

# EACH ONE TEACH ONE

Laubach's

## Materials and Methods

Edited by  
**S Y SHAH**



Indian Adult Education Association

**EACH ONE TEACH ONE**  
**Laubach's Materials and Methods**

**EACH ONE TEACH ONE**  
**Laubach's Materials and Methods**

*Edited by*  
**S.Y. SHAH**

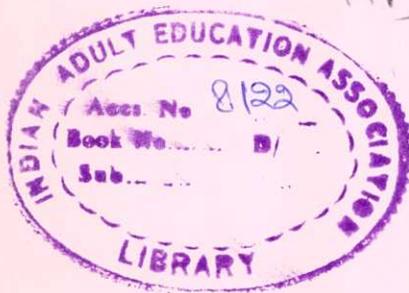
**INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**  
NEW DELHI

Published by

**Indian Adult Education Association**

17B, Indraprastha Estate,

New Delhi-110002



Rs. 75.00; U.S. \$ 9.00

Series 177

1991

Printed at N.S. Printers,  
2247, Dharampura, Delhi-110006

## PREFACE

This book is an unexpected outcome of a major study on the "International linkages of Indian Adult Education" that I have been working on. While collecting materials for a chapter on "the American interest in Indian Adult Education," I came across the extensive individual and institutional papers on adult continuing education located at George Arents Research Library for Special Collections in Syracuse University. Of the variety of materials, the huge collection of Dr. Frank C. Laubach was fascinating since it contained materials on 105 countries which were related to the period between 1915-1970 when the world was undergoing tremendous transformation. The indepth study of Laubach collection on India revealed its richness in terms of the variety of materials on Indian society, education (especially of adults), culture, religion Indo-American relations, perceptions of Americans about India—a great deals of which are not readily available in India. Besides there has been no exclusive publication which portrays the life and work of Laubach in India. In fact, in most of the publications on adult education in India, there is hardly any mention of Laubach ! Hence, Frank C. Laubach referred to as the "father of adult literacy movement in India"<sup>1</sup> remains virtually unknown to most of the present day adult educators in the country. These factors, though were compelling enough to venture upon the task of preparing a book on Laubach, would not have been suffice, had it not been approved and financially supported by the Review Committee of Syracuse University Kellogg Project and recognised as a legitimate piece of research work by the authorities of my parent institution—Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

The purpose of this book is not only to appraise the adult education scholars and professionals about the quality and quantity of Laubach's work in India but also to provide some relevant source materials that were not available to them so far. Perhaps the easy availability of source materials may also motivate some of the social scientists to examine the socio-political developments in India and her relations with America during some of the crucial decades of twentieth century from a different perspective.

It is interesting to note that the need for a book on Laubach's life and work in India was felt even during his life time. As early as 1957, the then Secretary of West Bengal Adult Education Association, B.C. Mukherjee, had expressed his desire to write a book entitled "Pandit Laubach" but had confessed his inability to do so and had requested Laubach to undertake the job on his behalf!<sup>2</sup> Laubach did not respond but the idea of a book on India remained alive in his mind. Instead of writing a new book, Laubach wanted to revise his earlier book, *India Shall Be Literate* and had suggested to his colleagues Fern Edwards and Lily Quy to undertake the job.<sup>3</sup> For want of money, the work was not undertaken. Now after three decades the idea seems to materialise.

The publication of this book may be viewed as a tribute to Frank C. Laubach who dedicated his life to the cause of Universal literacy.

1. See Preface by Manickham, in Frank C. Laubach, *India Shall Be Literate*. Jubbulpore : Mission Press, 1940, p. ii.
2. See Letter from Bilesh C. Mukherjee, Secretary, West Bengal Adult Education Association to Frank C. Laubach, 7 December, 1957, Laubach correspondence : Foreign-General, 1957, in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 80, (George Arent's Research Library for Special Collections, Syracuse University)
3. See Audio-tape script of Laubachs, tour around the world 1961-62, dated December 23, 1960 Tape No. 7 in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 259.

S. Y. Shah

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was mainly undertaken at Syracuse University during the spring of 1990. Although a number of individuals and institutions have provided a variety of support, I would like to acknowledge the cooperation of three institutions viz., Syracuse University Kellogg Project, Laubach Literacy International and Jawaharlal Nehru University and a host of people associated with them. When I first discussed the possibilities of bringing out a book on Laubach's work in India with Professor Roger Hiemstra, Dr. Maureen Goodman and Dr. Rae Rohfeld—all of the Syracuse University Kellogg Project—not only did they welcome the idea but also strongly endorsed it and managed to provide the required institutional facilities and financial aid in the form of a Kellogg Visiting Scholar Award which covered the expenditure connected with travel, boarding and lodging and photocopying of the documents. For all these, I am immensely indebted to them and acknowledge the support of the Syracuse University Kellogg Project.

As a Visiting Scholar, I was expected to participate and present a paper on "Laubach's Work in India" at an International Conference of Visiting Scholars organized by the Syracuse University Kellogg Project in March 1990 and also take a class for the graduate students of History of Adult Education Course offered by the School of Education at Syracuse University. These two occasions provided ample opportunities to discuss different aspects of my study with specialists in the field which helped in sharpening the focus of the study. I am grateful to all of them.

Sincere thanks are due to Ms. Irene Quinlan for successfully coordinating my programme at Syracuse and deftly handling the related paper work.

During the collection of source materials at George Arents Research Library, both Mr. Terry Keenan, Manuscript Librarian and Ms. Carolyn Davis, Associate Librarian were extremely helpful in providing the required information. Mr. Keenan's pertinent questions during my exit interview threw light on certain important dimensions of the study. The courteous but competent services of Ms. Karin D'Agostino, Ms. Diane L. Cooter, Ms. Molly Fulton, Ms. Lilian Davis of the library deserve a note of appreciation. I thank all the above members of the staff of George Arents Library for their cooperation.

Dr. Robert S. Laubach, son of Dr. Frank Laubach and a pioneer in literacy journalism was too eager to clarify several of my doubts about his father's philosophy and programmes. He spent a great deal of time in answering my queries and extended all the possible help. Dr. Robert F. Caswell, the Executive Director of Laubach Literacy International provided a lot of insights into the work of Dr. Frank Laubach and gave me access to some of the materials in the library, including the draft of the forthcoming compilation, "Heritage Collection of Frank C. Laubach." Ms. Carolyn Blackely a former associate of Frank Laubach gladly allowed me to use her personal collection and answered some of my queries about Laubach. My sincere thanks are due to the above members of Laubach Literacy International for their concern and cooperation.

Professor Alexander Charters, Emeritus Professor of Adult Education at Syracuse University and a former member of the Board of Trustees of Laubach Literacy International, was a great source of inspiration and help during my stay at Syra-

cuse. He took initiative in arranging meetings with Dr. Robert Laubach, Dr. Robert Caswell and Ms. Carolyn Blackley and several distinguished American scholars. He encouraged me to use his personal collection at office and home and over several lunches provided me an opportunity to discuss various issues related to my work. I owe a warm debt of gratitude to Professor Charters and Professor Margaret Charters for their hospitality and interest in my work.

My gratitude to Dr. Anita Dighe, Director of Adult Education at Jawaharlal Nehru University cannot be expressed in words. From the beginning, she showed keen interest in my work, supported the proposal and recommended leave (which the University granted), without which this work would not have been possibly undertaken.

I greatly appreciate the quick responses from Professor H.S. Bhole (Indiana University), Dr. Robert A. Luke (Florida), Dr. A.K. John (Kerala) and Dr. P.N. Kirpal (New Delhi) who kindly shared their views on Laubach either through correspondence, telephonic talks or personal interviews. I was encouraged by the genuine interest shown by Dr. Zhan Ruiling (China), Ms. Citlali Rouirosa Madrazq (Nicaragua), and Professor James Draper (Toronto) in my work. I acknowledge the contribution and concern of the above scholars to this study and sincerely thank them.

If it was possible for me to concentrate and complete this study within a short time, the credit goes to my wife Dr. Naseem Shah who took over the responsibilities of home gladly but graceously. I sincerely acknowledge and appreciate her role.

The correspondence between Laubach and S.C. Dutta reveals that the former was instrumental in providing a sum of US \$ 10,000 to the building fund of IAEA while he was the

President of the World Literacy Committee. In a way the publication of this work by the Association may be viewed as a humble tribute to Laubach's concern for the development of Indian Adult Education. I am extremely grateful to the President, Secretary, Treasurer and other office-bearers of the IAEA for accepting this work for publication and to Shri J.L. Sachdeva Director of the Association for expediting the whole process with patience and pleasure.

S.Y. Shah

# CONTENTS

Preface	v
Acknowledgements	vii

## PART—I INTRODUCTION

I. About the Study	3
II. Frank Laubach and Development of Adult Education in India	12

## PART—II LAUBACH'S VISION OF LITERACY

III. Universal Literacy : Curse or Blessing ? —A Discussion with Mahatma Gandhi	45
IV. Literacy for Peace	48
V. Literacy and Culture	51
VI. Literacy and Scientific Farming	54

## PART—III LAUBACH'S LITERACY MISSIONS TO INDIA

VII. Laubach's Literacy Missions to Colonial India, First Phase (1935-47)	59
VIII. Laubach's Literacy Missions to India —Second Phase (1948-55)	107
IX. Laubach's Literacy Missions to India —Third Phase (1956-70)	150

PART—IV LAUBACH'S METHODS AND MATERIALS

X.	The Mind of the Illiterate Adult	159
XI.	How to Treat the Adult Illiterate	170
XII.	Basic Word Lists	178
XIII.	How to Teach "Each One Teach One"	187
XIV.	Laubach Materials and Methods	191

**Appendices**

APPENDIX A—Lesson from Hindi Primer	198
APPENDIX B—Lesson from Anand the Wise Man	200
APPENDIX C—A Select Annotated Bibliography	202

**PART—I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

PART I  
INTRODUCTION

# 1

## ABOUT THE STUDY

“The facts of history are like fish swimming about in a vast and somewhat inaccessible ocean and what the historian catches will depend partly on chance but mainly on what part of ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use—these two factors being of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch.” (E.H. Carr, *What is history*, London : Pelican, 1964, p. 23).

“The past has happened and cannot change but the interpretation and understanding of it continues to happen and will never stop changing.” (D. Henige, *Oral Historiography*, London : Longman, 1982, p. 129).

Dr. Frank C. Laubach (1884-1970) was an internationally renowned adult educator who went on “literacy safaris”<sup>1</sup> to 105 countries with the primary aim of making the world literate. He worked with the people of all regions, religions and races; and developed literacy primers in 315 languages and dialect.<sup>2</sup> It has been estimated that he was instrumental in making 60-100 million people literate<sup>3</sup> mainly through his method—‘Each One Teach One’ which still continues as an important technique of teaching illiterates in several countries including India. Apart from directly or indirectly responsible for setting up a number of organizations for the promotion of adult literacy, he had also provided financial and professional support to a number of institutions and individuals

in different countries. Not only did he initiate basic literacy programme in several developing countries but also pleaded for the cause of literacy with a number of statesmen. He advocated literacy for world peace and development, and in literacy he saw the panacea for all the ills and hence he had dedicated his life to the cause of literacy.

His work was well received and much appreciated by all during his life time and he received honorary doctoral degrees from eight universities and fifteen citations from different countries including India in 1953.<sup>4</sup> He wrote forty important books on adult education, Christian religion, world politics and culture<sup>5</sup> and co-authored literacy primers in more than 300 languages. His post literacy reader *Anand the Wiseman* which he developed in India has been adopted in a number of languages. Twice nominated for Nobel Prizes,<sup>6</sup> Laubach has been rated as an "educator extraordinary"<sup>7</sup> and a "teacher of millions."<sup>8</sup>

The extensive work of Laubach has been extremely well documented. Far from being a prolific writer, Laubach had meticulously kept the copies of all his correspondence, speeches, notes and diaries and his collection is one of the largest in the field of adult education. It includes materials related to adult education in different countries, correspondence with world leaders, socio-political profiles of several regions and a number of books, pamphlets and articles on a variety of themes. The collection is preserved at George Arent's Research Library for Special Collections at Syracuse University and is systematically classified and catalogued.<sup>9</sup> There are 432 boxes of published and unpublished materials, 10 cartons of audio-visual materials, 6 scrap books and ledgers. Of these, 58 boxes contain a variety of materials related to various facets of adult education in India during 1935-70.<sup>10</sup> It includes Laubach's correspondence and discussions with eminent Indian leaders, viz. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Vijayalakshmi Pandit,

Humayun Kabir, Prem Kirpal, S.R. Bhagwat, a number of leading Christian missionaries and adult educators, notes and observations on various on going adult education programmes and agencies in India. It has been observed that though his collection has been open to scholars since 1972 and 31 scholars have already used the collection, neither any scholar from India has made use of it nor any body else has worked on the role of Laubach in India.<sup>11</sup> Hence this book will be the first one to introduce the readers about the extensive work of Laubach in India and the vast potentialities of his collection for the study of adult education in the country.

A review of Laubach collection substantiates the thesis that the development of Indian adult education has been primarily influenced by certain key persons.<sup>12</sup> Laubach was one of the key persons who played a prominent role in laying the foundation of adult education in modern India not only by championing the cause of adult education during the formative phase of its development (1935-55)<sup>13</sup> but also by introducing the novel technique of teaching through—Each One Teach One—and training literacy workers and writers of neo-literature. In fact, as the correspondence indicates, most of the adult educators in India had sought the constant guidance and support of Laubach in their professional endeavours during 1935-55 when he was directly or indirectly involved with most of the adult education programmes in India and hence this period may be designated as “Laubach Era” in the history of Indian adult education.<sup>14</sup>

For a variety of reasons the contributions of Laubach to the development of Indian adult education remain unknown to most of the adult educators. It may be either due to the ignorance of scholars about the source materials or their disinterest in the subject. It is surprising that notwithstanding the continuation of Each One Teach One method in India even today<sup>15</sup> there is not much awareness about its originator

or any literature available on him. There is hardly any mention of him in the extant literature on history of adult education in India.<sup>16</sup> The absence of studies on Laubach's work in India seems to have given some scope to a section of adult educators in the country not only to undermine his contributions but also to dismiss him either as a Christian missionary who worked in India for the propagation of Christian ideals or as an American official who aimed at the promotion of foreign interest in India. What was the motive of Laubach? And what was his contribution to the field of adult education in India? How did the state and public react to him? This book attempts to answer these questions in the light of the study of Laubach collection as well as interviews held with some of the contemporaries and colleagues of Laubach in the USA and India. Besides, it sheds light on the different facets of his life and work in India during 1935-70 through the presentation of his selected writings and speeches.

This book is in four parts. Part one provides an introduction to the study by discussing the circumstances and early experiments of Laubach in the field of adult education including the development of Each One Teach One method. The main focus is on the emergence of Laubach as an adult educator and his role in India. In this part, it is argued that though Laubach drew inspiration from the *Bible*, his motives of working in India were not exclusively evangelical.<sup>17</sup> They were partly humanitarian, partly educational and partly political. Though there was considerable overlapping of his motives, still it is possible to identify a dominant motive at a particular point of time. The evangelical aspect of Laubach's work was mainly confined to Christian churches. Laubach had clearly demarcated his role as a Christian missionary vis-a-vis an adult educator during his work in India. This was particularly true during his tenure as a US Consultant to Government of India when he wrote: "On six days a week I will be promoting literacy among all and

on the seventh day Sunday, I will be propagating literacy for evangelism among the Christians."<sup>18</sup>

A selection from the speeches and writings of Laubach on different aspects of literacy is presented in Part-II. The selection has been made keeping in view the importance of themes and time frame so that the reader could study the evolution of Laubach's thoughts at a particular point of time. Though Laubach wrote and spoke repeatedly on certain themes viz., literacy for democracy and literacy as evangelism, he did emphasise different topics in different countries and contexts. Thus, if he stressed on literacy as evangelism at the church meetings and Christian gatherings, he highlighted the importance of literacy for democracy during his public lectures in America and India. On various other occasions he also discussed the role of literacy in development and peace. During his forty years of literacy mission (1930-70) there has been considerable widening of his vision of literacy. If in 1930's he viewed literacy as a civilizing mission and humanitarian task, in 1950's he was more concerned about the role of literacy for the survival of democracy and world peace. His central concern revolved around literacy for self-reliance. His commitment to literacy was total and through literacy he wanted to serve humanity in a "loving manner and in a spirit of true service and thereby realize the God." In the final analysis it appears that he cherished universal harmony through universal literacy.

It seems that Laubach had great fascination for India since he visited the country as many as ten times and on each occasion travelled extensively to all parts of the country and interacted with most of the prominent people of his time. He had great admiration for Indian leaders viz.. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, Vinobha Bhave. During his visits to India, he had made meticulous notes on different individuals he had met and institutions he had visited and several conferences he had addressed, the

literacy situation and socio-political developments in the country. Besides he had also collected a number of publications from India, cuttings from the local newspapers, photographs, audio-tapes of different literacy seminars and prepared films on the selected on going literacy programmes. Based on these Laubach had written detailed reports of his literacy tours and published some of them in the form of open letters to his friends in America in the News Letters of World Literacy. Since these letters and reports will be an important source material for the study of Indian adult education, they are included in Part-III.

Laubach made several but significant contributions to the development of adult education in India. They were in the area of teaching illiterates, training adult educators, preparing materials and developing guidelines for the writers of neo-literature. He was one of the first adult educator who emphasised the need and importance of differentiating between teaching children and adults. He wrote profusely on the psychology of illiterate adults and the art of motivating and teaching them to read. His detailed steps and guidelines for teaching through Each One Teach One, are relevant even today. Since some of his writings on andragogy will be quite useful for the current adult education programme in India, they are included in Part-IV.

## REFERENCES & NOTES

1. *Bob Laubach, The Vision Lives On.* Syracuse : New Readers Press, 1984, p. 22.
2. *Ibid.* For a list of languages in which Laubach developed the primers, see *Laubach Collection*, Box Nos. 248 and 259 (George Arent's Research Library For special collections at Syracuse University. Since the entire Laubach collection is located at Syracuse, and no other collections are used in this book, the location of the Laubach Collection will not be cited again.)
3. David E. Mason, *Frank C. Laubach : Teachers of Millions.* Minneapolis : T.S. Denison Company Inc. 1967, p. 83.
4. For details see, Folder No. 7, Biography, in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 368. And Folder on Frank Laubach, who is who in *Ibid* Box No. 139.
5. For a list of books see, *Frank C. Laubach : A Comprehensive Bibliography*, compiled by Ann L. Wiley, Syracuse : New Readers Press, 1973.
6. For details see, File on Nobel Peace Prize Nominations 1964-69 in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 369 : .
7. See notes by David E. Mason, dated October—1964, in *Ibid*, Box No. 302.
8. David E. Mason, *op. cit.*
9. See papers of *Frank C. Laubach And Documents Of Laubach Literacy Inc.* Compiled by Deborah R. Chmaj and Menbera Wolder. Syracuse : Bird Library, 1974 ; Also see the *Additional Inventory of Laubach Collection* Compiled by Bird Library 1990 (Typescript).
10. For details of the contents of different boxes see the primary sources, under the Bibliography given towards the end of this book.

11. This observation is based on the statistics provided by Ms. Carolyn Davis of George Arent's Research Library and discussions held with her on April, 20, 1990. The absence of any publication on the role of Laubach in India further supports the observation to a great extent.
12. This thesis was first put forward by the author in 1988. For details see, S.Y. Shah, "*Adult Education for People : Some Indian Experiences*. Helsinki : Association of Finish Adult Education Organizations, 1988.
13. This phase has been designated as the formative because of the launching of a series of mass literacy campaigns in different parts of India, systematic development of primers and regular organization of training programmes for adult educators and the formation of an all India professional organization—Indian Adult Education Association. For details see S.Y. Shah. *The Development of Indian Adult Education : A Historical Perspective* (Forthcoming book) Chapter-II.
14. See, S.Y. Shah "The American Interest in Indian Adult Education : Laubach Era (1935-70)", paper presented at Visiting Scholar Colloquium held at Syracuse University on April 25, 1989. (Mimeographed).
15. Though the present method of "Each One Teach One" differs from the original method advocated by Laubach mainly in terms of the contents of the primer, method of teaching and evaluation, the basic idea remains the same.
16. For example, there is no mention of Laubach in the following books on the history of adult education in India. See, S.C. Dutta, *History of Adult Education in India* : New Delhi : Indian Adult Education Association, 1987.

Sohan Singh, *History of Adult Education During British Period*. New Delhi : Indian Adult Education Association, 1957.

17. On this point, different scholars have different view points. Professor H. S. Bhola thinks that Laubach's motives were "mixed : religious and secular." While Professor Alexander Charters considers that the evangelical motives of Laubach's were debatable, Dr. Robert Caswell and Dr. Robert Laubach, categorically state that Laubach's motives of working in India were purely non-evangelical.
18. See Laubach's letter to his friends, dated June 13, 1952, in *Laubach Collection* Box No : 117.

