window that will let in light and warmth and yet keep out the drafts of rude winds and the entry of evil spirits? She will help you to get assistance for remodelling your home and arrange it so that you can have more space for your workshop.... She will tell you how to prevent smoke from the *choolah* troubling you. She will tell you a nice way of making the baby's bed. Let her help you to light up your abode! Let her help you to invite Lakshmi to come and stay with you for always! She is the Gram Sevika, the lamp-lighter!”

This is how Dr. Krishna Bai Nimbkar introduces the Gram Sevika in her Guide Book for *Development Work Among Rural Women*. This little booklet is more than an interesting treatise on development work among rural women; it is a practical guide dealing with problems to be faced, techniques to be employed, and attitudes to be acquired.

Dr. Nimbkar comes to this work with a background of first hand know-

ledge of Indian villages, combined with the opportunity to observe what is being done in extension in two countries where work among rural women is well developed. After describing the methods used abroad she presents clearly particular needs of village women in India and the methods which she believes are best suited to meet these needs. We in India cannot take our programmes from other parts of the world, but must create our own. To do so, Dr. Nimbkar says,

“In adapting the extension service in a manner suitable to us, we must bear in mind one cardinal fact that our rural women are shrewd, practical and realistic. The problem we have to tackle is the problem of their isolation from progressive ideas. Our success in tackling this will depend on the extent to which we are able to suggest to rural women newer ways of living which will be in keeping with their environment and which will at the same time be an improvement on the present.... Our method, consequently, must evolve out of a two-way traffic between science and the life of the masses of our

rural women.... Thanks to centuries of stagnation, our rural homes have not kept pace in evolving a manner which would make a link with the present, easy. Our poverty has constricted the concept of a 'home' and very often the home even in the barest sense of a physical shelter is absent.... Our work, therefore, will be of a pioneering nature and we will have to use our ingenuity, and possibilities through experimentation."

Although she has not outlined it in just this way it would seem that Dr. Nimbkar divides her programme into three stages ; A study or Survey ; Home Demonstrations and Organized Groups

A Study or Survey

Dr. Nimbkar suggests as a focus of any study to be made, the village woman as a housewife and as a wage earner. She lists the points which should be covered—functions, shelter, home improvement activity, food, clothing, crafts or subsidiary occupation. We agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Nimbkar that a programme should be built around the felt needs of the villagers or the problems which they themselves are aware of. The nature of the study which she suggests would help not only the Gram Sevika, but also the village women to realise the problems which must be tackled.

Home Demonstrations

Dr. Nimbkar deals in detail with the subject of home demonstrations in her chapter on Organisational Activities among Rural Women, as she

feels this is a direct approach towards an organised group of women working on specific problems. She suggests that when the worker has become sufficiently friendly and familiar with the village women, she will be allowed in the homes where she can help with common household tasks, and thereby demonstrate the correct way of doing them. Here we might add that such demonstrations are most practical when they are done in front of a number of people, so that more than one person can benefit from them at a time. We have often been confronted with a man who asks for help in fixing a machine, and have learnt that we should first call together a group of farmers so that all can learn from the demonstration. It is the same case in the home. And it is well known that a women will be more likely to accept a new practice if she knows that her neighbours are also trying it out. This leads us directly towards organised groups, to which Mrs. Nimbkar has devoted a whole chapter.

Organised Groups

She gives both indirect and direct approaches towards starting primary units of rural women's organizations. Having been one of the founder members of the Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh, and till recently its General Secretary, Dr. Nimbkar is well versed in this subject. Here again she advocates building up the programme around felt needs, letting the organisation develop spontaneously over a period of time. She warns against the tendency to confuse "mass" work with "group" work. If the worker is to

avoid problems of caste and class barriers, she must organise the groups according to the natural associations within the village. Dr. Nimbkar adds.

“Only when such natural groups begin to get active and adopt programmes of such social action as will lift them out of a position of indifference and isolation to a position of conscious endeavour for self improvement, only then would the implications of national reconstruction through community development become meaningful.”

At the end of her book Dr. Nimbkar gives three Appendices which we found extremely valuable. We might mention Appendix No. II in particular —“The Basis for a Job Chart.” We would call this an excellent contribution to programme building. A village worker who is just beginning her work could very well build up her own programme by using Dr. Nimbkar’s points as her outline. A worker who has been in the field for a number of years can use them as a basis for an evaluation of the work she has done and is doing.

Importance of Work Among Rural Women

We have found Dr. Nimbkar’s publication one which supports and augments our own thinking along the lines of work among rural women. There are many besides the Gram Sevika who can benefit from it, particularly, as she herself suggests, those who administer programmes. So far in India’s development, interest in

women has not been sufficiently great to stimulate the leadership. We feel along with Dr. Nimbkar that no community project or development work can be complete without simultaneous work among women. Perhaps because of this strong feeling, Dr. Nimbkar has said little about working in co-operation with the Gram Sevak. Perhaps it is taken for granted that he will work in the same area. Particularly in the realm of community centres, which Dr. Nimbkar discusses in Appendix No. III, we feel that a Gram Sevika needs the help of a male colleague. If he is working towards the same goals with the men of the village, success seems much more likely. Dr. Nimbkar does say,

“Let the village workers, both men and women and at all levels realise the key position that they occupy, and whose efforts alone can render effective, the social revolution we have to achieve for rural prosperity.”

Throughout this book we have been carried along by Dr. Nimbkar’s enthusiasm, optimism and idealism. If her targets seem a little too ambitious to us, and her programmes too fast moving, we have no word of complaint or criticism, for she sets no time limits. It is far better, it seems to us, to err on the side of high hopes and expectations, than of defeatism or pessimism. Knowing Dr. Nimbkar, and seeing in her always the Gandhian ideals for India, we need never fear the latter.

Our only real question is how we can find Gram Sevikas who would

have the ingenuity and understanding to live up to Dr. Nimbkar's expectations. We must find women who are mature in their relationships with people and who have within them enough originality and creativity to keep the work from becoming routine and hum-drum. And how are we to make the job attractive to women of this calibre? This is an important question for every administrator to consider. In this stage of India's rural development it is essential that we make the effort to find, train and support women who are willing to break away from urban society and who are at the same time highly qualified. We echo Dr. Nimbkar's words when she says.

"It would thus be seen how work among rural women involves a

planned approach and how vital is the role which the worker has to play in the process. Her success consists in bringing about that awareness among rural women which will render them sensitive to the changing times that is fast overtaking them. If thereby, the rural women learn to change with it, and yet succeed in preserving those changeless and eternal values which have made them the custodians of an imperishable culture and a magnificent tradition which the ages cannot destroy, the worker would then have truly fulfilled her role as the little woman with a big destiny."

—*W. H. Wiser in Collaboration with Charlotte Wiser and Dita Kashyap.*

Useful Publications for GRAM SEVIKAS

1. Development Work Among Rural Women—A Guide Book

by Dr. (Mrs.) Krishnabai Nimbkar Price : 1.25 nP.

2. Istrion Ki Nagrik Shiksha

(Translation in Hindi of EDUCATION OF WOMEN FOR CITIZENSHIP)

—A Unesco Publication Price : Rs. 2.00.

Available from :

THE INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
30, Faiz Bazar, DELHI

SOCIAL EDUCATION IN PLANNING—A Post-script to Comments

Prof. Charles Madge, Advisor, National Fundamental Education
Centre, New Delhi.

The article by "Ulhas" in the issue of June 1957, and the "letter" in reply which it provoked from my friend Professor Bert Hoselitz, deal with issues of great sociological interest. Like Professor Hoselitz I must apologize at the outset for venturing to comment on these complex questions after only a short stay in India.

I do not think that "Ulhas" really meant that the only way to induce change in India was by changing "values" first. But in many key statements and in the Five Year Plan it is implied that the most important of all tasks for India is "to change the outlook of the people". In other words, a certain primacy is given to psychological change, rather than material change. Sometimes this leads to rather absurd overstatements, such as that it matters little what material achievements result from a community development programme so long as there is the inner change in men's minds. As men's minds remain largely inaccessible, one has to take on trust the extent to which they have been changed, and this tends to substitute a subjective for an objective criterion of change. This tendency, widespread in many parts of the world today

might be labelled "messianic psychologism".

This is, I think, the tendency which Professor Hoselitz thought he detected in Ulhas' article. I admired his own calm and temperate analysis and agreed with all of it, only I thought he partly missed the direction of Ulhas's thinking, and this was partly due to the fact that Ulhas's ideas needed further working out and clarification. If I try to go further into the differences in viewpoint of Hoselitz and Ulhas, I am likely to leave confusion worse confounded and I shall therefore rather state my own position, in brief, to the problems they both had under review.

Looking at the vast landscape of social change in India, one can see an immense number of different processes going on at once. Some of these processes were deliberately set in motion. Some of them stem from the Constitution, from the Five Year Plans, from the Community Development Programme. Some, like the growth of population or the changing pattern of mass demand, represent social forces over which Central Government agencies and planning bodies have little control.

The planned and the unplanned processes interact, collide, nullify or modify each other. But even in the processes initiated or guided by Government, there is an inevitable lack of cohesion. Among the most essential of these processes, three categories may be classified, the political, the economic and the educational. We often tend to think that by some sociological magic these three categories of social process are somehow functionally adapted to each other, but if we reflect on social realities we realise that this adaptation is often so imperfect as to be almost non-existent. Over a long period, there is a trend towards functional inter-adaptation, but at any given time there is little correspondence between the political process, the economic process and the educational process. Each is largely autonomous within itself, has its own customs, vested interests and ideology. Above all it is the social structure of these important sub-systems which mainly decides the vigour and the direction of their development. Or, put more plainly, the political process depends on who goes into active politics, the economic process on who is active in entrepreneurial activity, the educational process on who does the teaching and how the teachers are related to the more inclusive social system.

The Community Development Programme, and in a broader sense the whole national effort since independence, may be seen as a politically-inspired attempt to reconstruct the whole economy by an all-embracing educational crusade. Politics, economics, education, all are closely inter-

wined ; they cannot and do not amalgamate, but each introduces subtle differences into the emphases of the other. Politics becomes less partisan—all political groups, including the Communist Party, give their blessing to the Community Projects. Economics becomes more welfare-centred, taking into account not only productivity but social cost. Education has to undergo biggest transformation of all, finding itself promoted from a humble place in the school room to a key position in the community as a whole.

It is in analysing the new role of education, above all, that the utmost clarity is needed. Large utopian claims can only confuse the issue. Let us look at the traditional way in which men and women have been moulded into membership of society, and then at the new way which includes social education and community development.

Traditionally, the most important source of knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and motivations has been the family, itself embeded in the local community. It is from within the family that the fundamental values are acquired. A proportion of the children have gone to school, and have learnt something there, but in most cases they have acquired some simple skills rather than a new set of values. An even smaller proportion have gone after school either to higher educational institutions or to occupations and positions in public life which have involved them in self-education. For these few, there was likely to be contact with other value-systems than those they imbibed at home or at

school. Fewer still have completely replaced their old values by new ones ; though an inner conflict may have been set up. Fewest of all have been those who were "converted" to a new point of view, except under the influence of exceptional teacher, a nationwide movement or a stirring personal experience. For the masses of the people, values have changed with imperceptible slowness, the latent change being manifested only in crisis or emergency.

Now consider the new concept of education in a country with a great programme of directed culture change. The educational importance of the family is hardly less than it has even been. The school however is becoming more important. More children are going to school, methods of teaching are being liberalised and the curriculum includes some elements of "social study". *The school is beginning to play a part in the transmission of values related to Indian nation-hood and the drive towards economic progress. In theory, and to some extent in practice, the school-teacher is helping to transmit these values to the community as a whole, to the parents (who still are the deciding influence) and to those who have not been to school.* Whether the school-teacher can do much on these lines will depend partly on his own social and economic status, and partly on whether he is himself imbued with the values of the new India. But he is far more likely to succeed if the community has before its eyes the visible results of development work, in the shape of roads, wells, buildings, increased crops, improved cattle and the rest. The rapid spread of these visible results is espe-

cially favourable to a shift in values. One may expect that this shift will be greatest among two sections of the people, those who are young enough to have open, impressionable minds and those who have been actively involved as participants in developmental work, or have prospered markedly as a result of it. Active participation in turn largely depends on the effectiveness of local organisation, on the working of panchayats, cooperative societies and similar bodies.

"Events are undoubtedly the most powerful educators", Prime Minister Nehru has written in his *Autobiography*, "but events have to be properly understood and interpreted if their significance is to be realised, and properly directed action is to result from them". The most important educational task of village teachers, village levels workers and others engaged in social education work is to use the process of community development as an object lesson in citizenship. There will always be some people in the village who will remain narrowly parochial and traditional in outlook. From Professor Dube's recent book it is clear that many villagers can remain unaware for years on end that a development programme is going on in their midst. But this in itself should not discourage social-educational effort. Possibly the biggest psychological effect of the programme will be on the rising generation, on children of school age and those now growing up. It is for them, above all, that "events have to be properly understood and interpreted", and it is from them that we may expect the greatest change in outlook.

THE KATHAKALI—Its Meaning to Social Education

Achuthan Nair, SEOTC, Gandhigram

“Kathakali is an art which has perfected the most marvelous manifestation of the artistic impulse in hand. There is nothing like it to interpret human sentiments, thoughts and emotions. The language of the limbs, muscles and eyes is more powerful than spoken words. It is a vast mine of plentiful resources which remain yet to be tapped.”
—Uday Shanker.

KATHAKALI, one of India's greatest Art forms, came into existence early in the 16th century. The Rajah of Kottarakarai in Central Travancore, who lived between 1575 and 1650 A.D. was the first composer of Kathakali. It was essentially a revival of the old folk dance drama called Krishnanttam in a new attractive form, dress and setting. It is today a wonderful, scientific dance drama—par excellence where acting, dancing and music exist in perfect unison. It is always thought provoking, fascinating and spectacular. Speaking by the actors while acting is totally tabooed. They dance to the tune of the songsters and drummers who constitute the orchestra. The Kathakali dramas are written in

Malayalam. The dialogues are in songs and the intermediate incidents are given in verses sung in a variety of ragas. The themes are mostly from puranic lore—chiefly from Mahabharata, Ramayan etc, though of late other historic legends are also dramatised. There are about 115 Kathakali dramas of supreme dramatic and literary excellence, of which about 56 are very popular.

Music is of vital importance in Kathakali. The orchestra consists of a couple of singers accompanied by the clinking of 'Kaimanees'—a pair of small circular metallic piece and a hand carried 'gong' beaten in rhythm as one sings. Drums are of two types, namely, Chendai and Maddalam. The former is suspended around the neck and beaten at the top portion with well-shaped tiny bent sticks, producing shrill, harmonious and musical sounds in quick succession reaching over a long distance. The other—Maddalam, is tied around the waist and beaten at both ends producing different sounds and tunes suited to occasions. Singing in Kathakali is very difficult and requires great training and mastery of language. It should be melodious, highly classical and at

the same time energetic so as to match the violent aspect of the acting. The songsters and the drummers guide the actors and every step in the dance is calculated and measured. The foot movements are agile, rhythmic and acrobatic and when the actor jumps in violence, it would appear as though the earth trembles under his feet. The story of Kathakali may be a tragedy or comedy and it is always performed during night time, usually lasting over 7 to 8 hours and subjected to strict and rigid procedure with high technique. Speaking is not allowed. No scenic arrangements are permitted or are necessary. A huge brass lamp 3½ to 4 feet in height and 1½ to 2 feet circular at the top is placed in the Centre of the open spacious ground; it is filled with cocoanut oil (usually 3 to 4 gallons are required for a performance) with thick hand-rolled wicks all round duly lit bright, emanating yellow ripples of light. Behind the polished lamp, a rectangular silk curtain with a lotus embroidery design at the Centre (called *Therasila*) is held by two men and put down as and when different scenes commence.

The sounding of a few drums early in the night is an indication that a kathakali is to take place that night and villagers from far and wide assemble and sit around the lamp in a circular form leaving space 4 to 5 feet in diameter for stage. These villagers will remain until dawn next day to watch the heroics and historic talents of varied types to actors who appear in wonderful and colourful costumes and in complicated and artistic make-up.

Before the Kathakali actually commences, the drummers display their skills while the singers sing invocation songs, usually pieces from *Gita Govindam*. This is called 'Manjuthara'. Then the first item of dance, behind the curtain, follows usually by young actors, under training, as an act of devotion. This is called 'Thodayam'—an uninteresting item but considered as an essential prelude to the play.

After Thodayam, the dance drama begins with the appearance of the hero of the play—known as 'purappadu' in all his dignity, majesty and pomp. After his preliminary dance, the regular plot is continued through singing and acting.

The most striking and impressive feature of Kathakali is the 'Thiranottam'—'peeping over the front curtain.' This is generally performed by demons, villains and evil personages in the play. Their actions at this time would excite the audience and keep them in thrill suspense with the drums beating at their full intensity and musical punctuation. The actor makes thrilling dances, rages in violent shaking of the curtain, moving backward and forward and allowing brief glimpses of his shining head-dress over the curtain. He would often pull the curtain before him and plunge forward in electric speed almost toppling over the burning flickering flame. Finally after keeping the audience in awe and wonder, he suddenly reveals himself, dropping down the curtain and making some grotesque sounds, allowed only to these types of characters. The make-up of these characters would be horrible and complicated with artifi-

cial teeth and claws and two circular balls pasted over the centre of the forehead and the nostril respectively. Eyes radiant with red colour, fume forth in anger making a variety of movements and actions with eye-lids and brows as though speaking volumes about his role and purpose.

[The Kathakali make up is a matchless art, elaborate and complicated, often taking 4 to 5 hours for completion. A first layer of paint is applied to the male actors face who usually is constrained to lie stretched for hours for his make up and it is followed by another coating. Then other various lines and designs are drawn one after another with thin slivers of bamboo or broom-stick with the delicacy and skill of a painter's brush. Last to be placed on the face are 'Chutti' or rice paste-ridges one above the other forming a broad base below the jaws. The make up and dress differ according to the types of actors which are classified usually under five heads, viz. 'Pacha—Kathi—Thadi—Minukku and Kari.'

1. The character which impersonate Gods are called 'Pacha'—faces painted in deep green and lips deep red—usually with scarlet colour dress and ornaments in plenty. Jaws are coated with Chutti. The emotions which dominate them are love, gentleness and virtue.

2. The characters under 'Kathi' Group paint their faces with red and green and denote evil and ferocious personages like Ravana, Dushasana etc. They wear artificial teeth and claws and circular balls are pasted at

the nose and forehead. Demons, kings with brave but evil minds also come under this class.

3. The actors who appear with white, red and black beards are called 'Thadi' like Bali, Sugriva, Hunter etc. They are most spectacular.

4. Minukku characters paint their faces with mixture of yellow and light red and put white dots on their cheeks—usually lady characters, saints etc.

5. Brigands and robber chieftains and minor demons come under this category of 'Kari'. The face is painted black, over which red lines are drawn.

An actor has to tie at least 80 knots in the process of dressing. Except 'Minukku' all characters wear colourful costumes to match the colour of the make-up. The head-dress is elaborate, magnificent and decorative.]

Training

The Kathakali actors are masters both in 'Lasya' and 'Tandava' styles of classical dance. He might engage you for a full hour with an elaborate description of a garden or a girl whom he loves and similar items with his movements and action and keep you in rapt attention and full enjoyment. This acting requires mastery over the art, great experience and vivid imagination. When the actor makes love with a female role, he could make your heart melt and keep you in high ecstasy. The movements of the actor, his eye-brows, and eye-

lids, each convey different meaning. There are 9 different movements each of the eye-lids and eye balls and seven movements of the eye brows. Eight different kinds of looks are mastered by actors, each pregnant with meaning. There are 24 basic hand poses which are suggestive and indicative called 'Mudras' and 500 other poses which are combinations. The strides, dances, hand-poses and facial gestures are substitutes for vocal expression. Usually 12 to 15 years hard training is required to make one take an important role in kathakali. The movements of the feet, ankles, heels, toes, waist and every part of the body are properly trained. The kathakali dancer must have agile feet, expressive eyes and dexterous hands and all these are moved together in unison. Variety of gestures constitute the life in kathakali. The main scenes in kathakali are about battle, heroic exploits, and love and in all scenes, detailed narrations through songs give full scope for actors. Opportunities are given to demonstrate in full their talents through Mudras and body movements.

The kathakali performances ends always with a religious dance by one dressed in God's costume.

Kathakali today :

Like India's other dance patterns, Kathakali had also fallen into oblivion. But thanks to the ceaseless efforts of

Mahakavi Vallathol, over a period of 20 years, kathakali is being revived and given a new life and shape. Gopinath, his disciple, has also given a new twist and women have also now begun to take part in Kathakali dance. The poet is training excellent artists through his Kalamandapam. The period of the play is also reduced from 8 to 2 or 3 hours.

Let me conclude this paper with a short personal reference. I had the rare privilege of being with Uday Shanker when he witnessed a kathakali performance, for the first time, organised under the Travancore Art Festival in the V. J. Town Hall, Trivandrum. The themes were Duryodana Vadham and Ravana Vijayam. Ravan's role was played by Krishnan Potti who later became Uday Shanker's Guru in Kathakali techniques. His acting, manifestation of various 'Bhavas and Rases' so thrilled Uday Shanker that the latter went on the stage and actually fell at his feet in deep devotion to the art and skill displayed. The make up technique in the green room practically captivated his mind and made him speechless for a few minutes. He stood in rapt attention and admiration at the magnificent simplicity of the art displayed by the talented artist in the excellent make-ups of varied types and characters who thrilled and created awe and fear in the minds of the onlookers.

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is accelerated far beyond the capacity of the psyche to assimilate it. No wonder, mass neurosis is such a widespread phenomenon of the industrialised world. It is no longer merely the poets and visionaries of the early 19th century (who were dismissed as utopian dreamers by the progressive industrialisers) but the most scientific studies of contemporary sociology and psychology that draw our attention to the unhappy results. The bulk of the current academic literature on these subjects, is without exaggeration, a literature of crisis, a literature of neurosis the roots of which lie in the very essential ingredients of industrialisation. When the so-called backward countries try to borrow this process wholesale they should remember to set off the rate of increase of national neurosis against the rate of increase of national income.

The problem, therefore, that we in the East face, is not merely one of overcoming the so-called "bottlenecks" and 'resistances' to economic "progress" of the classical Western type, or of analysing how and when this or that element (caste system, joint family, and religious customs and beliefs) of the traditional social structure and personality will collapse to make room for the 'progressive' process. It is not even that of thinking now best the Welfare State might devise palliatives for every symptom which the process is bound to generate—assuming that the State will have the capacity even to detect any but the most superficial and gross evils. The

problem is one of questioning and refashioning the very constituents of the process. A structural re-thinking is necessary. One of the most important elements of this will have to be a humanist regulation of the rate and kind of technological change, and of the migration of people in occasions.

After all, economic development of the classical kind is not an end in itself, for which every element of culture and personality must be necessarily sacrificed or readjusted. Rather, the pattern of development itself should be readjusted, to suit our cultural values and aspirations. There is no value in change as such.

Generally, in a discussion on traditional Indian cultural, most attention is paid to the caste system, joint family, untouchability, etc. I am surprised that the supreme value of Indian culture is hardly mentioned, except as an obstacle to industrialisation, namely, the contemplative quest of the Divine.

The attitude of most of our intellectuals to religion is either one of contemptuous indifference (is it not indecent to talk of the subject?) or of treating religion as a convenient scapegoat on which the blame for our backwardness, for our slavery, for our poverty, and for every conceivable evil may be squarely laid; or of treating religion as something with which anything whatsoever may be reconciled, so that one may be a good Vedantin

as well as a good capitalist, a good communist, a good socialist, and above all a thoroughgoing industrialiser, frantically raising standards of living in the Russo-American image.

I feel that all these attitudes are unscientific and untenable, and can be shown to be so, if one had the time. I think we have suffered slavery and poverty not due to an excess but to a deficiency of religion. And so, what we need is not less religion, but more religion, and a more comprehensive, and more purified religion. I believe that a certain kind of economic development is necessary for and compatible with, India's religious ethos.

The classical pattern, however, is not only objectionable on simple humanist considerations, but tends to destroy the very psychological and ethical foundations of the contemplative effort and exploration. It gives to life a rhythm and a tension and an orientation (with the naked and limitless pursuit of wealth and power, exalted into the two supreme values by the compulsions of the social structure it creates) which makes the pursuit of

spiritual aims nearly impossible for psycho-ethical reasons.

A neurotic society may even tend to regard the contemplative as a neurotic and send him to a clinic for removal of sexual repressions and 'normal adjustment' to the norms and pressures of the neurotic society. Contemplation, difficult even in the most propitious social circumstances, is almost ruled out in such an awfully uncongenial setting. If this happens, I say, Indian culture will lose its very soul, and will have to wait for great unheavals to make a new start possible—just like the West.

I for one do not mind whether this or that particular social institution, custom or caste goes down, for these may be substituted, but if the quest of the Divine Mystery of Being is lost, and the conditions necessary for it disappear, India would be truly lost and betray the promise of giving to the world a new possibility of limiting, regulating and refashioning in its very fundamentals the socio-economic development made possible by modern science by constant reference to the ultimate imperative of this quest.

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. NOTES AND COMMENTS	i—ii
2. CASTE AND SOCIAL EDUCATION —Sublimation of the Caste Impulse	... 1 — <i>P. G. Shah</i>
3. 'GNYATI-BANDHAN' OR CASTE BARRIERS —What Are They ?	... 5 — <i>Dr. Jal F. Bulsara</i>
4. CASTE AND COMMUNITY IN INDIA AND THAILAND —A Contrast	... 13 — <i>Prof. Charles Madge</i>
5. ADULT EDUCATION —What it is and Why ?	... 16 — <i>Paul Legrand</i>
6. CASTEISM AND UNTOUCHABILITY —An Analysis	... 28
7. TOWARDS A CASTELESS RURAL COMMUNITY — <i>Dr. B. H. Mehta</i>	... 40
8. CASTEISM AND SOCIAL EDUCATION —Role of the Social Education Worker	... 47 — <i>Meher C. Nanavatty</i>

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Notes and Comments

Social Education and Casteism

EVER since its inception, social education has striven to develop the consciousness of a community among people. In its early phases social education—adult education as it then was—faced an environment wherein political issues broadly held together the “Community”. A foreign dominated political set-up oppressed all the sections of population and as such the community had a common objective to struggle against. After independence, however, the situation changed and the dormant incongruities and incipient conflicts in society found a milieu to express themselves. Casteism, perhaps the single vitiating factor in the development of community consciousness, thus became rampant and thanks to the limited opportunities for social mobility inherent in the underdeveloped society, “casteist” norms strengthened rather than weakened with time. The caste system with its offer of security to the individual promoted self-acquisitive norms in society wherein opportunities for individual development were limited by a series of historical catastrophies.

The introduction of Community Development Programmes was path-breaking factor in this frame-work. It offered possibilities for lifting the rural community out of the morass of stagnation into which it had got bogged. The opportunity for social action which constituted the basic premise of community development provided social education with the context for which it had looked forward with the advent of independence. Social education, concerned as it was with the social problems of community development, appeared to find before it the most congenial situation for promoting the consensus of rural community among people. The Community Development Programme, with community action as its core, appeared as the means to provide the rural community with a feel of a “community”.