## 2

### **FRANK LAUBACH AND DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA**

“The best way to help people is to give them the tools and the training that will help them to help themselves. Teaching men how to tap the wisdom of the world which is stored in books, is one way to do this — we are convinced it is an indispensable way” — Frank C. Laubach. *“Toward A Literate World*, New York : Columbia University Press, 1938, pp. 72-73.

“Literacy is the best and by far the cheapest bridge between those who know and those who need to know” (Frank C. Laubach, “Literacy A Challenge”, *World Affairs International*, Vol. 24, No 2, 1953, p. 126.

#### **The Emergence of Laubach as an Adult Educator**

There was nothing extraordinary in the early life, education and missionary career of Laubach which was indicative of his future role as a literacy pioneer and promoter. He was born in Benton (Pennsylvania) on September 2, 1884 and had his early education at his native place. He graduated from Princeton University in 1909 and took his M.A. (1912) and Ph.D. (1915) from Columbia University. He started his career as a Congregational Missionary (with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) in the Philippines in 1915. For the first fifteen years, his activities were confined to church and institutions. Then by 1930's he

emerged as an adult educator. How and why did he develop interest in literacy? Did he have any adult education background or did anyone influence or persuade him to get into literacy work? His educational records show that he had some courses in paedagogy and school administration. He had opted for Sociology at master's level and wrote a doctoral dissertation on the topic — "Why there are vagrants: A study."<sup>1</sup> These courses and research could not have fully equipped him to plunge into the field of literacy. Neither was he influenced by any individual nor directed by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to which he was affiliated. The main source of inspiration was the teachings of the *Bible*: "Love Thy Neighbour and Serve Thy People."<sup>2</sup>

To Laubach, love, brotherhood and service were universal values. He felt that "One of the real curse of human race was that so few would love their neighbours as themselves, so few would sacrifice self interest to bless all and so few would give themselves to the task of aiding others."<sup>3</sup> Laubach soon realized that it was not easy to practice what he had believed for the Moro Tribe of Philippines where he had begun his missionary career in 1915 were deadly against the advances of alien Americans. They were even suspicious of their kind gestures. In winning them over, it seems that Laubach had learnt a great deal from Mahatma Gandhi's "God like love and selfless service" towards his fellowmen.<sup>4</sup> He was so impressed by Gandhi that he had written and published an article on him in *Lanao Progress*, a paper he was editing and printing in Philippines in 1930. Because of his rich educational background, Laubach felt that one of the most effective ways of serving the people would be through the education of their children. Unfortunately, he could not make much headway in his chosen field as the uneducated local leaders of the Philippines were not convinced of the utility or importance of education. His zeal was met with "indifference or rebuff."<sup>5</sup>

The frustration did not dampen his enthusiasm for his commitment to the cause of education was total. If not through the formal system, he wanted to educate the people through non-formal ways and means. This realization seems to be the starting point of his experiments in the field of education.

Laubach developed one of the most innovative adult education programmes in 1930. He chose culture and religion as the strategic entry point programmes into the lives the Moro Tribes of Philippines whom he wanted to educate. During his stay in Lanao Province of Philippines he noticed that the Moros were very fond of their folk songs which they used to sing every evening. Laubach took interest in their songs and began to write down the lyrics in Roman letters. When he started singing their songs, Moros were overwhelmed and began to come closer to him. Besides, instead of preaching about the virtues of his religion—Christianity, Laubach concentrated on leading a model life of a Christian, practicing love, sacrifice and service among the members of the local community so that they could “see Christ in himself.”<sup>6</sup> Since Laubach adopted the strategy of refraining from talking about Christianity and at the same time showed eagerness in learning about the religion and culture of Moros, he had little difficulty in winning their friendship and confidence. He entered into discussion with the religious leaders of Moros and started learning about their religious practices and values.

From the continuous interaction with the Moros, Laubach realized that they had a difficult dialect and the common language of the province—Maranaw—had innumerable alphabets which made the teaching learning process extremely difficult. Besides there was no literature available in the language. Probably nobody had made an attempt to write in the language. As a first step towards developing literature in the language, Laubach started the preparation of a dictionary. From this exercise, it became clear to him that unless he reduced the number of alphabets and developed a simple

method of teaching, he cannot initiate any literacy programme. By continuous experiments, Laubach reduced the number of alphabets and hit upon three popular key words. ('Malabang'—name of the town, "Karatas"—paper, "Paganad"—learn), which contained all the consonants in that language. Laubach developed the entire literacy chart by using them in different combinations. Since this system of teaching revolved around key words, it came to be known as key system, or Lanao system as it was developed in the Lanao Province where Laubach was working.<sup>7</sup>

Laubach initiated the process of teaching with the religious leaders of the community and hence the programme had a successful take off. Soon the masses followed their leaders and then the teaching began to be organized in groups of five or ten or twenty. Laubach demonstrated that he could successfully impart basic literacy in Maranaw language within 4-5 hours spread over 10-15 days, on an average Laubach devoted 20-30 minutes a day to teach an illiterate. However, he emphasised that the teacher would succeed only if he taught the illiterate with great devotion and humility. He viewed literacy teaching as "love in action"<sup>8</sup> and through the process of teaching, he aimed at "spreading the spirit of service"<sup>9</sup> His purpose was "humanitarian". He strongly believed that the educational and philanthropic aspects of mission work should be free to go on regardless of their immediate effect upon evangelism.<sup>10</sup>

Laubach had a multi-dimensional approach towards adult education primarily based on community support and people's participation. Along with the basic literacy teaching, Laubach had simultaneously started the process of writing and publishing simple reading materials on health, hygiene, agriculture, animal husbandary, culture etc. for the neo-literates through the press he had established. Besides he also started a news paper with a page exclusively devoted for the publication of writings by the neoliterates. As soon as a person became

literate, Laubach presented the neoliterate books and one year's subscription as a gift so as to keep up their interest in reading.<sup>11</sup> The paper was so interesting that most of the readers ended up paying the subscription after an year's free reading. Simultaneously Laubach motivated the community leaders and with their support mobilised the local youth into a number of societies for taking up different problems of the community. Each society had 5-10 youth who addressed themselves to a particular problem, like-procuring pure drinking water or keeping the pond clean and through a series of public lectures at market places, which were accompanied by colourful posters, and songs they began to educate the masses and enlist their cooperation in solving the local problems.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the members of the society also surveyed each household and made all the members literate. As soon as all the members of a house became literate, a certificate was awarded to the head of the household and a label in red and yellow colour was affixed to the front wall of the house with a writing—"Bantogen a—Tanda 100%"—which meant a medal of honour for attaining hundred percent literacy.<sup>13</sup> All the newly literate were also given badges. Besides, Laubach had developed a huge prototype thermometer on which he recorded the growth of literacy in the town. He kept the thermometer at the centre of the town so that people could watch the progress of literacy every month. This innovation stirred up the interest of the masses in literacy. In this way, Laubach succeeded in keeping the issue of literacy alive and also making it a societal mission with the active participation of people. In one of the letters to his father, Laubach wrote that the entire province was "infiltrated with the ideas of humanity, kindness and service as a result of educating the masses through lectures."<sup>14</sup>

The success of adult education programme becomes evident when the people take over the programme during the period of crisis. Within two years of the commencement of

education programme in Philippines, there was Great Depression which resulted in the curtailment of funds for the programme which were being provided by the American Missions. Laubach had no option but to wind up the programme. However, the local leaders and the people who had become aware of the importance of the programme were keen to continue it on a voluntary basis. The Moro Chief ordered that all those who became literate should in turn make another literate or else they would be 'killed'.<sup>15</sup> But Laubach appealed to the youth to teach on a voluntary basis and in a true spirit of service to the community. He said, "everybody who learns has got to teach.....you can't have another lesson until you have taught someone else the lesson you have just learnt".<sup>16</sup> In the beginning when Each One Teach One began, it provided an opportunity to the neo-literate to practice his learning immediately by teaching an illiterate. It was a type of informal test which instead of threatening the neoliterate boosted his ego and also built confidence in him as a teacher.<sup>17</sup> Thus when Each One Teach One emerged in early 1932 in Philippines, Laubach also made his debut as an adult educator. In subsequent years, he further refined his methods and materials and India provided a fertile field for his experiments in literacy as there were a variety of languages and a number of interested adult educators.

### **Role of Laubach in India**

Laubach came to India in 1935 and continued to be associated with the development of adult education in the country till his death in 1970. His professional ties with India falls into three distinct phases. First phase (1935-1947)—when India was a British Colony and Laubach worked primarily among the Christian missionaries; second phase (1948-1955)—when India had emerged as an independent country and Laubach worked basically as a US Consultant to Government of India; third phase—(1956-1970) when

Laubach continued his association with Indian Adult Education mainly as a representative of a non-Governmental organization — Laubach Literacy And Mission Fund. During his thirty-five years of association with India, he made ten visits to the country and played a crucial role in laying the foundation of adult education in the country. It is said that inspite of his involvement of adult education programmes in 105 countries, Laubach's heart was always in India for she challenged him to do something big by solving her massive problem of illiteracy and Laubach liked challenges and doing things on a big scale.<sup>18</sup> India also stimulated his thinking by providing several methodological choices in teaching adults and Laubach was never satisfied with any one method he had developed.<sup>19</sup>

#### **First Phase of Laubach's Work in Colonial India (1935-47)**

The literacy situation in India at the time of Laubach's arrival was dismal. According to 1931 Census only 8 percent of Indian population was literate; while the literacy rate among men was 14 percent, it was only 2 among women. With the exception of the Princely States, viz., Cochin (33.7%), Travancore (29%) and Baroda (21%), all other states in India had very low literacy rates.<sup>20</sup> With the exception of the state supported adult literacy campaign launched by the Government of Punjab in 1921, there were no other concerted efforts towards liquidation of illiteracy in the country.<sup>21</sup> However, there were a number of night schools and adult educators, viz., Mr. S.G. Daniel and Ms. Devasahayam in Madras Presidency, Professor S.R. Bhagwat in Poona, Mr. Gijubhai Phadheke in Ahmedabad, Dr. J.J. Lucas in Allahabad, Dr. J.H. Laurence in Manipuri who were actively involved in teaching illiterates through different methods viz., alphabet story, key words etc.<sup>22</sup> Besides, political leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad etc. were actively involved in conscientising

the masses and political workers through their speeches and organization of night schools. The adult education as an instrument of social transformation had developed very 'strongly' during the period.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, there were innumerable night schools set up by local bodies, philanthropists, missionaries which followed the methods and materials of formal primary schools. Generally, their curriculum was an abridged version of formal schools, and was covered in two years. These night schools were quite popular among the masses of urban areas as indicated by their increase in numbers over the years.<sup>24</sup>

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Christian missionaries of British India were actively involved in literacy programme as they wanted the members of their church to read the Bible. Since the bulk of the converts to christianity were illiterates, literacy had become an important concern of Indian missionaries. Though most of them were teaching illiterates with great missionary zeal, it took almost three years to make an adult literate. They realized that an illiterate church meant "Church without Bible, weak and in danger"<sup>25</sup> and hence were keen to develop a quick method of teaching. It was at this juncture that an Indian Missionary, Dr. Mason Olcott came to know of Laubach's pioneering literacy methodology when he visited Philippines in 1934.<sup>26</sup> Simultaneously, more missionaries of India read about Laubach's work in the missionary journals. Although a number of Indian missionaries wrote to Laubach, the "most contagious enthusiasm" was shown by Dr. Samuel T. Meyer and Miss Minnie K. Shultz.<sup>27</sup> In January, 1935 when Laubach responded to their invitation it marked the beginning of a new era in Indian adult education in which he played a crucial role.

During the first phase of his association with India, Laubach concentrated on developing literacy primers in

different Indian languages viz., Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese, Santali, Urdu, Gujarati, Oriya, and Gurumukhi training of literacy workers and conducting literacy conferences. During 1935-39, Laubach made four annual visits to India and on each occasion travelled extensively throughout the country spending about a week or two in each place where he developed literacy primers with the help of local people. Invariably, he tried out the lessons by teaching the illiterates in the evenings. To quote Laubach, "nobody knows which is the best lesson, but the illiterates."<sup>28</sup>

Laubach had noticed that India had a rich tradition of learning and already certain literacy experts were experimenting in different methods of teaching. Laubach was greatly influenced by Professor S.R. Bhagwat's method of teaching a letter by making a story about its shape. But he observed that the method was time consuming and not easily adaptable in other languages. Taking a clue from Bhagwat, Laubach developed a new method of teaching the alphabet through pictures, words and syllables.<sup>29</sup>

In his approach to teaching Laubach was very flexible and he recommended different methods that were found to be effective in teaching various languages. If he adopted key word method in Hindi and Marathi, he switched over to story method in Tamil and Telugu. Laubach always worked with groups of interested people and discussed each issue in detail both with specialists and local leaders. He viewed literacy to be a national concern and hence sought the comments of important national leaders like, Gandhi, Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Rabindranath Tagore about the literacy materials and methods.<sup>30</sup> His contacts with the eminent leaders gave respectability as well as acceptability to his programme. He kept a very high profile, addressing innumerable conferences which were invariably attended by the local dignitaries and hence attracted large crowds who listened to his inspiring

talks in which he categorically stressed the importance of literacy. Thus, through team work at grass root level, taking the leadership into confidence through briefing, seeking the cooperation of all those interested in literacy, and inspiring public speeches, Laubach contributed a great deal in building up the literacy climate in the entire country. His chief contribution to India during 1930's had been "to goad her on to efforts tireless and unsatisfied, until at last the solution was found."<sup>31</sup>

The socio-political developments in India during 1937-1939 also favoured the literacy work of Laubach. In seven provinces of British India, Indian National Congress Party had come into power after the provincial elections and the eradication of illiteracy was one of the top priority programmes of the party.<sup>32</sup> Since most of the congress leaders were already familiar with the literacy work of Laubach, they extended full cooperation to him. He received both political patronage and official support. He had the satisfaction of witnessing the success of his efforts. While leaving India he wrote in his diary that "the foundations were being laid for a literacy programme in India."<sup>33</sup>

The tempo of the literacy programme in India was, however, slowed down due to the outbreak of the Second World War and the downfall of the Congress Ministries in 1939.<sup>34</sup> While World War II had kept Laubach confined to America, the Indian missionaries, specially the Secretary of the National Christian Council, Miss Ruth Ure, took over the reins and urged the "Christian forces to perform the essential task of literacy"<sup>35</sup> and thereby keep the flag of literacy flying. The American Lutheran Church of Andhra had passed a resolution that every Christian should promote literacy as a part of evangelical effort.<sup>36</sup> In view of these initiatives, fourteen Christian Councils of Adult Education had come up in Orissa, Madras, Andhra, Lucknow, Central provinces, Bihar, Gujarat,

Assam, and by 1942 they had prepared and published a variety of primers, post-literacy materials, charts, etc.<sup>37</sup> The colonial rulers in India did not pay much attention towards literacy though the Seargent Report of 1944, had viewed literacy as a Governmental activity.<sup>38</sup> The entire attention of the Indian leadership was focussed on the struggle for independence. Hence literacy programme dwindled into insignificance during 1940's.

### **Second Phase of Laubach's Work (1948-55)**

With the emergence of India as an independent democratic country, literacy became an important concern of the Government of India. Since the Congress leadership under Mahatma Gandhi had already identified literacy as a priority programme of the party as early as 1937, it was taken up with renewed vigour when they came into power after the independence. In 1948, the Government of India appointed a committee under Mohan Lal Saxena to suggest a suitable adult education programme for the country.<sup>39</sup> Keeping in view the recommendations of the Saxena Committee and the democratic character of the country, the then Minister of Education, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, emphasised the name of social education for the adult education programme.<sup>40</sup> However, there was a dearth of specialised training institutions and experts to implement the programme successfully. Having thrown out the British, India had started looking towards America and was eager to develop democratic institutions on American pattern. Since Russia had achieved literacy in a communist set up, Americans were keen to assist India achieve literacy through "noncoercive and democratic manner".<sup>41</sup> As the Indian leaders were already familiar with the work of Laubach, they sought his "technical advice in conducting a nation wide literacy campaign".<sup>23</sup> Laubach visited India in March, 1949 and studied the social education programme and also made detailed suggestions to the Government of India for launching

a campaign.<sup>42</sup> Due to the shortage of funds and infrastructure, the campaign was not launched.

In the course of his three weeks visit to Madras, Calcutta, Nagpur, Delhi and Amritsar, Laubach addressed twelve adult education conferences and helped several regional literacy teams to revise their earlier primers in Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi. Besides he also trained fifty people in the preparation of post-literacy materials and worked out a plan for a weekly digest for the neoliterate.<sup>44</sup> By meeting the top officials of the Government of India and different states and reiterating the importance of literacy in the discussions, Laubach gave a boost to the newly conceived social education programme. His inspiring addresses to the public, did generate a great deal of interest and enthusiasm among them for literacy work. Laubach had a rare ability to motivate the masses by appealing to their sentiments, like patriotism. To quote :

“In the bosom of India are resources sufficient to change poverty into abundance if we can learn how to utilise these resources for the welfare of mankind.....I believe that there is enough patriotism now in India for every person who has learned to read, to teach somebody else at home at a convenient hour. If the literate people will regard themselves as soliders in a vast campaign against India's enemy number one, you can get India taught.....The greatest interest of Indian Government to liquidate illiteracy presents the Christians.....an opportunity to reveal their passion to help other people.....<sup>45</sup>

Laubach made very significant and substantial contribution to the development of Indian Adult Education during 1952-53 when he worked as a US Consultant to Government of India. In this capacity he was expected to provide technical advice and guidance to Indian adult educators in the development of literacy materials and methods, impart training to literacy

workers and develop a five year plan for making India literate.<sup>46</sup> Laubach worked with a team which consisted of his wife (Effa Laubach) Mrs. Welthy Fisher, Mrs. Betty Mooney, Miss June Dohse, Mr. Richard Cortright, Mr. and Mrs. Phil Gray. The team travelled extensively in India, conducted a series of training programmes for literacy workers,<sup>47</sup> and developed primers and graded materials in eleven languages, viz., Hindi, Marathi, Gujarathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Bengali, Assamese and Punjabi.<sup>48</sup> The basic contribution of Laubach was the development of a popular book for the neoliterate—*Anand, The Wiseman*, which was adopted in different languages in India and abroad. The book had forty chapters and each chapter dealt with a theme related to health, agriculture, sanitation, culture etc.<sup>49</sup>. Besides Laubach also took initiative in the establishment of three centres for literacy journalism at Hislop College (Nagpur), Isabella Thoburn College (Lucknow), and Agricultural Institute (Allahabad) and helped in the establishment of five social education centres in India for the training of village level workers. Laubach also conducted a series of training programmes for literacy workers. As desired by the Government of India, Laubach also prepared a five year plan for the eradication of illiteracy which emphasised the need for quality materials, suitable training strategies and central coordination.<sup>50</sup> The plan was accepted by the Government of India in principle. In a series of letters and reports, Laubach has lucidly narrated his experiences of literacy work in India. These letters and reports include several photographs which depict the participation of eminent Indian leaders like Nehru in the literacy programme.<sup>51</sup>

It was observed that with the exception of Hindi, the literacy materials developed by Laubach team in regional languages were priced very high and not properly distributed or publicised.<sup>52</sup> With the departure of Laubach (after the conclusion of his contract with Government of India), there

was nobody of his stature to goad different state level agencies to make use of the literacy materials. Since one of his colleague, Welthy Fisher had stayed back in India to establish the Literacy House at Lucknow, the Hindi materials were put to maximum use through the institution. Hindi being the national language, the Government of India subsidised the printing of Hindi primers and also gave wide publicity.

The Literacy House continued to promote Laubach materials till 1963, when it observed that Laubach method was too "monotonous" and hence replaced them with a new set of materials.<sup>53</sup> However, Laubach materials in Malayalam continue to be in use even today at the Laubach Literacy Centre in Kerala.

### **Third Phase of Laubach's Work in India (1956-1970)**

Laubach had made clear demarcation of his role as an official literacy expert vis-a-vis a literacy evangelist. While he worked six days a week for the promotion of literacy among Indians in general, on the seventh day (Sunday) he "opened the doors for literacy evangelists among the churches."<sup>54</sup> Though not personally involved in proselytation, Laubach's inspiring sermons seems to have motivated many a Christian missionaries to practice "Each One Teach One and Win Gne for Christ."<sup>55</sup> While Gandhi and Nehru had welcomed Christian missionaries and sought their cooperation in literacy programme, they had cautioned them to keep off conversions. Unlike Laubach, most of the Christian missionaries in India failed to read the signs of the changing times and hence by 1955 the Government of India had to "put a curb on the flow of foreign missionaries."<sup>56</sup>

The activities of a section of Christian missionaries and the association of a large number of Americans with the work of Literacy House and Asia Foundation, had created considerable 'restlessness' among a group of Indians who began to

protest.<sup>57</sup> They branded all the missionaries and Americans as anti-India and hence when Laubach wished to return to India to resume his literacy activities, some of his Indian colleagues discouraged him.<sup>58</sup> Yet, Laubach, was keen to follow up his work in India and explore the possibilities of further strengthening the literacy journalism courses at Nagpur and Lucknow.<sup>59</sup> In 1956, he made a short visit to India and discussed the possibilities of starting a new Literacy House in South India on the pattern of Lucknow Literacy House with the leaders of South Indian Adult Education Association.