An assessment of the effect of Community Development Programmes on the caste system is yet to be made in a coherent form; indications, however, are that the Community Development programmes have not been forceful enough in their impact to remove the sources of caste tensions or to lift the rural community out of the narrow groves of caste perspectives which set the sights for social and political conduct in rural areas. While it would be admittedly too early to expect the programmes to root out altogether, the causes of caste tensions which have held the rural society under their sway for ages, the incapacity of the programme even to *move* in that direction is manifest. That, despite more than half a decade of intensive effort of the Programme, caste conflict should express itself in so violent a form as it did in Ramanathapuram or that, in a less spectacular manner, casteism should continue to vitiate public life in the rural areas of the country, is the measure of the ineffectiveness of the Community Development Programmes. This has been partly because of the nature of the programmes in existence which, although claiming to reconstruct rural society so as to sustain economic development has been, to all intents and purposes, least concerned with social problems of the rural community.

To be fair to the programmes, however, political factors, as many observers have noted, are not conducive to the eradication of casteism ; indeed, one of the factors providing sustenance to casteism is that castes are reservoirs of political power which political parties are obviously shy to ignore and which, to pamper, prove to be to their benefit. To the social education worker, however, an acceptance of the circumstances would merely be an escape out of the challenging situation ; his inability to face the situation would be to deny the very

assumptions on which social education has been built over the past many years.

CASTEISM AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

is complex in its character and various factors have moulded it to the shape in which it exists today. Although many of the forces which brought it into existence are no longer a reality, yet the system continues and social scientists point out various economic, political and social factors which sustain it in the present form. Some of these factors are of a nature, which are beyond the orbit of social education and some others again are of a character which social education cannot influence because of limitations inherent in an officially sponsored programme. To evolve social education programmes, focussed to the eradication of the evils of casteism is, therefore, a problem which needs thought and the issue relates not so much to the *means* as to the *content* of the programmes to be put across.

It is in this context that the present issue of the Journal was planned and issues relating to the purpose were discussed at a seminar of the District Social Education Officers. The Seminar which met at the National Fundamental Education Centre at New Delhi discussed the following problems :

1. What are the caste problems which come in conflict with the aims and objects of social education ?

2. How does the existence of caste affect various activities of social education like literacy, community organisations, etc. ?

3. In which programmes of social education do the caste tensions express themselves most and in which, the least ?

4. How can social education help to promote cultural approximation between caste groups ? How can social education help to

develop inter-caste communication and rapport? If social status determines caste differences in what way does a caste go up in social status? What are the aspirations and urges for progress within a caste ?

5. How are inter-caste prejudices to be removed ?

6. How can changes be brought about in the ideological aspect of the caste system ?

Considering all these questions the seminar decided that the views of social scientists should be obtained on the following topics :

1. The sociological basis of the caste system and the psychology of casteism.

2. Caste and casteism in modern India—How and why these are evils.

3. Manifestation of casteism in the rural community and its effect on community development programmes in general and social education in particular.

4. Social education and casteism—What type of programmes can be effective in eradicating the worst expression of casteism ; what should be the behaviour and attitude of the social education worker in situations where casteism and caste attitudes hinder his work.

The Journal has been brought out with a view to provide an insight into some of these problems. Due to limitations of various kinds not all the questions have been answered. If the issue, however, stimulates workers to ask themselves these questions and find their own answers, the purpose of this issue would have been more than fulfilled. The issue is being brought out on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, as a humble tribute to the indomitable and uncompromising fighter against the demon of 'Varnasura', which is well nigh threatening to destroy all that is progressive in terms of human values.

Caste and Social Education—Sublimation of the Caste Impulse

P. G. Shah

IN this short paper, I propose to tell social workers in rural and urban areas: "Do not ignore caste as a social force in welfare work. Caste has to go and will go eventually but until it has disappeared completely, recognise it as an evil as much as typhoid or small-pox. Do not neglect it; be always wakeful and watchful and see that it does not do any harm to the aims of national unity towards securing a society in which castes or classes cease to be operative forces. But do not imagine for a moment that because caste is officially abolished from our census records, and because untouchability in any form is a crime under our constitution, casteism and untouchability have or will cease to exist."

After years of social work I have come to the conclusion that these caste influences are still powerful and have to be controlled not by means of the parrot cry of "Down with Caste", but by careful control of the social and moral forces behind them. The five point plan of social education is to promote (1) Literacy; (2) Health and Hygiene; (3) Improvement of adult's economic status; (4) Sense of citizenship with adequate consciousness of

rights and duties; and (5) Healthy recreation suited to the needs of the community and the individual. Most of these points can be worked through those castes where healthy and normal forces find a free play. And my slogan is: *Sublimate caste forces in spreading aims of social education through responsive caste organisations.*

IN ATTEMPTING TO UTILISE the beneficent aspects of caste forces towards securing the aims of social education, I am reminded how sex knowledge has been found necessary and useful in securing social hygiene and national progress. Gone are the days when sex was taboo and people in wisdom and prudence declined to even talk about it in decent society. Sex is now recognised as a powerful social and psychological force which requires both study and sympathetic guidance at every stage. Similarly, the forces of caste or group activities are universal throughout the world in some form or other and all pervading. They require to be studied and developed and controlled in a sympathetic and scientific manner.

As recently as in June 1958 the All India Congress Committee issued

a circular prescribing, among other rules for the removal of casteism, that (i) an active member of the Congress should not be a member of caste or communal organisations; (ii) he should not associate himself with any activity carried out by or in the name of a caste, unless the activity be of a religious character, or is connected with the uplift of Scheduled Castes or tribes or is expressly for the removal of anti-social customs etc.

To the above decision, I would add a rider: When and if possible, enter a suitable caste organisation, with the object of sublimating its social forces towards national unity and fulfilling the aims of social education.

ALL SOCIAL WORKERS are aware of the great efforts made in the past to eradicate caste from the country. The earliest one was made by Lord Buddha about 2500 years ago when he fought the orthodoxy of Brahmanism and as a non-Brahmin did all that was possible to abolish caste both from religion and from society. But casteism and the forces of orthodoxy drove Buddhism out of the country; and a religion based on purity and love, on equality and self-sacrifice, prospered outside India, the land of caste.

Caste has not only prospered among Hindus but has affected the Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians who in spite of the profession of equality, have their Harijan groups who have separate places for their religious worship while alive and also for burial or burning after death.

The Father of the Nation struggled hard to create a casteless and classless society without exploitation, and tried to remove untouchability by living among Harijans by adopting a Harijan child in the family, and making the cleaning of latrines an essential condition of Ashram life. But these have not succeeded because the real change of heart has not yet reached the masses in India.

While not neglecting for a moment the ideal that caste has to go out let us examine what are the benevolent forces that have kept caste as a living force which does not die in spite of its official death. We will then make a note of the malignant forces of caste life which have to be eradicated.

1. Human beings are gregarious animals and want to live in groups, connected through family ties, kinship bonds and common social and religious practices which cannot be destroyed until replaced by equally efficient social or economic forces.

2. It is not easy to break off old ties for centuries; Indians have been travellers and have settled in all parts of the world but they return home either to celebrate the death of the father or the birth of a child or the marriage of the children. I know of a High School maintained in a village in Gujarat off the main railway line, by the members of a community living in South Africa, who send money for its maintenance and retain the normal powers of the management of the school, which they seldom visit.

3. Similarly there are communities which collect money for (i) giving scholarships to its students (ii) giving medical aid (iii) giving monetary help for settling down in business (iv) settling down in marriage.

4. There are rich organisations of Bhatias, Lohanas, Modhs, Saraswats, Khojas, Christians in Bombay, of Vaidyas, Suvarna Vaniks and other communities in Bengal, of Kayasthas, Ahirs, Chamars, Jats, Rajputs in Northern India and similar communities elsewhere.

5. I am familiar with Mandals or Societies of Adivasis e.g. Naikas, Bhils, Dublas, Naikdas, Gamits and others in Gujarat and elsewhere. They form a union or society for purposes of social, economic and religious solidarity. They lay down the rules, regarding marriage practices, expenses on dowry, caste-dinners for various occasions like death, marriage, pregnancy. They unite to collect funds for education and scholarship, form an arrangement for getting signatures of Mamlatdars or other officers required for obtaining scholarships or special concessions.

6. It is a significant feature of these modern caste societies that they are constituted on the basis of the Indian National Congress. Instead of hereditary panchs, they elect the President and a Managing Committee at annual or periodical sessions; they get members from across the villages and Talukas, and try to secure unity for the taluka, district, province and sometimes there is an all India status.

What is the duty of a social

educator towards this class of caste organisations? Should he frown at them, ignore them, boycott them? Or cooperate with them and preach to them the ideals of social education and national unity?

As a past Member of the Statutory Backward Classes Commission I am aware of the malignant forces that work through caste organisations. Some of these are (i) caste superiority in social behaviour encourages untouchability and leads to the exploitation of the socially or economically backward groups; (ii) wasting of money in caste dinners and marriage festivities, dowry and social festivities; (iii) depriving the freedom of woman before marriage, during marriage and after widowhood; (iv) Segregation of castes leads to isolation and obstructs social mobility and industrial expansion; (v) The system of votes by adult franchise has concentrated political power in social units like castes, groups, industrial labour, and political groups e.g. *Ajgars* (Ahir, Jat, Gujar and Rajputs in Northern India); (vi) Backward classes like Kunbis, Tambolis, try to form themselves into a political federation and seek political power on the basis of so called backwardness.

IT IS MY HUMBLE OPINION as a social scientist that all these evil influences can be gradually remedied by means of sublimation of the forces within by the methods of social education, if conscientious and trained social workers are available, and if ideals of justice, equality and fairplay are spread among the caste groups.

The best remedy is economic uplift by means of village industries, by handicrafts, by industrialisation and by making agriculture paying and remunerative. But even this would not remedy untouchability unless there is complete change of heart on both sides, and until there is a real inward and spiritual movement to secure the progress of the country as a whole. Industrialisation by itself will not remove caste and untouchability; it is well known that the most important section of factory labour in Ahmedabad consists of Harijans with their old social stakes in spite of an income of about Rs. 1,500/- per annum per individual. It is also well known that of about six millions of Harijans in the country, the real untouchables employed on work connected human excreta are only 52 lakhs and that the rest are weavers, or dealers in leather or other so called inferior trades.

Another point made out by the researches of Professor A. K. Rice of Tavistock Institute is noteworthy. "Whatever may be the faults and virtues of the caste system, it has in the past provided its members with a stable if restricting social organisation in which they could find security. So far as reform and industrialisation have succeeded in beginning the breakdown of established institutions, members of caste and village communities need to find other opportunities for the satis-

factions derived from group membership."**

Another difficulty in the abolition of caste is the existing provision in the constitution of India for Scheduled Castes which have no less legal status than Scheduled Banks. As long as castes are thus recognised for giving relief for social or political backwardness, caste will never disappear. They are at present about 300 Scheduled tribes, 800 Scheduled Castes, and about 1,400 other backward classes which are given social, educational and economic relief and political privileges on the basis of their "caste" or "class" which is officially recognized. To get these privileges, these 2,500 groups have to make an effort to remain recognised as such.

As a member of the Backward Classes Commission I had protested against this "class or group" being recognised for political privileges for voting, election, reservation of seats, and for offices, and had suggested economic criterion as the basis of social relief; until this suggestion is accepted (and I am given to understand that the suggestion is receiving attention) caste cannot disappear from the orbit of social workers. I hope when the New Commission for Scheduled Tribes comes to be appointed, this point will be attended to fully and caste or class completely abolished for the purposes of giving social and political relief.

**A.K. Rice, Productivity and Social Organisation—The Ahmedabad Experiment; 1956. P. 232.

‘Gnyati-Bandhan’ or Caste Barriers—What Are They ?

Dr. Jal F. Bulsara

IN the unfriendly surroundings in which our ancestor, the *Homo Sapien* or thinking man must have first emerged, he must have felt very early in his career on earth the need of organising fellow beings into coherent groups. This was essential in order to satisfy his instincts of hunger and sex as also to buttress in self-protection his individual weakness and enhance his combined strength against powerful adversaries in the shape of marauding animals as well as numerous forces of nature. This organisation took the form of joint or enlarged family, clan, phratry and tribe, which forms of social organisation we find all over the globe.

The basis of this social structure appears to have been varied, such as the expanding family, contiguity, common customs, language, gods and religion. When the tribe increased in numbers and occupied a large territory, dialectical differences may have been inevitable as also differences in beliefs, customs and culture. If a section of this tribe conquered and enslaved another clan or a section of another tribe and captured some of its women, their offspring would have inevitably imposed social problems such as of the ‘mother tongue’, social

status, tribal integration, etc. The tribal elders or council must have sat down to discuss and decide the social issues posed by such clash of cultures, and caste or class rules, and inhibitions may have been laid down and subsequently taught and enforced. Among other factors, the fear of incest may have led to exogamy and the bindings of caste to endogamy.

The evolution of human societies has assumed numerous forms according to time, clime and circumstance. There have been divisions on the grounds of language or dialect, occupations and the supposed superiority or inferiority of ancestral blood. As the major religions increased their adherents, sects arose out of differences on the interpretation of dogma. In the earlier centuries, the ideological differences were taken so emotionally that the sects did not allow their followers to worship alien or unaccepted gods or to marry outside.

In many parts of the world and more especially in Asian countries, the classes that did scavenging, skinning and slaughtering work came to be regarded as inferior, and if the occupations became hereditary, those engaged in such occupations came to be segregated and looked down upon.

In the Indian subcontinent this phenomenon of social division on the grounds of enslavement, language, dialect, occupation, racial admixture, religious dichotomy or sectarianism, seemed to have assumed a somewhat exaggerated texture. The divisions came to be solidified into castes (Jati) and the castes became both hereditary and endogamous. Those who did the so-called dirty or inferior, but all the same essential, work came to be treated in course of time as untouchables by the so-called superior or powerful castes. Like most people, under-privileged because of the adverse fortunes of history or fortuitous circumstance, these useful members of the self-same society had to suffer various indignities besides the great indignity of poverty.

THE PHENOMENON of social stratification is an accident of human evolution. With his primeaval ignorance of the phenomenal universe, heightened by the ignorance of his own electronic bio-psychological make-up, man began organising his kith and kin according to his light by the inevitable process of trial and error. If somewhere he struck or stumbled upon a happy solution, he and his society were lucky ; if he fumbled and made a *faux pas*, he and his posterity had to suffer the consequences and rectify what hurt him or retarded his progressive mastery over himself and his environment. It is therefore obvious that no existing society can be held responsible for the thoughts, ideas, actions and decisions of its ancestors. Nor would it be wise or reasonable for a society to proclaim

that it wants to perpetuate the pattern of life, which its ancestors had evolved centuries ago. That would be to abuse our heritage, insult our own intelligence, and ignore the fundamental *raison d'être* of any social activity or institution, which is that it fulfils a function, satisfies a contemporary need, and helps the society towards a better way of living or a greater harmony of social relationships.

That early Hindu Society evolved a caste system and that we as its descendants inherited it is not in itself a matter of pride or shame. Whereas to-day's society is not thus responsible for its ancestral evolution, it certainly is responsible for the way it utilises its heritage and hands it down to posterity. No society can escape this responsibility. We have therefore to understand what function caste performs for us to-day and whether it helps or hinders the attainment of our national objective, which is broadly the general wellbeing of all the citizens, irrespective of caste, colour, creed or sex, in what we have come to term a welfare state under a socialistic pattern of society.

Rightly or wrongly caste came to be, and for our ancestors, it had a meaning. They regulated various needs of the then society by forming themselves into various groups. These established their respective occupations and constituted a sort of early division of labour. Caste as a social institution endured because it was enforced both by the might of the mighty and the force of tradition and public opinion. We cannot say that

it was not resented by those who suffered the indignities of an inferior status not of their own making ; nor can we be oblivious of the fact that from very ancient epic times, a number social thinkers and reformers saw and pointed out the injustice of this unalterable arbitrary division of man into high and low, respected and denigrated. Very early in India's history we do read the grumblings of great sages against this arbitrary stratification of heredity, for which, the child born into it had no responsibility, and yet suffered for the imagined sins of his ancestors. It is not by birth that a Brahmin is such, it is by the merit and study of the shastras that he can become a Brahmin, we read in the Smritis.

WHEREAS CASTE may have had its major origin in occupation, it took on more functions as it developed and became hereditary. It became an endogamous group and individuals could marry out only on pain of excommunication. This created such hardships and handicaps for the outcasts in a society of strictly regulated social mobility, that there were very rare rebels against the restrictions of caste. To some extent caste also functioned as a repository of social security in so far as members found jobs as guildmen or members of an occupational group. If caste funds were created or caste welfare institutions developed, the members could take advantage thereof in times of need. In so far as people by and large believed in the caste system and secured some advantages by belonging to one, it had a function. This happened

largely in the case of the weaker ones. The rich and powerful were not bound by caste restrictions as rigidly as the weaker members, and restrictions could be circumvented or even disregarded by them at times with impunity.

In its narrow connotation of compartmentalised group life, the caste system may have functioned tolerably effectively in a largely rural, agricultural and to a great extent static, immobile society. Even in the earlier times, however, it was not adhered to as strictly in somewhat impersonal urban milieu as in small compact villages. Thus in the nineteenth century, many of the caste observances gave way in the closer living of larger cities, in factories, workshops, commercial concerns, in railways and on ships. Here caste restrictions and segregations could not be observed even if some people wanted to. The entire milieu was against the barriers of caste and their observance. A factory may employ workers belonging to twenty castes ; it cannot provide water, latrines, dining rooms, rest rooms and creches for them all separately. Boys and girls belonging to a score of castes and communities learn and play together in schools and colleges and work together in offices. They may fall in love and would decide to marry. Endless individual and social misery would result and would add to our many problems of integration and social harmony, if we were to regulate social relationships in a rapidly industrialising and urbanising society on the basis of an institution which emerged into initial

social consciousness almost 5000 years ago.

A GROWING SECTION of Indian society realises the problem that is posed by the rigidity of the caste system, and its fundamental antagonism to rapidly changing social relationships under impact of industrial technology. Caste is not helpful in the social adjustment that is essential because of the rapid tempo of industrial development. Casteism is not compatible with social mobility, an inevitable consequence of urban and industrial development. This was clearly envisaged by a galaxy of social reformers, learned in the 'shastras' and themselves devout Hindus, beginning with Raja Ram Mohan Roy early in the nineteenth century, followed by sincere well-wishers of Hindu society such as Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda and no less a seer and sage of our own times, Mahatma Gandhi. By some standards all these great personages would also be called orthodox in some ways; but their orthodoxy and championship of the purity of the Hindu religion was not of an irrational or unthinking kind. They clearly saw that human society, whether Christian, Hindu, Buddhist or Mahomedan, had to adjust its social structure, ritual and tradition to the necessity of economic, technological and political development, if it is to remain progressive and function effectively in a world which is in continuous flux. Orthodoxy, stagnation, or opposition to change for its own sake would only spell the disintegration of tradition, or cause misery

and conflict between the elements that would like to live and those that would like to commit suicide.

If by mutual understanding this unnecessary conflict between the so-called orthodox and reformist or *status quo ante* and progressive sections of the caste groups and of the Hindu society in general could be softened or obviated, there is a very bright future for the socio-economic, political and cultural development of India because of the keen intellect, capacity for thoughtful analysis, and ethical attitude of the average Indian citizen, supported by the wisdom, foresight and world-embracing vision of some of her leaders. Since change, adaptation and adjustment is the law of life, Indian society is not in danger of stagnation or suicide, but the tempo of her allround development could be quicker and the wastage of human and material resources, inevitable upon conflict, could be much less, if sharp or headlong clashes between the orthodox and reformist sections could be avoided.

Those of us who are interested in freeing our society from the unwholesome barriers and bindings of caste without causing violent emotional disturbance among its adherents will therefore do well to understand the historical development of caste, its varying hold on urban and rural societies, its functional value in the every day life of the people as mirrored in their social customs, food habits, marriage conventions, social security measures, employment potential and institutional activities to satisfy social and

cultural needs. Without understanding these various functional and socio-cultural facades of the castes living in a contiguous area, social workers will not be able to determine the correct approach to implement their developmental, educative or reformist programmes among the local communities. It is essential for social workers to make a patient and deep study of the attitudes to the observance of caste restrictions by the various social groups in a village or urban locality before they embark upon any programme of work to soften their rigours on the vulnerable groups suffering from such restrictions, or to bring about a liberalisation of the attitudes of the higher castes in the treatment of the so-called lower or inferior ones.

SINCE TRADITIONS die hard because of the inherent inertia of individuals and organised societies, those interested to see the inhibiting and crippling rigours of caste barriers being removed from the Hindu society will have to give much thought to the practical measures which could be devised to achieve their end. The first step in doing so would be a still deeper study of the historical development of the system as a whole as also of the individual castes, a detailed study of their actual working and of the functions they fulfil in the daily life of the adherents of each. This deeper knowledge of the actual day to day functioning of the caste system and the effect of prejudices on the progress and wellbeing of individuals, families and groups alone could lend authority to the practical workers in the

sphere of caste reform and removal of casteism. Over and above this knowledge, it goes without saying that the workers should have conviction in the unworkability and undesirability of the caste system in a modern industrial economy, in a functioning democracy, and in a welfare state, which envisages the wellbeing of the people on the basis of a common and equal citizenship and not on the basis of a caste status or hereditary privilege. Added to this conviction, the workers should themselves implicitly practise what they preach and proclaim to the people. Double standards or hypocrisy will do more harm to the cause than neutrality or indifference. These principles of conduct would hold true for the highest placed statesman or leader and the lowliest of grass root level workers.

Another maxim of social change is that people would listen more readily to preachers and practitioners of reform, who have established their leadership and prestige among them by selfless and sacrificing work and transparent sincerity of purpose over a long period. If small mouths were to talk big or minor individuals propose a radical social change in long prevailing traditions, the result is bound to be frustration. It is therefore that towards the later years of his life, the stature of Mahatma Gandhi could achieve with relative and sometimes startling ease, social transformations of a magnitude which would have shaken under a different climate the very foundations of the Hindu social fabric. Ordinary social workers must bear this important maxim of

social psychology in mind and establish themselves well in the esteem of the people by their sterling social work for their welfare before they touch the difficult domain of social reform or try to persuade people to change, sublimate or give up their deep-seated social beliefs, attitudes and values. They must prepare all sections of society towards the acceptance of a social change by their long-standing work for their welfare, and attempt minor reforms only after the people have been made amenable to discussing the pros and cons of a social tradition, institution or belief in a reasonable mood without emotional upset. It is because of considerations like these that it would be unwise for the authorities concerned to set social workers, such as social education organisers or community development workers, on the task of social reform right at the outset of their career in villages.

FOR A CONSIDERABLE TIME to come all categories of social workers will find plenty of scope for constructive welfare activities for the handicapped groups amongst whom they work. Not only would they get a good footing amongst the different communities by their welfare activities devoted to cultural development, social wellbeing and economic improvement of the boys and girls and men and women, particularly of the groups which are suffering from various social, economic and cultural disabilities; but they would be also achieving solid results thereby. This is because among other things, the handicaps of these vulnerable groups have arisen through the type of work which

they have been confined to and the economic poverty that has gone with the lowly paid work. The social workers would therefore be attacking the very background of their disabilities if they bring about by their educative work general cleanliness in their habits and improvement of their economic lot by teaching them necessary home-crafts and small cottage industries and finding a sale for their products.

They may also try to instill cleaner habits of living and courageous behaviour amongst their children so that when they try to bring them into contact with the children of the other more advantageously placed communities, the former may be able to meet the other children on an equal level and not feel embarrassed in their presence. Social workers may also bring about greater contact between members of the communities separated from one another either by physical distance or social separation.

It seems to one that such work will be a much better starting point for social education organisers, as it could be followed up in due course with further activities to bring about the desired social transformation and general change in outlook of both the handicapped and the advantageously placed communities.

These workers will succeed better if while doing their legitimate welfare work, they were to interest the youth of the local community to discuss and debate social problems in a reasonable and humble mood and bring this indirect influence to bear on the elders. The elders may be brought into the

discussion only when their strong convictions on such traditions as caste soften thanks to the technological change and ferment of ideas going on around them. No wanton or deliberate violence, however well-intentioned, to their dearly held or deeply cherished beliefs, traditions, attitudes and values, would serve the purpose the social worker may have in mind. It will only antagonise the local community or a section thereof against him and his other work in the field of social service and social education may suffer, sometimes irretrievably. This would hold true even as regards his work for the practical removal of untouchability, in spite of the law being in his favour. Discerning social workers will readily understand that law has made the practice of untouchability punishable in a court of law. This can be done by a tiresome and time-consuming legal process, but legislation has not necessarily eradicated it from people's hearts and minds. And the breaking down of mental prejudices and reservations is a lengthy and laborious process of education, enlightenment, learning by experience, or by the difficult process of reasoning and self-introspection. These do not come easily to illiterate masses ruled by tradition and group patterns of behaviour. Supposing the local high caste is not allowing the Harijans to draw water from the village well, the social worker will have to be extra tactful to sound the local elders to find out if they could suggest any solution. He will not rush the matter but by helping the caste elders in other substantial ways persuade them to help their weaker bre-

thren, whose need for clean, wholesome water is as great as their own. By appealing to their goodwill and generosity and their sweet reasonableness, he may be able to find a workable compromise or solution, which he would not be able to do by a direct attack on the hoary institution of caste tradition, by being violent or even logical in argument, or by a threat of the consequences of legal action. In such matters the average worker may be able to achieve much more by bringing in a respected authority like the Collector, local member of Parliament, or other respected elder of the district to speak to the villagers in an indirect manner. Very often such tactful approaches, which do not hurt the *amour propre* of the local elders or community, succeed far more than a crude frontal attack, especially where people's long cherished social or religious values, traditions or practices are concerned.

THIS WILL INDICATE that the training and orientation of the social workers asked to work in the field of changing people's outlook, has to be of a special kind, besides the trainees themselves being carefully selected from among a maturer type of men and women with a balanced temperament. They must be tactful and patient and must understand not only the principles and contents of social psychology but must also understand the history and techniques of social change. They will be unsuccessful in their responsible work if the above essential requirements are neglected.

It must be conceded that changing people's traditions, attitudes, values and general outlook on the philosophy of life is not an easy task, nor is moving men's minds the same thing as moving and manipulating inert material. Social development thus requires techniques different from those employed for economic planning and development, and the former would vary from people to people and milieu to milieu. These have to be carefully studied before programmes of activities could be formulated with the general consent and participation of the people for implementation. Government can generally help these programmes by strengthening the hands of the workers at all levels by indirectly influencing popular attitudes through the most effective medium of literature, drama and other types of popular entertainment.

Since the work of removing obstructive caste barriers in a rapidly industrialising and urbanising Indian society is paramount importance, it could be accelerated by setting as large a number of people as possible to thinking, talking about and discussing various problems connected therewith. This could be encouraged by announcing a prize of Rs 5000 to Rs 7000 each for the best novels or plays written in the fourteen principal languages of India and in English, dealing with the varied aspects of caste and the disabilities of Harijans with the object of educating the readers and creating liberal thought in their minds. After the 15 best novels and plays have been selected and awarded prizes, they may be given out to 15 Cinema film producers to produce

films, for which 15 prizes of the value of Rs. 15000 to 25000 each may be announced. These could then be passed after the usual censorship for display in all parts of the country, and considerable favourable public opinion could be built up through such popular entertainment in favour of liberalising and removing caste prejudices and barriers. The plays and novels could also be used for producing stage plays by amateur and professional theatrical groups or companies, thus adding the volume of indirect influence on people's minds. If effectively written and produced by some of the ablest minds in the literary and theatrical world, these media of literature and entertainment can achieve much more within a short time and at a much lesser cost than could be done by setting thousands of social education organisers on the job of attempting to influence people's minds by a direct impact, which may be resented.

PERHAPS MORE LEGISLATION have may to be enacted in due course but this should be done after preparing the public for the same, both by way of education and previous warning. Such legislation may debar the validity of ex-communication of any individual under caste rules and provisions. It may also debar the registration and creation of caste charities or institutions and trusts for the exclusive benefit of the members of a caste or Hindu sect, say after a warning period of three to five years. Government will have however to see that the functions as of employment, social security, or the satisfactions of felt social needs, which caste

(Continued on page 15)

Caste and Community in India and Thailand—A Contrast

Charles Madge

IT would be interesting to compare villages in a number of countries where the climate and physical environment were broadly similar and to see which features of the social structure were favourable or otherwise for community development. Having worked in Thailand and India during the last few years, some points of contrast have been evident to me, though I must emphasize that my knowledge of the two cultures is too slight for me to attempt a full dress comparison.

Caste is a dominant feature of Indian social structure. In Thailand there is nothing remotely like it. What effect does this have on community work in the two countries ?

IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE, caste serves both to integrate and to divide the population. In most cases, one agricultural caste is dominant. Families of other castes may stand in a client relationship to leading families in the dominant caste. Services may be rendered by such families and rewarded on the traditional pattern. Intra-caste disputes may be settled by caste councils, or in some cases by a higher caste. Inter-caste questions, or questions concerning the whole village, will be settled by the old-style village council in which representation is on a caste basis.

This integrating function of caste

has been reduced because of changes in the pattern of dependence between castes and between households of different castes. Lower-caste families which had once been serfs and were later attached as labourers to higher-caste families now tend to be employed on a more casual, less personal basis. The traditional services of the barber, the potter and the rest are losing their importance both ritually and in economic value. There are increasing number of lower-caste families who are relatively wealthy and influential ; and there are also some higher-caste families who, because they are poor, get little advantage from their caste. Continuous propaganda against untouchability and against caste restrictiveness in general has had some effect. The Government is trying to establish Panchayats on an elected rather than on a caste basis.

Meanwhile caste rules about inter-marriage remain strong. Strong also is the social control and influence of the kinship group. But as many observers have now pointed out, the dominant caste in a village does not as a rule consist of one cohesive kinship group but of a number of such groups which act as factions. These factions are not, it would seem, always in active conflict. We cannot therefore without further evidence conclude that village

factions, as described by Oscar Lewis and others, are without a latent integrative function. This may be a case of "cohesion through conflict"—the hypothesis which has been put forward to explain recurrent feuds and reconciliations in other societies, notably in Africa. However it is abundantly clear that divisions within castes as well as between castes add greatly to the difficulties of community work in India.

WHEN I WAS DISCUSSING with Professor Max Gluckman my experiences in villages of north-east Thailand, he found it hard to believe that they could be as free from conflict as I painted them. His own much wider experience, mainly in Africa, had led him to consider conflict as virtually a *sine qua non* of social structure. He thought, and he may well have been right, that I must simply have failed to observe the conflict which was going on in the Thai villages below the surface. However I can only report the situation as it appeared to me at the time.

I found these villages free not only from caste but from structured kin-groups. It is true that even in large villages, there were many kinship connections; most people married within their own village, though there was no rule about it. Until recently, there were no family names in Thailand: they were introduced by Government decree from Bangkok, and up till then the villagers seem to have got on very well without them.

Every Thai village has two institutions which help to build up social solidarity. Primary education is free and compulsory for every child; the

teachers are paid by the Government, but in many cases the villagers have contributed money, materials or labour for the construction and upkeep of the school building. Far older than this system of schools, but linked with it, is the institution of the Buddhist "wat", an enclosure in which there is a Buddhist temple, the residence of the Buddhist monks and other religious buildings. The majority of the village men enter the monastic order for a temporary period of one, two or three years. During this time they are fed and clothed by contributions from the whole village, which looks on them with pride. It may easily be imagined how many ties will develop among a group of men who, apart from kinship and common occupational interest, have been to the same school and have entered the same "wat". Incidentally no one may enter the "wat" without completing their primary schooling, which helps to insure that these two institutions work hand in glove.

There is also a tradition of mutual help in, for example, farming and house-building. The digging of wells and clearing of tracks is traditionally a village concern, though nowadays labour is sometimes paid for. The elected village headman organizes this work, and so far as I could tell he can count on the backing of the headmaster of the school and the abbot of the wat.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE and institutions of the Thai village thus seem outstandingly favourable for community work. There is not of course the sense of urgency which pervades the Indian programme, and

neither in the villages nor in Bangkok has either the practice or the ideology of planning gone very far. The development of a cash economy is less advanced in north-east Thailand than in most parts of India. There are no markets in the villages, and no banias. Almost all the shops in the towns and larger villages are run by Chinese, and the Thais themselves, though not uninterested in money, are several steps further removed from the entrepreneurial ethic than their opposite numbers in India.

Thai villages have something of the atmosphere of the more unspoilt and uncomplicated tribal villages of India, but to this primitive simplicity and unity has been added the civilizing influence of Buddhism and the primary school. The land is poor but nearly every household has its own. The large land-owner and the landless labourer are the exception. Population is growing much faster than in India and pressure on resources beginning to be felt severely in patches here and there. The need for community development is clear enough, if an adequate lead were given.

Finally, the position of women is much less of a problem in Thailand. Modest and gentle in their manners, Thai women are in no way segregated, concealed or veiled. Boys and girls mix together at school and in play. When they get older, they marry someone of their own choice whom they have probably known from childhood. In the villages I studied, it was usual for the husband to live in the house of his wife's parents during the first years of the marriage, a custom which makes

things easier for the wife than the opposite pattern which is the rule in India. The greater freedom and self-confidence of Thai women makes them better subjects for community programmes than their Indian sisters. This difference, of course, is tied both with caste and with the larger structure of ritual Hinduism. In India, caste endogamy and village exogamy have a cramping effect on women as members of the community, however devoted they may be as wives and mothers.

IT WILL BE CLEAR, I think, even from this brief survey, that compared with Thailand, India has a social structure less favourable to community work. Yet the urgency of the situation and the momentum left over from the winning of independence are counter-vailing factors. In any case it seems to me—though this is a matter of speculative opinion—that in India in the foreseeable future a community of castes is a more realistic objective than community without caste.

(Continued from page 12)

charities, caste organisation and caste provisions perform to-day for any members of society, are being taken over by government or other secular agencies. Otherwise the legislation to debar caste charities and trusts will have little effect and may even be resented with some show of justification on the part of the opponents of such legislation.

ADULT EDUCATION—What it is and Why ?

Paul Legrand

NOT until a comparatively recent period of our history did the need of education for adults come to be realized. Until the beginning of the 19th century the universally accepted view was that each individual life consisted of two periods, of very unequal duration. During the first period, extending from birth to an age determined, broadly speaking, by the resources at the community's disposal, the individual was assumed to be receiving a training which would equip him with the knowledge, ideas and standards of behaviour he would require to carry out the tasks and undertake the responsibilities involved in every human existence. At a given moment, which varied from one community to another, this introductory phase was considered to have terminated, and the individual entered upon the second period of his life—that of adulthood. The transition was emphasized by a series of rites, marking the decisive break with childhood and adolescence; a man took on his adult dress and status at the conclusion of his period of apprenticeship.

In actual fact, this distinction has never been a hard-and-fast one. Children do not always wait to complete their period of initiation before entering upon serious life. And

adults—at least the minority which does not sink into premature slumber on the “soft pillow of habit”—continue to study and to advance along the roads leading to greater knowledge and wisdom. But the division between the two ages of life is reflected in the structure of our educational systems. Adult education used to be spontaneous and unsystematic. It was a matter of the initiative, intuition and energy of any and every individual who wanted to keep his mind alive. He was not assisted in his search for knowledge, by institutions adopted to his needs or by the guidance of a planned curriculum; nor were his efforts facilitated by specially devised methods. Every adult was to all intents and purposes self-taught. The educational work of the churches was the sole exception to this rule. The Sunday sermon for the congregation as a whole, the evangelical missions and retreats for laymen, were steady and systematic forms of training, even if their purpose—the edification of souls—was not, strictly speaking and in all circumstances, educational.

ABOUT A CENTURY AGO, however, the concept of education entered upon a new phase. Around the year 1850, people began to realize—first in

certain small circles, and then more and more generally—that education could not be confined to children and adolescents. Education was thus extended, deepened and made more specific. The adult education curriculum results from the convergence of a number of forces and trends of thought; a more thorough consideration of the nature and content of the educational process being of outstanding importance in this development. In conformity with its etymology, the word education has ceased to apply merely to the curricula of schools, colleges and universities, and now covers any effort intended to promote intellectual, moral or spiritual progress.

The scholastic and scholarly concept of education has been widened to take in the whole development of the personality, through its manifold experiences and at successive ages. As a result, those responsible for adult education have been gradually led to create institutions where the educational process becomes a matter of human relations. Methods have been worked out which extend, utilize and supplement the inter-changes and experiences of daily life.

IN TERMS OF ITS PUBLIC, adult education is intended for all the inhabitants of a country who are above school age. That age depends, of course, to a great extent upon the laws governing the education of children and young people in the country concerned, and upon custom. In certain regions, young people are swept up early into social and economic activity, and may thus be regarded, from the educational

standpoint, as adults. Elsewhere, adolescence continues until comparatively late in life, and is then a master for special curricula, linked up with the work of youth movements and institutions.

In terms of levels of culture, adult education developed in the first place in countries where the majority of the population could read and where non-governmental associations were a firmly established tradition. Their curricula and methods were worked out in the light of these circumstances. As a natural consequence, the first theorists in the field of adult education drew up restrictive definitions which reflected the circumstances prevailing in the Scandinavian and English-speaking countries. The terms primary education and secondary education have the same meaning everywhere, whereas in the case of adult education we have the paradoxical fact that the term relates to programmes carried out in some parts of the world but quite unknown elsewhere. When responsible circles in countries which differ in their organization and circumstances came to introduce adult education in their territories, the theorists who initiated it felt a sharp distinction to be necessary between activities which had become traditional and the work undertaken in the so-called underdeveloped countries. The term "fundamental education" was adopted to express the difference of level between the two systems. It was by no means certain that this distinction should be maintained indefinitely. It assumes the existence of two categories of public, differentiated by a characteristic which is merely formal—their period of

school attendance—and lays insufficient stress on the fundamental unity of the educational process, whose aims are everywhere identical and which, despite the tremendous diversity of curricula, uses the same methods throughout. It would seem advisable henceforth to make use of the one term, "adult education" to indicate all the educational problems of adults, regardless of the degree of technical and cultural development of the community concerned.

In terms of its aims and content the whole purpose of adult education is to satisfy in its length and breadth, the cultural needs of men and women (both as individuals and as members of a community). This means that the curricula and activities of the responsible movements and institutions must vary considerably in order to satisfy the special needs of individuals and of social and national groups; they must also take account of the relative urgency and importance of the problems to be solved. In one country the chief aim may be to train responsible staff for industry and labour organizations, while another may have a practically illiterate population which must be taught to read and write. Both these classes of problem may, of course, exist side by side.

It is, however, possible to isolate and bring to the fore a number of problems whose implications are equally acute for all adults at the present day.

Every branch of education must allow for the capacities and requirements of those whom it is to benefit; but this is particularly true of adult

education. This type of education is freely sought by those for whom it is intended; it can therefore attract and hold their interest only by satisfying their spiritual, social, intellectual or material needs. Those needs are manifold and varied; not only are there differences due to age, sex, background or occupation, but the individual does not live alone, or for himself alone; he belongs to groups—family, economic, social, national—to which he has duties. A democratic education must establish a just balance between the individual's right to a personal, free and human existence, and his duties to the groups to which he belongs. Thus, the task of adult education is to impart to individuals the knowledge they require for the performance of their economic, social and political functions, above all to enable them to take part in the life of their community and so to attain a fuller and more harmonious mode of life. Accordingly, training rather than teaching is the purpose of adult education; it aims at creating a climate of intellectual curiosity, social freedom and tolerance, at awakening in every individual the need and the ability to play an active part in the development of the cultural life of his period.

ECONOMICS, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL training are the preponderating aims of adult education. Such training must be based on the pupil's daily occupations, but the fact that every adult's main anxiety is to improve his material and moral circumstances must not be lost to sight. It must also be remembered that such training demands full freedom of expression.

Science should, so far as possible, be included in adult education, in order to promote the development of a scientific attitude towards the problems of personal and social life, and to illustrate and explain the social efforts of science. In present circumstances two subjects are particularly topical—the food supply of mankind, and the peaceful utilization of atomic energy.

The *arts* are of paramount importance in adult education. Artistic expression, whether in the form of appreciation or of creation, is essential to the development of a balanced personality. Moreover, the arts constitute an international language which can make an outstanding contribution to mutual understanding between nations and civilizations.

A balanced educational system must have its share of recreational activities. The community of adult pupils will be greatly encouraged by the provision of attractive premises adequately equipped for enjoyable relaxation, which may take the form of singing, listening to music, film shows, social evenings, dances, games—particularly sports—community meals, etc. To these may be added excursions, sight-seeing, travelling and international correspondence. These activities are restful, and they help to hold the group together by strengthening, in shared enjoyment, the friendships formed among its members.

The population of a region where *adult education is less advanced* is faced in the planning its curricula with the same problems that confront areas where it is more highly developed.

The differences between the two are of degree rather than of kind. Whatever their level of previous education, the people have to cope with vocational, civic, socio-economic, cultural and other problems. It must be remembered that a still illiterate population may learn a great deal from exhibitions, films, filmstrips or pictures, from broadcasts, individual talks, discussions groups, and other methods which do not involve reading. Where education is at a rudimentary stage, there is no need to wait until the people have learnt to read before introducing a practical plan of adult education, with a predetermined programme.

Where the proportion of illiteracy is high, big-scale campaigns should be organized, employing all the available educational resources of the country and enlisting the help of private organizations as well as government services. A number of countries (e.g., Brazil, Mexico and Uruguay) offer examples and models of such campaigns, which have taught millions of their inhabitants to acquire those two great instruments of culture, reading and writing.

THE TEST OF ESTABLISHING new types of institutions is still unfinished and, as is only natural, earlier educational methods continue to exert a considerable influence. Moreover, the nature and role of these institutions vary in accordance with the cultural traditions of the individual countries.

(a) *Universities*. The traditional types of universities are not suitable for adult education. It is the apex of the

educational system ; it trains students for the highest branches of social, technical, administrative or political work, and serves as a laboratory for scientific research. It can thus contribute little to adult education, whose aims lie in a different direction. Indeed, in most countries, the universities and popular culture are not on speaking terms. The division between them is perpetuated by the instinctive and avowed mistrust prevailing in many political circles which, in the name of class warfare and ideological conflict, stigmatize the universities as the strongholds and instruments of a hostile, bourgeois culture, which they declare to be the champion and apologist of the established order. In their view, the mass of the people must be protected from the corrupt influences of this environment.

In some countries, however, especially in the English-speaking lands, where ideological conflicts are less acute, the universities have gradually come to play a different part in the national community. Ceasing to be regarded as a class institution, they are seen to be at the service of society as a whole. The strictly traditional features already mentioned have been supplemented by new and increasingly important functions. In the course of historical development originating towards the end of the 19th century, the English universities and the workers' movement have drawn closer together, to their mutual benefit. Thanks to the activities of the Workers' Education Associations (WEA), over 80,000 adults are at present receiving an education presenting the same guarantees as to its worth and

reaching the same high level of scientific investigation as are traditionally associated with university teaching. The same is true of the United States of America and of most countries where British influence prevails. In addition to their ordinary educational services, most English-speaking universities have a department which specializes in the education of the general public—extra-mural education, extension services, etc. Although these achievements are followed with close attention in most of the circles concerned, the universities of other countries, with few exceptions, have so far shown themselves reluctant to change their conception of their educational duty to the community.

ALTHOUGH UNIVERSITIES, as institutions, have shown little interest in the education of the general population, many teachers, at all levels of education, prompted by a sense of justice or by philanthropical or political consideration, have felt it their duty to put their knowledge and ability at the service of the people. This movement, which flourished in France and Italy at the beginning of the 20th century, spread later to the German-speaking countries. Germany, Austria and German-speaking Switzerland have numerous People's Universities (Volkshochschulen) which do much to popularize literature, art and science, particularly among the middle classes. The majority of these institutions are run by the local government authorities ; premises are rented and teachers paid by local grants.

THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES have developed a special form of People's University, in which study circles strive to satisfy the public's intellectual curiosity and thirst for instruction, through a series of educational programmes outside the usual working hours. Actual teaching is, however, reduced to a minimum. Organized lectures and courses are restricted in order to leave more time for personal contributions from the participants. The chief method of education in study circles is the exchange of experience by means of discussion, one of their principal aims being to establish intellectual and social contact between members of the community kept apart by the circumstances of daily life. Study circles occupy a considerable place in the social and cultural life of the Scandinavian countries, where they are one of the most important and characteristic experiments. Sweden, for instance, has about 45,000 circles, generously subsidized by the State, and attended by some 475,000 participants, or 13% of the adult population.

WORKERS ARE FOREMOST among the beneficiaries of popular education. There are many reasons for this. In the first place, their need to supplement their education is greater than that of any other category of the population. Most of them have left school very young, and many have never been to school at all. A particularly vigorous educational effort is required to help them to handle the language competently, to deal with abstract concepts, and to master the symbols and refer-

ences necessary for the adequate expression of their ideas and feelings. Furthermore, owing to present-day trends, under no matter what system of government, more and more workers are called upon to occupy posts and undertake responsibilities of increasing importance and complexity in the social scheme. Systematic preparation is essential to be satisfactory performance of such tasks.

The chief responsibility in this respect rests with the organizations established to defend the social and political interests of the workers: first of all, the trade unions, and, next, the workers' political parties.

Workers' education takes different forms in different countries. In England, as we have already seen, the workers' organizations co-operate with the universities to secure education for an effective minority of the working class, if not for the class as a whole. The trade unions also provide financial support to enable a small number of particularly gifted workers to receive a university education at one of the Oxford colleges Ruskin College.

The People's Universities, too, were founded for the benefit of the workers. But here the experiment failed in its purpose. After some degree of success, the public of the People's Universities, in the Latin and the German-speaking countries alike, was finally reduced almost entirely to members of the middle and lower middle classes. The atmosphere prevailing in these institutions, the methods and the terminology employed

there, are not adapted to the capacities, the intellectual level or the interests of the workers.

In the United States of America, the USSR and the majority of the People's Democracies, the upper ranks of the workers' movement are trained in institutions which take a limited and restrictive view of workers' education: the curricula exclude subjects of general cultural interest, such as literature, art and science, and concentrate on matters directly connected with the activities of the workers as producers and members of social and economic bodies; the subjects taught, in most cases, are political economy, book-keeping and accountancy, labour legislation and social legislation.

PARALLEL WITH AND IN ADDITION TO strictly educational activities and preparation for responsible posts in workers' organizations there are innumerable cultural aspirations and needs of a general character which in society, as at present organized, cannot be satisfied at all or can only be partially satisfied. These needs are of the most varied description and range from the performance of musical and artistic creation to reading, theatricals, games, conversation and debating.

The loneliness, the lack of mutual intercourse and of resources from which the greater part of mankind suffers, can be compensated only by enterprises of a community type aimed at bringing isolated individuals together, and putting suitable methods of

culture at their service. The needs are so much greater than the present means of satisfying them that no institution can as yet claim to have fully achieved this aim. But in various parts of the world institutions already exist which are striving to find at least a partial solution to the problem of cultural leisure. These are the Houses of Culture, Community Centres, Youth Clubs, Rural Institutes, etc.

A typical cultural club aims at uniting and combining the various aspects of cultural education—teaching, reading, theatricals, recreation, games, discussion groups. For this purpose it has spacious premises to enable a sufficiently large audience to attend the presentation of plays or films, lectures, debates, etc. The house (or club) should be planned in such a way that small groups can also meet for work or discussion. The club usually has a library where, in addition to works of reference and light reading, members can find newspapers and review the principal views and trends existing in their country. The club should also be equipped, so far as possible, to allow scope for the pursuit of artistic activities and crafts, ranging from choral singing and studios for painting or modelling to biological laboratories. Games, recreations, social evenings and parties will find a natural place in these institutions, which should promote the development of social relations and the community spirit, as well as the expression of individual capacities and talents. The ideal House of Culture should offer a well-balanced combination of these different cultural activities, which will

supplement and reinforce one another. But financial resources and qualified staff are insufficient for the requirements. In most cases, even in the best organized and equipped Houses of Culture, and despite the excellent service they render, these needs are satisfied only imperfectly and intermittently.

Clubs of the traditional sort, which have an exclusive membership, limited to people of the same social position, are seldom educational in character. But in the last 20 or 30 years a new type of club has emerged, one that aims specifically at furthering the education and cultural development of its members. The English-speaking countries, for instance, have women's clubs many of which are intended to encourage reading. These clubs meet to consider practical problems in the life of the community or to study some national or international issue; papers are read and accounts given of travels and literature. These clubs make a very-valuable contribution to cultural activity in the circles where they exist.

The most interesting achievements in this field, however, are those which bring together people who make use of modern, large-scale media for the diffusion of culture—mainly films, radio and television. To counteract the decline of the critical spirit and the deterioration in taste which almost inevitably result from a passive and indiscriminating use of such techniques, attempts have been made to discover means of utilizing the creative possibilities of these instruments of culture, chiefly by inducing active

attitudes in place of the usual, widespread passivity. This has led to the establishment in many countries of film clubs, associations of listeners to broadcasts, and tele-clubs. The members of these clubs come together to view showings of the better class of films, or, if their interest lies in the direction of broadcasting or television, to listen in organized parties to interesting programmes. Such events provide an opportunity, sometime a motive, for discussions of the social, political or aesthetic content of the programmes and of their quality. The effectiveness of these clubs, of course, largely depends on the ability and experience of their leaders; but it can already be said that they have done much to educate the taste and arouse the critical sense of those who use the media of mass communication and recreation.

THE BROAD EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY developed by the above mentioned associations is sometimes supplemented and reinforced by more concentrated, systematic action, undertaken by institutions where adults are able to spend a few days or weeks, or even, in some cases, several months. Everyone obviously benefits by being released, for a fixed and limited period, from material anxieties and the cares of family and job, and enabled to devote himself entirely to study. He then has time to make use of his intellectual abilities. He can take up the study of a particular problem or situation with the necessary seriousness, concentration and continuity. He can develop a

method of work and receive guidance in his researches. Human relationships are thus intensified in a way hardly possible in the circumstances of everyday life. Moreover, such institutions, when well organized and managed, may introduce their residents to a style of living and a quality of human relations which are among the most valuable experiences they have to offer.

Scandinavia is celebrated in all expert circles for its People's Colleges, the earliest of which were established in the first half of the 19th century. A large proportion of the younger peasants in the Scandinavian countries, after a few years of ordinary employment, are admitted for several months to these colleges, where they receive a supplementary training which fits them both for their job and for their responsibilities as future citizens. The curriculum includes national history, economics, literature, choral singing, gymnastics, and instrumental music.

The aspect and orientation of these colleges show considerable diversity, each being influenced by the religious, spiritual or political atmosphere of its environment, and by the personality of its director.

In many countries, political, trade union or religious organizations have colleges, institutes or educational centres where the leaders come to complete their training and receive guidance. Even allowing for the inevitable touches of propaganda it cannot be denied that such institutions make a vital contribution to the education of the adults who attend them.

Certain countries, among them France, have set up national and regional educational centres to train staff for organizations engaged in adult education. The State provides space for seminars, instructors and teaching materials. It also pays a considerable proportion of the cost of travel and board. This method maintains a skilful balance between State initiative and the legitimate desire of the non-governmental organizations for independence.

CHOICE OF METHODS and ability to make use of them are of particular importance in the education of adults. For the only adults who turn to education are those who feel attracted, want to begin and intend to persevere. If the methods employed are unsuitable, if they fail to arouse and maintain the interest of the audience, the consequences are soon visible—the adult pupil tires, becomes bored, and quickly gives up. Unsatisfactory results also attend the use of obsolete methods of education which aim at conveying encyclopaedic knowledge rather than cultivating judgement. Such methods are apt to turn those who embark upon adult education into frustrated pedants, attracted by learning but incapable of mastering scientific techniques.

Adult education, as the youngest among educational processes, naturally inherited methods which were formed and became set during past centuries and which have survived until today. With a few exceptions, the most important of which is the Danish People's Colleges, the originators of adult

education outside the standard framework of school, college or university adopted methods familiar to them, consisting chiefly of classes and lectures.

It seemed perfectly natural for those who possessed knowledge to convey it to those who were in ignorance, through the medium of words. Only gradually, after repeated setbacks and much cogitation as to their cause, did educators begin to doubt the effectiveness of traditional methods of teaching. The teacher-pupil connexion was then replaced by other relationships, better suited to adult psychology and behaviour. Methods were tested and perfected for enabling adults in search of instruction to obtain it in an active manner, by drawing upon the inexhaustible reserves of their experience as men, producers and citizens, instead of passively imbibing various literary or scientific subjects. A real educational revolution is now taking place, and its effects are bound in the long run to have repercussions on teaching methods in general. The teacher of adults is devoting more and more attention to developing habits of thought and emotional and social attitudes in the individuals under his care, helping them to think and to communicate with others, rather than cramming them with knowledge.

The methods most widely adopted in adult education may be classified as follows :

(a) *Courses, lectures and lessons*

As has already been said, the traditional forms of oral teaching still predominate in the majority of adult

education curricula. Classes and lectures offer the most convenient means of describing a situation or presenting the facts of a problem. These established techniques will remain important on condition that they are integrated into a general educational plan requiring the active participation of students.

(b) *Discussions*

Adult education programmes lay ever-increasing stress on the value and necessity of establishing links between the experience and situation of every individual, circle and social group. Discussions are at present the most suitable medium for this type of exchange. But if discussion is to have effective educational value, it must not be mere conversation. The constant exchange of information, ideas, tastes, opinions, anecdotes and comments which make up the web of social relations, rarely goes beyond a kind of gossip which is not always even agreeable. If such exchanges are to enable each participant to test the soundness and value of his knowledge or opinions by comparing his ideas with those of others, the method must be one which transforms casual, disjointed conversation into a well-regulated, methodical debate. Discussion then ceases to be a mere social diversion and becomes an educational instrument of the first quality.

The various specialized movements, particularly in the Scandinavian and English-speaking countries, have, in the course of long experience, gradually built up rules and formulae for the harmonious and orderly development of discussions, with the active participation of all those present.

It has been found that, generally speaking, a discussion has the best prospect of achieving its aims if it takes place in a small group of not less than half-a-dozen and not more than about twenty members—the ideal number being from 12 to 15. Considerable attention has been given to the practical organization of debates—the best use of each individual in the group, methods of ensuring that the discussion shall not degenerate into barren controversy or an opportunity for a few dominating personalities to air their views. Experience has also indicated the best ways of introducing the subject of discussion and keeping it in circulation among the group.

Much work now being done on classification and definition in the United States of America makes it possible to present a *s y s t e m a t i c* schedule of the types of discussion most suitable for a particular situation or subject. A careful distinction has been drawn between the *Forum* (a lecture followed by discussion), the *Panel Discussion* (a discussion following upon a debate between a few experts) the *Buzz Session* (division of a meeting into small groups each of which appoints a rapporteur), etc. Such classifications are of undeniable though limited interest. Any educator who knows his target and is familiar with his public will be able to evolve the working methods and organization most likely to ensure a useful, well-conducted and instructive discussion.

In certain countries, particularly France, systematic methods of mental training have been devised to stimulate the spirit of criticism and increase each

individual's contribution to the work of the group by developing the capacity for self-expression and the ability to persevere with an intellectual task.