By mid 1950's, there was a change in the nature of Laubach's involvement with adult education in India. It was mainly due to his involvement<sup>60</sup> with the establishment of a non-Government organization—Laubach Literacy And Mission Fund in 1955 for the world wide promotion of literacy activities. Since then, he began to concentrate his efforts in different parts of the world. Besides the new policy of Government of India of encouraging Indian nationals to take over missionary work within the country also discouraged Laubach from actively involving himself with adult education in India. However, he continued to provide professional and financial support to Indian adult educators and adult education institutions from outside. Since he adopted the policy of "having nationals instead of Americans doing the work"<sup>61</sup>, when Dr. A.K. John, an adult educator trained in the US set up an adult education centre in Kerala in 1958, Laubach extended financial support to him through the Laubach Literacy Fund, which continues it's support even today.<sup>62</sup> In subsequent years, Laubach Literacy also collaborated with Bengal Social Service League in the preparation of literacy materials and sponsored Miss Fern Edwards to train literacy teachers in Calcutta.<sup>63</sup> Laubach was also instrumental in providing some grant (US \$ 10,000) to the building fund of Indian Adult Education Association and helping a number

of Indians, viz. Eapen, Shashi Kumar Dethé, George Prasad, Ammini etc., to acquire training in literacy journalism at Syracuse University.<sup>64</sup>

During 1960's Laubach made the last two trips to India primarily to provide professional support to Dr. A.K. John's social education centre at Karthicappally in Kerala and Bengal Social Service League, in Calcutta. Moreover, he met the top officials of Government of India viz. Dr. P.N. Kirpal, Dr. L.K. Jha and Mr. A.K. Khosla and explored the possibilities of utilising a portion of PL 480 funds for the expansion of Indian adult education programme. The details of his visit have been recorded in audio-tapes, photos, and films.<sup>65</sup>

### **The Concern for India**

Laubach's involvement with adult education in India, though declined over the years, continued uninterruptedly till his death in 1970. But neither his interest in India nor his commitment to literacy in the country decreased. In fact, a variety of factors and forces sustained his interest in India. He had developed great admiration for several Indians. He was immensely impressed by the personality and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. In Gandhi's simplicity he saw Christ. To quote Laubach, :

"I believe that Jesus Christ left his heart in Gandhi and in Gandhian followers as truly as Christ in the best Christian missionaries. It seems to me that we ought to love and work with those self sacrificing people."<sup>66</sup>

When Laubach met Gandhi during his first visit to India in 1935 and discussed the importance of universal literacy, he had become fully convinced of the need for the liquidation of illiteracy in India.<sup>67</sup> Laubach was also fascinated by the profound educational philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore whose face reminded him of Moses and he wrote in his diary :

“God! What is man’s best gift to mankind? To be beautiful soul—That is what I learned as I looked upon the face of Tagore and listened to him.....His beautiful face reminds me of Moses.”<sup>68</sup>

The compassionate work of Vinoba Bhave among the poor and landless workers greatly appealed to Laubach and he devoted a full chapter on Gandhi and Bhave, in his famous book—*The World Is A Learning Compassion*. In fact “he lost his heart to India,<sup>69</sup> where he came across very dedicated and diligent missionaries and literacy workers whose company and cooperation stimulated him to continue his literacy work.

The size of the country and its backwardness and immense scope for evangelical work were added attractions to Laubach. Though he recognised literacy as an integral part of mission work and considered “literacy to be the world’s target door to evangelism,” in India, he was probably more concerned with humanitarian aspect of literacy work. He wrote :

“Reach down with compassion and lift these people out of illiteracy or they will reach up with hate and probably destroy us and themselves.”<sup>70</sup>

He also shared the predominant American fear of Communism in 1950’s. He believed that if Americans did not help the newly emerging democratic countries like India in making a success of democracy and solving the critical problems like illiteracy and poverty through democratic process and institutions, perhaps, Indians might lose faith in democracy and opt for Communism.<sup>71</sup> Since the two neighbouring countries of India (China and Russia) had succeeded in liquidating illiteracy under communist regimes, Laubach was eager to prove that a huge country like India could achieve literacy through “democratic and non-coercive manner”.<sup>72</sup> In one of the his papers, he gave expression to his fear :

“There are two races in which everyone.....is a contestant. The first race is between literacy and the world’s growing population.....literacy is losing the race with population .....But there is another race which we are losing ..... This is the race with communist mass education.”<sup>73</sup>

Laubach was very keen to protect India from becoming communist because of her geographic location and size among the Asian countries. He had cautioned American Government that “we dare not lose India if we expect to help Asia live in peace.”<sup>74</sup> He believed that if India opts for communism, it could tilt the balance in Asia because of her huge population and size and hence it would be essential to retain the democratic character of the country. This seems to be one of the reason for his support to the adult education programme in Kerala and Bengal, the two strongholds of communism in India. In his endeavour in making India literate, he was aiming at winning a battle of ideology between communism and democracy. To quote Laubach, “In India we are fighting the most crucial battle of ideologies anywhere in the world.” He strongly felt that if the adult education programme in India failed, the masses might go communist in the next general election,<sup>75</sup> and hence, Laubach mobilised all his resources to the cause of literacy. His writings and speeches during 1950’s and 60’s show that one of his important concern was to integrate literacy as a key component of American Foreign Policy so as to ensure the state support and financial backup for the literacy programme in developing countries. Laubach’s efforts, though publicised the issue of literacy and its importance among the American politicians and press, did not lead to any tangible policy formulation. If Laubach had built up a strong network of adult educators and developed literacy as a mass movement, perhaps a strong pressure group would have come up to argue the case for literacy. Laubach had commitment but no political patronage. Being a lone crusador against illiteracy, his efforts created only ripples in the backwaters of American politics and policy.

In promoting democracy in India, Laubach had a deeper motive. He firmly believed that "when India is safe for democracy, she is nearer to christianity."<sup>76</sup> However, he did not aim at making India Christian. To quote : "We do not want to be thought of as enemies of any other religion but as lover of men."<sup>77</sup> He wished that people should think of Christianity in terms of a loving service rather than a doctrine. To him literacy was an important avenue of service. In taking up the cause of literacy, he believed that he was carrying out the Will of God and hence there was total dedication.<sup>78</sup> It seems that his concepts of christianity and literacy were inter-linked and reflected a broader concern for the values like love and service to humanity.

### **Laubach Methods and Materials**

Laubach was one of the first few adult educators who focussed on the art of teaching illiterate adults. During the early 1930's, when there was practically no research on andragogy Laubach had categorically emphasised the difference between teaching children and adults and had written extensively on the psychology of illiterate adults and technique of handling them.<sup>79</sup> To Laubach, the practical process of teaching an adult was as important as the process of building a house.<sup>80</sup> He believed that if the illiterates were taught in a proper manner, it would be a delightful process both for students and teachers. He never believed in the formal evaluation of learners. According to Laubach, the best test was the successful teaching of an illiterate by a neoliterate.<sup>81</sup> His writings on teaching of adults have stood the test of time and most of them are relevant even today. One of the reason for his interest in adult learning may be traced due to his close ties with Edward L. Thorndike, a Professor of Education at Columbia University who was actively involved in developing learning theories. In fact Thorndike had written the preface to Laubach's book, *Toward A Literate World*.

Laubach loved teaching illiterate adults and he often stated that he was prepared to forego his food and teach adults as it gave him more satisfaction.<sup>82</sup> He never believed in the perfection of any one method. By continuously experimenting in different methods of teaching adults, Laubach emphasised the need for improving the methods to suit the changing clientele and their socio-economic background. In his essays on 'Each One Teach One' Laubach has spelt out the details of teaching adults.<sup>83</sup> He always stressed the importance of treating the illiterates like "kings and queens" and according them due respect as "equals" and talking to them in "soft voice." He stated that "people like a whisper more than a shout. When a youngman makes love successfully, he whispers in his sweethearts ear. He never shouts, if he hopes to win the fair lady. No more will you win your student if you hurt his ears."<sup>84</sup>

As Laubach was convinced that half the battle for literacy depended upon the preparation of suitable literature,<sup>85</sup> he devoted a great deal of time for the task. He was fascinated by the method of Rabindranath Tagore of using the common words and popular idioms in the literature.<sup>86</sup> Citing the example of Tagore, Laubach persuaded the literacy workers to survey their local area, identify the common words and prepare a word list<sup>87</sup> prior to the development of primers and graded reading materials.

The development of materials was always undertaken in groups. Apart from Laubach, the group consisted of local literacy workers, linguists, an artist, and an expert in writing in simple language. To start with, Laubach familiarised himself with the alphabets, vowels and consonants of a particular language in which the primer was to be developed. Depending upon the special characteristics of the language, Laubach tried to reduce the number of alphabets if there were too many alphabets and grouped them into 4 or 5 families.

Subsequently, with the help of local people Laubach identified 3 or 4 key words which were known to maximum number of people in the area and in which the different consonants are used. Since a primer consisted of 10-12 lessons, Laubach developed each lesson in the form of a chart depicting picture, word and syllable. A particular alphabet is taught through the association of a known picture of an object whose name began with that particular letter. For example, to teach the letter's", the word 'snake' and its picture were used. Most of the pictures were selected keeping in view the shape of the letter. In the absence of a suitable picture, the artist prepared a sketch resembling the shape of the alphabet and selected a relevant word. (see a lesson from Laubach's Hindi Primer given in Appendix-A),

From experiments and experience, Laubach had found that an illiterate-person could easily learn a new word if it was repeated five times. He found that on an average while an illiterate person could master six new words within half an hour, a neo-literate could learn ten new words if they were taught with due emphasis on phonetic, word and syllable.\*\* Laubach adopted different methods in different languages. While in Hindi and Marathi, he adopted the alphabet method, in Tamil and Telugu he switched over to story method mainly due to the large number of alphabets. In the preparation of post-literacy materials, Laubach emphasised the need for providing locally relevant and useful information to the learners through the lessons. In his widely acclaimed book for the neoliterate,—*Anand The Wiseman*, Laubach has provided an example of imparting useful knowledge related to health, agriculture, community etc. through the story of a character—Anand (see Appendix-B for a sample lesson from the book).

The materials developed by Laubach in Hindi were in use till 1963, when the Literacy House at Lucknow replaced them with a new set of primers. In other languages, Laubach

materials are being used only in a limited manner, either by some Christian missionaries or Laubach Literacy Centre in Kerala. Some of the scholars have criticised Laubach materials as "mechanical" and "repetitive."<sup>8</sup> However, defending his methods and materials, Laubach stated that :

"People who do not teach illiterates themselves sometimes criticise our stories for not being interesting enough. They ask why we do not have a plot. The answer is that : The one great objective of the student is to learn to read as quickly as possible. If he can read without the help, he gets a tremendous thrill and he does not need any exciting story to add to thrill. If on the other hand, he finds the page difficult, his difficulty will destroy all sense of excitement. Have you ever tried to read a joke in a foreign language which you knew imperfectly ?.....*Interest must never be attempted at the expense of simplicity.*"<sup>9</sup> (Italics added).

### Some Achievements

One of the significant achievement of Laubach was the demonstration that his methods worked. The materials developed by him served as a model to some and even stimulated others to take up material preparation. Laubach observed that one thing India needed above all was 'faith to believe it could become literate', and he believed that he succeeded in that respect.<sup>91</sup> Through his inspiring speeches and writings Laubach kept the flag of literacy flying in India. He was instrumental in setting up the Departments of Journalism at Osmania and Nagpur Universities where special courses were introduced in literacy journalism.<sup>92</sup> Besides playing a key role in setting up five institutions for the training of literacy workers in different parts of India during the early 1950's, Laubach mooted the idea of a national centre for the training of literacy workers and encouraged his colleague Welthy Fisher to pursue the idea which later blossomed into the Literacy House at Lucknow.

Laubach was one of the most innovative and enterprising adult educators of twentieth century. As a prolific writer of primers, efficient trainer of literacy workers, effective mobiliser of resources, and successful builder of literacy organizations, Laubach had adopted a wholistic approach to solve the problem of illiteracy around the world. Literacy was always the top priority programme for him. He believed that "since adults are deciding the fate of the world at present", their education need to be given top priority.<sup>93</sup> He had tremendous faith in the intrinsic strength of literacy in solving the problems of hunger and poverty. Hence he declared all round war against illiteracy and tapped all the possible resources from the religious, philanthropic, secular and governmental organizations. His aim being universal literacy, he spread his tentacles in all the possible directions. He "scattered the seeds of literacy and goodwill far and wide.....He has been too busy sowing to worry much about whether all the seeds took root. Some fell on rocky sand and some among thorns; but the seed that fell into good soil has begun to yield the harvest."<sup>94</sup> Being the first international adult educator who 'showed the way',<sup>95</sup> Laubach drew the attention of the world to the cause of literacy.<sup>96</sup> Laubach had the "deep satisfaction of watching literacy unfolding around the world" during his life time.

Literacy for self-reliance, literacy for equality, literacy for dignity seem to be the three cardinal points of Laubach's adult education philosophy and programme. In a steady and sincere manner, he pursued his mission till the end of his life. When he died, there was an incomplete script on his typewriter which indicated his belief in educating the masses for self-reliance. It read as follows: "We cannot feed all the hungry people of the world. But we can teach them to feed themselves."<sup>98</sup>

## REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. For details of his early education see, Helen M. Roberts, *Champion of the Silent Billion*. Minnesota : MacLaster Park Publication, 1961, pp. 22-54.
2. Based on the interview given to the author by Dr. Robert S. Laubach on April 13, 1989 at Syracuse.
3. Frank C. Laubach, *Learning The Vocabulary of God; A Spiritual Diary*. Tennessee : The Gospel Press, 1956, p. 19.
4. See Laubachs' letter to his father dated 18th Feb. 1933; Laubach Letters, Jan.-April, 1933, in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 2. And also *His Diary from Philippines 1929-30*, in *Ibid* Box No. 112. p. 12.
5. Bob Laubach, *Op. cit.* p. 14.
6. See Laubach's letter to colleagues, April 8, 1938 in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 2.
7. Laubach has given a detailed account of his early experiments in literacy along with the original charts in the following book. Frank C. Laubach, *Toward A Literate World*. New York : Columbia University Press, 1938. Chapter-II. See also Marjorie Medary; *Each One Teach One : Frank Laubach, Friend To Millions*. New York : Longman, Green, 1954, pp. 33-34.
8. Frank C. Laubach, "Manuscript of a Foreign Reading Book," in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 122, p. ix-6.
9. *Ibid.* p. ix-9.
10. Laubach's Letter to Dr. Alden H. Clark dated May 14, 1933, in *Ibid*, Box No. 2.
11. Laubachs' letter to Dr. Enoch, dated Feb. 7, 1934, Laubach letters, Jan.-May, 1934, in *Ibid*.

12. See Laubach Diary 1933, in *Ibid* Box No. 112, p. 12.
13. See Laubachs' letter to his colleagues, dated Nov. 22, 1933, Laubach letters—August-December, 1933, in *Ibid*, Box No. 2.
14. Laubach's letter to his father dated March 23, 1933, Laubach letters Jan.-April, 1933, in *Ibid*.
15. Bob Laubach *op. cit*, p. 15.
16. Cyril J. Davery, *Growing Bigger Everyday : Frank Laubach*. London : Edinberg House Press, 1961, p. 17.
17. Laubach has elaborated this point in his article on Each One Teach One and "The Mind of An Illiterate Adult"—See Part-IV.
18. Based on the discussions held with Dr. Robert F. Caswell, Director of Laubach Literacy International, on 17 April, 1990 at his office in Syracuse.
19. *Ibid*.
20. For details see *Census in India 1931*. Vol. I Part-I, Delhi : Manager, Publications. 1933, pp. 324-326.
21. Sohan Singh, *op. cit*, p. 51.
22. For details see Frank C. Laubach, *India Shall Be Literate*, pp. 13-18.
23. See, Madan L. Handa, "Adult Education And Social Transformation : A Political Analysis of some Aspects of India's Adult Education Programme (1950-1980)". Toronto : International Council for Adult Education, 1980, p. 9.
24. For details see, Sohan Singh, *op. cit*. pp. 50-55.
25. Ruth Ure, "India Aspires to Democracy", Folder on India in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 139, p. 23,
26. Frank C. Laubach, "Manuscript of a Foreign Reading Book", p. IV-I.
27. *Ibid* See also letter from Rev. B.P. Hivale to Laubach January 15, 1936, in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 2.

28. Frank C. Laubach, "Manuscript of a Foreign Reading Book", p. VII-26.
29. This aspect has been dealt in detail under the Section "Laubach methods and materials", towards the end of this chapter.
30. On this point see his discussion with Gandhi and letter from Nehru, in Part-II and Part-III.
31. See "Report on Adventures in the Campaign for Literacy in India" (1936-37), in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 246 p. 8.
32. For an idea of Congress ideology and the role of the Congress Party in literacy campaign see, S.Y. Shah, "Study of Mass Literacy Campaign in Bihar, 1938-89", *Journal of Education And Social Change* Vol. III, No. 1, (1989), pp. 6-7.
33. See Frank C. Laubach, *A Spiritual Diary*, p. 85.
34. The Congress Ministers resigned due to their differences with the British Government on various issues.
35. See Ruth Ure, "India's literacy Ablaze", in *Laubach Collection; Box No. 247*, p. 1.
36. Project overseas : India, in *Ibid.*
37. For details see, "Report of the Secretary of the National Christian Council submitted to the World Literacy Committee, in *Ibid.* Box No. 110.
38. *Report of Post War Educational Development in India, 1944.* Delhi : Manager Publication, 1944, pp. 46-52.
39. S.Y. Shah, *A Source Book on Adult Education—New Delhi* : Directorate of Adult Education, 1989, pp. 18-19.
40. For details of Social Education Programme, see, *Ibid.*, pp. 43-48.
41. Audio taped interview with Dr. Prem Kirpal (Former Secretary, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India) held on January 30, 1989 at New Delhi.

42. See "Plan For Nationwide Literacy Drive" in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 119.
43. The details of his visit are given in letter nos. 3 & 4, published in *Far Eastern News* of the Committee on World Literacy And Christian Literature in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 116, See Part III.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Laubach's speech delivered on 26th March, 1949, India 1949-56, in *Ibid* Box No. 119.
46. See Letter from Frank C. Laubach in *World Literacy Newsletter* June, 1952 Vol. VI. No. 4.
47. See, Report of the Laubach Literacy Team March 14-April 6, 1953, in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 119. See also Elizabeth Mooney, "Training Centres for Teachers, Directors and Writers", in *Ibid.*
48. The copies of the Primers in different languages are kept in 27 boxes. For details see, "A select Annotated Bibliography" given at the end of this book.
49. For details, see *Laubach Collection* Box Nos. 201, 234, 250, 262. See also appendix-B.
50. See, *How It Can Be Done : A Suggested Plan For A Nationwide Attack On Illiteracy In India*, Maryland : Koinonia Foundation, 1953.
51. See, Part-III.
52. Letter from Paul B. Means to Laubach January 22, 1956, Laubach correspondence January-February, 1956, in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 5 letter from M.J. Prakasan to Laubach, September 9, 1955, Laubach correspondence, August-September, 1955 in *Ibid* Box No. 4.
53. On this point see, Mushtaq Ahmed, *Methods of Teaching Reading*, New Delhi : State Resource Centre, 1989 (Mimeographed). pp. 5-6.
54. See, Laubach's letter to his friends, June 13, 1952, *Laubach Collection* Box No. 117.

55. On this point see, "Literacy as Evangelism", in *Ibid.* Box No. 114.
56. Oommen Philip, "Missions under Fire in India," in *The Christian Century*, August 15, 1956, pp. 944-945.
57. Sally Swenson *Welthy Honsinger Fisher : Signals of a Century*, Ontario : The Author, 1988, pp. 340-347.
58. See letter from Welthy Fisher to Laubach, March 15, 1956, Laubach correspondence, March-April, 1956, in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 5.
59. Laubach's letter to Ellis, February 13; 1956, Project Overseas, in *Ibid*, Box No. 259.
60. Laubach's letter to Paul Means, February 11, 1956, in *Ibid.*
61. "Laubach 1936-41", in *Ibid*, Box No. 121, p. 71.
62. See, "Project Overseas : India", in *Ibid*, Box No. 247. See also Box Nos. 9, 79, 277, 330, 358, 413.
63. "Report on India", in *Ibid*, Box No. 215 and 'India : General', *Ibid*, Box No. 246.
64. See Laubach's correspondence with S.C. Dutta, and others in, *Ibid*, Box No. 80, 82, 84.
65. See Laubach's tape script in *Ibid*, Box Nos. 106, 117.
66. Laubach's letter to his friends, March 7, 1952, in *World Literacy Newsletter*, Vol. VI, No. 2.
67. See the discussion of Laubach with Gandhi, in Part-II.
68. Frank C. Laubach, *A Spiritual Diary*—p. 9.
69. Frank C. Laubach, *India Shall Be Literate*, p. 235.
70. Frank C. Laubach, Each One Teach One Essays, in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 113, p. 5.
71. See Laubach's address, September 27, 1957, Laubach Essays, II, in *Ibid*, pp. 8-10.
72. Audio-tape interview with Dr. P.N. Kirpal (Former Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of India) held on January 30, 1989, at New Delhi.