(c) *Audio-visual methods*

The extension of the means of communication and recreation made available to individuals and to the general public by modern technology and industry accounts for one of the chief problems with which adult education has to deal. On the one hand, it has to combat certain deplorable effects upon the mental and emotional balance of audiences produced by broadcasting, cinema and television. As we have already seen, some institutions have been set up to meet this situation and to make the fullest use of the cultural aspects of these new methods of communication. It is now generally recognized that teachers must learn to master the capacities of pictorial representation which, as a vehicle of knowledge, an instrument of psychological shock tactics and a means of persuasion, occupies a place of increasing importance in the structure of civilization.

(d) *Evaluation*

Teachers of adults will naturally be interested in the changes which occur in the awareness and the behaviour of individuals and in the habits of the group. They will not confine themselves to introducing their audience to works of art and the products of science. But the extent to which attitudes alter or persist will guide them in judging whether or not their work

is having satisfactory results. For a long time there were no means of assessing the extent of such results. The teacher had to make the best of imprecise estimates and entirely subjective judgements. To counteract these empirical methods, which retard the progress of popular education, educational experts in different parts of the world are striving to establish standards in the light of which judge-

ments can be made and evaluation techniques developed. A sociology of leisure is now being worked out, with the aim of analysing the behaviour and occupations of different circles outside working hours and co-ordinating methods for investigating and checking results. The application of these methods will undoubtedly be of great service to those responsible for popular education.

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CASTEISM AND UNTOUCHABILITY—An Analysis

THE problem for the seminar to discuss is how far casteism can be looked upon as being consistent with the present-day trends, whether in politics or in religion. The problem has become all the more acute as casteism has given rise to the institution of untouchability whereby vast masses of men, nearly 60 million, have been placed outside the range of Hindu society.

The general working of the orthodox caste system may be briefly summarised as follows, apart from the legal changes effected during the last hundred years by the British or the Republic of India :

1. Each sub-caste is hereditary, which implies that nobody can belong to a sub-caste unless he has been born in it. In other words, a Hindu can only be a born Hindu. Under the orthodox caste system, no one can become a Hindu by conversion.

2. A man belonging to a sub-caste can marry a girl only of his own sub-caste. No legal inter-marriage is possible.

3. A person belonging to one sub-caste cannot inter-dine with members of other sub-castes. This has seriously affected the social relations of the Hindus among themselves.

Three years ago, the Indian Conference of Social Work had convened a Seminar on "Casteism and the Removal of Untouchability". The purpose of the Seminar, in which many prominent social scientists participated was to suggest practical measures to combat the ubiquitous menace of casteism and to make the constitutional removal of untouchability a reality.

The proceedings of the Seminar, we believe, have immense value to social education workers. We are, accordingly, reproducing excerpts from the working paper formulated by Prof. A.R. Wadia and from the papers read at the Seminar by Shri Jagjivan Ram and Acharya Kalelkar.

4. The whole caste system is based on a hierarchy with the Brahmin as the highest caste and then the Kshatriya, then the Vaishya and finally the Shudra. The first three castes are the higher castes, generally spoken of as twice born, because the members of these castes have a right to wear a sacred thread, the investiture of the thread being looked upon as the second birth. The Shudras consisting of the vast majority of the Hindu

community are looked upon as having a very inferior status and are not permitted to wear the sacred thread.

5. Every person who does not belong to any of the four castes is outside the pale of Hindu society, and is looked upon as untouchable, and in Malabar even as unapproachable. In strict theory, every non-Hindu is an untouchable whether he be a Christian, European or a Muslim, but in the history of India, the Muslims and the Christian Europeans have figured as conquerors and therefore they have not been called untouchables, and this term in actual practice has come to be restricted to certain indigenous Indians who do not belong to any of the four recognised castes.

THE STUDY OF THE CASTE has become an extremely complex problem. Different scholars have assigned different reasons for the origin and growth of the caste system. A detailed study of castes goes to show that, in the long history of Hinduism, it has undergone many transformations. Protagonists of the caste system usually argue that it represents nothing but an economic division of labour as can be found in any other human society, and there is every reason to believe that the origin of caste was purely economic. At the present day, however, the economic aspect of the caste system is practically of no importance.

Originally perhaps the castes, especially the three higher castes were looked upon as more or less equals. The word "Arya" has the meaning of

householders and originally applied to Vaisya and then became the generic term for all the three higher castes. Sukraniti mentions that enlistment in Army and employment in high offices were open to all the three castes. The absolute superiority of the Brahmins was also not accepted as the Upanishads normally go to show that the Kshatriya Kings like Janaka and Ajatasatru were capable of achieving the highest knowledge so that even Brahmin came to them for enlightenment, but in course of time, as Hindum developed more and more as a ritualistic religion, the importance of the Brahmins came to be more and more recognised, as they were the intermediaries between Gods and men and ultimately claimed to be Gods on earth. This tendency became all the more accentuated when in course of time India was conquered by foreigners. The Kshatriyas lost their importance and the Brahmins came to be looked upon as the upholders of Hindu religion.

It is worthwhile knowing that the hierarchical importance of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya had a tendency to depreciate the worth of the various Shudra sub-castes following different crafts. This has been particularly pointed out by Romesh Chandra Dutt. Yajnavalkya condemns a large class of professions as impure and actors, workers in leather, physicians, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, weavers, washermen, oil manufacturers are all clubbed together with thieves, eunachs, prostitutes, drunkards, eaters of dog, and so on. This throws an appreciable amount of light on the fact that the intellectual predominance of the Brah-

mins has led to an undue depreciation of the dignity of manual labour, If in the industrial age today the dignity of labour has to be emphasised, it goes without saying that a low estimation of the Shudra is quite out of place in the new India that is being built up.

ANOTHER ASPECT OF CASTE is the ethical. In the Geeta, Krishna claims that the fourfold castes were created by him on the basis of the differentiation of Guna and Karma. In the Mahabharat, Yudhishtira says : "Finally a Brahmin may sometimes lack the good qualities found in a Shudra. A Brahmin is not to be known as such merely by his name or from the accident of birth, nor is a Shudra by his. Where virtue and righteous conduct is found, there is the Brahmana". We read elsewhere in the same Epic, "Not birth, not sacrament, not learning make one dvija (twice born), but righteous conduct alone makes it". But any acquaintance with the caste system in practice goes to show that the ethical aspect of caste is mere talk and has nothing to do with the actual facts. As Max Muller shrewdly quotes an editor of a Madras paper—"Universal custom is more powerful than books however sacred, for books are read but customs are followed" and the fact remains that the Brahmin however immoral he may have been still continued to have all the reverence due to a Brahmin and the untouchable Nanda remained an untouchable in spite of all his saintliness.

The last and the most important

aspect of caste is really the religious aspect. Caste has ceased to be a mere economic or social organisation. It has become a part and parcel of the Hindu religion. The historical misfortunes of India tended to make the caste system all the more rigorous. Once the Hindus lost political independence, they tended all the more to withdraw themselves within the narrow crust of their undivided castes. The Kashtriyas lost their importance and the Brahmins became supreme, exploiting the credulity of the ignorant masses. With the powerful weapon of ex-communication, caste became all the more a rigid religious institution. The slightest breach of a caste custom led to ex-communication and the ex-communicated naturally tended to form new sub-castes as rigid as the old ones. Thus the caste system may be said to have been both constructive in the sense that it maintained Hinduism against the onslaughts of Islam and Christianity, destructive in the sense that it led to the breaking-up of Hindu society into endless fragments, without any real cohesive force. It may be noted that the rigid rules against inter-dining made it almost impossible for the Hindus to develop real intercaste friendliness. As an extreme example, one might mention that a hostel at Allahabad had to provide 37 kitchens for 100 students. The influence of railways has gone far to mitigate the rigidity against inter-dining and in large cities like Bombay, the Irani shops as well as the coffee house have helped to break down social orthodoxy to a considerable extent.

THE MOST UNFORTUNATE part of the Caste System has been the untouchability and unapproachability of large masses of Hindus.

In this connection the influence of Gandhiji as a man of intense religious convictions has to be particularly noted. He was driven into politics by circumstances, and while fighting for the rights of the coloured peoples in South Africa, he could not be blind to the rights of the so-called untouchables in his own country. That is why from the very beginning he insisted that the untouchables should be looked upon as Hindus with all the rights, religious and political, which the caste Hindu enjoy. That is why he was not enamoured of the idea that the untouchables should form a separate electoral bloc, for this would perpetuate their distinction from the caste Hindus. Due to the general apathy of the caste Hindus, almost amounting to hostility to the rights of the untouchables, it became inevitable that the untouchables demanded at least as a transitional measure that there should be a separate electorate for the untouchables. Gandhiji from the best of motives thought to exalt the status of these unfortunate people by calling them Harijans, and this word has now been commonly accepted but without achieving the aim that Gandhiji had in mind, for it is impossible to forget that Harijan is only a new name for the untouchables.

The future of the untouchables has thus become not only a religious question but also a political question. While in public discussions the Government consisting of a party ple-

dged to carry out the policies of Gandhiji, is anxious to remove untouchability and has recently even declared it an offence against law, the fact remains that in actual practice untouchability is still there absolutely in villages, and considerably modified in large cities. It exists because it is rooted in the caste system as its appendix and therefore any study of untouchability raises ultimately issues of casteism as such and the present Seminar is faced with the primary problems of tackling that casteism as a preliminary to doing away with untouchability.

The problem that will have to be studied at the Seminar may be summarised as follows :

1. Is the continuance of caste desirable ?
2. In view of the fact that it has no economic significance at the present day and that it has lost its racial significance completely for several centuries, that it has no moral significance, how far can caste justify its continued existence only on the ground of religion ? Here too, it has to be noted Buddha and Vedanta give no justification for caste or untouchability. In the religious history of India, the Alvars of South as well as the Bhakti movement of mediaeval India were revolts against the rigidity of Brahmin orthodoxy and caste generally. In the last century powerful reforming bodies like the Brahma Samaj of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Arya Samaj of Dayanand Saraswati have made a direct effort to reconstitute Hinduism on a casteless

basis. The influence of the teachings of Shri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, while not aspiring to build up a new sect of Hindus, has tended to liberalise Hinduism. If this tendency succeeds, as it should be encouraged to succeed, cannot casteism as an integral part of Hinduism disappear in course of time ?

3. From the standpoint of the political development of India, will not casteism tend to favour religious groups rather than political parties, and to that extent will not democracy suffer ?

4. Whether the Harijans are accepted as an integral part of the Hindu society or not, should not their political rights be protected as much as the rights of Muslims or of any other community in India ? In view of the fact that the Hindus constitute the predominating community, will not the Harijans suffer unless their equality is accepted by the whole Hindu society ?

IF DOING AWAY WITH UNTOUCHABILITY is desirable from the religious stand point, the question arises as to what are the means by which the rights of the Harijans can be fully established

1. First of all through a special intense religious revival which would do away with the idea that the Harijans are not a part of the Hindu society and therefore not entitled to the rights and privileges of the Hindus.

2. The orthodox Hindus put forward the plea that the habits and cus-

toms of the Harijans being what they are, they cannot be raised to the level of caste Hindus. Is not this excuse unjustifiable so far as food is concerned, because the Kshatriya and the Shudras are as much non-vegetarians as the Harijans ? If due to the backwardness in municipal administration, the Harijans have to follow certain professions, for example of sweepers, should not we recognise the important part played by them in maintaining the health of our cities and villages ? It is totally unfair that those who keep caste Hindus clean should for that very reason be looked upon as unclean. It is for this reason that special efforts should be made to improve the conditions of the Harijans. It would be useful for the seminar to suggest ways and means of achieving this idea.

3. Our education under the British tended to take up a neutral attitude in the matter of religion. Should not the educational policy in free India tend to overcome this religious indifference ? What are the ways and means whereby education can grapple with the problem of casteism and untouchability ?

4. There is no doubt that the Government aims at making India a secular State. This has given rise to impression that India has nothing to do with religion. But in fact the concept of a secular State actually implies only that the State will not identify itself with any one religion and not that it will not tend to look upon all religions with due appreciation. If India is really as spiritual as she claims to be, would it not be fair that the

whole institution of caste, looked at from the standpoint of high spirituality be done away with in course of time and with the disappearance of

casteism, will not untouchability go because it subsists only in the context of casteism ?

—Prof. A. R. Wadia

* * *
THE ORIGINAL BASIC FUNCTIONAL THEORY underlying the four Varnas has had a long life. Its grip on the mass mind is still very strong. But the impact of the conditions of modern life has been gradually weakening its hold. There can be no two opinions that the theory has ceased to have any validity either in the context of democratic theory and belief or in the context of India's socio-economic needs. The thinking section of the community is united in holding that the sooner this tenacious relic of the past is given a decent burial the better it would be for the Indian society.

But though there is an agreement about the end, there is considerable divergence about the means. There are the theoretical democrats and fervent nationalists who would like to cease mentioning caste. They believe that if only people did not talk of caste, if they only came out of the psychological cage and breathed in a free atmosphere, where human beings are considered as human beings on their own intrinsic merit and not on the basis of caste labels, there would be an end to the problem of caste and untouchability. Then, there are those who think more of the solidarity of the nation and less of the individuals who compose this collectivity. They feel that by making caste the basis of institution against which we profess to be battling, we unwillingly give caste a new lease of life. The only

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criterion for ameliorative measures, they maintain should be backwardness—social or economic—and not caste. There are still others who think that the problem is largely and mainly economic and that its social, cultural and other aspects will take care of themselves if the economic problem is, rightly tackled. They think that it is only by a process of sublimation that the energy and the cohesiveness of caste may be directed to national unity and overall co-operative endeavour. Persons having such views are opposed to special safeguards such as reservations or concessions even during the transitional period for particular castes, as they believe that reservations, safeguards and concessions would perpetuate caste feelings and caste loyalties and would retard progress towards higher loyalties and larger social cohesions. These very well meaning people unwillingly arrogate to themselves the role of benevolent guardians of the backward communities and feel that it is for them to repay the moral debt which they owe to the submerged millions in a manner which they consider to be best conducive to the good of the nation.

I am afraid such thinking and such attitudes betray either a colossal ignorance of realities or a desire to escape them. It is not the intellectual conviction alone, about caste being a pernicious and inhuman institution, that matters. It is not the profession that

is of any value. It is the behaviour which counts and the behaviour even of the educated is determined mostly by certain prejudices which occupy a very important place in the Hindu thought structure. The original prejudice of treating occupational manual labour with contempt and associating those engaged in occupational productive manual labour with lowliness, persists. Social prestige is still attached to the man who does not work by hand. The force of inherited habit, the force of ideas about endogamy and the hierarchy of the caste system mostly determine the behaviour of the upper caste intellectual, his convictions notwithstanding.

THESE PREJUDICES ARE A PART of the social fabric. They have sunk deep into the very recesses of our being. Hence it is that we find such a glaring discrepancy between profession and practice. It is for this reason that we do not find many emancipated minds even amongst the so-called intellectuals. How is the discrepancy between profession and practice to be overcome? How are the backward communities to be assured that, even if no reservation or safeguards are provided for them, their interests would be safe in the hands of the well-meaning intellectuals of the upper caste, who in spite of their best intentions and their intellectual beliefs, are unable to rise over caste prejudices and practices? That is the crucial problem which should be sincerely and seriously considered.

To me, the problem does not pose itself as a negative problem of the

eradication of caste and untouchability. Personally, the problem appears as a positive problem of changing the way of thinking of our people and of bringing about a change in the age-old Hindu thought pattern and thought structure. The problem is one of completing the process of renaissance and reform which was begun by many great saints but which never ran its full course. One can recall that phase in the development of Europe which is known as the Renaissance. It did not bring about a change only in the intellectual and moral attitudes of the people. It also provided a new socio-economic basis which could sustain the new ideas. Under its impact and inspiration, the European nations entered upon a fresh stage of vital action. It stimulated creative activity greatly, not only in the intellectual sphere but in other spheres as well. How did this happen? It freed man from the thralldom of theology and led to a vivid recognition of the godliness in man. It was the new ideas of the intrinsic worth of man and of human life that really worked the miracle. At the same time, it did not imply a break with the past. It developed what was original in medieval ideas and emphasised, through man's fresh endeavour after spiritual freedom, the continuity of history and the identity of human nature, shattering the narrow mental barriers imposed by medieval orthodoxy. This recovery of freedom for the human spirit after a long period of bondage to oppressive religious and political orthodoxy, paved the way for the emergence of modern states. Not only the economic life not only the thought structure,

but also the religious beliefs were affected and religion itself underwent a great change. In India, unfortunately this movement never ran its full course. Buddha failed because he was too advanced a reformer for his times. The reforms initiated by other saints failed because they became segregated and ended, not in obliterating caste, but in creating a new one of their followers and thus the whole idea behind the reforms initiated by the saints the idea of securing greater recognition and respect for the individual human personality, was defeated. The last and the most powerful blow to the old system was given by Mahatma Gandhi. He moved firmly aggressively, persistently and yet cautiously. He did not start with challenging the basic assumptions behind the fourfold division of Indian society and yet succeeded, to a very great extent, in shaking the very foundations of the system.

THE WORK BEGUN BY MAHATMA GANDHI has to be carried on. It has to be realised that the real end of man's journey is freedom. Anything which restrains or injures human dignity restrains freedom. It is to be recalled that the question of the eradication of untouchability and caste is but the negative aspect of the issue of the expansion of the human spirit and freedom. It is also to be realised that ideas of dignity and the inviolability of the individual will not find a full play within the frame work of the existing system of Hindu thought because, so long as this system of thought continues, the behaviour

of Hindus is likely to be influenced by it. It is a great coercive force. Though invisible, it subjugates the Hindu to a state of complete acquiescence. Under its grip, he does not challenge the environment. He accepts it and gives up the highest virtue and only abiding human value and privilege—to be free. This spirit of willing and voluntary servitude is the first hurdle which a reform movement has to negotiate. The feeling of seeking security and recognition within the confines of the caste arises from a sense of helplessness—the psychology of a child seeking parental support. So pernicious and all-pervasive is the effect of this system that the majority population of the country, which consists of the backward communities, thinks more of aping the customs and manners of the upper castes, and less of breaking the shackles. There are innumerable instances of men belonging to the lower communities, taking to surnames which are supposed to be dignified, or discouraging the remarriage of widows, as it is believed that these are tokens of social advancement. If the untouchables practise untouchability within their own communities to an extent that is surprising, it is explained by the fact that it is a sincere but poor imitation of the Brahmins who constitute the most heterogeneous collection of minute and independent sub-divisions that ever bore a common designation. Once it is realised that Indian nationalism arose amidst such peculiarly powerful social institutions, customs and cultural traditions and that the prevalent social and mental frame-work is therefore, essentially unsuitable for its deve-

lopment or for the development of democracy, the urgency of the problem becomes apparent.

THE FIRST THING TO BE DONE in this connection is the carrying to fruition of the much-delayed and very much chequered process of renaissance and reform. I once said jokingly to a gathering of Congress Party workers that a day may come when the law of the land may not recognise marriages within the caste as valid. If the regulative powers of the State are utilised to sustain an anti-democratic, anti-humanist and pernicious system, they could be better utilised to bring into being a better system where there would be no barriers between man and man based on social, economic or other considerations. That day will come—how soon or how long will depend on how and when the processes of renaissance and the economic re-organisation of society are completed.

With a complete re-organisation of our economy, with full employment and social security assured and with dehumanising occupations abolished for ever, conditions could be created in which a change of attitudes towards manual labour would easily take place and productive labour would come to be valued. While this process of renaissance and economic re-organisation takes place, it is necessary to enable the Scheduled Castes and other Backward Classes to take their fair share in this creative process. This can be done only when they are safeguarded against the disabilities and discriminations resulting from caste attitudes. It will not do to keep them out of the great

historic process that is continuing on the plea of democratic formalism or abstract theories. It will not do to tell them—“We the benign and moral upper castes are there to safeguard your interests. We are creating a new life for the Indian people in which there will be no distinctions between man and man and all would be happy and free. Till this new life is created, you are to depend on us for giving you protection and the solidarity of the nation has to be safeguarded. You must not clamour for any safeguards or reservations”. This attitude will not do. The nation after all is only an abstract collectivity and its strength or weakness depends on what the individuals, the constituents of the collectivity, feel and think. Therefore, so long as the caste feelings are there—and with all efforts it will take some time before caste feelings are completely eliminated—some kinds of reservations, some kinds of safeguards, have to be there and special concessions and facilities will have to be provided for their educational, economic and cultural advancement. This will not, as is apprehended by those who consider the nation to be their monopoly, give rise to fissiparous tendencies and lead to disintegration. This will, on the other hand, generate a belief in the backward communities, who constitute the majority of the population in this country that opportunities for self advancement, even during the period of transition and creation, are not being denied to them, and they will cooperate whole-heartedly and willingly in the creation of the new life and the new order. I feel that the idea, that reservations and safeguards are

pernicious, may sometimes unconsciously result from thinking that those who have so long been submerged and have occupied a lower place in the social hierarchy, may get the better of others who were leaders of our society so far. It may not be so in the case of those whom belief in democracy is sincere and genuine, but it is definitely so in the case of the large masses of the rural population who still continue to believe that the four-fold division

in immutable and is the best under the circumstances. With this three-pronged attack vigorously undertaken, I have no doubt in my mind that before long we shall not only succeed in creating a new social and economic life in the country, but also in giving a decent burial to a system which has defied the endeavours of saints and s a v a n t s from Lord Buddha to Mahatma Gandhi.

—Jagjivan Ram

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EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN that caste-loyalty often proved stronger than loyalty to the whole body politic, to the nation and to humanity. Caste-loyalty frequently drives a man to subordinate his sense of justice, fair play and humanity to the interests of caste. This over-riding caste-loyalty is known as casteism.

Casteism is to be found amongst people of all religions. It is surprising to find some non-Hindus, claiming to be free from caste feelings, reproaching Hindus as if they were the only guilty sections in the body politic. The Government, in its anxiety to protect the weaker sections of society from the domination of the stronger sections, has encouraged caste beyond measure. The British Government following the policy of divide and rule, alternately encouraged the orthodox and the reformers.

I have documentary evidence to prove that the British rulers justified attitude of the Savaranas in keeping the Harijans out of Government schools etc. It was only when the Britishers found that upper castes

were getting ambitious and resentful of British domination, that they encouraged the Depressed Classes, the Muslims, the Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians to develop caste-consciousness and group loyalty.

Nationalist elements in the country had, therefore, no alternative but to recognise and placate the group loyalty and casteism of Muslims, Indian Christians and the Harijans. In fact, every group that found it convenient gave its loyalty to the highest bidder. The Government and the Congress vied with each other in winning the doubtful and temporary loyalty of these caste groups.

That policy still persists and caste-loyalties are now broadening into group loyalties. The Harijans were encouraged alike by the missionaries tabligiwalas, the Sikhs, the social reformers and the Congress Government to cultivate group consciousness and group loyalties, specially in the political field. The Anglo-Indian soon became a caste of loyalists supporting the policy of the British Government, and when they

found that the Britishers were really leaving the shores of India, they in their wisdom saw that they were a very small minority. They, therefore, assumed a docile attitude and secured whatever concessions from the Swaraj Government they could for their own caste.

The Muslims and the Christians had always prided themselves on being free from caste. But ever since the moment the Swaraj Government gave liberal concessions to the Scheduled Caste and the backward people, both Muslims and Christians have been enthusiastically trying to prove that there is caste and untouchability in their midst and the Christians have successfully proved that caste Christians look down upon Harijan Christians and keep them aloof both in life and in death. The Harijan Christians in some regions were kept outside the church for a long time. Then they were allowed to sit in church in a separate wing. Even today, Christians belonging to untouchable castes are forced to have separate cemeteries in some parts of India. Even the dead amongst the Christians must observe caste and untouchability.

In Goa, I have personally seen how the Brahmin Christians claim superiority over non-Brahmin Christians. I have also known Christian families consulting not only caste but Gotra in arranging marriages. The great Pandita Ramabai, a Brahmin lady convert dedicated to proselytising work, had to admit that "inter caste" marriages amongst Christians led to family quarrels, unhappiness and breaking of homes. She, there-

fore, was driven to consult caste when arranging marriages amongst convert Christians.

Muslims, have told me that they generally do not tolerate marriages between higher caste Muslims and the scavenging Muslims or butcher Muslims. The Shias, the Sunnis, the Khojas and the Memons and the Aga Khanis too observe caste in the sense that they prefer to have marriage amongst their own group.

Social and religious charities flow chiefly to men and women of one's own caste. This is true of all castes whether Hindu or non-Hindu.

HINDUISM, FROM A SOCIAL POINT OF VIEW, can be described as a federation of innumerable castes accepting the religious tenets and utterances of saints of the Hindu tradition. These castes of Hindu federation are bound together in a well recognised hierarchy. Each caste knows its place in the Hindu hierarchy. These castes sometimes fret and frown against their particular status. Sometimes a particular caste manages after some struggle to rise in the social scale. Some castes in their weakness sometimes lose their status. The process of up-grading and down-grading has always gone on in the Hindu social structure but the hierarchy has remained. In mediaeval times caste, inspite of its gradation of high and low, had cultivated a fund of mutual goodwill and social and industrial cooperation, because society was governed not so much by the political rulers as by the social leaders themselves. The strength and solidarity of

the Hindu community or the Hindu nation as some would like to call themselves, lay in the universal acceptance of this hierarchy. People in India, like the people in England, were content to accept their (high or low) social position in the body politic and cooperated with each other with loyalty, contentment and mutual goodwill.

This caste hierarchy, although universal in India, was so far as organisation was concerned, confined to the various regions in which India is divided. Caste organisations have assumed a wider vogue only recently. The saints of old tried to bring about harmony among various religious groups etc. Social reformers and national leaders are doing their utmost to break caste consciousness. But the Government policy even of the Swaraj Government is uniformly, if unwittingly and helplessly, encouraging caste. Caste organisations in the whole of Indian history never received so much recognition and encouragement as they are receiving today. The one and important good point about the present day encouragement is that it is helping all minorities and backward communities to improve their educational and financial position. Universal adult franchise has transferred, at least potentially, all political power to the masses.

So even if caste remains, the hierarchy of caste is bound to go. But the danger is that if the present day Government continues its unscientific and halting policy, it will succeed in breaking social and national solidarity and India will be a land of political clans which will bring to an end all freedom and progress.

Orthodoxy and reactionary conservatism, combined with a sad lack of political consciousness, are opposing the destruction of castes. They are opposing the process of nation building. This opposition, however, determined, is blind and against the spirit of the time. It is bound to fail. But the opposition makes all efforts at social reform and nation building very costly and the cost in money and social solidarity and mutual good will would be too heavy for the national exchequer and too onerous for the national fund of good will. Orthodoxy is playing a covert and dangerous game which is bound to be very costly and positively suicidal. Social reformers, religious teachers and political leaders would do well to appeal to the orthodox masses, both from the highest ethical level and also the prudential level to give up this suicidal policy.

—Acharya
Kaka Kalelkar

Towards A Casteless Rural Community

Dr. B. H. Mehta

SOCIAL structures arise in the world as human groups find themselves faced with problems and needs which these structures are called upon to deal with. In the beginning, most human groups evolved an integrated social structure which fulfilled the needs of all the members of the large or small community. With feudalism, and the emergence of land ownership, first individuals, and then small groups came into existence whose self-interest led them to function apart from, and at the same time against the interests of the whole community. In a heterogeneous and large society, small groups like the caste worked against the rest of the community, or worked exclusively for the benefit of their own caste members. Like self-consciousness, narrow group consciousness is also the product of a functioning caste, and this caste mentality which crystalises as group consciousness is antagonistic to what is understood as community consciousness. Thus caste is a social structure with economic motivation and deep psychological implications.