73. Frank C. Laubach and Robert S. Laubach, "Are we Losing Both Races in Adult Literacy", in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 113, p. 1.
74. Speech of Laubach, June 11, 1953, Lit. Lit. No. 402, in *Ibid*, Box No. 139. See also Laubach's letter to Thomas B. Stanley, July 21, 1963 in *Ibid*, Box No. 3.
75. Laubach's letter to friends, October 1952, *World Literacy Newsletter*, vol. VI, No. 6.
76. Laubach's letter to friends, May 20, 1953, in *Ibid*, vol. VII, No. 6.
77. See "Laubach Memorabilia, 1970", p. 3 in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 126.
78. Bob Laubach, *op. cit.* p. 12.
79. See Part-IV.
80. Frank C. Laubach, *Teaching The World To Read*, pp. 12-13.
81. Frank C. Laubach, *India Shall Be Literate*, p. 53.
82. Laubach Memorabilia, in *Laubach Collection'* Box No. 126 p. 13.
83. See "How To Teach Each One Teach One", Primers in *Ibid*, Box No. 299 : pp. 21-28.
84. *Ibid*, p. 22.
85. Frank C. Laubach, *Forty Years With Silent Billion*, p. 115.
86. Frank C. Laubach "Manuscript of a Foreign Reading Book", pp. V-13.
87. On this point see, Part-IV.
88. Frank C. Laubach, "Report on How To Make the World Literate :' The Each One Teach One Way; in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 119, pp. 8-12, p. 22.
89. On this point see, Valerie Meyer And Donald Keele, "The Laubach Way To Reading : Review", *Lifelong Learning*, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1988, pp. 8-10.

90. Frank C. Laubach and Robert S. Laubach, *How To Make the World Literate—The Each One Teach One Way*, p. 12.
91. See Laubach, Manuscript of a Foreign Reading Book, p. VII-25.
92. See, "Shall India Be Literate", in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 139.
93. David E. Mason, *Op. cit.* p. 151.
94. Marjoie Medary, *Op. cit.* p. 205.
95. Interview with Ms Carolyn Blackey held at Syracuse on 29.3.1990.
96. Interview with Bob Laubach held on 10th April, 90 at Syracuse.
97. Helen M. Roberts, *Op. cit.* p. 89.
98. Bob Laubach, *Op. cit.* p. 45.

**PART—II**  
**LAUBACH'S VISION OF LITERACY**

# 3

## UNIVERSAL LITERACY : CURSE OR BLESSING ?

— A discussion with Mahatma Gandhi —

Dr. Frank C. Laubach had become a great admirer of Gandhi even before meeting him. During his first visit to India in 1935, Laubach had the chance of meeting him and they had an interesting discussion on the importance of literacy. Laubach had noted down the contents of their conversation and quoted it in parts in several writings and speeches. The following account which provides the entire conversation is selected from the original manuscript of an unpublished work.....Ed.

There are many people who doubt whether we ought to make the rest of the world literate—we are having enough troubles already, they feel. As Dr. John R. Mott puts it : “The alphabet is the most dangerous weapon ever put in human hands.” It is like science—it may bless the world or destroy it. I agree that this is all true. Whether literacy curses or blesses, all depends upon what people read. But nobody can stop that rising stream—what we can do is to keep it pure.....

I had an interesting conversation with Mahatma Gandhi on that point. It was in 1935 on my first visit to India in the interest of literacy. We had just completed a reading chart

in the Marathi language and I took it to Wardha to show Gandhi what we were attempting. He was sitting on the floor and I sat down cross-legged in front of him and unrolled the Marathi chart. He took a look at it for a moment, then looked up and said to my amazement :

“I doubt whether India should become literate.”

“You are the first person I ever heard say that,” I said, hardly believing my ears. “What do you mean?” I told Gandhi. “The literature you publish in the West is not fit for India to read. Look at what you are writing and selling us on any railway stand.” I had looked—he was right about that. He did not wait for a reply but struck again.

“I gave my son a Western education, sent him to England to finish his college work. He learned to drink whiskey and be lazy, and now he will have nothing to do with his father. I am worried about what Western education will do for all India.”

Then this saint, revered by millions, gave me a third punch before I had recovered from the first two, and don't you think this was “the most unkindest cut of all” to a Christian missionary ?

“Many of the greatest benefactors of the human race have been illiterate—Mohanmed, for example.” Had he thought up these punches before I came ? My answers were not thought up—they came out of heaven. At least I haven't been able to think of any others so good.....

“Mr. Gandhhi,” I said, “You are right about all these points. But on the other hand, millions of us admire you and have read your books with great blessings. If you had not written these books and if we had not learned to read, we should have never heard of you.”

Mr. Gandhi dropped his head and said meekly : "I think, I would have done a little good."

The other answer came and I let it fly : "The greatest single blessings that ever came to this world was the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. If his life had not been written and if we had not been able to read, we would know very little about Jesus."

Mr. Gandhi shook his head up and down slowly and silently for a few moments, and he looked through me every time his head came up. I wish I knew what he meant by that head shake. He changed the subject.

"I do believe in literacy for India," he said at last. "Indeed I have probably been instrumental in teaching thirty thousand indirectly myself. But far and away the largest question for India is to feed her hungry multitudes."

"That", I said, "is exactly why India needs to become literate. *A few educated leaders cannot lift the masses above hunger until they can read and so can learn how to lift themselves. All over the world illiterates have been victims of educated scoundrels who keep them in debt all their lives, and literacy is the only road I see to their emancipation.*<sup>1</sup> (Italics added).

## REFERENCES

1. Frank C. Laubach, "Manuscript of An unpublished Foreign Reading Book", in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 122, Chapter-I, pp. 18-20.

## 4

### LITERACY FOR PEACE

Literacy for peace has been one of the important concern of Laubach. In this write up Laubach has drawn the attention of Americans towards the plight of under privileged people around the world and has highlighted their role in liquidating illiteracy.....Ed.

.....Illiteracy has an enormous bearing on world peace and security. If only a small part of our world remains on a fairly high economic plane, while the majority of the human race are in poverty and degradation, the areas containing these underprivileged peoples will be centres of resentment, unrest, and revolt. It is true that they have been in this state of destitution for thousands of years. But there are new factors in modern living that make these people more rebellious at their condition than ever before. The airplane, the radio, the cinema, and television have ushered us into the electronic age where illiterates can see for themselves the enormous economic superiority of literate countries. Every motion picture whips them into an ever rising determination not to tolerate this difference. We must help them up or they will blow up and destroy us.

Now as America and other countries in which education is general assume responsibility for policing the world, the illiterate areas will believe that the reason we are wealthier is because we hold the robots and the bombs. In this new

world no country will be safe while other countries are underprivileged. Our economic plateau is our peril now—we have to help them up to our level.

The United States is now torn between two impulses. One is to spend billions in defence and in policing the world, while telling the world that we cannot help them in their efforts toward reconstruction because we must pay our titanic war debts. The other impulse—the Christian impulse—is to reach out and lift the world as rapidly as possible to our own economic level. The first of these ideas if adopted will not only be selfish, but will be a fatal mistake. The underprivileged nations will hate us because our workmen in some areas receive ten times, or even a hundred times the wages of their labourers. They will unite against us and ultimately destroy us. The underprivileged nations will have atomic bombs.

If, on the other hand, we can find a way gradually to lift the world, especially where poverty and distress are greatest, those countries that we aid will be grateful to us and will love this country. Moreover, our efforts to help them will set the rest of the world a good example, and in this way we shall inspire other nations to adopt a spirit of cooperation and helpfulness. Only in the direction of loving cooperation can we look for permanent peace and contentment. People are happy when they are in the process of improvement. They are in sullen despair when their efforts to improve are frustrated. In spite of our national debt, therefore, the United States must help the underprivileged countries of the world, as well as the underprivileged in our own country. And we must avoid appearing to be the world's big bully.....

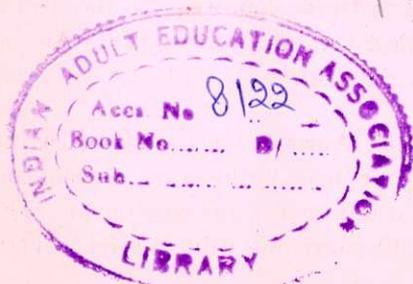
If we are convinced that America must reach out with a helpful hand to the world, our first problem is to find out how we can get the largest returns for our investment. This is especially essential with the enormous debt we must carry

from our world wars. If we find the right lever, we shall be able to help the world rise above want and misery at a relatively small cost, but if we do not find this lever, we may spend countless millions of dollars without seeing any appreciable results.

For example, no permanent result can be expected from sending food to the hungry but ignorant people of the world. It was necessary after the war to supply food as a temporary expedient, but the only thing that will permanently solve the problem of the world's hunger is to show underfed populations how to raise their own food. To translate agricultural information into their languages and then distribute that information would be futile because eight out of ten cannot read. To distribute machinery that requires skilled labor would be futile because illiterates could only ruin it. The one lever that could make every other agency effective in lifting the world is education. And this education must begin with literacy campaigns.<sup>1</sup>.....

## REFERENCES

1. Frank C. Laubach, *Teaching The World To Read: A Handbook for Literacy Campaigns*; New York: Friendship Press, 1947, pp. 1-6.



## 5

### LITERACY AND CULTURE

In this write up Laubach has discussed the importance of literacy as a tool of cultural transmission and has stressed the need for strengthening the contents of adult education. Laubach strongly believed that the ability to read would enhance human progress.....Ed.

.....Literacy is not only a means to an end; it has cultural value in itself. Building a house is a means to an end, and yet the process of building it is also valuable. We will repeatedly show.....that if illiterates are taught in the proper manner, it is a delightful process for both student and teacher; it begets new faith and new vision in the learner; it destroys his sense of inferiority and frustration; it stirs him to new self-reliance; it destroys his defeatist complex; it makes him feel that he belongs to the class of society that triumphs over difficulties and does not live forever in despair. It has the same value for the illiterate that cultural education has for educated people in general. It gives him a new sense of mastery over his fate.

Besides, locked up in books are all the greatest secrets that the human race has discovered in the course of the last ten thousand years of civilization. Writers are constantly unearthing and presenting these secrets in new, fresh ways. *Making a man literate pulls him from the edges of society, where he has lain stagnant mentally, into the current where he*

*will be swept onward as a part of the great, moving course of human history. Some illiterates will never go far, but others may develop genius. Adults differ more widely than children do. There is many an Abraham Lincoln who awaits only the opportunity that Lincoln found in his log cabin, as he read a few books before the fire. Even if the new literate does not go far himself, the door has been unlocked for his children, and for his children's children. (Italics added).*

The theory is often expressed that the masses will stop work with their hands if they become literate. That this is all non-sense is proved by the fact that the most literate countries in the world accomplish the most work.

Admittedly, there is a type of education that leads people away from manual labour, but that is the fault of the material they are given to read; it is not due to the fact that they can read. If new literates are given only cultural literature, they may be influenced to believe that the purpose of education is to provide an escape from physical work into the professions where mental activity is all-important. If, on the other hand, they are given information about their own work, so that they can dignify their trades with new skill and catch the spirit of progress, then they will become far more efficient workers and they will enjoy what they are doing infinitely more.

The worst slavery in the world is work a man dislikes doing and for which he sees no reason excepting the necessity of earning a living. The right kind of reading matter constantly contributes new ideas for use in a man's own business and gives him the zest of discovery and the feeling of getting ahead. So reading delivers him from bondage to his toil and transforms it into fun. We say that a reading doctor is "up on his profession," while a doctor who does not read allows himself to fall behind the times. For, after all, all reading is far and away the greatest means in the world by which people

exchange their discoveries. Men pour onto the pages of books the finest results of their experiences, and other men may read these pages at their leisure. It is safe to say, therefore, that a thousand times as many progressive ideas are disseminated through the printed page as are spread in any other way. If this is true, learning to read multiplies a man's power to progress.

It is not by any means the only thing a man needs—this ability to read. If his attitude is selfish, if his social ideals are low, then education may make an illiterate a menace. But the proper kind of literature is effective in changing people's ideas. Countless people have acquired a new vision of life reading the Gospels. Millions have changed their lives because the right sentence confronted them at the right moment, so that literature probably is as great as any single force in the world for the building and rebuilding of human ideals. It is debatable whether all the sermons of all the churches are as influential in transforming human beings as are the books the people read.<sup>1</sup>

## REFERENCES

1. Frank C. Laubach, *Teaching The World To Read : A Handbook For Literacy Campaigns*; New York : Friendship Press, 1947, pp. 12-15.

## 6

### LITERACY AND SCIENTIFIC FARMING

In this write up Laubach has stressed the significance of literacy for the farmers. He had discussed the advantages of printed words vis-a-vis audio-visual materials in imparting lasting literacy to the farmers.....Ed.

To show the need of literacy for scientific farming would seem to be as needless as proving that one and one make two. Is it not evident that literacy must go hand in hand with scientific farming ?

Yet many intelligent people have advocated bypassing literacy. They would "educate" the farmers through "mass media", like the radio, film strips, motion pictures, television, flannelgraphs and lectures.

All these new inventions are valuable aids to the farmer. But there are many reasons why they cannot replace the printed page. The trouble with spoken words is that the moment they leave the mouth, they begin to fade from the memory, or become distorted and misquoted. But when a thing is written, it remains unchanged for an indefinite period. It has been said that Homer's Iliad will out last the pyramids. All exact scientific knowledge, including farming and industry, is possible only because it is written down.

You may perhaps reply that phonograph records, film strips and motion pictures are also permanent. This is true, and yet

there is a difference. Few of the villagers are able to have a radio or phonograph or motion picture of their own. They will be able to profit from these only in public performances. If they want to refresh their memories about something they have forgotten, they cannot do it. The great advantage of the printed page is that one can get the knowledge he wants when he wants it. If the villager does not have it in his own home, he can go to the village library, or he can write a letter for the information he needs to the Government authorities, and then he can keep this information ready until he needs it. Consider also the enormous difference in cost between papers and booklets on the one hand, and the phonograph, radio and motion picture on the other. From papers and booklets the farmer is able to get the exact information he needs by paying a few pice or annas. If he wanted to get the same information by buying phonograph records or lantern slides, the cost would be prohibitive.

Let us consider some things the illiterate farmer cannot do. He cannot understand a catalogue of machinery. He may look at the pictures, but he will not know what the machines are for, or what they cost, or where to get them. Without ability to read, the catalogue is nothing more than a mysterious picture book. Even if the illiterate does buy a machine, he cannot read instructions or blue-prints to assemble it, or repair it, or grease it, or even use it.

The same is true of a catalogue of garden seeds. It is useless unless the farmer can read. The same is true of advertisements of fertilizers and of household conveniences; and of Government publications on agriculture.

Suppose the farmer wants to market his crops, he cannot read the price quotations. He cannot correspond with anybody about selling his products. He is confined to what his neighbour tells him and since educated people pay little attention to an illiterate, he gets most of his information, and misinformation,

from other illiterates. It is no wonder he is in debt all his life, no wonder that he is deceived and swindled at every turn.

Those who advocated abandoning literacy had a good reason for their despair. It required so long to learn to read that only children could accomplish it, by attending school at least five years. Adults by the million tried to learn to read and found it too difficult. The Indian alphabets are especially difficult, more difficult than those of Africa or Latin America or the Malay regions, though they are not as difficult as Arabic letters.

*What was needed was not a shortcut leaving out literacy, but a shortcut to literacy itself.* (Italics added). At last this is what we have. Educational experts have been applying all the discoveries of modern education. Among these aids was the study of memory methods, such as are familiar to those who have read Pelmanism. By using the association of resemblance of letters to objects, it was found that adults could remember the sounds of letters the first time they saw them. This is an enormous gain, because the old methods had required fifty or one hundred repetitions. By the new method, when the student sees that the letter 'न' looks like a "null" (faucet), he has it at once. The thread of association does not have to be very strong. A very little thread is enough. By using this association, the time and difficulty of memorizing is reduced fifty or one hundred times. What had taken an hour or a day to learn now requires thirty seconds.<sup>1</sup>.....

#### REFERENCE

1. Frank C. Laubach, Pamphlet on Literacy and Scientific Farming, in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. : 104.

**PART—III**  
**LAUBACH'S LITERACY MISSIONS**  
**TO INDIA**

## LAUBACH'S LITERACY MISSIONS TO COLONIAL INDIA - FIRST PHASE - (1935-47)

Laubach first visited colonial India during November-December, 1935 at the invitation of Christian missionaries. The three subsequent visits in 1936, 1937, 1938-1939 were sponsored by the World Literacy Committee of New York. Although the purpose of these visits were primarily to help the Christian missions to develop an appropriate adult literacy programme, Laubach had always tried to expand the scope by involving non-Christians, eminent Indian leaders and officials interested in literacy. During his visits, he travelled extensively and addressed forty literacy conferences, organized several workshops for the preparation of literacy primers in 20 Indian languages and dialects and conducted a number of training programmes for the adult educators—all of which gave a new impetus to literacy movement. In all the speeches, he repeatedly stressed the importance of conducting researches for the improvement of primers, training programmes and writing for neo-literates. Apart from critically reviewing the literacy situation in colonial India and tracing the causes for the educational backwardness of the country, Laubach made detailed notes and observations on the prevalent methods of teaching adults and the prominent adult educators. The following excerpts from his notes, writings and speeches, provide some glimpses into the status of adult education in colonial India during 1935-39 when the mass literacy campaigns were going on in several parts of the country .....Ed.

### First Visit to Colonial India (December, 1935)

.....It happened that Dr. Mason Olcott, a fellow Princetonian, whose brother was my classmate, had travelled through the Philippines in company with the committee on Village Education in India and had seen the Moros. He was the first to become keenly interested in my visiting India.....

Many other Indian missionaries wrote us, men who had beaten their heads against the stone wall of illiteracy in India for twenty or thirty years and who had wide knowledge of the particular problems there out of their invaluable experience. These men expressed their eagerness for me to come to India, though one of them warned me in his letter to expect a task about equal to shovelling the Himalayas into the Indian Ocean. "We shall never have a strong indigenous church in India", he wrote, "until a much larger proportion of its members can read the scriptures than can do so at present; and so I am keenly interested in any effort that may help to solve the problem, even though I fear that your visit will be a disappointment to you in the way of definite results, save that you may be able to stir up interest in the subject."

The most contagious enthusiasm was that of the Rev. Samuel T. Moyer, of Basna, Central Provinces. He had been my schoolmate at Perkiomen Seminary, Pennsylvania. He wrote not only to me, but also to many leaders in India, and made plans which later proved sound and helpful.

My tireless secretary, Miss Minnie K. Schultz, was the person who really pushed me over the brink into a campaign for world literacy! She persuaded me to prepare a letter for persons along the route of our homeward trip offering to explore with them the possibilities of applying our method elsewhere. Then before I realized it, Miss Schultz had copied and mailed five hundred copies of this letter! The great majority of those addressed answered that letter.

The replies from the Dutch East Indies and from South Africa did not encourage us to believe that we could get the cooperation we sought. The replies from India and the Near East, on the other hand, were more eager than we could have expected.

We decided to accept the invitations from Singapore, Ceylon, certain points in India, Cairo, Palestine, Syria and Turkey. and on January 20, 1935, I set out, half frightened at my own audacity !

On the boat from Singapore to Colombo were an American missionary, Miss Caroline Pope, and a Hindu gentleman, Mr. G.D. Mehrottra. Miss Pope had a Hindi dictionary. With tireless zeal, these two worked with me to see whether we could make lessons like ours in the Philippines. I knew the first day that we could never make them as easy as our Moro charts, for whereas the languages of the Philippines have less than twenty letters, Hindi has fifty-one letters—and each vowel is written two ways, making sixty-four forms to be learned. And that is not all, for many letters are applied together, so that the total number of letter forms to be learned is over one hundred. My heart failed me. I considered telegraphing my wife to come by the next ship, and then sailing on past India, defeated without a fight. But Mr. Mehrottra would not give up. "This," he said, "is what India needs of all. Our people are over ninety percent illiterate, and we have more illiterates every year. We have got to solve this riddle." This Hindu, friend was another gift of Providence.

We tried grouping the letters that sounded nearly alike in families, until we had fifteen families. Then we built up lessons like those we had made in the Philippines, around key words. I wrote the lessons on the typewriter with Roman letters, and Mr. Mehrottra wrote them in Hindi characters. By the time we reached Bombay, we had our first rough draft

of lessons done in Roman Nagari characters. I cherish that first set still, though it is useless for teaching. We had proved that there was at least one way to meet this problem. I faced the unknown future with my morals not wholly shattered.

“How did you have the nerve to undertake this titanic task ?” writes a bewildered friend. I think the answer is that I always loved unravelling riddles and that in unravelling these languages I found a fascinating game. It is more interesting than chess, because the results count for something, while winning a chess game is of no use to the world!..... ..