The caste system in India, has developed with the growth of the Hindu Society. Though it prevails all over India, its actual nature, manifestation and effect of the system on neighbouring communities and the local society is not

similar. A caste is capable of doing good, and it can live in harmony with other caste and non-caste elements. A caste can also become a cause of tension and conflict when self-interest and selfishness leads to activities and behaviours which are antagonistic to the well-being of the entire community. In such cases there is a need to study the nature of the tensions and conflicts in terms of specific economies and other social and psychological causes.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS appear at times to be obsessed with immediate economic objectives, although the Community Development philosophy recognises that man is the chief agent of development. It is not realised that unless he is properly organised in a social structure to become an efficient agent of development, the quality of the development is likely to be indifferent. A Community Development project, over and above achieving social, economic and other practical objectives, should therefore, attempt to achieve community integration through an organisational and psychological integration of the community as a whole. In this way, group consciousness will be gradually eliminated.

It is therefore essential to appreci-

ate that a programme of social and psychological preparation should accompany, and even precede all physical and economic development activities. If this is not done, then group leadership in some places will take advantage of opportunities even against the interest of the whole community and the interests of its really needy members.

There are many who believe that the solution lies in the "education" of the group so that the group may change its behaviour and activities and work for the benefit of the community. Education is a formal process which relies too optimistically on mental control, behaviour and development. Human beings are not too rational, and do not behave according to their knowledge or defined thought processes; actions depend on reflexes and pre-formed habits stimulated by passing emotional conditions. Thus the motivation of action is complex, and ignorance and knowledge are not necessarily two separate distinct absolutes. The entire process is an experience of life; and experience is not merely or totally intellectual. It is a highly complex phenomenon in which conscious and unconscious factors are present and in which thought, emotion and activities are simultaneously involved.

In order to develop community consciousness, therefore, man must constantly *be* together with others, and enjoy the *togetherness* as a creative experience. Togetherness is present whenever and wherever there is *participation*. Participation is primarily in terms of activities. Thus there must

be faith in the mere and continuous participation of members of the community in community based activities. This will be community experience, and will hardly involve a process of education where defined concepts of teaching and learning are present.

WHERE CASTE IS PREVALENT, it will be noticed that community participation is not genuine, equal, and universally enjoyable. Participation will be based on self and group interest. This is especially true of economic activities. Those who really stand to gain out of a good road are rarely those who will work to construct it, because such is the division of classes and the division of labour in modern communities. In a feudalistic society, human relationship is not based on community consciousness, but on exploitation and social injustice. Every effort should be made to prevent the appearance of any type of unfairness and exploitation in community activities.

A community which is based on caste will not easily succeed in immediate programmes involving community participation. It is therefore interesting to examine participation pattern in terms of sections of society like children, boys and girls, youth, women types of adult groups, old persons, etc. Unless the environment and family behaviours exert influence and pressure, children are the most capable of easy community participation, not only in play activities, but in pleasurable work activities. Boys and girls may be influenced by sex impulses, but rarely by economic motivation, and they can

contribute more to community participation than even children.

The success of community participation will depend a good deal on youth. They are either under the influence of the Past, or they are inspired by the Future. It is for the community development agency to continuously inspire the youth to continuous community participation. The philosophy and objectives of the Playground is to create mental understanding and emotional integration through virile and pleasurable activities. The Playground should build the spirit of the community, create a new leadership, develop scope and opportunity for leadership, and create the urge for service of the entire community. Youth is the natural leader of children, boys and girls; and with this leadership assured, the birth of a new and integrated, co-operative community is almost certain.

Adults, whether males or females or mixed groups, are not easily amenable to community participation. Their participation depends on the nature of family life, and prevailing community traditions. The struggle for existence or the desire for success compels active and continued participation in economic activities; and the consequence of an economic life steeped in poverty, is that of money-making, or property hoarding which often leads to anxiety, frustration and defeat. They invariably participate on a self-interest basis, and they respond most to gain. Such a psychological foundation is least congenial for community participation. There is in this a desire to shirk effort; and also an implied wish that others

should work for them as much as possible. Under the circumstances. Adults must first experience a new community atmosphere which is created by the recreational and creative efforts of the children and youth. Gradually they will join in, driven by the emotional urges of their children, and perhaps further stimulated by song, dance and religious and social participation.

It is at this stage that an appeal to the mind may prove useful. First the habit of congregation, then a programme of information, followed by a programme of participation may prove a useful technique of community participation of adult groups. But if caste behaviours are strong, then the pattern of participation in recreational activities may indicate the extent of preparation that is needed to make the adults ready for economic development for common good. Social participation in a caste ridden community is slow; and if economic motives are emphasised, even conflicts or unwillingness to participate could arise. Therefore participation for welfare objectives on a basis of service prepare the adults for more difficult economic activities like the organisation of a co-operative, soil conservation, well construction, or road building activities. It is quite evident that caste produces resistance and evasion of participation, but encourages participation for self benefit and personal gain. The Community Projects administration should therefore, realise the importance of gradualness, and a need to phase economic activities so as to develop community participation at any cost.

Old age represents accumulated experience and wisdom ; the sympathy of old persons therefore should be secured for all activities involving community participation. They may not be able to contribute actively ; but their blessings, their presence, their enjoyment of community effort goes a great way to reduce the influence of the caste to hamper community effort.

STIMULUS, ENTHUSIASM, AND AWAKENED INTELLECTUAL INTEREST are the three fundamentals of powerful participation drives. Perhaps the most effective stimulus is a powerful leadership with drive and ability for organisation of the environment, and the management of human beings. In the initial stages, successful community participation depends much on leadership. It is therefore necessary to emphasise the need for community organisers rather than social educators, as the right type of leadership to plan and organise community activities on the basis of community enthusiasm, interest, and felt needs. It is fatal to permit group and caste leadership to lead community participation. This is a major reason why non-representative Panchayats led by caste and selfish leadership fail to produce the right community response to community development. It is desirable that carefully screened youth are prepared and trained for community organisation work in the first instance.

The activation of the different sections of the community should be in terms of carefully prepared programmes which will involve constant participation including creative enjoy-

ment and gradual development of friendly and co-operative relationships. The activities should be simple, social and recreational in character in the beginning ; and an education involving proper understanding and appreciation of economic problems, needs and programmes should immediately follow. This education could begin section wise, and should involve the careful use of audio-visual aids and discussions, promoting decision-making abilities.

A brief statement of possible programmes that gradually remove caste prejudices and habits, developing community consciousness at the same time are given below :—

All adult activities should involve democratic leadership, constant discussion, the habit of understanding the meaning and purpose of activities, and development of decision-making abilities.

It should always be understood that an under-current of caste consciousness and practices will remain in adult activities more than in the other sections of the community, and time must be allowed to permit a withering away of this anti-social consciousness. This will not be achieved if caste leadership is allowed to take hold of adult activities, and therefore the leadership factor is decisive in the programme to eliminate caste consciousness and sectarianism.

It is necessary to emphasise that there is a distinct objective in evolving programmes of children, youth, women and adults separately ; and then bringing them together into a purely social organisation called a village welfare council. This nucleus of

management, which will be a nucleus of community organisation, may consist of two representatives of the youth organisation, two representatives of the women, and two or three representatives of adult activities and the village panchayat. This organisation is "service based", as against the Panchayat which must remain basically political, and therefore "power" based and divisionist in character. Besides, Panchayats are not always "village" based, and therefore they are extra-territorial, representing multi-community groups. True community organisation should as far as possible grow around simple, regional village communities which should gradually develop an emotional integration based on sympathy, co-operation, understanding, and constant activity—the four fundamentals of successful community organisation.

Nothing destroys the caste and sectarian tendencies and prejudices as the emergence of a common and universal prosperity of the entire community. All economic activities have to be characterised to achieve that one objective. The promotion of group prosperity destroys community prosperity; and therefore a general programme emerges to establish community organisation in its spirit and real meaning involving four factors :

1. The presence of a cheerful and optimistic atmosphere created by sectional recreational programmes.

2. The creation of "activised" programmes involving universal participation of separate functional sections of the community creating a new lea-

dership, an experience of organisation and methods, and the enjoyment of creativeness that is involved in the performance of activities.

3. The emergence of a "service" based organisation in the village like a Welfare Council to work on the "service" principle involving constant effort for the good of all.

4. The development for a limited social education programme to develop mental interest, understanding, and decision-making ability.

The above four factors will gradually achieve an emotional integration of the community through constant participation in activities involving general and universal benefits.

It must be emphasised that the exclusion of the children's group from the first combination of youth-women-adult activities is intentional. As long as caste and sectarianism are not eliminated, as long at least the emotional integration of the community is not achieved, it is desirable to allow the children to grow up in a more healthy atmosphere, all by themselves. Let this one-third population of the community grow up in a benevolent environment, in a new atmosphere, receiving and enjoying the right type of basic education which involves the socialisation of the child's attitudes. It is essential that from now on the child must grow up in a casteless atmosphere; education must be for unity; and play and child welfare activities should achieve an emotional health which cannot permit the caste to appear again.

Children should develop leadership amongst themselves at a very early age. They must move and travel to enjoy Nature and realise the vastness of modern life. They must constantly meet others, enjoy companionship, and have scope and opportunity for self-expression in every direction. Thus they can grow up to become nation builders of tomorrow, much better than the nation builders of today. In the youth of today there must be Hope; but in the child of today must be born Certainty.

A concentrated effort, a creative programme of child welfare apart from education, is needed to bring up children outside the experience of fear, neglect and selfishness. The child belongs to three environments: the home, the school, and the larger community. The home is the greatest danger, because it sets child development patterns in the early years. The Balvadi or pre-school is therefore vital to permit children to grow up in a properly laid out environment, adequately fed, in an atmosphere of love and protection, enjoying constant activity and creative effort. Always together with other companions, they will learn to grow up in the unity of play and work life.

The village Welfare Council meanwhile must conceive a comprehensive child welfare programme to create in the child a sense of belonging to the community. The Social Welfare Board has a heavy responsibility, in co-operation with organisations like the Indian Council of Child Welfare, and other children's organisations in the country to make child play the

most creative and healthful experience for child growth. The child must become and remain creative. Frustrated and neglected children, growing in an atmosphere of fear, eventually develop and promote sectarianism to protect themselves and succeed at the cost of others.

The home will be meanwhile gradually softened by the (1) adult recreation programme, (2) the social education programme, (3) and the economic development activities.

It is the failure of education, or the non-existence of education which is the single greatest danger causing a delay in the death of the caste system. The nature and content of education of child between the age of 7 and 14 years will decide whether the social revolution in India is going to activate its basic aims. The establishment of right objectives, the improvement of standards of basic education, the creation of better and more sincere and active teachers, and the presence of right type of experiences of life which will create the right education for the permanent elimination of caste.

One of the indirect forces promoting a class and caste society is the disparity of rural and urban education—the chasm between the village school and the urban universities. The villager has no scope for growth and prosperity unless he goes to the town, and then to the city. After failing in the competitive life of the city, he often returns to the village to use the advantage of education for the purpose of exploiting the rural population. This disintegrates the commu-

nity. The standard of rural education must therefore immensely improve ; and opportunities for economic success must be available in rural areas. At the same time the opportunities in the city to achieve and amass wealth and property and power must be severely curtailed. It is inadequately realised that the city is an indirect support to the economic foundations of the caste system in the village.

Whilst dynamism of participation can destroy the usual expression and habits of mental behaviour, it is yet necessary to investigate the various social forces, practices and traditions which foster caste, sectarianism, or separatism of any kind. The Community Project authorities, who are even now unable to cover the entire country successfully, could rule out any assistance to a village which persists in the practice of untouchability. Or special programmes could be devised to remove untouchables from villages where there is untouchability, to settle them on land or artisanship away to more socially healthy communities. On the whole the community and the government has been over-tolerent and over-sensitive about the historical practices of less sensitive and socially unconscious communities.

It is desirable to conceive participation, and activity programmes which

foster universal participation, and leave out activities based on caste groups in the village community. The village well, hotel, places of worship, etc. are environmental symbols that perpetuate the growth of mental behaviour and individual activity patterns approving caste. They should be removed, or their influence negated by more healthy community practices in the opposite direction.

Activities requiring the use of caste are undesirable from the point of view of community participation. The practice of the community development authorities receiving cash or labour according to the capacity to pay or work may be expedient ; but it eventually perpetuates the ability of cash to escape labour. Pecuniary contribution in a socialist State should never be equated with creative or productive contributions.

Innumerable creative and joy producing activities are possible evading the use of cash and property, and such activities generate community consciousness. In the categories are activities involving individual contribution to common good. Happiness in collective endeavour for common good must be experienced to realise the immense creative potentiality of this type of casteless living.

CASTEISM AND SOCIAL EDUCATION—Role of the Social Education Worker

Meher C. Nanavatty

IN the eradication of casteism from our social life, although it is gratifying to note that the Social Education worker is considered a vital contributor, it is necessary to evaluate how far he can prove effective in practice. Casteism as a plague of social life is all pervading. It is the purpose of this article to discuss all pervading nature of the social disease and show what contribution the Social Education worker can make.

THERE IS NO AGREED DEFINITION of Casteism. Many a times in an effort to eradicate casteism, caste is taken synonymous to casteism.

Man lives in and through small groups and as such he is the product of group life. The group life begins to influence his personality from his very birth. The Family is the most vital social group that conditions his outlook. The outlook of the Family is in turn conditioned by the influence of the neighbourhood and the caste. At times, specially in rural areas, neighbourhood consists of the families belonging to the same caste with the result that the influence

of caste is deepened considerably. It is this influence, if in-bred and made to create an attitude of superiority in the mind of its members as against other group associations, that results into casteism. In other words, when an individual is conditioned by the attitude that his in-group is superior to all other out-groups and he must give preference to this in-group and its members, that he exhibits an attitude of casteism. In fact this influence of casteism makes its imprint so deep that the man begins to see every other relation in relation to his caste. This ingroup feeling is exhibited not only as a result of the influence—we may say negative influence—of the traditional caste but also of religious groups, linguistic and provincial groups. It is this bane of casteism and parochialism that prevails in our social life.

There are two alternative solutions to this intense in-group feeling resulting into narrowness of outlook. One is, to avoid all small groups that influence the outlook of the child, so that later the attitude of in-group may not result into casteism. The second is to develop the group life in such a way as to enlarge the relation of the individual from one group to an-

other, thus avoiding the development of the in-group feeling against out-groups.

The first solution of relating an individual directly to the larger community without the intermediate relation of small groups although easy to conceive, does not function effectively in practice. No child directly relates to the community as such. He passes from one small group to another and eventually establishes his relation with the community. Besides, the relation with the community is an inter-group relation. No community can exist or function without its vital groups such as the family, the neighbourhood, the play-group, the worship group, the education (formal) group, the business group and the work group. It is wrong, therefore, to imagine a community relation without inter-group relation. Thus, to avoid group relation and intra-group relation and to hope for direct relation with the community is unsound and impracticable.

This leads us to the second solution of avoiding the development of in-group attitude and enlarging the group relation gradually to inter-group relation and community relation. In other words, if the groups are considered as an integral part of the community, every group influence has to be so broad-based as to divert the attention of the individual to the larger interest of the community. Thus the danger of in-group feeling resulting into parochial attitude can be overcome. In fact, each group should see its own usefulness in the larger interest of the community ever

widening the outlook of its members and merging it into the wider interest of mankind.

Casteism or Parochialism is also the result of the fear and insecurity created in the very existence of the minority group. This struggle to survive makes the feeling of in-group more intense. In short, the effect of casteism or parochialism spreading beyond social life into political and work life is to be recognised as a continuous struggle of in-group versus out-group.

What is the solution of this continuous process that corrodes our social, political and work life? The answer does not lie in making speeches to attack casteism, parochialism, linguism and communalism from the public platform. In fact, this attack makes the in-group feeling more in-grown. The solution lies in retracing the very process that has resulted in the development of casteism or parochialism and creating new processes of enlarging one's horizon with more enlightened in-group and inter-group relation.

BEFORE WE CONSIDER specific steps to be taken to eradicate casteism, it is important to consider the contribution of Social Education to the life of an individual citizen. Social Education by its very emphasis on social relation, emphasises the educational process for enlightened life in society. It is a process of emphasising the importance of social adjustment and social relation. The concept of adjustment and social relation is a dynamic

concept. It implies accepting the present social system and gradually changing the social values for enlightenment and progress. The process of Social Education is a process of conditioning the attitude of the individual through participation in group life and in situations created through the activities of social organisations. Although direct preaching is attempted, it has not proved very effective. The process of Social Education starts at the mother's breast and continues in the play-group, the school, the neighbourhood, the caste, the work group, and political and other social groups. Thus, it can be said that to the extent that this process of Social Education is not effective in combating the in-group feeling against out-groups that the casteism becomes in-grown. It needs also to be reckoned that Social Education is not the work of one individual. It is a resulting process of the working of various social institutions and organizations such as the home, the family, the neighbourhood, the caste, the play-group, the school, the library, the temple, the work-place, the recreation centre and the community. Various individuals like the mother, the father, the teacher, the playmate, the priest and the leaders of the civic, economic, political and social organizations play an influencing role in making an individual socially educated. If Social Education is to prove effective against casteism, it has to permeate in the effort of all the organisations and individuals referred to above.

The solution of casteism similarly would lie in influencing group feelings

at all levels in such a way that the out-group and the inter-group feeling may emerge into community feeling for better life through joint effort. To begin with, the fight against casteism, if it is at all a fight, is to be made in every heart. The individuals who are adults should be helped to realise the ill-effect of the in-group feeling on the larger interest of the community. Once this realization is brought home, individuals will have to feel conscious of the prevailing bias in their attitude and try to overcome them in their inter-relationship. It is at this level that the Social Education worker can help, not through speeches and advice but through the creation of situations which can help the individual participant to realise the ill-effect of casteism. This can be done through participation of one group with another group and relating the activities of the group in the service of the whole community.

In the life of the child and the youth, the family and the home contribute vitally in conditioning their attitude to other groups versus the caste group. In fact, the seeds of casteism and parochialism are laid in the minds of children and youth through the attitude of parents and adults residing in the family. If the attack against casteism is made at this level, it may prove more effective. The programme of education of parents should, therefore, include education against casteism.

The ill-effect of casteism is more prevalent in the educational institute run by caste organisations or religious groups. It is, therefore, necessary to remove this source of pollution al-

together. Even when a caste organisation is established for social purpose, care needs to be taken to prevent the intense in-group feeling created through its activities. Efforts need to be made gradually to widen the outlook and interest of participants and relating their services to the larger country.

Similarly, religious institutions should avoid preaching narrow parochial outlook. It is rightly said that "religion to live religions must die." The neighbourhood plays an equally vital role in conditioning the attitude of the inhabitants in rural areas. As suggested earlier, the neighbourhood usually consist of families of the same caste living side by side. Under the circumstances, there is greater danger of in-breeding the narrowness of the caste outlook in the attitude of the inhabitants.

THE VILLAGE IN ITS effort to improve community life has an opportunity to overcome the negative attitudes of in-group through active participation of the villagers in the larger interest of the whole community. The Panchayat or the Community Council can contribute effectively in relating the interest of the individuals from their in-groups to out-groups through the organisation of service programme for its inhabitants. At this level the Social Education Worker once again can play an effective role in guiding the working of the various organisations and institutions in diverting the interest of the individuals from their in-groups to out-groups.

The school as an educational institute, by the very nature of its responsibility for educating the younger generation, has its own contribution to make in conditioning the minds of the children and youth against casteism. The teachers themselves should first be conscious of their own attitude towards casteism and control giving expression to the same in their work with their pupils. They should try to generate situations in the class and in the school whereby the students are helped to develop healthy attitudes of treating all the members of the community as equals and relating positively with them in the larger interest of the community. This could be achieved through the creation of various situations as suggested earlier, both through the curricular and co-curricular activities. The experience of the pupils should be happy and satisfying so as to encourage in the pupils a favourable outlook for relating themselves to others. The school may have as well to undo the attitude of casteism created in the children at home and in the neighbourhood. At present, by and large, the school as an educational institute does not seem to perform this role effectively. The whole process of socialization so vital in the education of child needs to be emphasised and re-emphasised.

Political parties and their leaders have their own responsibility in creating the atmosphere of expectation against casteism. If they themselves have bias of casteism, the attitude of the public is likely to be effected in favour of casteism. It is at this level

once again that the battle against casteism is to be fought. In short, it is to be realised that the battle against casteism is not an isolated effort. If it is to be effective it must be effective; it must be a continuous effort of all individuals, groups and organisations at all levels. In addition, effort needs to be made to stimulate various community groups and organisations such as the youth, the workers' and women's group, the teachers group, the workers group, to continuously fight against the influence of parochialism and casteism in social life.

BY THE VERY DEFINITION of the Social Education as an educational process of enlightened social life, the work against casteism is included in its activities. The worker in the field can function at different levels with individuals, groups and the community. At the same time, it needs to be noted that the worker is entrusted with heavy responsibilities of promotion of various other social education activities through the organisations of community groups. Although he can help these organisations to condition the attitude of their members against casteism, he as an individual worker can only play a limited role, a role more of a stimulator and enabler rather than a doer. In fact, if he is not able to understand the very process of development of the attitude of casteism, he is inclined to take to the easy practice of a propagandist, thus remaining usually at a surface level and at times even creating antagonism against himself and his work. This

does not mean that he should not develop his convictions and stand for them in action. He as a public worker, however, has to take stock of all processes of community life and help in generating forces systematically more through education rather than through propaganda. This he can attempt by creating a climate of understanding the evils of casteism and developing opinion in favour of its eradication through the activities of various community groups and organisations and concentrating on his role as an enabler and a stimulator. Besides, there is a danger of others developing an attitude of complacency towards casteism once the work is entrusted to a worker like this. In fact, this is actually happening in practice. Although the State has enacted laws against the practice of untouchability, it is far from being realised in practice. After passing the Act people seem to feel that it is the responsibility of the law giver to enforce law forgetting, however, that without their active cooperation and conscious participation, the plague of casteism cannot be eradicated. In fact, all the forces influencing the attitude of casteism are to be attacked simultaneously and continuously if the results are to be achieved. No worker can ever dream of fulfilling the role of social organisations and institutions that naturally belongs to them in eradicating casteism from social life. He can only act along with others in generating forces and setting situations for the removal of the social disease of casteism.

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. MESSAGES	i—ii
2. NOTES AND COMMENTS	iii—iv
3. SOCIAL EDUCATION IN URBAN AREAS —Seminar Documents	... 1
4. URBAN SOCIAL EDUCATION —The Climate For It	— <i>Dr. S.D. Punekar</i> ... 17
5. COMMUNITY CENTRES IN NEW ENGLISH HOUSING ESTATES	— <i>Sewell Harris</i> ... 22
6. URBAN COMMUNITY CENTRES WORK IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES	— <i>Peter Kuenstler</i> ... 28
7. SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE ON ADULT EDUCATION —The Challenge Before It	— <i>Richard Attygalle</i> ... 33
8. FROM THE ARCHIVES —The Presidential Address of Sir Shah Sulaiman	... 36

*The Indian Adult Education Association welcomes reproduction
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Fifteenth Adult Education Conference—Three Messages

“**W**HATEVER our approach to our various problems in India might be, it is necessary to base it on the growth of proper and widespread education. Essentially, that education must be directed to the young, from children upwards. But older people cannot be left out, and they must be tackled. That I suppose is the main purpose of what is called social education. I should like, therefore, to send my good wishes to the next Conference of the Indian Adult Education Association.

“While adults should be approached directly in this matter in so far as possible, I am inclined to think that the easiest way to approach them is through their children who go to school. If the child’s mind is awakened and his curiosity roused, he comes back to his parents and tells them all about it. This is particularly important in regard to such subjects as the eradication of casteism.

“It is generally admitted that casteism is thoroughly unsuitable in the present context of our society. It is disappearing in its original form, but is now putting on a political garb, which is even worse than its previous form. The importance of dealing with this matter is obvious, and I am glad that the Conference has chosen this theme for its next session”.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

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“**Y**OU have taken, this year, as the theme of your discussions, the problems confronting social education in urban areas, and in so doing are taking a stage further the discussions initiated at your conference in Calcutta in December 1957 on workers’ education.

“It is fitting that your seminar should turn to this theme. In establishing a Regional Centre at Calcutta for the study of the social implications of industrialization, Unesco has emphasized the significance of the great changes that are taking place in the social structure of ancient societies. The impact of technology expressing itself more and more decisively through the Five Year Plan makes urgent the need for developing services for the further and continuing education of adults. In the course of this year, there have been established in the Indian Union, on an experimental basis, permanent adult schools in which adult education organizations represented at your conference are co-

operating. It is of special interest that these schools are in or near urban areas and that the results of this experiment may provide the basis for a national system of adult education services. I have no doubt that the discussions of the conference and the seminar will contribute greatly to the needs of city dwellers as they face the manifold problems of social change.

“It is our belief that the growth and vitality of democratic institutions depend upon the degree to which the members of a society are able to comprehend the nature of change and to retain the initiative in the face of it. This is the great task of social education and in the measure that it helps the individual to exercise social responsibility, adult education contributes to the fulfilment of the human personality and the harmony of social relations.

“It is therefore with a deep sense of the importance of your conference that I send you my best wishes for the success of your deliberations. Your thinking and your conclusions will benefit the Secretariat of Unesco in its efforts to assist Member States to relate their programmes of education to the complex processes of economic and social change”.

Dr. Luther Evans, Director-General, Unesco, Paris.

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“I strongly hold the view that caste is an anachronism in modern India and an impediment in the way of national solidarity. It is losing its hold on the highly educated so that its eradication is essentially dependent on proper orientation of people’s mind through education. Such education must necessarily be part of social education so far as the vast bulk of the population is concerned. Since agencies are now being created to influence their attitudes in other important directions, the time is ripe for intensifying efforts. I welcome the holding of the Conference and wish it every success.”

Shri C. D. Deshmukh, Chairman, University Grants Commission

Notes and Comments

Issues at Lucknow

THE 15th All India Adult Education Conference meets in Lucknow on the 13th and 14th December, this year. The Conference, as such meetings always do, will afford an opportunity to adult education workers to examine in retrospect the progress of the movement and arrive at conclusions from the experience gained during the year. This year, however, the Conference will mean much more than the Conferences that are held annually, for, the year marks the completion of 20 years of the existence of the Association and delegates will have to interpret not merely a year but two decades of experience that will crowd before them. To sift and sort the relevant from the irrelevant from this wealth of experience is in itself a formidable task, but what makes it even more difficult is that the experience has been varied and circumstances have changed over the period so radically that the application of the lessons of the past would demand a great deal of discernment and discretion. On the contrary, it is also true that experience matures ideas so that in examining some of the basic assumptions on which the movement has developed, we are in a position to bring a maturer mind.

To begin with, an impressive feature of this period is the variety of means that have been tried out in social education. The emphasis on literacy with which the movement started has yielded place to several other aspects of adult education and today we have in social education programmes, activities concerned not only with literacy, but others like people's colleges, recreational and cultural activities, extensive use of audio-visual aids the like. The need for this large variety of means reflects the wider area of influence which is sought to be brought under the ambit social education. Besides experience soon proved false the fond hopes cherished by adult education workers that with the removal of illiteracy, adult education would have accomplished its aims. For not only was the acquisition of literacy an almost impossible task for the majority of illiterates, but also that the acquisition of literacy most often stopped at the ability to sign the name.

This however, is not to say the early spokesman of adult education were unaware of the limitations of literacy programmes, as the following quotation from the presidential address delivered by the late Sir Shah Sulaiman at the First Adult Education Conference held in 1938 will indicate :

"If adult education were confined within a limited scope and attention be concentrated solely on literacy as a narrow objective, adult schools are not likely to survive long. Men who have to earn their living by hard work during the day are not likely to be in a mood to come at night to take instruction in literacy. Their minds not being as easily impressionable as those of the young, it cannot even be expected that they would make much progress in learning how to read and write, and like the boys of the primary schools may forget what they have learnt after leaving schools."