### **Lesson Building in Marathi, Telugu and Tamil**

The first day we reached Nagpur, Mahatma Gandhi happened to be dining with Mr. J.Z. Hodge, Secretary of the National Christian Council. The Mahatma invited us to his ashram in Wardha the following week. A group of intelligent Indian teachers worked with eager haste for a week to prepare a preliminary chart in Marathi, which, like Hindi, employs Sanskrit letters. Thanks to the preliminary work, which had been done in ship board enroute to India, we were able to prepare a few lessons and lay them on the floor before the famous Indian saint. Mr. Gandhi opened the conversation with this characteristic statement :

I do not think that the teaching of illiterates is the greatest problem in India. The economic problem is far more pressing. Education may do more harm than good. It often puts men in contact with the bad literature and with customs of western civilization which we do not wish to adopt. For many minds, also, reading has become a substitute for thinking. Some of the world's greatest prophets were unable to read or write.

I replied :

Mr. Gandhi, almost all good things have their perils. Your writings and the story of your saintly life which is

printed throughout the world have blessed countless people. If they had been unable to read they would never have heard of you. Further more the world would know little or nothing of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ if it had not been written and men had not been able to read. His ilfe, I regard as incomparably the world's greatest treasure.

The Mahatma Gandhi nodded his head as though he approved of this answer, and replied :

Of course, I realize that literacy is desirable, and I have probably been instrumental directly or indirectly for the teaching of thirty thousand people. But I want to place my main emphasis upon the relieving of India from hunger and want.

The answer, we think, to Mr. Gandhi's magnificent desire to relieve India's poverty, is that *the best way to help people is to give them the tools and the training that will help them to help themselves. Teaching men how to tap the wisdom of the world which is stored in books, is one way to do this,—we are convinced it is an indispensable way.*<sup>2</sup> (Italics added).

... Prof. H.A. Dharmaraj of Hislop College (Nagpur) was extremely interested in the new lessons. The College is carrying on a social service program through its students in order to teach them "selfless" service, and desired to find a really efficient method of making literacy teaching a major feature of their program.

At the Mennonite Mission at Dhamtari, in central India, the District Superintendent of Schools joined in the building of Hindi charts. Every evening we visited outcaste villages and experimented until we were sure the charts were workable. At the end of a month an eight page primer was printed, and the experimental work was left under the efficient supervision of Rev. J.D. Graber.....

.....Our next experiment was conducted in Southern India. Six weeks were spent at the Arcot Mission at Vellore, where Dr. Mason Olcott gathered twenty Indian teachers in his Central School. Half of them spoke Tamil and half Telugu. Each day charts were built and rebuilt in these two languages, and each evening they were tried and retried in the adjoining caste and outcaste villages. It was an unforgettable experience to visit village after village where not a soul could read and to see the pathetic eagerness with which men and women learned and taught one another, crowding about the great bright Mazda lantern as far as its rays would reach.

Telugu is regarded as the most musical language in India, the "Italian of the East". The letters too are beautiful, all of them complete or partial ovals and circles. Telugu scholars say that all their letters are curved because originally all Telugu was written on papyrus leaves with a pin point and would have broken through if they had run parallel with the grain of the leaves. Hundreds of thousands of papyrus volumes of Telugu written in this manner are now to be seen in the college of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore in Bengal. An old man may be seen patiently building up a dictionary of Telugu words from those manuscripts. He had been at it all his life and is not half finished.

It did not prove difficult for our committee to find six key words and prepare a remarkably simple set of lessons which seemed easy to learn and not very difficult to remember. Unfortunately the vowels are attached to consonants in a very irregular manner, so that complete mastery of the phonetics is not as speedy as one is led to hope by the fine progress of the first lessons.

Tamil is very proud of its ancient literature, which sets the style for all writing. The vocabulary which is employed in well written Tamil is very different from that which is spoken in ordinary conversation. This constitutes the greatest difficulty for the illiterate. The words are on the average

longer than in other Indian languages and are spoken with lighting rapidity. Ten syllables may be pronounced in a second.

Tamil proved more recalcitrant to the key method as employed in the Philippines than any language we had thus far investigated. Relatively few common words were found which end in open vowels.

There are two methods in common use which are well adapted to the peculiar characteristics of the Tamil alphabet. Mr. S.G. Daniel of Tanjore has spent more than forty years in experiments principally with children. His lessons, which resemble the key method in building words from syllables, are interesting and very easy to understand, but progress is too slow for the voluntary teaching which we do in Lanao. Lesson I consists of only one letter, pronounced as "e" in "be", and which is the word for a "fly" or "bee". The letter, consisting of two small circles under the arms of a T-shaped frame, is made to seem like the two eyes of a fly. We saw a class fascinated to Mr. Daniel's beautiful presentation of the lessons, and keen to return for another.

Another ingenious method in Tamil is that of Mrs. A. Devasahayam. Properly taught it achieves swift results. Mrs. Devasahayam groups the letters according to their shapes. She teaches the sound of the several letters first and then uses them in words. To the objection that this the old "able" method now so largely discarded, Mrs. Devasahayam replies that the grouping of the letters by shape introduces a new and valuable aid to memory. Her most convincing reply is not argument, but the remarkable progress which her students make under her own expert teaching. We saw her teach a group of students so that they knew the forty elementary symbols in five days of study. Evidently this was in large measure due to the perfect finesse which she has acquired by many years of experience. She writes each letter upon the

blackboard while weaving stories about it, and then illustrates it in words and sentences.

The student is deceived by his rapid progress during the first week into supposing that he is nearer literate than is really the case. For after the first forty symbols are learned, the vowels are attached to them in such a variety of ways that they constitute 247 distinct shapes to be memorized. This fact, coupled with the fact that the student must learn a new vocabulary of several thousand words before he can read intelligently, renders learning to read in Tamil vastly more difficult than it is in the Filipino languages, where a student is reading intelligently as soon as he learns twenty or less letters and their vowel combinations. It has become clear that one of the major reasons for India's high percentage of illiteracy is the tremendous difficulty that confronts the illiterate before he can understand the vocabulary in books and newspapers. Had we realized what a world of difference this makes, we probably would never have had the temerity to undertake adapting the Lanao key idea to Tamil.

But I was blissfully ignorant of most of these difficulties as we toiled for two months in the country school building near Vellore. We were delighted at our success in preparing lessons which the illiterates in our vicinity found easy to learn.

### **Experimenting in Urdu**

The last two weeks of that busy period, the headmaster of the Mohammedan Government School of Vellore brought his faculty to work on the Urdu language, which is spoken by Moslems. We found our powers of concentration taxed to the limit with three new languages and three different alphabets, all entirely new, going at the same time. Urdu employs Arabic letters. Never have we seen a more enthusiastic group than these Urdu scholars. They argued and struggled day after day with magnificent devotion until they were all satisfied. No second rate work could get by their critical eyes. When

finished they mimeographed the charts with great care and summoned a group of illiterates for a demonstration. It exceeded their highest expectations. They sent letters to Madras which resulted in a large gathering of Moslem educators at another wholly successful demonstration.

Mr. W.H. Warren of the Christian Literature Society in Madras agreed to publish the primers that had been completed in five languages in India, and to act as distributing agent.

We found throughout Southern India a mingling of desperate eagerness and despair on the part of the missionaries as they confronted the stupendous problem of illiteracy. Everybody wanted improvement, but many doubted whether any stranger with a foreign idea and no knowledge of Indian Languages could help them.

At the summer resort on the seven thousand foot high plateau of Kodaikanal some two hundred missionaries who gathered one afternoon to discuss illiteracy, ordered, sight unseen, ten thousand copies of charts in the five languages in which our lessons had already prepared, but not yet printed. One of the missionaries consented to act as a student before the whole assembly. Though he knew no Marathi he went through Lesson I almost like an old reader. With tears in his eyes—and mine—he said : “If I had a million dollars I would invest it in this literacy program.” What could not India do with a million dollars invested in literacy !

Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who was with us for a week in a Kodaikanal Ashram, caught the vision that has stirred us and has since been urging literacy campaigns wherever he travelled in India.

The ten weeks which we had allotted to India were now ended. We had prepared experimental lessons in Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil and Urdu, and left the long process of testing and improving in the hands of deeply interested

and competent missionaries. We had seen and done enough to realize something of the magnitude of the task that India confronts. What had at first been a vague whisper in our ears was now re-enforced by the multitudes of illiterates whom we had seen.<sup>3</sup>

### Second Visit to Colonial India (November, 1936)

.....We reached India in November, 1936. A year had elapsed since the former visit. We found that many people had experimented with the charts prepared the previous year in Hindi, Urdu, Tamil and Telugu. The charts had not yet taken on in any large way, but enough success had been achieved to make the method widely and favourably known. The great majority of missionaries and educators were eager to cooperate in further efforts.

One could quote many pages of advice as to just what our function during this trip should be. Some believed it was to "stimulate interest" since the major trouble with India was apathy "deadening and hopeless". With this we did not wholly agree. The disease appeared to be "despair" rather than apathy, and what seemed most imperative was to try to find out what chains bind India's education and help cut them if possible.

We travelled sixteen thousand miles from Bombay to Calcutta, and from Madura to Lahore. Forty conferences were held in swift succession, each in a different area of India. These had been arranged under the efficient direction of Miss Alice B. Van Doren, a secretary of the National Christian Council, with the splendid cooperation of a large number of leading missionaries. These conferences gained in interest and fruitfulness. The first few were disappointing, for they were groping too much in the dark. They were, however, indispensable for the success of those which followed. Each conference brought out a few valuable facts which were passed on to the next. Thus a large body of experience was

gleaned from all parts of India with surprising rapidity. Had these experiments been confined to one area, with the limited numbers who would have been able to attend, many years might have passed before as much could have been accomplished. Certainly the advertising of literacy was alone worth more than the effort.

This experience proved that constant experimenting with illiterates must accompany conferences. Had the conferences been held without continuous experimentation there would have been a tendency to adopt untested theories. If only experiments had been conducted without conferences, there would have resulted a failure to develop a comprehensive program for India. The combination of experiment and conference carried from region to region, remaining from one to four weeks in each region, has proven so stimulating to literacy in India that it can be recommended for trial in other parts of the world.

The problem of literacy was attacked from a wide variety of angles. A volume could be written (perhaps will be written) on the themes discussed on these conferences. The agenda of the Jubbulpore Conference, held in January 1937, is printed here to indicate the range of subjects which called for consideration. [ It is as follows : ]

Progress of the literacy campaigns in the Philippines, Africa, Mexico, elsewhere, new world emphasis on adult education, the literacy situation in India—statistics, experiments being tried in India, handicaps to literacy, difficulty of literacy, use of classical language, lack of literature in colloquial, vocabulary load excessive in present readers, absence of children of illiterate parents, superstition, fatalistic philosophy of life, oppositions of landed and industrial leaders, opposition of men to women's learning, failure to see any value in literacy, psychology of adults, main difference in interests of adults and children, love and genuine interest on part of the teacher needed, what are

the chief interests and vital problems of the adult, motivation in the learning process, sense of achievement, protection from fraud, desire to vote intelligently, desire to read and write letters, appreciation of non-objectionable native songs, literacy as a servant of uplift, illustrations of Mexico, Russia, Brazil, elsewhere, methods of teaching : story method combined with phonetic drill, chart preparation, can the alphabet be simplified, word counts : various methods and their value, need of colloquial literature, listing the sub-dialects in the Hindi area, a periodical in colloquial language, study of how far they diverge from Hindi, need of an all-India agency to supply material for colloquial papers, classes for training people to write in colloquial, available literature on adult education for the teacher, bibliography of simple literature for new literates, planning a campaign for literacy advance, training of specialists in adult education, cooperation of Governments and private enterprises, use of educated students as teachers of adults, use of educated unemployed as teachers, emphasis of patriotism as a motive for teaching others, best time in the day and year for literacy campaigns, future plans for co-ordinating the work, a future conference to pool experiences, necessary organizations for promotion of literacy, permanent groups for experimentation, report of the committee on findings.

The first question to be answered was this : Why had no literacy campaign in India ever made deep inroads into illiteracy ? Was the trouble with India or with the Indian languages ?

### **Obstacles to literacy in India**

The conferences revealed a serious difficulty. The trouble was the same as we had discovered in Arabic (sic) lands. In each language area of India there are two languages under the same name, one written and the other spoken. In Tamil, for example, newspapers and books print one vocabulary while

the illiterate people speak another. In order to read, the illiterate man must practically learn a new language—the language of print.. He might almost as well learn English,—perhaps better, because Tamil is burdened with difficult rules of rhetoric. For example, there are a dozen synonyms for “heaven.” It is bad rhetoric to use one of these synonyms twice until the other synonyms have all been used. Imagine writing English like that ! To a greater or less degree every one of the major Indian languages follows the same custom of over-burdening the written vocabulary.

These conferences all agreed to adopt a principle to which we have rigidly adhered, of never using a word in teaching illiterates that they had not learned in conversation prior to their study—no matter how the grammarians might complain about slang or bad grammar. The teaching of unknown words was to be postponed until after the student was familiar and he could pronounce unfamiliar words phonetically, and could gradually learn their meaning. Thus one difficulty is attacked at a time, the easier first.

A second obstacle to progress in India is the fact that among illiterates, life is static. It is considered dangerous and almost wicked to do new things. If a method has been used for a thousand years, that is convincing proof that it is best. The “zest and quest for better and best” has not yet taken hold of the masses of India at all. There are, to be sure, millions who have caught the spirit of progress and who are battling against the sleep of ages. While they do not yet constitute one in ten of the population, their influence is far greater than their numbers.

A third reason for India’s slow educational progress is that so many school children lapse into illiteracy again after they have left school. They return to almost wholly illiterate villages and having nothing to read or write, forget almost all they knew. In many villages it would be impossible to find a post-office, and difficult to find a book or newspaper. Unless

a student continues to make use of the knowledge he has gained in four or five years of schooling, he will forget it all—even as you and I have forgotten our Latin and Greek, unless we have used it since leaving college.

If parents are literate, their children never lapse into illiteracy because they find books and papers in their homes, and because their parents realize the value of education.

Another more tragic result of educating children while their parents remain illiterate is common. Often educated children come to feel ashamed of their parents and move into some city where they hope to find what they consider honourable positions. Not infrequently they cut off all communication with their ignorant relatives. Because this has happened so frequently, it has fostered widespread dislike of schools for children. For this and other reasons it has not been wholesome to put a wide educational gap between parents and children.

To quote a leading educator :

Agriculture and handicraft are the foundations of civilization. Only when those foundations exist are the conditions given for the formation and persistence of a stratum of population which can occupy itself with commercial and intellectual pursuits. But with the natives in the colonies—and they themselves demand it—we proceed as if not agriculture and handicraft, but reading and writing, were the beginnings of civilization. From schools which are mere copies of those of Europe they are turned out as 'educated' persons, that is, who think themselves superior to manual work, and want to follow only commercial and intellectual callings.....It is the misfortune of all colonies.....that those who go through the schools are mostly lost to agriculture and handicraft instead of contributing to their development. This change of class from lower to higher produces thoroughly unhealthy economic and social conditions. Proper native education means educating the natives in such a way that they are not alienated from agriculture and handicraft but attracted to them. Intellectual learning should in every colonial school be accompanied by the acquisition of every kind of manual skill."

The right procedure, and by far the most economical, would be to raise parents and children together to higher educational and cultural levels.

A fourth ever present reason for India's slow educational progress is poverty. The people must work hard planting their crops during the rainy season in order to stave off starvation during the dry months. When the tremendously hot, dry months come they lack energy because they have neither proper protection from the heat nor proper food to make them energetic. Daily the temperature rises during the hot months over one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, and in places to 120 degrees in the shade. Nowhere a air-conditioning so much needed as in India, yet nowhere are the people so hopelessly unable to afford luxuries of any kind, even proper roofing.

The illiterates for the most part are caught in a vicious circle—they are ignorant because they are poor, and they are poor because they are ignorant. The place to attack this vicious circle most effectively was a moot question throughout India. It seemed clear to these conferences that *it is a major mistake to improve the economic condition and leave the people ignorant. The eight percent of literates in India who are trying to lift the 92 percent who are illiterate must combat inertia at a tremendous cost of effort with but meager results.* (Italics added).

A literacy program ought to accompany any reconstruction program, acting as the handmaid of progress. When illiterates first learn to read, they believe everything they read,—until bitter experience tells them that the printed page is not infallible. If they are given instruction along the lines of health, sanitation, agriculture, morals, recreation, industries, laws, world affairs, or any other topic, they are likely to read and reread this instruction many times, and to attempt to carry it into practice. Therefore, *newspaper for semiliterates are necessary aids to social reconstruction.* (Italics added).

There is indeed, not a social program in India which would not multiply its efficiency if literacy could become a central part of the program.

One evening, I addressed a large mixed audience at the Madura Y.M.C.A. The distinguished judge who acted as chairman was a Brahman. In his closing speech he said that India was really educated thousands of years ago, while Europe was still savage, and that literacy and culture are two very different things. If literacy is to turn India into a mad-house like Europe, he much preferred the present state of India. On this last point, I quite agree.

But I do not think literacy begets wars, though of course it does enable men to fight more destructively. This reminded me of Mr. Gandhi's remark when we were discussing literacy on the quality of the literature we have to offer. That seems to me to be much to the point. The literature on the rail road book stands is not worth wasting one's life to teach people to read. We must solve the problem of getting into the hands of people the worth while truth, in a style they enjoy. The positive effort of placing in abundance of good practical and inspirational material within the reach of everybody and within limits of each pocket book, is the really important service that must be rendered, in India and over all the world. I began to realize that *half of our literacy problem was the creation of a new literature.*<sup>4</sup> (Italics added).

.....The programs for the first five days in Madura had been arranged with the idea of stimulating new interest. I spent two hours of my first morning in conference with the teachers of Capron Hall Training School, and urged upon them an intensive period of experimentation. The suggestion, I made was one which I have since made on every training school visited in India.

Select ten or a dozen of the keenest student you have, men and women who have shown that they have creative minds,

and make a seminar of them. Let half the period each day be devoted to examination of methods being used in India and elsewhere, and the other half of the period to experiments with illiterate. If this kind of laboratory work, seeking to help India find the answer to her riddle, is carried on for a period of a year, it should result in great progress. At the present time the only persons experienced in teaching adults are out of touch with the latest ideas in education.

Sunday afternoon, November 8; I talked to the students of the American College in Madura, who have an experimental class with adults in a building by the roadside. I urged that they organize two new classes, one to make specialists in adult education and the other to train men to write the new literature which India will need.

The training schools at Pasumalai, at Dindigul, at Dharampuram, and at Erode, each gave me an hour or two, and in each instance. I could only urge upon them the establishment of seminars to experiment with methods and prepare themselves for the coming India-wide literacy campaigns, by becoming specialists in this field of education.

We spent seven hard days at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Olcott attempting to find a better approach to the difficulties which the Tamil alphabet presents.....

My visit to the Telugu country between November 22 and December 6 was more encouraging than that in the Tamil area. The Telugu lessons had been used successfully by a number of persons. A very enthusiastic meeting of the Anglican workers at Bezwada gave me the first glimpse, I had not had of the power of the mass movement. They voted that the lessons made two years previously should not be abandoned, but only revised to omit the unfamiliar words. A hundred delegates expressed keen eagerness for the new lessons so that they might begin work.

A week was spent in Guntur attempting to revise the Telugu lessons. The committee was altogether too large.....<sup>5</sup>

.....At Guntur, there arose the persistent question of the "story method" versus the "key-word method". Since this subject came up so many times on this tour of India perhaps it deserves a special comment.

In the English language long experimentation proves that for ordinary children the best progress is made if we begin from the first day to teach a few words in an interesting children's story like "The Little Red Hen", adding a few more words each day, and postponing the teaching of letters and syllables for days or even weeks.

In Lanao, on the other hand, we discovered that it was easy to teach the adults all their sixteen letters (*sounds* of letters, not *names* of letters) the first day, often in one session. After that, they could pronounce nearly every word for themselves, and the teacher had little need of saying much. Many taught themselves to read after the first session. This is far quicker than the story method—if you can make it work at all.....

As a result of the Guntur meeting there came a set of lessons prepared by one of the delegates from Dornakal, a famous mass movement area farther north. The man who carried out the experiments that made these lessons possible was J.K.G. Sundaram, Principal of the Teacher's Training School at Dornakal. He has since developed into one of the five or six greatest literacy leaders in India. He never grew discouraged and never was satisfied, but continued his experiments with tireless tenacity<sup>6</sup>.....

.....My experience in India had helped me to see two facts. First, the long alphabets made the teaching process about ten times as long as the Philippine alphabets require. In the Philippines our alphabet problem is solved in from one to four days. We needed a swift method of getting the alphabet in the power of the student, and thereafter he could read without our help. In the Indian languages there is as yet no known

way to teach fifty to seventy-five letter forms in three days so that they will be retained. We could carry the interest of the Moros and other Pilippines through three days of easy rapid progress, by using words. We could not carry the interest of the Indians through two or three weeks of mere words and sound combinations. More and more, I saw that we had to usefully rounded ideas in sentences, and get the alphabets incidentally. In other words we shifted towards the story method, which I had first tried and then abandoned in the Philippines.

We built up sentences or phrases in our phonetic drills. In addition to that I introduced a new idea in Marathi. We made a story around our phonetic drill of key words, to sustain interest and to train students in rapid reading.

Every group of languages needs a type of literacy lessons adapted to its peculiarities, and we never know just what type a group of languages will use best until we have experimented.....

Aside from Urdu, the Indian languages are phonetic, and when you have to arrange the letters and the combinations you seldom go wrong. But the process of learning is long because there are so many of these letters and combinations—from one hundred to six hundred in the various languages. How long can one continue to make the study of such an alphabet interesting? How can they be so taught that illiterates will be able to teach each other? Is this possible at all? That was the problem we confronted in all parts of India. Marathi and Hindi were better than the languages of Southern India, because the number of letters and combinations was smaller... The difficulty of using an alphabet rises in geometrical ratio to the number of letters.

Our lesson building continued at Wai, Dhond and Puntamba. Mr. Benjamin Balaram, Headmaster of the Puntamba Training School, promised to make a word count

in Marathi. He marks in a dictionary all the words he thinks the illiterates of his region know, selects ten illiterates of varying ages, five men and five women, names the words, having them indicate what words they know. After each word he placed the number of these illiterate who know the word, as 2, or 5, or 10. Then in a dozen other parts of the Marathi region he asks competent persons to do the same. The lists could be collected and a list of the thousand words known over all the area could then be made.....

In Calcutta an interesting group of missionaries and Indians gathered at the Baptist College Centre. Mr. B.A. Mukherji, now at the head of this student center, had prepared a set of lessons which he intended for use with children and adults. Like nearly all lessons those have not been subjected to the experimentation they ought to have undergone. Personally, I feel that it is a mistake to try to use the same lessons for adults and children.

Dr. J.K. Shah, who heads the Department of Rural Reconstruction on the Sir Daniel Hamilton estate at Gosaba, Bengal, has prepared a very brief and very good set of lessons. He has tried every lesson on many illiterates. At present he and Mr. Mukherji are combining their courses. Mr. J.M. Sen, formerly Director of Education, and now head of a Government Training School, also promised to introduce a seminar for the study of the problem of illiteracy in his school.<sup>7</sup>.....

.....At his home and school, Shantiniketan, north of Calcutta, I had the rare privilege of meeting one of the world's greatest poets, Rabindranath Tagore, then very aged and looking, like Father Time, with his long white flowing beard. When he looked at me with those large brilliant eyes, I forgot everything except those eyes and the music of his sweet voice. He was the most unhurried great man I have ever met. For an hour, I listened in rapt silence while he told me of his

dream for Shantiniketan and the education of India. Tagore's work is now finished. It is recognized now that among his many great accomplishments was this: that he took the common words of the Bengali language which the people spoke and wove them together into sentences of breath-taking beauty. He did it so long and so wonderfully that the spoken Bengali has become correct as well as popular, and the old tilted languages of the pundits has lost its grip on literature. He was the first to break the backbone of literacy prudery. Tagore has set an example which writers in other dialects are beginning to venture to follow. Mr. Gandhi is doing it in Hindi, and we are witnessing the beginning of a literacy revolution. It was one of the never-to-be-forgotten miracles of my life to have met Tagore and to have been able to point to him as the example of what all writers in India ought to do.

At Allahabad, five hundred miles up the Ganges from Calcutta, I found a great center of American Presbyterian mission. Here Sam Higginbottom presides over his famous Agricultural Institute. One of the major concerns of Higginbottom and his colleagues from the first has been the improvement of India's cattle. India has the largest cattle population of any country in the world. Millions of them are old, weak, and worthless but no Hindu may ever kill a cow. There are old age homes for aged cows—but none for aged people. These cows give almost no milk, barely enough for their calves. Millions of them are useless except as draught animals for plows and carts. Higginbottom got the idea of introducing strains of cattle that have been developed as milk producers. The difficulty was that several diseases which infest India killed all the foreign cows. Long exposure had rendered the Indian cattle almost immune to these diseases. So the trick was to introduce the hormones which produce milk and at the same time retain the hormones which gave immunity from disease, and to do this without ever slaughtering a cow. It will require many generations of skilful breeding

to increase this new strain all over Indian, but when it is accomplished it will have done more to furnish food for the starving multitudes than any other single plan (Sic.). The millions of cows which have been eating India into poverty will become as much an asset as they have been a liability.....

Across the river from the Agricultural College is Ewing Christian College which correspond to our liberal arts colleges in America. Here were also five hundred students burning with passion to lift this India out of poverty and ignorance. They crowded the platform after I had challenged them to literacy teaching and offered themselves, not one by one but in platoons and companies I think the statement which struck fire in their young souls was this :

In five years there is going to be a tremendous awakening of interest in literacy throughout India, such as we have now in Russia, Turkey, Mexico, and China. Then India will be looking for leaders trained as directors of adult education. We have almost nobody in India who meets these requirements. There will also be an enormous demand for writers who know how to say things clearly and in simple beautiful language such as Tagore uses in Bengali. Over a quarter of a million educated men and women in India are looking in vain for suitable employment. The number of available jobs for educated men and women is not as great as the supply. Here in the beginnings of a literacy movement is a new field of opportunity for those who are adaptable and farsighted enough to see what is ahead. You students will soon have a vacation and you can get the experience you will need by teaching the illiterates in your community. That same appeal I found brought students to the platform in every part of India.....

In all northern India. Dr. J.H. Lawrence has had the longest experience in teaching illiterates. I went with him from Jubbulpore to visit his school at Mainpuri in the United Provinces.

Dr. Lawrence teaches men, women, and children, from

sixty down to six, with the key-word method. He was getting good results. But what gave me a thrill was to find that Dr. Lawrence had printed many stories in the simplest Hindi dialect, some for children, others for men, still others for women. A part of these were translations but many more were taken from Indian folklore.<sup>8</sup>.....

.....Mention of a newspaper for illiterates had been made several times. Everywhere I went I urged that this was necessary if the campaign was to be a success. The paper ought to have about four pages. Each article should be about three inches, long. The type should be large, the sentences short, the content fascinating and practical and full of facts. Twelve places have promised to start papers this year for this purpose : The C.L.S. of Madras will print in Tamil and Telugu, Mr. J.D. Graber of Dhamtari in Chattisghari, Dr. B.A. Schneider probably in Dihati Hindi, Mr. B.A. Mukerji, or Mr. J.K. Shah in Bengali, Canon T.D. Sully in Hindi, Mr. R.M. Chetsingh of Kharar Punjab in Punjabi, Miss L.F. Austin in Gujarati, Dr. D.P.B. Hivale in Marathi, Miss B.E. Elliot of Puntamba in Marathi, Miss K.E. Munson of Bangalore will adapt her Treasure Chest, Mr. J.H. Lawrence of Mainpuri will do the same, Kaka Kalilkar of Wardha plans such a paper for depressed classes.

One of the problems connected with such a paper is the vocabulary to which the illiterates are accustomed. Mr. J.C. Koonig of Baroda Bazar made a word study of primary text books, and the government of the Central Provinces had accepted his list. What we need is not what the text books have printed but what the illiterate adults actually use and understand. Miss Dorothy Dragon, of the A.P. Mission, Kasganj, U.P., is undertaking such a word list as we proposed for Mr. Balaram in Puntamba, and he has made considerable progress. She finds the list of words the illiterate understands much larger than she had anticipated.

The busy days in Moga from February 2-6 are among the most joyous of my India memories. Dr. and Mrs. Harper by their lovely lives and radiant Christian spirit melted us all into a sympathy that made cooperative work easy. There were no discordant spirits, though Christians, Moslems, Jains, and Hindus were working all in one committee. We considered all aspects of the literacy question, handicaps to literacy in India, psychology of the adult, the needs for literature and newspapers, the organizing and conducting of campaigns. But the major effort was to discover some better way of preparing lessons, so that the illiterate could teach one another without special training. The "Moga Method" starts with sentences, gradually increases the vocabulary, introduces phonetics as opportunity arises, makes free use of the blackboard. The first lesson, when translated, runs something like this :

There is a picture of a cow, a goat, a carabao, and a sheep, at the top of the page. Underneath are these sentences: the cow gives milk; the goat gives milk; the carabao gives milk; the sheep gives milk, the phonetic drill is left to the ingenuity of the skilled teacher.

Now the objective to which we set ourselves was to frame lessons which would require no ingenuity on the part of the teacher, but could be taught merely by following the line. Essentially our method is the same as that of the Moga schools, excepting that we print on paper what they put on the blackboard, and we attempt to introduce phonetic drills the very first day, while they wait a few days. The last difference is due to the facts that adults can lean on reasoning much more effectively than children can.....

At the ashram of Dr. E. Stanley Jones at Lucknow, I organized a group of remarkably efficient people into a Literacy Committee. The New Organization for Relief of the Depressed Classes placed literacy as one of its four major objectives.....

Professor S.R. Bhagwat, an engineer by profession, and Chief Executive of the City of Poona, has found a method of teaching which works pretty well, and has pushed it far all he was worth. The first step of the system is ingenious. Each letter is taught by making a story about its shape, until all the alphabet is known. In about three days on an average the consonants are learned. Then each consonant is mixed with the vowels one by one, just as they have always done in India. This, Mr. Bhagwat says, is when the students drop out. He was eager for improvement.

February 20, unless I am mistaken, dates a new departure for our service in India. Up to that time my chief contribution to India had indeed been to goad India on to efforts, tireless and unsatisfied, until at last the solution would be found. But beginning at Godhra, Panch Mahals, the heart of the Gujarati speaking area north of Bombay, we struck a trial which certainly offered one solution that satisfied all our demands. A very competent group of educational men and women had been called together—the Americans all women, the Indians all men! — not counting myself. I told them frankly that we had not yet found what we wanted for India. The reports that had come from Dr. Hivale's charts were not enthusiastic. There was no sense in duplicating what we had done. Would they go with me on a voyage of discovery? Not knowing what was all about, they agreed.

So we made use of a suggestion from the Pelman and Roth memory systems. Roth says that if you want to remember a series of objects you shall think of two at a time, making a vivid mental picture and "make them large, make them move, and make them funny." This idea worked. We found a noun that stood for each letter, and then tried to make pictures putting two together in some funny fashion. It involved as set of pictures for each letter. We had pictures for : pen, ink, well, donkey water-pot, tiger all on the same row, and the Gujarati words for those things began with "k",

“kh”, “g”, “gh” “w”, (we took liberties with the last letter “w” because we needed it early and did not need “ng”.)

The lessons we built up around this scheme could be learned after one teaching, they fascinated the students like motion pictures, they were so nice to teach that the students began to teach one another, and the crowd of illiterates steadily increased each day. That met all our requirements. In seven days we had made what I considered a great but not final advance.

The next adventure in Allahabad from March 6 to 14 proved to be the most thrilling to me of all my Indian experiences. Mr. A. Ralla Ram had brought such pressure upon me to come back to Allahabad that I had cancelled my passage to Africa for March 2. There was a splendid working committee. They were eager for new things, they had the scientific spirit. I told them I wanted to try abandoning the inherent *u* shibboleth, and they agreed. We made one set of lessons along our new lines, took them to the Agricultural College across the river every afternoon and tried them out. We used the Dihati dialect, which means the rather slangy language used by the cattle drivers. Then we built another set, based on a wholly new arrangement of the alphabet according to the shapes of the letters. The Jubbelpore Press is printing both. For the progress of that great week many people must be given credit. Dr. Schneider of the Allahabad Agricultural School had sent splendid men from his faculty and student group. Professor R.N. Kaul of the University of Allahabad was as loyal as was Mr. Ralla Ram.

Mr. Reyazul Hasan, who works in the Accountant General's Office, and teaches Urdu built a set of Urdu lessons along the new lines. The Urdu alphabet was rearranged according to shape, and looked like the easiest alphabet in India. Then we built Dihati lessons with Urdu letters. The man was positively wild with delight as he tried

them out and found how easy they were. And I was as much excited as he, for this seemed to be the thing we had failed to find in Moga<sup>9</sup>.....

..... I had the joy of taking the Urdu lessons to the home of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru of Allahabad, who had sent word that he was very anxious for us to work on teaching the Urdu language. Even in 1937 he was the second man in importance in India. He gave me the impression of great refinement and sensitiveness to the highest spiritual values. He afterwards wrote me as follows :

I am greatly interested in the literacy movement which is gathering momentum in India. With your great experience in the liquidation of illiteracy, this movement should derive great profit by your cooperation. I hope that the Provincial Governments in India, who are pushing this literacy campaign, will take full advantage of your expert knowledge and experience and will seek your cooperation. I am glad to learn that the World Literacy Committee of New York is interesting itself in the work in India. Any help that they may give in this work will be very welcome and will bear fruitful results.

Anand Bhawan,  
Allahabad

“Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru”

With less than two weeks to spare before leaving for Africa, I hurried back to Bombay for an interview with Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, the outstanding leader of the depressed classes; then down in Sholapur and worked at the home of Rev. William Hazen with feverish haste to throw into Marathi the new discoveries in “picture story” arrangements of letters in illustrated charts that we had made in Gujarati and Hindi. Every evening we went to a criminal tribe settlement to experiment and we found the new method was taking on better than anything they had ever seen.

With these lessons under my arm, I went back to Poona

to show them to my dear friend Mayor Bhagwat. In fifteen minutes we were at the office of his printer. Bhagwat ordered ten thousand copies of the letters made then and there, although I begged him to try out only a thousand first, for they most certainly needed improvement. "No, no," he said, "I can sell ten thousand as easily as one thousand." So I surrendered.

Some power beyond me was driving me on and on. I had two more days in Bombay, so hunted for some competent Moslem to help throw the Urdu scheme which we had made in Allahabad for the village dialect of that area into the more polished Urdu of Bombay. In India a dozen languages all go under the name "Urdu," because they all use the "Persian" — that is Arabic — alphabet. But they are no more alike than English, French, Spanish and Italian. I was introduced to a distinguished lawyer, Mr. A. A. Fyzee. His wife and mother, both educated women, worked with the utmost ability and zeal for those two days until our lessons were finished. We worked all day Easter Sunday, excepting while I was in church. I felt that I had never pleased the Master more than that Holy week, working all Good Friday with a Brahman, and all Easter with two Moslem women.

Monday afternoon Mayor Nariman and a large crowd of leading Indians met at the Gilder Tank School, the leading public school of Bombay, and listened to Mr. Bhagwat and myself describe the new lessons and tell them how Bombay might become literate. The Government agreed to publish all of the new lessons. They began that afternoon to lay the foundation for what was to be one of most gigantic literacy campaigns in any city in all India.....<sup>10</sup>

.....It grows on me that the real solution of the illiteracy problem in India is the adoption of one simple alphabet for use in all parts of the country. How to get this accomplished is a question that needs a great deal of prayerful thought. I

do not think we need to wait for the government to act. Whatever succeeds in a large way will have the government endorsement. We need some group with the courage to go ahead and make a successful demonstration.

It is best not to put all our eggs in one basket. If we attempt everything that seems possible, we shall be more likely to succeed, at least in India. Of one thing one can feel calmly sure ; that within five years a tremendous campaign against illiteracy will possess all India. One can only hope that this will also unify India instead of perpetuating the present differences. It is for this reason among others that a simple alphabet that will take on everywhere is desirable .....<sup>11</sup>

### **Third Visit to Colonial India (June 12-28, 1937)**

.....I returned to India with a singing heart. I reached Bombay on June 12, 1937, I have just sixteen days left before I was to.....sail for Manila.

I hurried off to my friends, the Hazens, at Sholapur, who quickly found a wonderfully competent teacher and a good artist, in the Girls Training School. Swiftly we made the changes and additions in our Marathi charts, following the methods we had found successful in Africa. These I sent back to Professor Hivale at Wilson College for him to show the Bombay government.

I then went on to Medak in the State of Hyderabad where for three days the best possible committee, I could have found worked on the revision I wanted to make in our Telugu lessons. Eight of them worked with me on the lesson building while ten or more did the [copying by hand, (since there are no typewriters in the Telugu language), and two Indian artists did the picture drawing. We called it our "literacy army." We produced a set of lessons as good as any we have ever made. I felt and the others felt that we were not making those lessons, but that God did it, while we worked under Him. The memory of those three days makes me tingle yet ! My

colleagues called it a miracle, and I am sure they were right

.....

The Director of Public Instruction of Mysore state had written asking me to come there, so I travelled on as speedily as I could to Bangalore to undertake the preparation of lessons in Kanarese, the only really important language of India which I had never before tackled. Miss K.E. Munson, Editor of *Treasure Chest*, one of the most effective religious publications in India, had been publishing a very good series of articles on literacy. Because of a sudden change of plans in Hyderabad, I arrived unannounced, but Miss Munson and her colleagues dropped everything else, called together a group found a drawing master and we set to work under high steam, growing ever more enthusiastic !

The Indian Director of Education, Mr. N.S. Subha Rao, returned the next day from his vacation and immediately became excited when he saw the lessons we had made. It happened or had God planned it ?.....that one of the most brilliant educators in India, a Hindu gentleman, K. Srinivasa Achar, headmaster of the Government Normal School in Tumkur, Mysore, was visiting the office when I came in. The director appointed him on the spot to help me. He cancelled his plans to return to his school and worked with us two days. The Kanarese lessons were as fine as the Telugu, and the artist's work was better. The Bureau of Public Instruction printed them.

Just before my departure, Miss Eva Swift, matron of the Missionary Rest Home of Bangalore, called together seventy-five missionaries and Indian pastors. They organized a committee to carry on the campaign in Kanarese, Telugu, Marathi, Tamil and Urdu,.....all of which languages are spoken in Mysore State.....

The whole set of experiences in Bangalore had been a miracle and now in Madras another miracle took place ! I

went to the Christian Literature Society to see whether they could suggest a committee. They at once set aside their two best Tamil writers and critics, as well as their expert artist. Eagerly and with astonishing skill, this committee worked two and a half days and finished the Tamil lessons by Saturday noon, as I took the train southward for Ceylon.....

#### **Fourth Visit to Colonial India (December 1938—April 1939)**

.....The two previous visits had borne far more fruit than anybody had anticipated. All over India people who had despaired of making that vast country literate were now convinced that the way had been found. The imagination of the people had been captured by the idea of the speedy rate at which India could achieve literacy if each literate person would teach just one illiterate a year. It hardly needs to be said that they did not accomplish that result, for if they had, the country would have been one hundred percent literate within four years !.....

Our first conference on literacy was held near Mettur Dam, one of those enormous projects by which the government is reclaiming great areas of land for cultivation. Here Hindus and Moslems joined with Christians in insisting that illiteracy must be conquered. It is amazing how tolerant we become when we have a common enemy ! It was evident that all alike regarded ignorance and hunger as India's two greatest enemies, and believed that hunger could not be conquered until ignorance was liquidated. Twelve areas were represented by the delegates at Mettur Dam and so twelve chairmen were appointed to direct campaigns.....

From Madras I travelled westward to Mysore State. At Bangalore the director of education at once set aside a small but excellent force of workers who helped prepare a large new Kanarese chart. Dr. Fred Field Goodsell, Executive Vice-President of the American Board, went with me to see the Dewan, Sir, Mirza M. Ismael, B.A., K.C. I.E., O.B.E.,

whose wonderful service for Mysore State makes one feel he deserves all those initials. The Dewan requested me to go to Mysore City, of which he is tremendously proud—and the request of a Dewan is a command. I obeyed, though it was interfering with finishing our chart, and was entertained like a prince at the government palace. In the evening, I was taken to see the most marvelous system of illuminated fountains in all India, or so far as I know in all the world. The fountains are located below the great dam which furnishes lights to all Mysore city and will ultimately light every village home in the State. The sheer ability of these government officials in Mysore, and the clip with which they were running everything was marvelous. There was here no sign of democracy, but a most competent and benevolent dictatorship within an ancient form of monarchy, if one may judge by material progress.

Early in January, 1939, I went back to Madras where fifty-five of the elite in that city gathered at the beautiful home of Mrs. Ammu Swaminathan. The premier of the Madras Provincial Government, C. Rajagopalachari was the enthusiastic chairman. The president of every leading college in Madras was present. This literacy adventures, which two years before had been confined almost wholly to missionaries and Christian laymen, was now drawing hearty support from the highest circles in India. Wholly overwhelmed, I wrote in my diary before retiring that evening :

O God, O God, these twenty millions of illiterate Tamils hang now upon that group who have met here with the Premier to organize the Adult Education Movement of Madras Presidency. Thou knowest how to prepare their hearts, to do what Thou dost desire. Please God, take such possession of me that Thy will, exactly, all and nothing but Thy perfect will, may be accomplished. This is Thy work and it must go on. Others are seeing the vision and will continue. Thank Thee, dear Friend, for letting me have a share in this stupendous undertaking.

In the magnificent buildings of Madras University was

held the South India Adult Education Conference. The presiding officer was the Minister of Education. Educators of every religion spoke, but the Christian leaders, several of whom we have met..... before—Mrs. Devasahayam, Mr. S.G. Daniel, and Dr. Mason Olcott—shone like stars as they shared the experience gained in their prodigious work for illiterates. These three, one felt, represented the passion of Christ spending himself for the oppressed. But the undying fire in their hearts was, I thought, matched by a young Hindu, Mr. T.J.R. Gopal, a passionately patriotic youth who had organized this conference and who later wrote a book about it. Heaven had set his young heart literally on fire with passion to get the Tamil people literate as quickly as possible.