Experience these past twenty years have amply borne out Sir Shah Sulaiman's words and we have the comments of Prof. Mujeeb at the 15th All India Adult Education Conference :

"A recent survey, based on random sampling, of five Hindi speaking states that the actually literate are only a fraction, and not a large fraction, of these listed as literate. We may dispute the findings. The fraction that is actually literate may be somewhat larger. But so may be the number of those found to be illiterate or almost illiterate. The question is not one of arithmetic, of small or large percentages. We use glasses to acquire normal sight, not for relatively better sight. Our effort is not well used, or well directed, if the main result is to convert absolute into relative illiteracy."

A redeeming feature of this situation is that considerable advance has been made in the solution of the several problems that have stood in the way of an effective literacy programme. The problem of follow up reading material which has been the biggest hurdle in the way of effective literacy activities is now receiving the attention it had needed and a great deal of effort is going into research on

production techniques, reading tastes and aptitude of adults and other allied problems. One problem however, which has yet, apparently, defied solution is that of a suitable organisational agency for implementing literacy programmes. In the early stages the common practice was to entrust literacy work to the school master's leisure hours but this was shown to be ineffective for reasons which were lucidly stated again by Sir Shah Sulaiman :

“Nor should night schools be a mere device for day-school teachers to earn an extra income by holding classes outside school hours. I would suggest that the instructors in such schools should not be recruited exclusively from the ranks of the day school-teachers who would like to have an extra remuneration in their spare time, but should consist mainly of those who follow the trade and the profession they teach. Teachers who teach in day-schools for several hours a day, would feel too tired to continue their work at night. Over-worked teachers are neither likely to be enthusiastic about working overtime, nor to have a fresh mind for such work.”

One would have thought this robust common sense reinforced by the experience of these years had taken the issue beyond debate but tendencies are evident which are reviving it ; their appears to be a school of thought, influential enough to take notice, which is anxious to lay the burden of literacy on the school teacher. If this policy is implemented we might at the very outset give up any expectation that our literacy programmes will yield in future any results better than in the past despite the advance in techniques we have made.

With regard to the other programmes in social education conditions congenial to their application have developed only since Independence—more particularly since the dawn of the era of planning which was ushered in with the First Five Year Plan introduced in 1951. While it is too early yet to assess, in a comprehensive manner, the effect of these programmes indispositions are clear, with regard to their efficiency. The progress of programmes are being hampered by the absence of a proper organisational structure. The government has taken on itself a big share of work in the field

and the official field workers' attitudes have ably described by Prof. Mujeeb :

“The teacher has his syllabus prescribed, his periods assigned; he knows what registers he has to fill; he knows the rules about salary and D.A. and leave; he knows when to expect a promotion and when to fear or hope for a transfer. His life is an example of continuity without change. He has now, because of the exertions of forward-looking educationists, to sit through lectures or to attend workshops or seminars. He has sometimes to formulate in words what is called his ‘experience’, to repeat substantially what he knows. My arithmetic has always been bad, and I cannot give in figures how many times the same things would be repeated if we had twenty seminars, each attended by fifty persons. But you can guess the figure. Social education workers at all levels are not less guilty of confusing thought with repetition, or with the passing around of cliches and technical terms from mouth to mouth, seminar to seminar, conference to conference. Earnest and enthusiastic government officers add official slang to the technical terms and cliches appropriate to the subject they are dealing with, and mistake precise correspondence between scheme and budget, idea and expenditure, for serious thought.”

We have not accepted—except for purposes of slogans—the solution suggested at the First Conference :

“Education should essentially be a matter of local interest. It should be the genuine concern of the Municipalities and Town Area Committee to help such schemes and also to supervise them. And private philanthropy must in an equal degree offer generous help.”

This view was subsequently reiterated time and again at various Conferences and it has become somewhat of a fashion in Government quarters to voice similar view but the official attitude towards non-official agencies continues to be a bureaucratic one—benignly patronising or svavely evasive.

Thus, twenty years after the First Conference we are still faced with the problem of organisation. Either we firmly decided to solve it or else social education is in the danger of stagnation. This is the challenge at Lucknow.

Social Education in Urban Areas — Seminar Documents.

1. Working Paper

WE have now in the rural areas a regular set-up for Social Education. Whatever its weakness, it has ensured a place for Social Education in rural development and has created a consciousness among people that Social Education, or education in general, is one aspect in which they have to catch up with the times.

There is no such assured place for Social Education in urban areas. In fact, it seems that whatever Social Education work (in the form of adult literacy, for example) was being done in cities and towns prior to the introduction of the Community Development Movement, has been generally speaking, either stopped or drastically reduced, because of the need of funds for rural development work.

Is it necessary to launch Social Education in urban areas on as organised a basis as has been done in rural areas? Of course, any educational effort made in an organised way is better than leaving it to a chance combination of social forces. The question really means—should Government take initiative in putting Social Education in urban areas on an organised footing?

The reasons against Government taking a direct hand in organising Social Education in urban areas are :

(a) Social forces in urban areas

are, on the whole favourable for Social Education. Government need not add their might to them.

(b) There are many more men of initiative in towns and cities than in villages and it should be left to them to organise the work.

(c) Cities are wealthier than the villages and men of initiative should mobilise funds to carry on Social Education work and not depend on Government.

There is much force in these considerations. However, the fact remains that in spite of these advantages, Social Education in urban areas is in a chaotic state and, as has been pointed out, is probably worse off than before; some tangible effort on the part of Government is, therefore, necessary.

What is the urgency of Social Education work in urban areas? Why not leave it to later and better times when the *per capita* income is a little higher and Government and men can afford to spend more on education? At the present, it is argued, the income of individuals and Government is insufficient to deal with demands even more pressing than education.

The urgency lies in the fact that there is more frustration and unhappi-

ness in urban areas than in rural areas by the neglect of Social Education. We suggest :

- (a) Education is a necessity peculiarly urgent in urban areas. Take for example literacy in urban areas. For a large proportion of citizens — much more than in the rural areas—it is an instrument of livelihood.
- (b) In cities there is a loss of primary group values. It is well-known that most of the evils of urban life arise from this. An educational effort to repair these values is called for ; otherwise we will have nothing with which to combat the destructive tendencies which arise in cities and which we see coming up whenever a real, hard problem comes up before our people. Witness, for example the disturbances, mostly confined to cities, which marred the life of some of our cities at the time of the States Reorganization Committee's report.

ASSUMING THAT THERE IS A NEED for special Social Education effort in the cities, what should be its pattern ? Should it be the same as obtains in rural areas or should it be different ?

Social Education as a concept is of course the same everywhere. But its actual pattern will have to differ from place to place according to the needs and circumstances of the population.

The three main aspects of Social

Education as practised in rural areas are :-(a) community organisation, (b) education and culture, and (c) its orientation towards community development as embodied in the Five-Year Plans of the country. In urban areas, due to the largeness of the population and a much greater diversification of skills and occupation than is the case in rural areas, the gamut of Social Education will perhaps be less than in rural areas. For example, the orientation towards the Five Year Plans will have to be much less. The pattern of Social Education in urban areas may be as follows :

(a) The greatest problem in the cities arises out of the loss of values which obtain naturally in small face-to-face communities. The atomised individual then becomes a prey to anti-social tendencies. The problem is to build up these small face-to-face groups. There is greater need to do this among the adolescent and youth age groups than in any other. Also, there is greater need in the cities to arouse civic consciousness, a sense of pride (or shame) in the condition of life in one's city and the desire to take action co-operatively—in the Social Education way—for tackling the various problems concerned with life in one's city. As things are, certain interests in cities, mainly sectional, separatist and even anti-social, have a clear field in this sphere.

One of the basic items in the work of urban Social Education workers is therefore to build up urban Community Centres and youth clubs. Community Centres will provide opportunity to know their neighbours as human

beings which is sadly missing to people in a small part of the town or city. This would be in itself a big achievement.

The primary function of Youth Groups will be to develop civic consciousness as indicated earlier. Civic consciousness cannot develop in a vacuum. It is nurtured by developing the activities of Youth Groups. In addition to the promotion of educational and cultural activities mentioned later in the set-up, the Youth Groups should take up programmes directly concerned with the betterment of town or city life, such as :

- Campaigns to increase open spaces and their maintenance as clean areas ;
- Beautification of the town, especially public places and their right use ;
- Better civic habits, such as the queue system ;
- Cleanliness campaigns ;
- Public Safety practices etc.
- Campaigns for essential civic institutions such as libraries.

(b) In the educational field the pattern in cities will differ from that in the rural areas, e.g. in the rural areas, literacy campaigns leave the neo-literate without his bearings. The practice is bad even for rural areas, for towns and cities it is worse, since there literacy is an instrument of livelihood in a very real sense. The need in the cities is, therefore, for setting up regular schools for adults, which will take the learner from Grade I to the Matriculation, which may entitle him to enter a University, if he so desires.

Similarly, at least the larger cities should have Evening College facilities to enable workers in offices and in other employment, to take up higher education where possible.

Besides, these classes connected with the regular educational system of the country, in urban areas there is also need and scope for informal courses of lectures for the public on home decoration, public safety (including rules of the road), public hygiene etc, and courses in first-aid, management of crowds, beautification of public places etc, for members and specially leaders of Youth Groups. There may indeed be special courses for the latter in the management and programmes of Youth Groups. Training in orderly and seemingly conduct in group and public gatherings would make for efficiency and harmony in our public bodies and facilitate transaction of business.

(c) The greatest cultural agency for urban areas which has proved its value again and again in city after city is the Library. Almost every city has now a programme of setting up libraries in its area. One of the finest service the cities can take up, as indicated earlier, is to bring pressure on the authorities for setting up libraries and also *educating the public in a worthy use of them where they exist*. Associated with the libraries, or as a movement in its own right, all larger cities should have their Vidyadan Sabhas, regular organisations for organising lectures. Wherever possible, Universities could undertake this work, just as the Delhi University did last year. The practice of setting up Joint Committees com-

posed of Universities and other representatives, so successful for instance in the U.K., should be investigated.

A third type of cultural organisation needed in cities are Drama Clubs. Drama as an instrument of education, especially in social matters is as potent as it has been neglected in this country. It is a very good programme for Youth Clubs to stage cultural (not propaganda) dramas in cities and thus help to bring a new spirit of cultural appreciation to the very doors of the people.

There is also good scope for organising radio-listening groups in cities. Enterprising cities can set up organised trips to museums and zoos for the benefit of their citizens.

WHAT IS THE ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP which an urban area should have to put into action a well-thought out programme of Social Education ?

There are three alternatives :

- (a) A state Government may set up an organisation for Social Education work in the same way as it has done in rural areas.
- (b) The Municipal Committees or Corporations of the town should take up the responsibility of Social Education work and set up a regular committee for this purpose.
- (c) An autonomous Council should be set up for the purpose by the State Government.

What are the merits and demerits of these various alternatives ? The Seminar will discuss this in the light of experience gained in cities like Bombay, Delhi, etc.

It seems that the third alternative would be the best way of organising Social Education in urban areas. In the first place, there is such a great variety of talent and resources in urban areas, especially large cities, that only a non-official body of citizens invested with the requisite authority can best mobilize them. Secondly, many Social Education agencies may actually be in the field in a town and what is required is just to co-ordinate their activities by informal agreements between themselves, rather than through action at Government level. Thirdly, allowing the citizens to manage their affairs is the best way to train them for civic responsibilities. State Departments naturally tend to be more sympathetic to ways of regimentation and these are calculated to kill the spirit which should sustain Social Education.

Thus it seems best that such urban units should have Co-ordinating Councils for Social Education. Should the Councils be set up by State Government or the Municipal Committees concerned ?

From the point of view of civic responsibility the latter alternative would be the better one. The advantage of the former would be that as the State Government may have to bear a part of the cost, it may be best to give it the privilege of nominating a majority of the Council. Even if a Municipal Committee is allowed to nominate its Co-ordinating Council, it

should not be a mere sub-Committee of the Municipal Committee. It should be an independent autonomous organisation. Why ?

The functions of a Co-ordinating Council may be as follows :

- (i) To co-ordinate into a practical plan and an effective programme the work of the various institutions which have to contribute to Social Education.
- (ii) To encourage and assist individuals in making their contribution to Social Education work in their city.
- (iii) To help individuals and institutions in Social Education work with literature and experts.
- (iv) To have machinery for some of its own programmes to fill any gaps that may exist in the programmes in practice, for example literacy work, where an organisation may not be in existence to take it up.
- (v) To create a fund from as many sources as possible for carrying on its work.
- (vi) To maintain liaison with similar Councils working in other cities.

Each Co-ordinating Council should have the following Staff :

A Social Education Officer, who will be Secretary of the Council, its Administrative Officer and the Technical Head of the Social Education Service in the Town/City, and

An adequate number of Social Education Supervisors—say one supervisor for every thirty workers, A corps of trained Youth Leaders and Community Centre Organisers.

The number of the latter personnel that Co-ordinating Council can employ will depend on its finances or perhaps an area may be lucky in voluntary or part-time workers. At any rate, among the Supervisors, there should be one well-trained officer each for youth work and Community Centres.

We have not counted in the above staff, Librarians, Adult School Teachers, Lecturers and other personnel needed for the comprehensive type of Social Education work indicated in the last section. It is assumed that there will be specialised agencies in these fields and the Co-ordinating Council will only have to co-ordinate their activities and programmes.

What are the various agencies which can be mobilised for Social Education work in towns ? The Seminar will, in this connection, discuss the contribution of such institutions as Universities, Colleges, labour unions, etc. In some areas the agencies may not be there. The Co-ordinating Council may then either start and run these services itself or aid suitable agencies for the purpose. Which would be the better way ? Perhaps it will depend on the circumstances in each area. Or perhaps, it will be desirable for the co-ordinating Councils to run these services itself in smaller towns and to aid other agencies in bigger towns.

Every State Government has now

accepted the necessity of having a Deputy or Assistant D.P.I. for Social Education and many States actually have these Officers. The Co-ordinating Council will be responsible for their work to such Officers. There is no doubt these Councils, especially those of the bigger towns, will have a large degree of autonomy. In fact, that is one reason why we consider it necessary that they should be non-official bodies. But in matters of reports, accounting for grants received from State Governments, financial and administrative efficiency and integrity in general, the Councils must be responsible to the Heads of the Social Education Departments in their States.

SOCIAL EDUCATION IN URBAN AREAS should be as much the responsibility of Government as Social Education in rural areas. There is, therefore, no need to think out a separate financial pattern for the former. In rural as well as urban areas, it is expected that people will not only come forward to participate in Social Education activities, but will also contribute financially to some degrees. It is expected that public contributions will be available to a somewhat larger degree in towns and cities.

Let us, however, analyse the financing of the various parts of the programme as given in this paper.

(a) *Co-ordinating Councils* : State Governments must bear the expenditure, except in cities of over three lakh population, where this should be the responsibility of Municipal Committees/Corporations.

The Seminar will discuss whether it is desirable to have one practice for all towns, or whether it may vary as indicated above. If uniformity is recommended, should Co-ordinating Councils be financed by State Government or Municipalities ?

The expenditure on Co-ordinating Councils including that on the staff and office.

(b) *Community Centres* : It should be made compulsory by law that any agency putting up a town or a residential quarter should provide a place for a Community Centre and a Library. Legislation is necessary because Government itself has neglected in this respect.

In the existing residential areas, it should be the responsibility of Municipal bodies to provide accommodation for Community Centres. The cost of equipping the centre may be shared between the Municipalities and residents. The cost of maintaining the Centres also may be kept elastic. In very poor areas it should be the responsibility of the Municipal body; in more progressive areas it should belong to residents. There is scope for variations in between.

(c) The cost of training Community Centre Organisers and Youth Workers should be borne by the State Governments and the Government of India between themselves. There should be a permanent institution for training these workers. The necessary cost on salaries etc. of such staff should be borne by State Governments at least to a minimum degree. Over and above this minimum, the Co-ordinating Councils

should tax voluntary resources. The minimum should be one Community Centre Organiser and one Youth Worker for every 50,000 population.

(d) Cost of Adult Schools should be the responsibility of the State Education Department. Of course, the adults in their schools should be charged small fees. Existing school buildings should be utilised, until such time as it could afford to give the schools their own building. Similar should be the pattern for Evening Colleges.

(e) Informal courses should be held in Community Centres and their cost should be borne in the main by those who take the course.

(f) Library service is the responsibility of the State Government. Similar is the case with museums.

(g) Co-ordinating Councils should tap voluntary resources for raising drama groups, radio-listening groups etc. except that some aid may be given for equipment.

(h) Similarly, initial assistance may be given for starting Vidyadan Sabhas. But apart from this aid, they should depend solely on voluntary efforts or should try to be self-supporting.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA :

1. Should ask State Governments to work out a scheme of Social Education in urban areas as recommended by the Seminar to be included in the Third Five Year Plan.

2. Should, during the latter part of the Second Five Year Plan, make arrangements for training instructors, for training of Youth Leaders and Community centre organisers for urban areas.

3. Should provide Community Centre and Library accommodation for all new townships that it sets up. In fact it should bring up in consultation with State Governments, legislation calculated to secure that any agency (including Government) responsible for planning new residential localities must provide Community Centres and Library building, at the rate of one building each for a population of 25,000.

STATE GOVERNMENT SHOULD :

1. Prepare schemes of Social Education in urban areas to be included in the Third Five Year Plan.

2. Set up training centres for Community Centre Organisers and Youth Leaders for urban areas.

3. Set up adult schools in all urban and industrial areas.

4. Set up Community Centre buildings and Library buildings at the rate of one building for 25,000 population in all townships or housing states it sets up.

5. Bring up as early as possible library legislation to enable them to set up library service in all urban areas, which in addition to serving the local population, will also radiate library service to the surrounding rural areas.

Comments . . .

THERE are various groups living in an urban area. Each of these groups has different needs and can be motivated towards education differently. It is, therefore, desirable that a survey should be made and the population in an urban area divided into groups. Their needs and manner in which educational programmes are to be conducted among them should be separately studied.

IN REGARD TO LITERACY, my feeling is that the effort has to be decentralised and everyone stimulated to participate in it. The teachers of all institutions and the high school and college students should be yoked for the purpose. An atmosphere should be created in which it should become incumbent on everyone to make literate a few of those who come in intimate contact with him. The process of enforcing it through rules and regulations may also be studied in conjunction with the educational authorities operating in the area concerned.

Correspondence courses and radio classes may be added to the adult schools as agencies of education.

Private examinations may be conducted for those not going to organised institutions so that their attainments can be judged and given proper recognition.

AS REGARDS SOCIAL EDUCATION Councils, my feeling is that private organisations should be fully represented on these Councils. Secondly, these Councils should not undertake any direct activity, but should confine themselves only to coordination of the activities of various organisations and stimulate new individuals and institutions to come into the field. The Councils should not enter into competition with these agencies. Undertaking fulfilled activities will also add to the cost of these councils. It is desirable that this cost should be kept down as much as possible.

D. P. Nayyar

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BASIC factors that effect their attitudes and behaviour patterns in urban areas are :

- (a) Housing conditions,
- (b) Neighbourhood facilities and Community Organizations ;
- (c) General level of the civic education which determines civic values and attitudes. In other words, urban social development is governed by the physical conditions of the neighbourhood ; the organisation and set-up of local communities and the mental and cultural make-up of the people. For the achievement of these ends,

the provision of housing facilities under healthy conditions and the elimination of slums is essential. This Board, with the assistance of the State Government, is trying to meet this challenge in the shape of construction workers' colonies under the Industrial Housing Scheme and provision of rehousing accommodation for the slum dwellers under the Slum Clearance Scheme.

COMMUNITY CENTRES should be established in the various neighbourhoods of the town at the rate of one centre for a population of about 25 to 35 thousand persons, varying with the density of the population. These Community Centres should have a community building with suitable surroundings, a Library and Reading Room and facilities for social activities.

These Community Centres should also provide for a net work of civic educational activities including the following :

- (1) Adult Literacy Programme;
- (2) Study groups on civic matters;
- (3) Collection of civic information;
- (4) Organizing discussions and display of audio-visual material including films on health, education, traffic, housing and good living;
- (5) Cultural activities;

- (6) Organizing campaigns for cleanliness and development of good civic habits.

These organizations should be set up by local Mohalla people and should receive assistance in carrying out the various programmes from the Municipal and State Authorities.

B. P. Sahi

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ON page 3 of the Working Paper in para (b) the statement is made the literacy campaigns leave the neo-literate without his bearings. Many would question the truth of this statement because facts do not support it. I think literacy helps neo-literates to *establish* his bearings.

On page 4, before going to 'organizational' setup perhaps three paragraphs should be added; one on "Workers' Education", the second on "Citizenship Education" and the third on "Women's Education", as patterns of work in urban areas.

IN THE ORGANISATIONAL PART beginning on page 4, a paragraph may be added on utilising to the fullest extent facilities available in urban areas, such as primary schools, middle schools and High Schools for holding adult classes in the evenings.

The Working Paper does not go into the methods and techniques of Social Education in urban areas. There are certain media of communication which are more suited for use in urban areas than in rural areas, for exam-

ple, radio and the movie. The Seminar should give guidance on how such media can be effectively used and what the Governments will have to do in this regard. Mobile libraries in motor vehicles would also come in this category.

The Working Paper is very comprehensive and would serve very well as a basis for discussion by groups.

T. A. Koshy

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THE outline of the programme to be discussed in the ensuing seminar on "Social Education in Urban areas" gives an exhaustive over-view covering almost all the facts of the problem of adult education. But I would, besides appreciating, them like to add a few things to be inserted and suggest that some thing be done in that direction.

The main aspects of Adult (Social) Education in Urban areas *inter-alia* should include also

- (1) A continuance of education left off at various stages especially at higher levels ;
- (2) Leisure time education, especially in the case of women residing within the municipal limits;
- (3) An extra specialisation course in technical, mechanical and professional education; and
- (4) Parents' education in order to have in them a sense of responsibility towards and arousing a spirit for the education of children and their own.

THESE FACTS bring before us some problem of cities which a democratic country like ours has to bear in mind. The problem of economic efficiency in the present socialistic pattern of society requires top priority and as such adult education schemes in cities ought to be planned with this end in view. If economic efficiency of the people is brought about, no doubt most of the difficulties are overcome by themselves. Economic basis therefore should be the centre of Social Education. If economic position is better, social efficiency will automatically follow. Social efficiency, therefore, should be achieved next. With this quality a citizen will be enthused to discharge his responsibilities and duties towards family, society and state. For this purpose we have to make efforts through Social Education and its agencies both formal and informal to stir up social consciousness in the indolent and lethargic persons. If the unlettered and uneducated mass is able to realise that education is their birth right and they have to avail this opportunity they will strike hard to compete for individual progress.

The next thing that is important in this connection is that the demands of the cities are altogether different from those of rural populace. The urban community consists of the three strata of people—one is the lower class, the other is the middle class and the third is the higher or upper class. The upper class may not require Social Education so urgently. The middle and the lower classes do require this education. For the lower class literacy is the first and foremost requirement. This will be the foundation of their

general and cultural education that shall be built up later. The middle class needs Social Education as they form the major bulk of the urban community. So, these facts are to be taken into account when attempting expansion of Social Education in cities.

THE SUGGESTIONS ENLISTED in the draft are on the whole made with a wide range of outlook and require no more additions. But considering the present developments of some cities and the means adopted by them it seems that a few points may be mentioned in this relation also.

Social Education is an important part of civic life in the cities and an inalienable part. In this direction the various localities have formed some cultural-cum-social associations which aim at imparting general and cultural education by means of informal methods. These are often known as 'Mohalla Sudhar Samitis'. In the present precarious situation where armed dacoities are being committed in a city like Allahabad almost with great frequency we have to form a 'Civic Guard Platoon' which can be a part and parcel of the said development-associations. Such associations are to be recognised socially and educationally and good support should be extended to them for their proper and wider functioning.

As Social Education is required more amongst our women folk in the cities, it is necessary that the leisure time activities should be readily motivated and if possible with some economic gain. The functioning of

'Annapurna' indeed was highly appreciable but it could not be popularised and made accessible to all the women irrespective of their social status. Besides, another organisation like 'Mahila Manoranjan Club' is also in the offing and is working well at several places but it has the only aim of whiling away time. Such clubs need to be encouraged to undertake educational activities as well and be not confined to a selected few only. Every locality may have such clubs and the initiative should come from the women welfare committee of the city, attached to the all India body. This will propagate culture, literature, education and even arts and crafts, all done in leisure time. Children's Clubs and Youth Club should be integrated with the above movement.

I would like to have a Parents' Association. This will have a communion with the school teachers and the authorities, of which the latter may also be regular members. This is a great need in Indian democracy because we have to teach our younger generations the democratic way of living and so we first require to train ourselves. No doubt Community Centres may attract this association being formed automatically if the literate parents make themselves more educated citizens and do make efforts to create a new spirit of freedom *plus* responsibility and duties in their offspring. Such an organisation will build sound character among people.

More emphasis should be given on observance of national days, social celebrations and such other festivals which require strengthening

of national solidarity. Informal agencies without any political or communal bias should be developed and made instrumental in achieving this end. What we lack today in our country is that we do not know the importance of civic life, national songs, great persons in the field of literature, politics, religion, and society. Our religious celebrations have become orthodox and one-sided. Our social customs have become rigid and our national activities politically party-biased so that we refrain from participating in them and remain ignorant about them. It is better, therefore, to employ local reform societies to engage all men and women old and young, alike to share the common experiences, joys and attitude which we require in social education to serve the purpose of completing our national plans.

A WORD OR TWO about the Coordinating Council. Its organisation should also include some coopted members. These members shall be coopted from the bodies privately engaged in the welfare work of the society. As these organisations are found to be well-associated with the people they can do better work and for their direction it is necessary that some sort of guidance may be given and this guidance shall be forthcoming from the Coordinating Council.

In the formation of Coordinating Council it should be borne in mind that the people may come up and join hands. It should be the outcome of the people. If it is so formed it would be of great help in solving the financial difficulties and

in all likelihood the voluntary monetary aid required for cultural and other activities would be easily available without any force from outside.

In the end the State has to organise a campaign for Social Education on a formidable ground. Various departments engaged in this field in the rural areas are doing, no doubt valuable and important work but the result is not a consolidated one. In order to ensure better and efficient Social Education in urban and as well in as rural areas there should be a separate department under the Ministry of Education. In that case it will not remain the responsibility of everybody and thus of nobody, and solid progressive achievement will be assured.

I. D. Caleb

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ON page 3 while there is quite a comprehensive list of activities by which youths may be concerned to better the urban life, I suggest that the following activities may also prove worthwhile.

(a) An Information Centre where detailed information regarding various careers, vocations and studies in India and abroad are available, may be started in each important town particularly in the vicinity of educational institutions.

(b) Such activities may also be tried for youths as would provide them opportunities for learning and earning. Welfare of youths suffers a great deal for want of such programmes and if any provision could be made, certainly the student community would benefit from

it substantially. Others who are in employment may be allowed facilities for increasing their efficiency in the technical skill required in their co-operation.

(c) It has also been suggested in the Working Paper that a portion of the expenditure should be borne by those who derive benefit from the programme of Social Education in urban areas. To those who can repay this fee or taxation in the form of labour, the scheme of part-time work at the centre will be very useful. However, it should not be organised on a compulsory basis.

(2) On page 4, the organisation of drama clubs has been suggested. In spite of its educational value it is a very common observation that a very few selected youths we may call them talented, take part in dramatics. The reasons why dramatics do not make a very large appeal, should be studied and as such the programme of drama clubs should be expanded by including lead-ups to dramas.

(3) On page 4, one more alternative should be added for the organisational set-up. The programme to be financed by the Central and the State Governments and organised and administered by an autonomous council composed of representatives who have benefits from the urban Social Education programme. Although this would be possible after the scheme has been in operation for 2 or 3 years, the voice of such representatives will immediately help in modifying, revising and enriching the programme and also in improving the organisation.

(4) While planning the programme

targets should be fixed so as to reach a saturation point in the prescribed time limit, in the sphere of literacy programme, public health programme, employment programme, physical and recreational programmes etc.

M. Chaube

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I may be permitted to state a few facts which have come to the knowledge of the Samaj Shiksha Samiti, Jabalpur during last nine years.

I agree that imparting of Social Education in Urban Areas is very essential, and on no excuse however weighty, can Social Education be post-poned even for a minute.

A popular Government owes a duty to educate the children as well as the adults. A nation cannot afford to ignore more than half the adult population which is illiterate and steeped in ignorance and disease. Social Education alone can improve the lot.

IT IS TRUE that town and cities are richer and more advanced than villages; they should be able to promote the cause of literacy and social education from collection of funds from the public, and from the service of voluntary and honorary workers. This truth is not without a touch of fallacy. The uneducated in urban areas are no better than their rural brothers.

In fact they are a little worse because of so many corrupting influence and attractions in the town. Our personal experience has shown that the greatest difficulty is to attract illiterates to join our classes. Philanthropy may provide space and material but at the

certain stage even philanthropy will have to find a limit. For example in the town of Jabalpur fourteen miles in length and six miles in breadth can we depend upon philanthropy alone, to conduct publicity from day to day in this vast areas ? The Government must provide us the means loud-speakers, transmitters, films, books, pictures etc.

I THINK THE STATE GOVERNMENT, Municipality and the voluntary organisations should all combine in this campaign.

The resources of most of the Municipalities are not enough to provide the essential needs of the public as for example drinking water, fresh air, good roads, and drains etc. How can they be expected to provide help for this cause to literate adults, essential though it may be ? They have also a huge responsibility of providing compulsory primary education to the boys and girls.

2. Voluntary organisation, as I have already said before, have a limit to their philanthropy. It is not for one year or two but a continuous process of help for the cause which is difficult to expect from them in these hard days when the people are overburdened with taxes and due to dearth of all the commodities.

3. The Government must come forward seriously in this campaign against illiteracy. It is our personal experience that so long as we had the full cooperation of the Government when the department worked jointly

for rural and urban areas we are able to achieve great success. Therefore, although the voluntary organisations may work independently they must get good support from the State Government and the Central as well. It may be a far fetched suggestion but it would do lot of good if there is some kind of compulsion as it exists, in the case of children in certain areas and as it is proposed to be extended all over the country in the near future.

THE ILLITERATE POPULATION in the urban areas consists mainly of workers in mills and factories and mines etc. The Government should exercise some kind of influence on employers of these organisations.

The Government imparts education to the Army and Police. It is also within our knowledge that railway authorities are encouraging efforts to impart literacy to their workers in full co-operation of Jabalpur Samaj Shiksha Samiti. In spite of it all, the doors of military, factories and even State Government and Centrally managed civilian factories are not open and they are not cooperating with the Samiti to impart education.

The other suggestions such as library, dramatic club, radio listening etc. are very useful but every city of India has got a large population of illiterate adults who require special attention and removal of illiteracy by holding night classes ; this is a very important step.

K. B. Sinha

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ON page 1, touching on the urgency of Social Education in urban areas, I will like to add more suggestions (c) and (d) namely:

(c) In cities the observance of civic rules and inculcation of a code of civic conduct is one of the essentials if we are to give support to the activity of the Welfare State for the people and if we are to create consciousness of an obligation of the citizens towards the State Administration. An educational programme to stimulate action projects with the sense of urgency in order to introduce better health and civic consciousness among the people would go a long way to encourage a citizen to take to better way of living in other directions as well. One of the methods of such education could be through Voters' Clubs in different wards where a systematic educational programme could form the basis of meetings and group action.

(d) In cities a rallying factor is necessary for the education of the body politic on the various current problems of the day which would be a non partisan trust, working on programmes of public lectures on topical subjects by eminent experts who could present these to the average urban mass in simple forceful language. A public forum which will provoke participation of citizens and whose voice will count with the local, civic and administrative authority would be invaluable asset in improving the life in urban areas. This would help also to steer clear any partisan politics or any scramble for place and power. The Social Education programme through such an organisation could consist of a

series of lectures as organised by the Vasant Vykhnamala under the Tilak Memorial Trust at Poona, which is doing valuable work in this direction.

Krishna Bai Nimbkar

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LIBRARY services should be as far as possible be free to the community.

The timing should be convenient to the readers.

It is further suggested that the Library service should be made available on holidays.

II. Vidyadan Sabhas (Organisations for organising lectures) can play a great role in educating masses and can be more effective if they are equipped with audio-visual aids (film shows, charts, exhibitions). It is experienced that people are not interested in lectures unless it has additional attraction.

III. We do not think it necessary to have separate organisations for Drama Clubs. It should be a part of the activities of Youth Clubs.

IV. The present school buildings can be used for evening classes provided light arrangements is made.

AUTONOMOUS COUNCILS should be set up and the basic 5-point programme should be the guiding line.

The Council may invite suggestions from voluntary agencies and incorporate them in the general programme for the larger interest of the urban populations.

In urban areas as they are heterogeneous groups it is desirable that the different socio-economic, cultural, religious groups should be represented in the Coordinating Council as far as possible.

SO FAR AS FINANCES are concerned, fifty per cent should be met by the Municipality and fifty per cent by the Government.

(1) The Municipality should take the responsibility for the reason that it would be convenient for this body to collect contribution by way of taxation.

(2) It is feared that at this stage compulsion by law may not yield the

desired results unless people become active participants and cooperate with agencies programme.

Coordinating Council will no doubt coordinate activities of various agencies. These agencies have already fixed programmes of Social Education is likely to be an additional burden to them. Under the circumstances it is desirable to have more Community Centres which can provide variety of programmes taking into consideration the different phases of group life. As such, more Community Centres (one for every 100,000) are desirable.

*Registrar,
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of Baroda.*

THE COMMENTATORS.....

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Urban Social Education—The Climate for it.

THE primary purpose of this article is to spotlight some of the important factors which would be favourable to the spread of social education in urban areas and also those which would hinder its development. Independent India has taken to the path of social and economic development and the progress on this path can be facilitated by the implementation of a well-planned programme of literacy and social education. An illiterate mass of people, lacking in elements of civics and citizenship, can hardly assist their country to progress on the path of planned development. One of the characteristics of under-developed economy is the inadequate utilisation of the available human resources. In India, these resources are abundant in quantity, but deficient in quality. In other words, we have a considerable mass of unemployed and under-employed persons, whose services cannot be utilised for the nation's development, because they lack social and technical education. If this deficiency, affecting the quality of Indian manpower, is eliminated, an appreciable proportion of our population can be transformed from a parasitic drag on our precarious economy to a vigorous, potential power supply of a resurgent nation. It is for this reason that social education occupies an important place in the planned development of India's economy. "The chief objectives of social education are to create a new outlook, new values and new attitudes on the

part of the people, to import new ideas and new skills, including literacy, to energise people's organisations for group action, to provide healthy recreation, to give an impetus to the entire development programme by enlisting people's participation, and to build up local leadership."¹ As the Planning Commission clearly states, "Social education embodies a comprehensive approach to the solution of the problems of the community, primarily through community action. Besides literacy, it includes health, recreation and home life, economic activities and citizenship training."²

INDIA LIVES IN VILLAGES, nearly 83 per cent of her population is even now rural by residence. It may be for this reason that our official social education programme, through community development, caters to the village population. In fact, though for centuries the concept of "community" has been identified with urban groups bound by religion or caste, the latest connotation of the term relates to rural groups, cutting across religious, caste and economic differences. The first Five Year Plan makes this clear when it states that community development "seeks to initiate a pro-

1 Committee on Plan Projects—*Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service*, Vol I, p. 101.

2 *Second Five Year Plan*, p. 517.

cess of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages.”³ Social education programmes in community development do not appear to have been successful, as the following remarks of the Team for the study of C.D. and N.E.S. reveal: “Despite the fact that adult literacy programme has been widespread in the early stages of community development, we find that there has not been any significant progress in spreading adult literacy not to speak of adult education in its three aspects, viz. (a) the introduction of literacy among grown-up illiterates, (b) the production of educated minds in the masses in the absence of literacy education, and (c) the inculcation of a lively sense of rights and duties of citizenship both as individuals and members of a democratic nation.”⁴ The Team found the various Evaluation Reports discouraging and quoted a report which said, “The adult literacy centres run as long as grants are available but as soon as these cease, the centres cease too.”⁵ The running of the community centres was also not found to be satisfactory. On the other hand, organisation of activities requiring occasional participation like *vikas melas*, *shibirs*, campaigns or drives, proved successful, probably because of the love of villagers for short-term entertainment programmes.

The general failure of social education programme in villages may be ascribed to various causes such as lack of active co-operation from the rural

people, low standard of Social Education Organisers, confusion about the role of social education and about the functions of the S.E.O.s., conflict between the S.E.O. and the state Department of Education, general poverty of the masses and lack of necessary facilities and equipment. Nothing fails like failure and it is tragic that social education programme has failed in the rural areas, where its need was foremost. The vicious circle of poverty and under-development cannot be broken, unless a well-planned programme of social education is successfully implemented. The causes of its failure in rural India need be carefully investigated and eliminated.

THE FAILURE OF SOCIAL EDUCATION programme in the rural areas need not discourage the promoters of social education in cities and towns. Urban India offers certain advantages, which are denied to rural people. In urban areas, people are concentrated in homogeneous groups and are thus easily accessible. The rate of literacy is higher—34.6 per cent in urban areas in contrast to 12.1 per cent in rural areas and 16.6 per cent for the country as a whole. The general economic standard of the urban population is comparatively higher than that of rural people. Religion, caste and customs have less rigidity. Joint families, are fewer. Facilities like audio-visual aids, educational institutions, trained teachers, spread of newspapers, public meetings, cheap transport and general civic sense contribute to the promotion of social education. Social, religious and political consciousness,

3 *First Five Year Plan*, p. 223.

4 *Report of the Team*, Vol. I, p. 105.

5 *Fourth Evaluation Report*, p. 35.

influence of western values and culture, development of trade unionism, and welfare organisations facilitate the spread of social education.

According to the 1951 Census⁶, India has 558,089 villages with 2,950 lakhs of people, as against 619 lakhs of urban population residing in 3,018 towns and cities. The urban population is thus relatively small (17.3 per cent of the total), though it has been progressively on the increase during the last half a century. The pattern of India's urban population is as Table No. 1

The table shows that though there are only 73 cities among 3,018 towns, the total number of inhabitants of these cities exceeds one-third of the total urban population in India. It may be desirable to start the work relating to social education from cities, gradually taking it to towns. Even among the cities, it may be desirable to take the bigger cities first—Greater Calcutta (45.78 lakhs), Greater Bombay (28.39 lakhs), Madras (14.16 lakhs), Delhi (13.84 lakhs) and Hyderabad (10.86 lakhs), because of the availability of the various facilities.

IN INDIA, LARGE NUMBER of cities like Bombay and Calcutta have grown big mainly because of industrialisation. Besides many industrial towns like Jamshedpur have also sprung up. Such industrial cities show certain peculiar characteristics regarding livelihood pattern, age structure, sex disparity and influx of migrants. The

livelihood classes of Bombay and Calcutta are as Table No. 2.

These figures show the predominance of secondary and tertiary occupations and the absence of primary occupations. Naturally social education will have to be oriented to the needs of industrial workers and to those of self-employed persons. The economic status of the self-supporting persons in Bombay and Calcutta is shown in table No. 3.

In industrial cities, social education programmes should include labour and trade union education, literacy and even vocational education, to enable the workers to be better technicians, better trade unionists and better citizens.

Industrial cities draw their labour supply from their labour hinterland. The migrants find it somewhat difficult to adjust themselves to new life and changed nature of work. If the influx of migrants is not properly tackled, serious consequences arise because of maladjustment. Some of the migrants tend to be social enemies, whereas many others contribute to labour unrest, resulting often in sporadic strikes, damage to machinery and assault on supervisory staff. Factors like insecurity of service and housing shortage in cities do not allow the migrants to bring their families with them, leading to the familiar vices of industrial cities like slums, overcrowding, prostitution, gambling, alcoholism and crime. The number of females per 1000 males is 602 in Calcutta and 596 in Bombay; this sex-disparity can be attributed to the migration of men to city in search of livelihood. Similar differences in

⁶ See *Census of India, 1951*, Vol. I, Part I-A, Chapter II.

age-structure between the rural and urban population is illustrated in the Table No. 4. These figures reveal the abnormal excess of males over females and also the over-representation of young men, young women and middle-aged men in industrial cities.

THESE STATISTICS REVEAL some of the problems, which will have to be faced by the urban social education organisers. They have also to study various other factors like the influence of caste and state on worker's life and work, the factory environment and living conditions of workers, the extent of trade unionism, the attitude of management to workers' problems, the social and cultural activities of workers, their utilisation of leisure time, their contacts with their villages, religious practices followed, their expenditure and thrift habits, their aspirations regarding higher economic and social status and their general attitude to their urban life and work. In fact, a programme of urban social education should be preceded by intensive research about the urbanised worker, so as to find out his educational needs. Similarly, the urban social education organiser will have to study the needs of other classes, like the self-employed

and the dependents, before a programme is planned and implemented.

THE GREATEST SERVICE an urban social education organiser can do is to assist in elimination of the disparity in urban and rural living standards. At present, in India, a villager differs from a city man in various aspects—economic and social status, literacy standards, habits of food and dress, utilisation of amenities, like cinema, trams and buses, newspapers, etc. and political activities. Even the thinking habits appear to be different. Such disparity in thought and action is prejudicial to the interests of a nation, which aims to achieve the status of an advanced economy. The widely differing standards of urban and rural population practically divide the country into two distinct parts—Urban and Rural India. Such a state of affairs is inimical to progress of the country and can be avoided by upgrading the rural standards and adjusting them to the urban standards. The problem of social education will then become indivisible in urban and rural compartments, when the existing division between them will be eliminated. The social education organisers, both urban and rural, should strive to unite urban and rural India by developing both the wings and should not widen the unfortunate gulf at present existing between the two sectors.

Table 1

	Population Groups	Number of Towns	Number of Town Dwellers (in lakhs)	Urban Population percentage
Cities	1 lakh & over	73	235	38.0
Major Towns	20,000—1 lakh	485	186	30.1
Minor Towns	5,000—20,000	1,848	178	28.6
Township	Under 5,000	612	20	3.3
		3,018	619	100.0

Table 2

	Bombay	Calcutta
Agricultural classes	15,502	42,143
Production other than cultivation	994,102	897,789
Commerce	691,068	980,648
Transport	238,243	391,899
Other Services	900,355	1,260,673
Total	2,839,270	3,573,152

Table 3

	Bombay		Calcutta	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Employers	50,547	4.0	60,386	4.0
Employees	950,402	77.0	995,155	68.0
Self-Employed	236,499	19.0	414,814	28.0
Total	1,237,448	100.0	1,470,355	100.0

Table 4

	Percentage of Population			
	Males		Females	
	India (General)	Bombay and Calcutta	India (General)	Bombay and Calcutta
Infants and young children	13.2	7.7	13.9	13.4
Boys and Girls	24.9	14.5	24.7	22.7
Young Persons	32.6	49.1	33.3	40.0
Middle Aged Persons	21.0	24.1	19.6	18.0
Elderly Persons	8.3	4.6	8.5	5.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Community Centres in New English Housing Estates

Sewell Harris

A community centre, as we know it in England, is a building which serves a neighbourhood in many ways, as a club, a centre of social service, a place where a variety of organizations can find accommodation; and ideally, it is the heart and symbol of the community. It is managed by a community association, which has the duty of transforming the building into a home, an extension of all the homes of the neighbourhood, and a home for the life of the neighbourhood.

The association enrolls individual members; it also brings together, as constituent bodies or corporate members, as many of the specialist organizations of the neighbourhood as will come in—sports clubs, churches, philanthropic organizations, trade unions, etc., the multitude of societies in which people come together to promote some special interest. The governing body of the association, and therefore of the community centre, is a council which consists of representatives of these two sides, some elected by the individual members and some by the constituent bodies.

The work of the association may be regarded, according to the point of view of the observer and the emphasis put on particular aspects, as either in the field of social service or in that of

education. It is social service in the sense that the association exists to serve society and that whatever it does should be for the benefit of the members of society—whether it be, for example, the provision of a citizen's advice bureau or a distress fund (social service in the narrower sense), or preparation for parenthood, or healthy recreation. It is education, education for better living—whether it be a class in child psychology, physical training, ballroom dancing, children's hobby groups, the discipline of ascertaining accurately the needs of the neighbourhood for better postal services, or the practice of democracy in the control of the centre.

The association sets out to serve its neighbourhood in any way in which service suitable to a voluntary organization is required, except in the spheres of party politics and sectarian religion, from both of which it keeps clear. It may, therefore, approach the local authority for the establishment of a nursery school, or the local transport body for a better bus service; it may initiate a stamp collecting group for boys or provide a room for a ballet dancing class for girls; it may foster a poultry club or a dramatic society for adults, or a football club for adolescents, and so on.

HERE WE SHALL CONFINE ourselves to what it does for adults, looking at the work from an educational point of view. With adults, even more than with younger people, whose minds may be less set, it is important to start from where people are, from their present minds may be less set, it is important to start from where people are, from their present interests, and to consider how these may be enlarged and used as a means to a fuller life, and what are the probable new interests to which present ones might lead; sometimes also to persuade people to experiment with some quite new and unaccustomed experience which may lead on to a new world of interest. One may, for example, get people to attend a concert of the kind of music to which they are not accustomed perhaps by offering a certain number of free tickets, or by giving such tickets as a prize for a competition at some other function; or one may appeal to their loyalty to the association or to their friends in the dramatic group to persuade them to attend their first serious play.

Most people are interested to some extent in other people, if only because they want to have social contacts rather than to spend all their time at home. Nearly every community centre will have social activities of various kinds, dances, whist drives, parties, etc. and voluntary workers usually run them. From time to time new people are wanted to lend a hand, perhaps at first only by taking entrance fees at the door, then perhaps acting as host or hostess and welcoming people as they arrive, later on, per-

haps, by serving on the committee which is responsible. Once people undertake some responsibility in a community centre they are on the road to a whole series of contacts and ideas which may eventually take them on from the centre into the life of the town or nation.

The initial responsibility leads to contacts with other people in the centre who also have undertaken responsibilities. This may lead to a better understanding of other people's work and so to an interest in the people themselves. It may be, for example, that the steward on the door at the dance finds that people complain of the price of admission and so the doorkeeper suggests it should be reduced. Who fixed the price, and why? Probably a social committee which was responsible to a finance committee, for raising a certain amount of money for the upkeep of the premises. The doorkeeper may think that a reduced price would bring so many more people that in fact more money would be raised. That doorkeepers may be asked to join the social committee, and later the finance committee or the executive committee.

MANY OF THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES of an association combine the two purposes of giving pleasure and of raising money—some, dances or whist drives, being held weekly or monthly; others, such as a fete or a carnival, annually. These annual affairs usually involve a great deal of organisation and co-operative activity and may be correspondingly valuable from the educational point of view.

Community associations are democratic organizations. Thus participation in their affairs provides practical lessons in the difficulties of democracy—and the solution of these difficulties. This is one of the association's most important educational functions. When the doorkeeper arrives on a committee he may find that there are a number of points of view which he had not appreciated before, a number of facts which had not been taken into consideration, and that a great deal of time is being spent on discussion of the points of view and education of the facts.

If the committee is applying democracy at its best he will find that it strives to find agreement as to what the facts of the situation are and that, once this has been done, people of goodwill who have a common object readily agree on the action the facts oblige them to take. He thus learns that democracy is not merely a question of a majority deciding and overruling a minority, but a question of getting the facts together, each person contributing the ones of which he is aware, and accepting the decisions which together they dictate. When this has been learnt it can be applied in many spheres of life.

It is an important part of the education which a community centre makes possible that the association is not only responsible for activities and relations between people, but also for the building, its heating, cleaning, upkeep, etc. This responsibility for material things, which are often a source of controversy, provides a different discipline and a different set

of facts which have to be realized. People may learn about bricks and plaster and paint, their applications and costs, in a way which would not otherwise be possible.

IN MANY INSTANCES an association has had to put in a great deal of effort to secure a centre and in some cases this has taken the form of actually building the structure by the voluntary effort of members, who have thus learnt by personal experience that hard work together in a common cause helps, as nothing else does, to create a spirit of fellowship and mutual understanding.

Some associations have been fortunate in securing the help of international work camps in the building of their centres. Volunteers, for example, helped in building the community centre at Novers Park, Bristol, this summer. Most of them were in their twenties, about half were British and the other half came from Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Israel, the United States and Mexico. They worked an eight-hour day, they had parties, open houses and bonfires with the people of Novers Park. This group lived in tents, but sometimes the members of work parties live in the houses of the people of the neighbourhood. In either case the members of the association which has been helped have not only got to know each other better, and have secured their building more quickly than they could have done by themselves, but have been able to share in the fellowship of the international camp and learn a little of the ways and

thoughts of people from other countries.

It does not usually require a work camp, however, to interest people in ways of other nationalities. Women, particularly, like to hear how the women of other countries keep house and feed their families. If a talk of this kind can be given, as is often possible on new estates outside our larger towns, by a women of the country which is being discussed, the interest is all the greater and an additional small link in the international chain of goodwill can be forged.

In the case of our nearest continental neighbours, it is sometimes possible to develop sufficient interest to create a desire for a visit, or better still an interchange of visits with members of some similar organizations in the other country. Such visits provide a wide range of educational possibilities, in their organization, in the thought given to them beforehand and in actual participation in them. If planned sufficiently far ahead they may even give rise to formal classes in the languages of the countries to be visited.

WOMEN'S INTERESTS IN THEIR HOMES can often be a starting point for wider interests. Three main fields have been developed; the international, the historical and the technical. The international has already been mentioned. The historical may follow the same pattern, through time instead of space—except that one cannot get a woman of 200 years ago to come and talk about her way of life. That way can, however, be re-created in people's

minds. All sorts of possibilities open up and may be followed according to the wishes of the group; for example—What were the houses like in England 100, or 500, or 1,000 years ago? What did they eat and wear and play with? The important thing is to get an enthusiast to talk about these things; an amateur who can arouse in others the interest she herself has may be better than an expert who is less inspiring.

The most popular technical subject for women in community centres has probably been dressmaking, often with a teacher supplied by the local education authority. This was true before the war when most residents on new estates had to be as economical as possible. During the war the clothing shortage made it even more urgent, and the classes often turned to repair and alterations so that clothes could continue in use for as long as possible for one or other member of the family. Cookery has been possible in some centres, either as a class, like the dressmaking, or in occasional demonstrations perhaps put on by the Gas Board or Electricity Board. Millinery, upholstery, and even shoe repairing have proved attractive.

Shoe repairing, however, has usually been thought as more a man's job and several centres have provided opportunities for learning it. More creative work has been done in woodwork shops, though in this case, also, some repair work has been carried on. Whichever it is, repairing old or making new things, men have been helped to do things for themselves. Allied to these subjects, either as

hobbies or as occupations of economic benefit to the family, are poultry clubs rabbit clubs and, of course, horticultural societies, most of which will enrol both men and women and sometimes younger people as well. Interest in living things obviously provides an unlimited field for education which may range from conversation between two people, through discussions, shows and demonstrations, to the formal class running throughout the winter or longer.

Many associations themselves carry on, or help with, the more formal types of adult education. Various aspects of domestic science, handicrafts for men and women, and languages have already been mentioned as subjects in which classes are arranged, but many other subjects are also included such as history, economic, psychology, literature, art and science. Classes in these may have been started either because of interest aroused by less formal talks and discussions or by people whose first contact with the association was to ask for such instruction. Sometimes arrangements will be made by the association direct with the local education authority of the university, sometimes the association will ask the Workers Educational Association to arrange a class and sometimes the Workers Educational Association or local authority or university will approach the association for accommodation or other assistance in getting classes or lectures established.

In many centres people are interested in their own physical fitness and come together for general physical

training activity such as weight lifting or boxing. These are usually organised in the form of clubs. The same applies to the many games which are played by members of community associations. In these the enjoyment of the game may be the chief attraction, but most of them, such as badminton, table tennis, football and cricket are educative also, both because they involve physical skill and because they require organization and in most cases some subordination of individual desires to the good of the team or group.

Stress has here been laid on informal and exploratory adult education, because that often seems to be the most urgent need, and community centres, to which people come for many different reasons, social and recreational activities, information on social services, assistance of one kind or another, are in a good position to undertake this work.

The common room, canteen, or lounge of the centre provides an opportunity for people who come for diverse purposes to mix and so, perhaps, to find new interests. For this reason, amongst others, it is a good thing to have some formal cultural classes going on in the centre so that, for example, the young man who comes to play table tennis may knock up against the girl who comes to study the history of art or music, or the woman from the dressmaking class may meet the budding psychologist.

Where people's interests are already developed to the stage at which they know what they want to learn, the function of the association may only

be to act as a source of information and to tell them where they can get what they want. Sometimes, however, it may be necessary to assist the enthusiast to get into touch with others by a notice on the centre's board or an advertisement in its magazine.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT the officers and committees of the associations should be interested in and imaginative about the educational possibilities of their centres. In many cases it is found that if the most is to be made of these possibilities it is necessary to have, as the whole-time paid officer of the association, a man or woman who has had some experience of adult education, both formal and informal, and who is able to exploit appropriately every situation which offers an opportunity of developing any form of adult education.

For some forms of adult education new housing estates often provide a particularly fertile field, because they are lacking in some of the usual amenities, especially in their earlier stages, and therefore not only provide obvious reasons for people to get together to improve matters, but also offer fewer alternative ways of spending leisure time than do more settled neighbourhoods. On the other hand, many of the people who move into a new estate have their own houses for the first time in their lives and want to spend a good deal of time at home and working in their gardens. These factors give a special importance to the work of community Associations on these estates.

—*From material supplied by
Education Clearing House,
Unesco.*

Urban Community Centre Work in Underdeveloped Countries

Peter Kuenstler

COMMUNITY Development has been recognised as an almost indispensable means of enabling under-developed territories to help themselves. It covers a wide field of health, education, agriculture, administration and social welfare. In one of the many U.N. documents which refer to it, it is stressed that it "should bring into play personal and mass attitudes." In other words, it is essentially a matter of dealing with human beings both as individuals and in groups. It is in this context that it is of interest to review some of the problems that arise when community centres are established in urban areas of some African territories still under colonial rule.

The need for such centres is accentuated by the weakness of the family structure which is typical of a body of immigrant labourers or even of those who have settled in towns but are of rural origin and have to adapt themselves to vast differences of material conditions. In many places wage policies are based on the assumption that the worker's family is not with him and that for the most part the women and children of the family can support themselves from

the produce of their piece of land where they live in the rural areas.

In such conditions the town population is predominantly male and young. There are all the ingredients which lead to breakdown of accepted cultural and moral patterns of behaviour and the tremendous impact of industrialisation, with all the weight of contemporary technology, make it likely that the 20th century industrial revolution of Asia and Africa will be even more wasteful of human happiness and welfare than was the 19th century European epoch. In such circumstances it is not surprising that the European Colonial powers have attempted to face a common social responsibility.

IN 1953, THE BRITISH COLONIAL OFFICE published a statement on Community Centres in British colonial territories. It covers both general principles and some matters of detail, including finance, buildings, staffing and activities. The majority of the examples quoted are taken from experience gained in African territories.