And now the time had come when I had to begin playing leap frog all over India. At Raichur were gathered a hundred Christians and a dozen missionaries, all ablaze to help the eleven millions of people who speak the Kanarese language. We had completed a Kanarese chart only nine days before in Bangalore, but I was not satisfied with the words nor with the work. So we started afresh with the "picture-chain" method, using Indian students as artists. It was one of the most exciting weeks of this wonderful year. But it was not a week—only three days! They worked until midnight every night and until three in the morning the last day, to get the pictures done in colors before my departure. Everybody was so happy with the results that we nearly wept on each other's shoulders. I did weep with joy as they put a lovely blue Kashmir shawl around my shoulders and said, "Now you are an Indian." I carry that shawl with me everywhere. They sent a lovely red one to match it to Mrs. Laubach.

The Director of Education of the little State of Aundh,..... telegraphed that their Rajkumar (Prince) wanted me to come. There wasn't a day available, so I had to say "No." But Aundh State, Prince and all, had caught the literacy epidemic and went ahead so effectively that they out distanced any other

state in India, so far as percentages were concerned. The school children were all dismissed for three months to help teach the illiterates. They tried to make everybody in the state literate in twelve weeks! The Rajkumar took a leading part in the campaign, going with his Princess from village to village, singing Kirtans (long musical narratives) on literacy. There were large phonetic charts posted in conspicuous places in every village. All the villagers gathered round these centers at night to study. In two months 12,000 learned to read out of a total population of 76,000. Literacy had been doubled in eight weeks. If a little state can do that, why not a big one?

When I reached Raipur in the Central Provinces, I found that the leading citizens of the city had been called together under the chairmanship of a remarkably able woman, Mrs. Paramanand. The people in Raipur didn't want anything but lectures and celebration. The lessons, they said, were "grand, fine, perfect, couldn't be better." They wanted nothing but a good hard shove and they would be off .....

The next day at Nagpur the British Governor of the Central Provinces spent an hour asking interesting questions. That night the one hundred and fifty educational leaders of the city met with the Vice-Chancellor of the University—its executive head in the chair. They made Mrs. Irene Mott Bose, daughter of Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the City Literacy Committee.

From here, the Reverend R.M. Chetsingh, a magnificent Indian Quaker, took me to the Settlement at Rasulia, of which he is director. The Society of Friends in India, as everywhere else in the world, is always found cooperating with the people who are doing most for the unfortunate. I saw one of their literacy schools with seventy persons studying in three languages.

Passing on to Jubbulpore, I found a hundred literacy

students gathered at Leonard Theological Seminary, teaching one another. As soon as they learned a lesson they had to teach it to the newest students. This school had begun with about ten pupils who had brought others each evening until it spilled all over the Seminary verandah.

The students of nine schools in Jubbulpore responded to a challenge to overthrow India's number one enemy, by volunteering almost to the last man. A professor of Robertson College took me with him and twenty students to a village a few miles from Jubbulpore where his class is helping in social reconstruction. The students learned how to use the new charts for teaching illiterates, while all the village folk were eager and excited with the prospects of learning to read. Thereafter literacy was central in their village uplift project as it is in fifty college projects in India.

The keen interest of the Hawabagh teacher training school for girls, and their eagerness to help make the women of India literate was another reminder of the enormous power available for India's uplift in the young women studying in Christian schools and colleges. Time after time I met educated women in India, filling positions of leadership with magnificent poise and ability.

In the hill country of Chota Nagpur, at Ranchi, we found unusual evidence of the way in which a literacy campaign stimulates cooperation. Some teachers from St. Margaret's Girls' School helped prepare lessons in the Mundare dialect. When the lessons were ready we showed them to five hundred representatives from Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic churches, and the government schools. All of these came together in the Anglican church! The room was too small and crowded, but the enthusiasm was intense. The very fact that Christians who had never spoken to one another before had found a common task to perform for India gave them a new sense of oneness.....

The most thrilling hour was that with the Ranchi Branch of the Bihar Literacy campaign, under the direction of the British Deputy Commissioner, Mr. W.G. Lacy. They had worked out every detail of a marvelous effort to make their district literate in five years. I was impressed by the brilliant efficiency of Commissioner Lacy. He was one of the very few British officials who took an active share in literacy efforts. Most of them said, "Luck to you," and let it go at that.

Patna, capital of Bihar Province, which I visited in February, was the buzzing scene of one of the world's greatest literacy campaigns. B.B. Mukherjee had started it and was its secretary. He told me how he had "caught the literacy bug." His wife had attended a Girl Guides' Convention at Calcutta, where she had heard about the Philippine method of teaching and about the rapid progress of the Moros. On fire, she returned home and aroused her husband's interest. That is one of the amazing aspects of India, that so many men and women literally become aflame with an unquenchable passion to make their people literate and to lift them out of poverty.

The city of Patna was literally honey-combed with literacy campaigns. Mukherjee took me from one to another until I was nearly dead, and then said we had barely started! I saw classes for Hindustani and Urdu being taught side by side. These two languages are really the same language in Bihar, only the alphabets were different, for Moslems will have nothing but Arabic letters and Hindus will have nothing but those derived from Sanskrit. The same lesson text was written in both alphabets. I saw some of the students learning both alphabets at once and having fun doing it. Dr. S.C. Sarcar, Principal of Patna College, had a department wholly devoted to experiments in the best methods of teaching illiterates—the first of its kind in the world. Stirred with enthusiasm, I wanted to stop there and then and enroll in that seminar for the rest of the year. Everywhere in Bihar,

the literacy classrooms were packed to suffocation with students. As I looked into their pathetic faces, I could only think of the helpless, defeated look on a herd of cattle. India does not know how to smile, for she has had so little to smile about.

Director Mukherjee took me to a huge gathering where the people were literally wedged in against each other, as everybody tried to see the instruction of prospective teachers. The climax at Patna was an even more gigantic meeting in a huge hall where I had to yell to be heard by the thousands of people present, the elite of Patna. This literacy campaign in Bihar province was so big that it resembled a stampede. Nobody had ever attempted to handle an educational problem in all India as large as this, and it had burst through all bounds. I wanted Paul Monroe, or Thorndike, or Kilpatrick, or John Dewey, or some other great educator to be there, not to tell us what was the matter—that was obvious—but what to do about it. It was education run wild !

The next day Mukherjee took me to Gaya prison where I saw seventeen hundred prisoners, studying in classes on the floor of sixty prison buildings, and nearly all the prisoners already literate. I seldom get stage fright, but I didn't know how to act as these prisoners rose from their seats, shouted my name, and sang terrifically loud Indian songs. The Superintendent was Col. J. Chandra, M.D., a man with wonderful ideas on prison reform. The prison was almost wholly self-managing, with a government elected by the prisoners. Very little attention was paid to the gate, Dr. Chandra said, for the prisoners would rather live inside the prison than out ! Toward the end of that incerdible day, the prison cabinet met and their best poet sang a song that brought the tears running down my face. I could hardly see as I tried to write it down while Dr. Chandra translated it to me. Indeed the sights that I saw all through this prison made this the most moving day of my whole life. I saw what

love and light can do within a prison. This was the Poem— as given to me in written translation by one of the officials— with not a word changed :

The spring season has set in for our souls and the name of God has a new charm and the garden of my heart a fresh beauty. Praise be to God for his grace to the prisoners of our jail, for he has been exceedingly gracious in dealing with us. Oh! kind Lord of goodness, I will sacrifice myself for your sake, for I have discovered what kindness and graciousness really mean. The days of my sighs and groans are over and another voice is in my life. I was not free inside this jail, nor was I free even before I came; but today there is a new longing in my heart. We Indians have been living in the prison of utter ignorance, but now the good news has reached us that a new day is dawning. No longer shall we be slaves of black ignorance. Who am I that I dare dream such new aspirations as I now cherish? Why should we not entertain our guest in this prison? My prayer is different altogether, O Shayar. Everybody is praying for the happiness of our august guest, but my prayer surpasses all others and exceeds all measure. How fortunate we are that we should have him in our midst as our guest, for he hails from the land of the free! His kindness to us prisoners/beggars all description. It is the heart's magnet that has drawn him from far-off America and brought him to us who are in jail. How can the atoms praise and do justice to the sun? Pray, convey this humble message of ours to America, that all Indians are full of praise for the Americans. Please tell your countrymen that the unique achievements of America have opened our eyes and that we are only taking a leaf out of your books and faithfully following in your foot steps.—Syed Abdul Mannan Shayar—Gaya Prison.

.....In the Santali language, we prepared the first Indian set of lessons in the Roman alphabet—a rather daring undertaking. The Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, and Anglican missions had agreed that since they were the only agencies trying to teach the Santali people to read, and that no one else was printing any literature in Santali, they would choose the best alphabet! The result is that they cut out two-thirds of the difficulties encountered in the Indian alphabets. They

needed only half the vowels used in Hindi, and less than half the consonants. The phonetic chart which we built was as simple as our Spanish chart. If only we could persuade the Indian people to follow Nehru's advice and adopt the Roman alphabet, they would remove one of the formidable handicaps to making India literate. If only ! Yet India is no more stubborn than we English-speaking people. If only we could be persuaded to reform our spelling, we would remove one of the formidable handicaps to making English the world language. And all of us could become good spellers ! If only !

In six days our committees had not only built lessons in Santali and Bengali, but had also revised the Hindi lessons. These charts, we demonstrated at the Government High School before a thousand people, using two interpreters, one in Hindi and the other in Bengali. Everybody was excited and delighted. As rapidly as possible the missions published the Santali chart and plunged into a literacy campaign with high enthusiasm and good results.

A day's stop in Calcutta was filled in working with an artist provided by the British and Foreign Bible Society as we planned the pictures for our revised Bengali lessons. In the midst of our conference Mr. F.W. Harding arrived from Assam to urge that I come to work with his colleagues in building charts for the people in that frontier country at the foot of the eastern Himalayas.

There was no sleep the next night on the train from down through the province of Orissa. The track was so rough one had to hold onto his bunk and hope that the wheels would also be able to hold onto the rails. They did, and the next day the train arrived intact at the city of Cuttack, the capital. I was taken at once to the office of the Minister of Education in the provincial government who said, "You shall have the best artists and educators we have and all the money you need. Go ahead."

We plunged at once into the arduous task of preparing lessons in the Oriya language with an alphabet I had never set eyes on before. We got on wonderfully, though our splendid artists grumbled at working twelve hours a day. When finished the lessons were shown to the Prime Minister who was greatly pleased and promised to start a mighty literacy campaign with adequate finances. Between lesson building I spoke to twelve assemblies in five days, one an evening meeting in the open air for which an amplifying system enabled me to reach thousands of people trailing off into the distant darkness. The mission schools, the teacher-training schools for men and for women, and the college all had to be given instructions in between lesson-making hours. I do not see how we finished all this, but we did, with beautiful charts, and I took that sleep-destroying train back to Calcutta. The campaign which followed that visit was described as "immense."

Two days later, I was far to the north-east of Calcutta at Biri Siri in Assam, beginning the project that Mr. Harding had enlisted me for that day in Calcutta. Here the language was another new one, Garo. We plunged into chart-building with nationals and missionaries, all of them Australian and American Baptist, keen, energetic, and thorough. The Garo students in the school were of the stolid, plodding type. Our artists were not clever, but they were tireless and determined not to stop until they had done their best. They not only worked on pictures all day but stayed up for two nights practically without sleep. In two days they had finished a set of Garo lessons in Roman letters for the mountain people of Assam and another set in Bengali letters for the lowland people. Similar lessons have since been made in six other languages of Assam.....

India's greatest industrial center, Jamshedpur.....is the home of the gigantic Tata Iron and Steel Works, largest in the British Empire. The whole city is a benevolent dictator-

ship of the Company. Mr. A.M. Hayman, Chief Accountant, had come up to Patna earlier to meet me and had arranged for me to visit this huge factory community. A first-rate literacy campaign was in full swing under a Secretary of Mass Literacy paid by the company. He showed me twenty classes under instruction. Mr. J.J. Chandy, President of the company, was so interested that he had a lengthy address printed urging every laborer to become literate. He was especially interested in the proposal, on which we are still working, to have large phonetic chart panels made of some cheap but durable material placed in every village in India so that the illiterates could teach one another with very little expense to the government.

The Dewan of Mysore had told me he was going to have his panels made on Mysore granite and inlaid with silver so that they would last forever! If he does, I fancy ten thousand years from now some archaeologist in Mysore will wonder what queer people had tombstones of granite covered with pictures and an alphabet !.....

The United Provinces Department of Education was about to launch a literacy campaign and its chief officer pumped me dry about plans and program.

As on my earlier visit, the deepest impression remaining from Lucknow was that of my meeting with the four hundred cultured and intensely earnest girls of Isabella Thoburn College. In those women is power to lift India. They crowded about me after the lecture with their almost sad and yet eager faces, promising that they would help. At somebody's suggestion, we asked those who would promise to teach at least two and to write for the illiterates to rise, and the whole room stood as one person !

When I reached the Punjab, I went at once to the Moga Training School where a conference of thirty leaders in education had gathered, We had struggled for a week the

previous year to bring this language into some sort of phonetic scheme, and after our conference had broken up Miss E.J. Smith and Mr. S.K. Roy had kept on trying until they had evolved the simplest lessons ever made and perhaps the simplest that can be made in that language.....

Following a swift and luxurious motor trip in an official car to Jammu as arranged by the Government of the Maharaja of Kashmir and Jammu for a conference with the educational department, I began my long southward tour.

In Delhi, Mr. G.T.J. Thaddous, General Secretary of the Boy Scouts of India, with his cabinet, planned to send out a pledge card for every Boy Scout in India to fill, promising to teach at least one illiterate a year. There was another meeting at Delhi of distinguished leaders with Sir Shah Sulaiman and Madame Aruna Asaf Ali, Secretary of the Delhi Women's League, presiding. I was introduced to the Maharani of Gwalior, wife of the Maharaja of that important state. She was then President of the All-India Women's Conference. The Maharani gave me an urgent invitation to visit Gwalior in the interests of literacy .....

That night, in spite of the heat, we opened a conference with eight hundred people, many of them in full dress and many in government uniforms. A profuse letter was read from the Premier, containing epithets about myself which fitted the facts about as well as a horse collar would have fitted my neck. But I had begun to understand the psychology of India and made no effort to correct exaggerations. India has made up her mind to launch an onslaught on "enemy number one", illiteracy, and they needed a figure-head from some distant land to give the signal—somebody about whom they knew nothing and who thus made it possible for them to give limitless range to their imaginations. I had succeeded somewhere, which was all that mattered. The one thing India needed above all else was faith to believe it could be done.

So the Indore Literacy Campaign was launched that night with a blare of trumpets.

The next morning six hundred Indore teachers gathered for instructions ; as though they could receive a course in two hours ! I gave them two hours worth of faith that India can be literate and of psychology—how to treat an illiterate : “Never scold nor frown nor yawn ; say ‘yes’ when you mean ‘no’ ; look surprised and pleased and pat the student on the back and tell him how bright he is ; tell him he will make a wonderful teacher and that you want him to help you teach the rest of the village ; treat him like a raja, and make him fall in love with you ; don’t say a single unnecessary word, but let the student talk all he will ; never ask a question the illiterate cannot answer ; never tell him what he already knows.”

This psychology of teaching—all of it directly contrary to Indian custom—is about fifty per cent of the art of teaching illiterates. It sounded like an educational revolution to the teachers of India.

In this vast central and western region of India with its many native states is Daly College for the training of princes. Every one of the sixty princes wore a handsome sky-blue turban. They had large smooth handsome faces and great black eyes. They looked just like the princes of the story books. It was a queer sensation talking to these princes. They all promised to do their part to make their states literate, but they did not have the passion for the poor in their eyes. I got not half the sense of irresistible power that came as I talked to Isabella Thoburn College, for example, or the wonderful educational committee of the Indian National Congress.

One must be grateful for garlands of jasmine even if it means getting out of a train at 1.45 a.m. to receive them. That was what happened as I rolled into the station at the capital city of the Gaekwar of Baroda’s state to be met by a

group of students. His Excellency the Dewan, Sir V.T. Krishnamachariar took me through the various towns that day where the government was establishing libraries. They pride themselves on having a library and reading room with the best Gujarati newspapers in every important village of the state. The libraries were the handsomest buildings in town, but unfortunately there seemed to be very few people who were prepared to use them. The Dewan was convinced that now they had good libraries, it would be necessary to teach the people how to read. So they were using every library as a literacy school.

It was Sunday morning when I reached Ahmedabad, the boy-hood city of Mahatma Gandhi and spoke to a thousand Christians at eight o'clock in a united service arranged by several churches and missions. I told them that since so many people in India lacked the Christian passion to teach without pay, each Christian ought to teach four to make up for the slackers. When I asked how many in that audience would volunteer, everybody stood up. That afternoon the Reverend G.N. Brown, my amazingly efficient host, had advertised so well that we had one huge crowd after another. At the service that evening, I told them that a thousand Christians had promised to teach four each that morning. Six hundred more rose to promise that they would each teach two illiterates. This was not a Christian audience, but I think they would have promised four instead of two, if they had been asked. Many missionaries met me later in a conference and I was impressed with the burning anxiety of them all to reach the heart of India with the message and spirit of Christ. I felt there, as I did throughout all India, that the great yearning love of the missionaries was doing more to rebuild the spiritual and educational life of India than any other single factor.

On Monday morning at eight o'clock, six hundred Hindus, Moslems, Jains, and Christians gathered in a public hall. That

afternoon they were there again, and in the evening a select group met with the Director of Education to map out the campaign. The next morning at eight there were seven hundred present, that afternoon six hundred people had returned for five meetings to hear more and more, and more. Fortunately, by this time, I had accumulated enough convictions to talk for ten hours on literacy without repeating. I took the night train—and slept !.....

As the train pulled into Kosamba early the next morning, I was strapping up my bedding in leisurely fashion when I heard the sound of Scottish bagpipes. I looked out the window to find a band of pipers in full Scottish outfit, bright plaid kilts and impudent Scottish hats—nothing was missing excepting the glowing pink complexions of real Scots. For these pipers were young Indians, and behind them as far as my eye could reach was a throng of people. The whole town was out to meet the train. What celebrity, I wondered, was arriving? Was it Gandhi, or the Viceroy, or perhaps the Gaekwar of Baroda himself! My question was soon answered. In a moment a company of high officials filed into the train and approached me. “Is Gandhi here, or the Gaekwar?”, I asked their leader, who proved to be Dr. R.D. Souri, representing his Excellency the Premier. “No”, answered Dr. Souri, “We have gathered here to meet you, the most distinguished educator in the world.” Those were his exact words. I think I was in a partial faint as they read me this address from the Government of Baroda :

Our Government as a mark of recognition to the services rendered by you for the whole country of India, have commanded me to welcome you as a guest of his Highness 'Government on this March 30, 1939 at Kosamba, where you have so kindly agreed to lead a joint conference of the State Government teachers, inspecting officers, missionaries and their education staff. The honour of State Guest extended to you by His Highness' Government is one extended only to Princes, High Political Officials of the Empire, men of national and international importance

on account of their special services, and personal friends of the Royal family.

While he was reading, I thought of the old wisecrack : "An expert is a little spurt far from home." With that I recovered, smiled benignly, and made up my mind to act like a prince while I had a chance ! So we started from the station, the bagpipers leading, and behind us the school children of thirty-five schools which had been dismissed for the occasion. As we reached the huge open space which had been decorated for the ceremonies, what struck my eye first was a big banner across the front of a building bearing the words of the song which we had prepared as one means of teaching the phonetics to illiterates. It runs : (Sing it fast and loud !)

Everybody's singing ka, ke, ki, ko, ku

All the boys are singing ka, ke, ki, ko, ku

All the girls are singing ka, ke, ki, ko, ku

All Board s singing ka, ke, ki, ko ku

We stopped in front of that building and four thousand school children sang that song until people must have heard it in Mars. They had a "love feast," as they called it, for the entire town-food for everybody. People of all castes ate together.....

I went to sleep on the train repeating with Edwin Markham, "after the silence of the centuries"—and awoke in Bombay. This was just five days before the official opening of what was to be India's most tremendous literacy campaign, in Marathi, Gujarati and Urdu. The Prime Minister of Bombay Presidency headed the campaign, with Miss G. Gokhale, of the Servants of India Society as the driving power for the city of Bombay. Bombay with a million illiterates ! They were to hold their inaugural meeting on

April 4. That day they would begin to propagandize the entire city using motion pictures, posters, slogans, processions, public meetings, hand bills from airplanes. They asked the city to contribute 400,000 rupees and they wanted two thousand volunteers for their five hundred class rooms. The good friend of my former visit, S.R. Bhagwat, mayor of Poona, was beaming. This was the kind of war he had wanted for years. Never before had I felt so reluctant to leave anywhere, as I did that day when I had to leave Bombay before the campaign actually opened. But another exciting program had been set up for me at Sangli in southern Bombay. Officials of the Presidency and many delegates had collected from that area. At the home of Dr. J.L. Goheen, of the American Presbyterian Mission, we set to work revising the Marathi lessons in the light of our best experience with the picture-chain method. We finished that particular revision in one day. It was a wonderful committee, missionaries, pastors, and a few officials from Sangli State Government. In addition to lesson-making, we held eleven public sessions on literacy with from one hundred to three hundred persons in attendance at each. On leaving we were entertained at tea in the royal gardens of Sangli State, where I sat between the Maharaja and his lovely Maharani.