The aim of community centres is defined as "the promotion of the well-

being of the community by associating the local authorities, voluntary organizations and people in common effort to further health, to advance education, to provide facilities for physical and mental training and recreation, and social, moral and intellectual development, and to foster a community spirit for the achievement for the benefit and welfare of the community generally of the objects mentioned, and any other objects such as village betterment, improved water supplies, improved methods of cultivation, etc.," and is acknowledged that this statement is derived from experience gained in the United Kingdom "and will generally meet the situation in colonial territories." While immediate aims and activities and indeed the structure of the centre "must be determined in the main by local circumstances.... There is however one important principle which must be observed if a community centre is to be a successful and useful centre. The establishment of a community centre must either be in response to an explicit demand from the people to be served or be related to needs keenly felt by them. If the nature of their needs and the value of a community centre are not spontaneously appreciated by the people, the authority or agency concerned should create such an appreciation among them before the centre is built. An effort should be made to interest all people of the neighbourhood likely to be concerned, either by direct consultations, where the people are sufficiently advanced to make that possible, or in other areas where the people are less advanced and not organized into local associations, and

perhaps not so articulate, by a careful survey of local authorities, problems and behaviour and by discussing their needs and desires with the people affected."

Perhaps some of the most interesting matter in the report is concerned with the problems that have in practice been found to arise in the rural areas of the more backward territories. The following are some examples :

Nigeria : Special difficulties are :

—The tension between the old and the young.

—The lack of unity among the people accentuated by their fear of each other and of the witchcraft which may be used against them.

—The belief that to be in any way superior to the rest of the people, renders one liable to be killed by witchcraft.

—General apathy.

—The lack of leisure time in which women can avail themselves of the instruction and recreation provided.

—Primitive beliefs that attribute bad health and all other social evils to the power of evil demoniacal forces.

—The expenditure of wealth on non-productive features such as funeral ceremonies, protection against witchcraft, etc.

—Suspicion of all government officers, especially with reference to any matter pertaining to land.

—Illiteracy, and the fact that once a

boy becomes literate he considers himself too good to work with his hands.

—The growing spirit of materialism that asks “What can I get?” not “What can I give?” and the power of the wealthy villager to buy the support of the young people and take them away from supporting their traditional older leaders, who usually have a great concern for the welfare of the village as a whole.

—The difficulty of ascertaining what the real attitude of the people is. As to this, grievances or causes of failure are never openly expressed and methods of thought are tortuous in the extreme.

Uganda : There is a lack of accepted cultural activities which would replace the traditional pastimes and useful arts which have to a large extent fallen into disuse. This means that it is necessary to give instruction in such cultural activities as concerts, indoor games, boxing etc., or to revive traditional activities, e.g., village crafts (which requires expert knowledge).

Family activities are difficult to organize. Many men do not wish their wives to visit the centre. When wives do attend they tend to engage in activities separately from the men.

Kenya : The reason for success or failure is that activities so far arranged for the centres in the African District Council areas have been somewhat sophisticated and beyond the understanding or appreciation of the bulk of the population in the backward areas. In the backward areas, it has not been surprisingly difficult to

maintain the morale of the trained warden, who has to overcome the inertia and apathy of the people.

Tanganyika : Two centres have failed completely and have been closed down and twelve are regarded as more or less failures. All are regarded as serving a useful function in that they provide a reading and relaxation for educated and clerical type. The main reason for failure are that the ex-servicemen for whom they were primarily designed do not wish to use them, the general African public is uninterested and quite apathetic about them, and the educated few who do use them are not yet “community” minded.

These can be paralleled with other similar examples from Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. Two points should perhaps be explained about these reports : first, that they are taken from official reports given by the Government officers ; and secondly, that lessons have been learnt from these problems and failures, so that it is hoped that present and future development of community centres will profit thereby.

THE FRENCH DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS in the Ministry of France Overseas has defined its policy in the following terms. “A Community Centre is an institution, which, with the collaboration of those using it, attempts to solve the problems affecting the population in its own particular neighbourhood or geographical sector ; this by means of its combined services and plans which

have an educational, social, public health character. A Social Worker is in charge of it, and when possible, lives there...In order to be immediately successful in reaching its main goal, that is the development of the social structures—social education must be given to the most receptive members of the population: the woman and the child. This in order to prepare them for civilised methods of work which do not reach them as rapidly as they do the men, in community groups. The use of woman's moral influence within the community, where she is an element of moderation, when not hostile, will contribute to the harmonious development of the entire group....”

IN EQUATORIAL AFRICA, community centres combine all social and cultural activities together: maternity and child welfare, consultations, lectures, lantern-slide lectures, dancing, athletics, theatricals, dressmaking, cookery courses, kindergartens, individual or group social service activities: recreational or cultural activities. In the Cameroons, the community centres are confined to social activities, social welfare, household management instruction, kindergartens, family and child welfare, but the educative element is introduced into the family through Social Service visitors and assistants, who reform and assist with the management of the home by helping the woman and the home to benefit from domestic training. In French West Africa, social centres exist, devoted exclusively to social assistance and household

management education; cultural and recreational activities are taken care of exclusively by other specialised centres, called cultural centres.

In addition to such Community Centres, French policy in Africa covers a number of social welfare centres concentrating on domestic and baby-care, education for women; in addition there are cultural centres described in this manner; “The Cultural Centre constitutes a social structure available to the whole population, to all associations, to any groups to whom assistance may be given, no distinction is made as to origin, tendencies or class.

“The scheme for directing such an organisation must be well thought out in order to avoid the influence of one clique, or political influence. Its use should also be open to any individuals or association, without exception. It is through the joint-management of the centre, administrative on one side and membership representation on the other, that the smooth functioning may be reached.

“The cultural centre is set up in a government building equipped by the locality; it receives subsidies to set it going and for its action. This accounts for the presence of an administrative manager and accountant who are responsible for the building and its equipment. These centres aim at reaching the masses through the medium of a select few; they will assist in helping groups to form around this elite, and at the same time assist those who wish to complete their education and spend their leisure time in a pro-

fitable and healthy manner, whatever their age may be”.

IN BELGIAN AFRICA, a similar emphasis has been put on “foyers” or social centres focussing on African women, with courses on child care, gardening, and other domestic subjects. Some of the foyers are provided by missions and by industrial firms, but the most important are under statutory control through the department A.I.M.O. (Affaires Indigenes et de Maid-d’Oeuvre). These centres have attracted favourable comment from foreign visitors and can play a great part in urban life. Thus in Leopoldville there are eight, each with a total attendance of upto a thousand per week at the various classes and activity groups.

The problem of sponsorship of community centres in a territory under colonial administration raises many difficult problems. Non-statutory bodies are apt to be viewed with suspicion by the authorities and centres which deliberately set out to promote free and unrestricted discussion may well be feared as possible foci of subversive talk and plans. On the other hand, government sponsorship may be difficult to combine with a sense of local autonomy and free intercourse. A happy solution appears to have been found in Nairobi where on the new housing estates, several different bodies affiliated to the Christian Council of Kenya have taken on

the responsibility of establishing and maintaining a social centre, where educational and welfare activities may be carried on to meet the urgent needs of the rootless, mobile and often bewildered crowds of city workers. Nairobi is typical of many parts of East and Central Africa in that it represents a large city which has sprung from nothing almost within a generation and which has brought together a large number of people wholly unaccustomed to living together in towns.

Even in West Africa where there is a tradition of town life, the impact of industrialization has been so powerful and the rate of growth of urban population so swift that virtually a new situation has been created. To what extent the provision of social and community centres can meet the obvious resultant difficulties remains to be established. Enthusiasts for neighbourhood work and community centres are perhaps too ready to see in the object of their enthusiasm a panacea for all the social evils which the growth of industrialism brings in its train. This is foolish; but we shall do well not to overlook the essential contribution which such work can make and to ensure that the authorities concerned, whether they be town planners, social economists or administrative officers having control of budgets, should make allowance for such establishments in their recommendations and plans.

—By Courtesy of *International Review of Community Development.*

Second World Conference on Adult Education The Challenge Before it.

Richard Attygalle

Unesco had convened in 1949 at Elsinore the First World Conference on Adult Education. The Conference served to clarify many of the problems faced by the adult education movement, the world over. The Elsinore Conference proceedings, as many adult education workers know, helped workers achieve clear insight into the issues before the movement.

A great deal of experience has accrued since the first Conference and adult education workers will look forward to the Second Conference which Unesco proposes to convene in 1960.

We have pleasure in presenting here an article which discusses some of the issues which the Second Conference will have before it. We welcome comments and suggestions on the issues raised herein. Ed.

DESPITE the swiftness of transport and communication which has made neighbours of the world's communities, the common assumptions of our daily thought and action still run along the narrow gauge of prejudice and difference. To the Shibboleths of Orient and Occident are now added the convenient coinage of developed and underdeveloped territories. This understandable need to distinguish and define is all the more insistent because of the rapidity of technological conquest which has made pedestrian our efforts to adjust ourselves, emotionally and mentally, to its consequences. With reference to economic progress, the terms developed and underdeveloped correspond to recognizable realities. The scientific and intensive exploitation of natural resources and

the shrewd and enterprising use of industrial skills provide, with their evidence of economic and political organisation, a ready measure for identification. But the easy extension of these concepts to other fields such as education invites a parochialism of outlook which ignores the global character of the present challenges to social progress.

A recent observation on the programmes for the education of the community, now current in almost all countries, was that it appeared that there was fundamental education for one part of the world and adult education for the other. It is observation, charged with the ground-swell of feelings, which darkly questions the assumptions of all those who are seriously concerned to redress the balance

between the economically developed and underdeveloped countries of the world. Nevertheless, there is sufficient point in the observation to merit a re-examination of those assumptions.

THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES for the purposes of these programmes have been seen, largely, as non-industrialized areas where illiteracy predominates and malnutrition and hunger are the norms of life. Faced with the need to raise the standard of living of its peoples, it seemed right that the educator should join forces with the technician to attack ignorance, poverty and disease. Accordingly, teaching people to read and write, raising productivity and improving occupational skills and techniques, primarily those of agriculture, and intensive campaigns of health education to change traditional practices which demographic and social trends, among other factors, had made injurious, constitute their main instructional and educational activity. This seems all the more justifiable since the vast majority of the population, because of the inadequate number of schools, are denied access to education. On the other hand, in the industrial countries, with their high productivity, itself an expression of widespread instruction, a degree of political and civic maturity which manifests itself in popular associations complementing the governmental and administrative structures, the programmes for adult education provide for the further education of the citizens. Local government bodies and non-governmental organizations together help to meet

the professional and cultural interests of the people. It would be futile to deny the relevance of these programmes to immediate realities but, valid as their difference may appear to be, they take little note of the peculiar rhythms of economic and social processes.

Like the jungle, technology is neutral and the pylons, which cast the shadow on the primitive plough, point with dramatic sharpness to the falseness of that image of primitive pastoralism where the path of economic and social development runs through the ordered and regulated concepts of a nineteenth century liberalism. The harsh resentments and tensions that the sudden neighbourliness of other races creates, point as much to the need for extensions of civic and social understanding in the West as is incessantly demanded, under other circumstances, elsewhere. The basic error was, perhaps, to have drawn the boundaries between the two forms of adult education according to the degree of schooling available to the population. Fundamental education, seeking to make good an inadequate school system, generalises from the village whose isolation had been broken already with the advent of the first tin pail. Equally, adult education, basing itself on the specialization of labour and the evolution of civic organization, bypasses the cities in countries where an illiterate migrant labour from the fields emerges in fulness of trade union association and urbanization has atomized the closeknit patterns of family and clan.

IT CANNOT BE GAINSAID that a programme for the education of the community does, in any event, supplement and support the school system, be it adequate or otherwise to the needs of the population. In largely illiterate communities it may represent the peculiar contribution of education to economic development. But the encouragement and development of appropriate institutions and activities for the education of young people and adults emphasizes the continuing and permanent character of the process of education in the advancement of human society. Here, education is concerned with the whole community, with those who have had schooling, partial schooling and no schooling. It is concerned with leisure activities, popular culture and with the fostering of a deeper and comprehensive civic sense. Above all, by helping to assimilate the scientific attitude and methodology into existing cultural patterns of thought and behaviour, it favours the emergence of responsible and understanding citizens and lays, more permanently and securely, the basis for economic and social progress.

EDUCATION, TODAY, IS LESS AND LESS thought of as a specific activity necessary to a particular age of life. It is rather a continuing and ceaseless effort to make possible the free and full association of all citizens in the furthering of human society. The constant aim is the education of the individual for the exercise of responsibility and before the universal impact of technology, this aim is defined with equal insistence in all coun-

tries. This does not minimize the need for instruction in such fundamental skills as reading and writing, but it does mean that the importance given to them does not lead to assumptions that oblige a people to repeat the stages of evolution of more instructed communities. It is the privilege of backwardness to take up the cultural heritage of man at its most advanced point and it is no image of fantasy that is offered in the spectacle of peoples, but scarcely broken from tribal thought and custom, engaged in elaborating the institutions and procedures of a democratic society.

The comfortable notions of ordered and gradual progress are daily contradicted by "the physical neighbourliness which emphasizes our spiritual distance". Indeed the very development of the film, the press and radio, of museums and libraries has enriched the resources of the educator and rendered feebler still distinctions, which confound means with ends. Varied as the needs of different communities may be and diverse their cultural and social patterns, they do not affect this essential unity of function and purpose, the emotional and mental education of the individual for the exercise of responsibility in the measure that it creates an adult society.

In 1949 the Conference of Elsinore treated adult education in terms which still pencilled the differences of two worlds. In 1960, UNESCO proposes to convene a second world conference on adult education. It is timely. A decade of decisive change has

(Continued on page 42)

From The Archives — The Presidential Address of Sir Shah Sulaiman

We reproduce below the presidential address delivered by the late Sir Shah Sulaiman, Kt., M.A.D.Sc., at the First All India Adult Education Conference.

The Conference, held on 11th March 1938, appointed a Provisional Committee to report on the movement in the country with a view to help the Second Conference, which was to meet the following year and arrive at a definite conclusion regarding the formation of the Indian Adult Education Association.

The Provisional Committee which was presided over by Sir Shah Sulaiman, consisted of H.I.H. The Princess of Berar, Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur, Rani Rajwade, Prof. A.N. Basu, Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh, Shri N.M. Joshi, M.L.A., Prof. J.B. Raju—Vice Presidents ; Shri H. B. Richardson—Joint Secretary ; Miss Godavari Gokhale, Prof. N. G Ranga, M.L.A, Shri M. Rais-ud-Din, Prof. Eric Franklin, Prof. Bal Dev Khanna and Shri P.M. Gopalakrishnan—Joint Secretaries.

In the forthcoming issues of the Journal, it is intended to publish more documents from archives of the Association which will throw light on the development of the movement over the past twenty years. This, we feel will help adult education workers acquire an insight into the dynamics of the movement and shape the future accordingly—Ed.

IT is a matter of great privilege to address the first All-India Adult Education Conference on a subject in which we all are so deeply interested and which is a vital part of every general scheme of education. It is

more appropriate that the first session of the All-India Adult Education Conference should be held at this ancient and historic centre, which is the premier town of India. It would be in the fitness of things for the education-

ists assembled at Delhi to take the lead in placing the Adult Education Conference on a firm and permanent basis.

THE PROBLEM OF ADULT EDUCATION is entirely distinct and separate from that of imparting literary education through the medium of ordinary schools. The great bulk of the Indian population is ignorant in many ways and the adults are generally too old to acquire much of book learning. Schemes for holding night schools for adults are in vogue in many foreign countries ; and we ought to utilise the experience gained there for the benefit of our own. But in India they have been tried so far only in a sporadic fashion. There has not existed any common organization which would co-ordinate all such activities and also guide our efforts along similar and uniform lines of action. The aim of adult education is not merely to spread bare literacy among the masses. That object is attained more easily by the introduction of free and compulsory primary education, when finances permit. The grown up sections of the population stand on a different footing, and adults can also be brought in touch with the advance of practical knowledge without the necessity of books. The method of educating adults must of necessity be somewhat different from that used for educating younger persons. Trying to impart literacy to adults often proves to be a belated and almost futile attempt ; on the other hand, supplying general information to them is of more practical utility.

We should entrust our ordinary schools with the task of removing illiteracy, and not confine the adult education institutions within such narrow limits.

The present system of education is certainly open to several serious objections and needs a drastic over-hauling. It is no wonder that from time to time it is subjected to severe criticisms by educationists in all the provinces. There is a growing and insistent demand all over the country that education should be made more practical and useful, and that a new type of school which would equip students for particular callings are more urgently needed.

The underlying policy in the past was to establish as many schools and colleges as possible so as to turn out matriculates and graduates in large numbers. That was a time when there was a marked demand for educated men, as posts in the Government services were available to them in plenty. The system of establishing more and more educational institutions therefore worked pretty well and men who qualified succeeded in obtaining suitable employments. Acquisition of even a literary education was economically advantageous, and those who received the benefit of such education were certainly better off than those who had neglected it. With the enormous growth in the number of students the situation has changed completely, as there are not enough vacancies in the offices to meet the supply. Ordinarily speaking, mere literary education has ceased to be of any great practical utility. The educated classes are now faced with a very serious pro-

blem of unemployment. With a multiplication of educational institutions and wide-spread expansion of literary education, conditions are bound to get still more chronic. A heavy duty is therefore cast on those who are working for the cause of education to remodel the existing institutions so as to give the students a decided bend of industrial and commercial line in order to fit them for that special skill which a workshop or a factory would require. It is most essential that quite apart from the literary education that is being already given in our existing schools, there should be a well-organised effort to provide facilities for grown up people to learn in their spare hours what could be more useful and helpful to them in their individual occupations. A wide-spread scheme of adult education, as supplementary to the school education, would go a long way towards solving the unemployment problem. Of course it must be conceded that education by itself will never be able to create new openings or bring into existence new industries so as to provide further and more numerous opportunities for employment. But vocational training will certainly enable people to avail themselves of industrial opportunities that exist, and accelerate the utilisation of the vast natural resources for the development of indigenous industries.

Mere perfunctory literary education for the poorer classes is by no means popular. In order to make it appeal to them, it is necessary that the nature of education imparted in our schools should be such as to adapt the pupil to the particular occupations or callings which they wish to enter, for

such practical knowledge would enable them to earn their livelihood better.

IF ADULT EDUCATION WERE CONFINED within a limited scope and attention be concentrated solely on literacy as a narrow objective, adult schools are not likely to survive long. Men who have to earn their living by hard work during the day are not likely to be in a mood to come at night to take instruction in literacy. Their minds not being as easily impressionable as those of the young, it cannot even be expected that they would make much progress in learning how to read and write, and like the boys of the primary schools may forget what they have learnt after leaving school. On the other hand, vocational training would not be so distasteful and would evoke enthusiasm, specially if the training is directly connected with the day-to-day occupation of the student.

It is a mistake to suppose that we already have too many workmen. Perhaps we have a sufficient number of them, but only a very small percentage of those who can be regarded as skilled workmen and artisans. Skill in the various crafts will enable the workmen to do their work better and such training would be both profitable to the workers and conducive to the general development of the Indian cottage industries. There would not be the same amount of repugnance towards manual training, nor any false notion that it is derogatory to one's honour or status, if such training were to yield a good return for the work done.

ADULT EDUCATION CAN HAVE MANY BRANCHES. In its higher forms we can have university extension lectures, talks on the radio, broadcasting of speeches, holding of public lectures and delivering of popular addresses. But in a more modest way, a good deal of practical and useful work can be done by providing vocational training in commercial pursuits, and make it available for those who wish to take a course of instruction in the evenings. Inclinations differ with individuals and it will be necessary to have a very large variety of optional subjects of vocational study so as to furnish a wide and comprehensive field of choice to the students to make their selection from. The catalogue of such subjects would be a huge one and their full enumeration is not at all necessary.

Adult education is undoubtedly a matter of far-reaching importance, and if due attention were paid to it even the higher forms of industrial and commercial training can be easily secured. The great possibilities of a wide spread system of adult education cannot be doubted. The essential thing is that adult education should be conducted on vocational lines so that even literates can find leisure from their ordinary avocations of life to attend night classes or holiday courses.

On the continent of Europe and particularly so in Germany, a system of vocational schools exists where students are being trained for some vocation or other. Students trained in the various branches of vocational

study are always available, and a large percentage of them are able to organise large businesses, providing a better source of income for themselves and for their families.

The problem of education in rural areas presents a still greater difficulty, as the villagers are unable to appreciate the benefits of elementary literacy, as they find that it does not make them more fitted for their hereditary occupations. One fears that they are not far wrong in thinking that there is no permanent benefit conferred by teaching them just how to read and write, when they have to go back to their agricultural pursuits and soon forget what they learnt. If instead, they had been given some practical knowledge of farming and agriculture in which their family is engaged, they would find their learning decidedly profitable. Before a general programme of education for the rural areas is taken in hand, we have to make up our minds as to the exact kind of education that is going to be given in the village schools. There is not much need there for the present type of schools, which impart education of a character that has a tendency to turn out literates, who cherish dislike towards their industrial occupations, without having been fitted for any better calling. Would it not be much more useful to teach a village student the qualities of the various kinds of seeds, the advantages of good manure, better methods of irrigation and new methods of cultivation, which would stand him in good stead? Information about harvests and rainfall would be highly interesting and practical training in modern farms certainly more useful. We should not

be too prone to follow blindly the lines of the Urban scheme, but would have to devise a special scheme suitable for the needs of the countryside.

Handicraft centres of various types are likely to be more popular with the poorer classes than the literary schools which they consider useless. For such people the benefit of education should be judged from an economic point of view and practical training regarded essential. The need for it is unquestioned and is recognized on all hands. What is really wanted is the creation of a sufficient interest in the wide possibilities of such national work.

The aim should be to open schools for adults in every city, town and village and direct the attention of the people to pursuits of a vocational type. The great masses of the urban and particularly, the rural population, belong to the working and labouring classes, to whom practical knowledge is of far greater benefit than what attendance at a literary school can give. A wide-spread scheme of vocational education is likely to relieve the pressure of employment which is weighing upon the middle and the lower middle classes in a crushing manner. Elementary night schools and classes have been in existence in many places but the progress made has been very slow because there has been no well-chalked out plan for their development and expansion. For the success of such a movement a large body of trained teachers and instructors, who are willing to volunteer their services, would be a necessary requisite. We should endeavour to enlist the sympathy and

support of public-spirited persons in establishing an extensive organisation for starting centres of activities in every local town, later to be extended to rural areas as well. Let us hope that persons specially qualified and trained would offer their services and spare a few hours every week or even month to help in promoting such schemes.

I MUST, HOWEVER, SOUND A NOTE OF WARNING that there is always a danger that many parents who, but for such night institutions, would have sent their children to day-schools, may retain them during the day for earning some wages and send them to night-schools as substitutes for day-schools. This can be effectively prevented if the night schools are strictly confined to adults who are no longer school-going age. Young children should not be allowed to attend such schools at all. Nor should night schools be a mere device for day-school teachers to earn an extra income by holding classes outside school hours. I would suggest that the instructors in such schools should not be recruited exclusively from the ranks of the day-school teachers who would like to have an extra remuneration in their spare time, but should consist mainly of those who follow the trade and the profession they teach. Teachers, who teach in day-schools for several hours a day, would feel too tired to continue their work at night. Over-worked teachers are neither likely to be enthusiastic about working overtime, nor to have a fresh mind for such work.

Owing to extreme ignorance and illiteracy as well as poverty, India suffers from a blind pursuit of the antiquated industrial methods inherited from the past generations. It is therefore not at all a matter of surprise that village industries have become stagnant, and conditions are stationary. Unless the Indian cottage industries get a new lease of life from the supply of a better class of workers, with more specialised knowledge, their further deterioration is inevitable. It is our bounden duty to awaken the Indian industries and to save them from extinction and ruin, which must be their certain doom, unless such a catastrophe is prevented. We must save our indigenous arts and crafts from utter annihilation, by reviving and stimulating them and re-adapting them to modern needs. Cottage industries on both big and small scales, even in the presence of machinery, have survived in all countries not even excluding Japan. Unless we take immediate and effective steps to protect them many of the old smaller industries would soon be completely destroyed and become incapable of being resuscitated.

Now that we have Provincial Autonomy, and Indian Ministers are in charge of the departments of education, it is all the more incumbent upon them to take stock of the present situation and seriously consider the overhauling of the existing system. If a representative body like the All India Adult Education Conference were to prepare a complete scheme and submit it to the provincial Ministers for their consideration, there is every reason to hope that due attention would be paid to their recommen-

dations. But there need not be too much dependence or reliance on Government grants. Education should essentially be a matter of local interest. It should be the genuine concern of the Municipalities and Town Area Committees to help such schemes and also to supervise them. And private philanthropy must in an equal degree offer generous help.

WHAT IS REALLY LACKING AT PRESENT is an organised system of adult education for the whole of India, based on a uniform policy and brought about by the co-operation and co-ordination of all like institutions which are working for the same purpose. An All-India Adult Education Conference is in the best position to give a lead, if not also to guide and control the activities of the institutions of this kind. A serious effort should be made to give a new impetus to this movement by forming, not only in every province but in every district and town, institutions which would carry on adult education work on a well-prepared plan and with a well-financed scheme. Unless there is an all-India Association which has a well-thought out plan ready for adoption, adult education is bound to be conducted in a haphazard manner without any concerted action.

It is for this Adult-Education conference after full deliberation to devise a well-considered scheme, and fix upon the various subjects for training, and to prepare a progressive course for each handiwork as the necessary subject of instruction.

IT IS A HAPPY AUGURY for the future progress of adult education that this Conference is meeting at Delhi to draw up a programme of action and to devise schemes to be put into effect. The various organisations in the different provinces should treat each other as sister institutions and work with mutual good-will and co-operation. If there be a co-ordinated and united action on a fixed plan, there is no reason why advance should not be made in an ever-increasing degree. Real progress will be made by local efforts, which alone will give the movement a practical shape and prove to be economical. Adult Education Societies all over the country should undertake the training of young men and women in the various arts and crafts as well as in the trades that flourish locally, so that the workers may get the benefit of improved methods. The introduction of new designs and greater skill would produce new articles of greater workmanship and utility and in that way create a new demand for such products. The importance of arts and crafts in the scheme of national life has to be well-recognised. Excessive industrialism may throw out of employment many who were depending on small cottage industries. Adult Education conducted on vocational lines may alleviate the sufferings caused by rapid industrialisation. To prevent the arts and crafts from being ruined and exterminated by modern machinery, we would procure for them more skilled workmen. A real development along such lines would be greatly welcome.

The Handicrafts Department of the Delhi Indian Educational Society has

put training in handicrafts in the forefront of its educational programme, and has already organised instruction in (1) cane work, (2) tanning, (3) toy-making, and further proposes to extend training in (i) electro-plating, (ii) leather work, and (iii) stencil drawing in the immediate future. This is a good lead.

We certainly start with many handicaps ; and there would in the beginning be obstacles and difficulties in the way, particularly of a financial character, and we may also suffer from a lack of enterprise, energy and enthusiasm ; but there is no reason why we should be despondent and despair of the future. If only everyone who is interested in the cause of education were to do his utmost to further it, no matter how small may be his contribution, the combined effort put up is bound to produce a solid and substantial result. The task is undoubtedly great and arduous, but let not gloom overtake us. Let us work courageously and steadily with our hearts full of inspiration, and full of hope that our efforts will ultimately be crowned with success.

(Continued from page 35)

bound more closely the family of man. It will offer adult educators, the world over, the opportunity to restate their tasks before the common challenges of our time.

—From material supplied by Education Clearing House, Unesco, Paris.