There was just time before sailing for a quick trip back to the city of Bombay—where I learned that their campaign had begun most successfully,—and for a stop at Nagpur on my way eastward to attend a meeting of a committee of the National Christian Council in which we prepared a budget for the future program of this work. How pitifully small the funds available seemed in view of the opportunities all around us.

The final two days in India were spent in Madras on further revisions of our Tamil lessons, and then on April 13, 1939, I sailed once more from Colombo back to Miandanao.

The second world war prevented a return visit to India in 1940<sup>12</sup>.....

#### Work Cited

1. Frank C. Laubach, "Manuscript of an unpublished Book, (1943), in *Laubach Collection*. Box No. 122, pp IV-1-7. (Hereafter abbreviated as Laubach Manuscript).
2. The discussions with Gandhi have been given in detail in Part-II.
3. Frank C. Laubach, *Toward A Literate World*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1938, pp. 70-74.
4. *Ibid*—pp. 87-93.
5. Frank C. Laubach "Report on Adventures in the Campaign for Literacy in India, 1936-37", in *Laubach Collection* Box No. 246, pp 2-3 (Hereafter abbreviated as Laubach Report).
6. Laubach Manuscript, pp I-7 & 8.
7. Laubach Report, pp 3-4.
8. Laubach Manuscript, pp V-12-16.
9. Laubach Report, pp 7-9.
10. Laubach Manuscript, pp V-23-26.
11. Laubach Report, pp 10.
12. Laubach Manuscript, pp VII 1-32.

## 8

### **LAUBACH'S LITERACY MISSIONS TO INDIA—SECOND PHASE (1948-55)**

Laubach's visits to India were interrupted due to the outbreak of Second World War. They were revived when he visited India during March-April, 1949, after a gap of ten years. As India had become an independent country and had developed Social Education Programme, Laubach was keen to study the new programme and explore the possibilities of providing professional support to Indian adult educators. At this juncture he was invited by the Government of India to provide "technical advice." Laubach spent three weeks in India and visited Madras, Calcutta, Nagpur, Delhi and Amritsar and addressed about twelve literacy conferences, helped the literacy workers develop primers in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and trained fifty people in writing for neo-literates. During his visit, he pleaded for the cause of literacy with Government officials, Christian missionaries and other agencies and tried to give a fillip to the ongoing literacy programme. Apart from making 63 slides depicting the scenes from the ongoing literacy activities in India, Laubach also wrote letters describing his observations and experiences in India during 1949.

During 1951, Laubach made a brief visit to India to participate in a national workshop for the preparation of materials for neoliterates.

Again during 1952-53, Laubach visited India as a U.S. Consultant to the Government of India to provide technical guidance to the Indian Adult Educators in the development of appropriate literacy materials and methods. During these two years, he worked closely with the officials at the Centre and States, and developed literacy primers in eleven

Indian languages, organized a series of training programmes for the Social Education workers, and played a key role in the establishment of the Departments of Journalism at Osmania and Nagpur Universities. The main concern of Laubach was to demonstrate that India could become literate through democratic means and structures and thereby strengthen the democracy in India. During his stay in India, Laubach met Pandit Nehru and several other distinguished Indian leaders. He wrote a series of letters from India to his friends in America which provide details of the adult education programme in India during 1952-53, attitude of the officials towards literacy programme and the perceptions of Americans about India. These letters contain innumerable photographs of literacy programmes showing the involvement of eminent Indian leaders like Nehru and they were published in the *World Literacy News Letters* of 1952-53. The following letters have been selected due to their wide coverage on Indian adult education. However, most of them are the edited versions of the original letters which contain a lot of general information and repetitions—Ed.

(1)

Dear Partners in Literacy:

March 26, 1949

Government House, Madras

As in Siam, so here in India we are guests of the government. This week His Excellency the Governor of Madras Presidency is our host. We are finding the interest in literacy intense in India, and everywhere a tremendous determination to get rid of what the leaders consider the greatest hindrance to the achievement of a successful democracy. This accounts for our breath taking reception by the government leaders.

It is gratifying to find that in nearly all the areas we have thus far visited, the lessons which we helped make on previous visits are considered the best and are widely used. Indeed, this visit to India is proving to be a very agreeable surprise. Someone, after a tour through India, wrote our office that "literacy in India is in a bad way, a very bad way," and that "they express disappointment that Laubach wants to rewrite

the lessons, which they think they can do better themselves." This letter made me dread revisiting India. But thus far I have found the exact opposite to be the case. Literacy was going as well in India as it had gone anywhere in the world, until it was bogged down by the war. Now I find optimism and enthusiasm wherever I go.

Moreover, the moment I say we have discovered better methods of teaching in the ten years since I left India, they all say, "we liked your other lessons, but if you have new ideas we want the latest." We have finished a new set of lessons in Hindi, which the National Christian Council will print at the earliest possible moment. Three other language areas had representatives whom we trained at the Hindi conference, and are now at work making similar lessons in Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati. Assamese and Bengali will have to adapt theirs later, as we had no time while in Calcutta. In Santali, too, the first stages of revamping the lessons are done.

India is more intensely alive to the need of literacy than any country I have ever visited, and the very best I can do in lesson building is what they want from me the most.

We are only half finished with this one month's visit in India, having visited five cities, Calcutta, Allahabad, Jubbulpore, Nagpur and now Madras. The rest of the tour may change our impressions. At this point we are disappointed in only one thing, that the missionaries and the churches are not seen as prominently in the leadership of literacy as we hoped they would be. When I started here fifteen years ago, *only* missionaries believed. Now they are retiring, with several shining exceptions. Allahabad is with us hard. Dr. George Bryce of United Church of Canada mission gives his whole time to literacy. Mrs. Grace Wilder, with the Congregational mission in Madras, is magnificent. I suppose, I will meet others later. Perhaps I am so nervously anxious for the Christians to march in on this tremendous wave of literacy.

and make missions of converts to Christ that I shall never be satisfied with them.

The convener of this Madras conference for the National Christian Council said last night: "I am sorry to say the church seems to be asleep to the marvellous opportunity afforded by literacy to evangelize India" That is more true than false, so far as I now see, after two weeks in India. The church seems to think this is a work for which some must be set aside especially. My conviction is every church member in India including bishops should Practice Each One Teach One and try to win that one to Christ. In Jubbulpore they replied: "We must teach our Christians to read first." No. Not first. Simultaneously!

That is like many in America who say: "We must make America really Christian before we send out missionaries to other countries." No! Not before, but at the same time! Likewise with literacy. Half the Christians are literate. Let them teach the other half and non-Christians at the same time. This is what the church as a whole in India seems not yet to see. While the passion for literacy is so strong is the time for a stupendous harvest of souls.

I am glad that Ruth Ure, now a secretary of the Presbyterian Board, is coming back to India as secretary for literacy and literature of the National Christian Council. She can persuade them with her sweet ways better than I with my nervous scolding.

Partly, I think, the trouble was that some missionaries tried to get each one teach one going in the churches, and the old lessons proved too hard. This means we need better lessons. The Indian alphabets are among the world's most difficult. Tamil, for example, contains some tantalizing difficulties. We can make lessons easy and pleasant to teach. When there is a difficulty, that is not the signal to quit, but to try harder. I'd like to stay here a year and solve the riddles that still remain.

I am greatly heartened at the success of the lessons we made ten years ago, and so are the Indians.....

9 PM, March 27,(returned) home from a big meeting held in the Roman Catholic St. Mary's Hall, with the Archbishop in the chair, and the Minister of Education speaking. The Catholics everywhere are on the alert about the importance of helping in literacy. A good many Protestant missionaries came also. There are delegates from four language areas of South India here—Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese (also called Kanada) and Malayalam. Someone showed me the printed Malayalam lessons I had forgotten it. So that makes 168 languages instead of 167 in which we have helped make lessons. This conference in Madras wants to bring all four of these lessons up to date in four days ! It is going to be a four ring circus from now on. I like it hectic !

The enthusiasm today has topped any other day, and among the Christians too. I was overjoyed to find so many old friends. Sally Austey, a British missionary, is here. She generalled the making of our miracle Telugu set of lessons in 1937. Sundaram is here, who used to be Principal of the Teachers' Training School for the late great Bishop of Dornacal (Anglican), and who worked with me with splendid zeal and ability for weeks. Here, too, is Prakasam, who worked on the first lessons in Tamil, Telugu and Urdu ten year ago, along with Mason Olcott, formerly of the American Dutch Reformed Mission.

What brought me to tears today was not the praise or the flowery speeches, or the love in the eyes of scores of old friends. But two lovely Indian girls, belonging to the Theosophical Society, each with the typical red dot on her forehead, came up to me and said : "We are dedicating our lives wholly to helping the illiterates to read." That is good news because they and their father run a school for illiterates near Madras.....

Yours,

Frank Laubach

(2)

April 5, 1949  
Amritsar, India

Dear Friends,

.....The visit to India has exceeded our fondest hopes. We were not prepared for the splendid reception we have had everywhere. Each city seemed better than the preceding, with the climax in New Delhi, capital of India. Indian educational authorities feel the stupendous burden laid upon their shoulders of making 330 millions literate rapidly. We had barely stepped off the plane from Madras on March 31 when we were told of the first public meeting of educational authorities two hours later. They did not ask for inspiration; they wanted to know precisely what to do. So we plunged into the three major problems: 1. Preparation of the very finest lesson books to make adults really literate; 2. The most efficient method of organizing a campaign at the lowest cost possible; 3. Finding writers and publishing a vast number of good interesting books, magazines and papers for the 330 millions they hope to teach.

After outlining detailed plans to meet these three problems, we spent the second day proceeding to implement them. Fortunately, we had finished drafting the Hindi lessons, and could promise that they would be ready in large quantities in two months. Phil Gray is putting the finishing touches on the pictures now. Here is the complete course of adult literacy which will be used in India: 1. Primer, teaching Hindi phonetics and about 125 words; 2. Second reader of 80 one-page articles of practical material, to familiarize the student with another 800 high rating words. A similar Second reader dealing especially with women's problems is being prepared. 3. A weekly digest of highly valuable information introducing 40 new words a week, or 2,000 words in a year's reading.

After the first year the student is fully literate with a recognition vocabulary of 3,000 words. But he will not be able to read the difficult vocabulary found in many Hindi books, magazines and newspapers. With this vast multitude of new literates in mind, we spent the third multitude of new literates in mind, we spent the third day of the Delhi conference helping fifty men and women with the job of writing simply and fascinatingly for the new reader. At my suggestion, they wrote to De Witt Wallace, Editor of Readers Digest, asking him to send one of his best creative writers to train Indians in the superb art that has made the Digest the most widely read magazines in history. I hope also a Hindi Digest may be started, and a simple Digest for new Hindi readers.....

Sincerely yours,

Frank Laubach

(3)

February 23, 1951

On the train to Poona, India

Dear Friends :

As one travels on this Indian train there is a constant buzzing of animated conversation. We can hear the American policy for India discussed pro and con. The newspapers, too, are full of International news. India, like the United States, is forging out an international policy. We can count on India working for peace. What India wants to know is how far she can count on America to be on the side of peace. There is not the slightest doubt that both America and India will profit by sticking close to one another. This can be accomplished too, if we are wise and seek to understand India.

One of the finest suggestions, I have heard since coming here is that in return for the one million tons of wheat, India be required to release seventy million dollars for technical

assistance in India, so that these famines will not recur. That is very far-sighted states-manship, and is received with favour here in India. We must help countries to help themselves.

I think as Americans come to understand Indians they will feel a rising admiration and affection for them. The idealism of India appeals to the best people in America. We must make certain that India is kept aware that there is a strong strain of idealism also in America.

The stamps here say "Republic of India, Inaugurated Jan, 26, 1950." Scarcely over a year old, she is trying to make a success of her democracy. She had the enormous problem of getting rid of her hundreds of princes and thousands of feudal lords who had kept the masses in abject poverty. China got rid of her landlords the communist way of confiscation, imprisonment—often execution. India did not wait for communism, but compelled the landlords to dispose of their land to their tenants on easy terms. America must do nothing to turn India from her present rulers, for Nehru is one of the greatest heads of government in the world.

About fifty delegates from all parts of India are meeting here in a conference to prepare literature for new literates. *India's problem is not so much how to make people literate as how to supply them with enough good reading to keep them literate.* (Italics added). Thousands of literates have lapsed into illiteracy for want of interesting reading that is easy enough for them to read.

Each day of our crowded three weeks has started with early morning devotions on the roof, while we watch the glorious sunrise. After breakfast, (called chhotihazari) we have a lecture, then break up into small workshop groups, writing articles. The afternoon is a similar routine, and the evenings are devoted to informal talks, showings of filmstrips Bob has taken of literacy work in other countries, or impromptu dramas.

Our conference first plunged into the question what to write. The body of literature we must develop should be what the people need—information to help them out of their poverty and disease and despair. It must also be something they like for they won't read what they don't enjoy. Most magazines worry very little about what people ought to know, and concentrated on what they like to read. We have consciences, and so must pack our articles full of entertainment, with helpful material on every page.

*New literates are not convinced by intellectual arguments. They are convinced in their hearts by their emotions. So we aim to make them laugh and cry and feel aflame with conviction and fervor. "Convince their hearts and their minds will listen,"* (Italics added).

Most things now written in India sound formal and unnatural to the new literates. We want our writers to write as naturally and simply and interestingly as they talk. The Indian people are wonderful story-tellers, but for the life of them they can't write what they have said. The next time we make a trip we are going to take a tape recorder along and record their delightful stories. This material, carefully edited, printed in large, legible type, and attractively illustrated, will help to keep India's new literates interested.....

The conference at Nasrapur was the first one we had in India to prepare literature for the new literates. Everyone was tremendously gratified by the results of the conference, and went home armed with materials on health, agriculture and village life, with which to write many articles and booklets. These then will be edited for publication by the literature committee of the National Christian Council. Miss Ruth Ure, jointly supported by British and American Mission Council funds, is in charge. With her previous years of experience in India, she is ideal for the job.

(4)

New Delhi, March 18, 1951

Dear Friends,

After leaving Nasrapur, we stayed a day in the city of Poona, the educational center of Bombay province. There I led a discussion on literacy problems. They agreed that since the chief bottleneck in the literacy program in India today is in this realm of simple literature, it is very necessary to establish schools of practical journalism. We must train an army of specialized writers, for nobody now knows how to write well for new literates.

Hislop College in Nagpur is to have a course in practical journalism in 1952. Professor Roland Wolseley, now teaching journalism at Syracuse University, will establish this new department. In Bombay the Department of Education was so convinced of this need that they may start a course.

Here in New Delhi, the capital and nerve center of the nation, you can feel the tingling zest of the greatest republic in Asia. The government officials were eager for every new idea. The most gratifying interview of the week was with the Secretary of Education, Mr. Tara Chand. He was particularly interested in the idea I proposed of putting up phonetic charts in all the villages, where the crowds gather. At least half the task of learning the letters would then be accomplished without any formal teaching, for those who read would explain them to others.

Mr. Cornelius, the Secretary of the YMCA, where we are staying, sent us to the opening of a Cultural Conference. We were placed in the diplomatic row, and to our delight, Mr. Nehru came and sat beside us. Because the program was on, we just shook hands and exchanged a few words.

Miss Ella Griffin, of UNESCO and the U.S. State Department, has been loaned to India for several months. She was

most cordial and showed us her ideas for simple literature. It was exactly what we had been working on at Nagpur—health cartoons with a few sharp sentences.....

Another exciting meeting was with Mrs. Emily Hatch and her brilliant daughter. Dr. Spencer Hatch is famous for his village uplift work in Mexico and India and right now he is in Ceylon.

We went out to see a Maylah, or village fair, put on by the Department of Education of Delhi. For three days the Maylah goes on, with entertainment and exhibitions of all sorts, each designed to show how to improve the village life.

When everyone's enthusiasm reaches fever pitch, the literacy campaign begins. One out of four school teachers conducts the campaign, while the other teachers carry on with the children. The batches go out to one of these villages every day to show them how to tie in literacy with all the practical things that mean a more interesting and healthy and prosperous life. Within a few weeks, a half or more of the people in each village are made literate. It is the most intensely interesting literacy program I have seen in India. I wanted to stay right here and help. Literacy has real meaning when it begins to raise the standards of whole villages at a time, as these campaigns are doing.

Faithfully yours,  
Frank Laubach

(5)

January 22, 1952  
Kasganj, U.P., India

Dear Literacy Partners :

Since leaving America I have been plunged into despair...

.....

But when we reached India my soul soared again. Everybody was much friendlier than they had been a year before.

In 1951 we reached India while our Congress was still debating about the two million tons of wheat for India. Every stranger we met seemed to look at us with sullen dislike. Only our friends treated us kindly. That was a year ago. But this year all is changed.

The customs officials positively apologized for even looking in our baggage. Somebody loaned me five rupees so that I would not need to get any money changed before morning (we arrived at 3.00 a.m.). Everywhere we have felt the same friendliness from the Indian people. Every American we have met has felt the difference, too. It was caused by several factors.

First, we did give India the wheat at last, and it did help to relieve the famine.

Second, Chester Bowles, our new Ambassador, has captured the love of India by his democratic ways. He and his family ride bicycles, as do the common people of India. Only the rich use automobiles. The Bowles children are going to Indian schools, and studying in tents because there are not yet enough permanent buildings. Ambassador Bowles dresses like any business man. So the common people like the whole family.

This January 5 the Ambassador and Prime Minister Nehru signed an agreement that India should receive 54 million dollars of Point Four money for technical and other assistance. None of this is for military purposes. The Indian Congress searched the agreement with great care for some objectionable clause, but concluded that the gift was being made without any strings attached, and without any motive save the technical development of India.

This was the most unselfish gift ever made to India, our fellow republic, and the Indian people were grateful as well as astonished. Here is a sample of the "war of amazing kind-

ness." The resulting bond of friendship proves again how miraculous can be the kindness that goes the second mile.

Just as thrilling a story is India's first election—the most enormous elections of free people in the history of the world. There are 180 million voters. In America we have about sixty million voters, if I remember correctly. It is thrilling to see how the people talk about the issues and the candidates. There is surprisingly little rumour of fraud or corruption, certainly no more than we have in an American election. The percentage of voters to the total population is as great as it is in America, too.

It is taking three months to finish the election. Thus far the Congress Party has won, but the communists are strong in South India, especially among the very hungry people. It is very clear that we can do a good deal to help India succeed as a democracy by helping the people out of their hunger, disease and ignorance.

Here in the Orient the two largest countries, India and China, are trying side by side the two leading theories of government. The Chinese are ruled by a small tough core of communists; those who dare oppose that communist center are liquidated. No freedom of the press or of speech or even of thought is tolerated, and their land reform goes on by means of unspeakable brutalities.

India, on the other hand, has more freedom of speech than we have today in the United States. The communists are allowed to speak and publish all they wish. In the train a few days ago I saw a man reading a communist newspaper, which I borrowed. One article said Russia is now the most prosperous nation on earth. Another said the Indian Congress is corrupt, a fraud and a betrayer of the people. Still another article said the United States is trying to destroy the United Nations and conquer the world. I asked this man why he read such lies, and he said he believed in reading all sides. I asked him if he

did not know these were lies and he said they were probably forty percent true. He believed people ought to be allowed to lie and we should just keep patient. The communist has the same right in India to spread his propaganda as anybody else. It seems ridiculous because the moment the communists gain control of the government, we know that they will no longer permit freedom. This Indian freedom is a mark of the confidence India's splendid rulers have in their people.

The situation here will look perilous, especially with 85 per cent of the people illiterate and even more than that number deep in poverty.

But there is a third reason I feel a great new hope. That is because a new movement is starting to help lift India out of poverty. It is called the Economic Development Plan. Fifty villages are to be helped by experts to increase their farm production, learn home industries, improve their health and become literate. Point Four, the Ford Foundation and the Indian government will work on it together.

Horace Holmes, who suddenly came into fame because he doubled the production at Etawah, has been employed by the Indian Government to develop these fifty centers (see Life, "Asia", issue, Dec. 31, 1951). I had dinner at his home in New Delhi and he urged me to help find men and women who could help develop literacy campaigns and produce literature.

Already, here at Kasganj, we are plunged into this tremendous project, to help train a few writers. Mr. Holmes hopes that World Literacy can help find the personnel for literacy, simplified writing, illustrative art and printing. In addition, he is searching for the proper kinds of agricultural experts from all over America.

What a chance for the Christian church of India and the United States. For among Christians we must find the men and the women with the technical skills and the over-flowing

love of fellow man in their hearts. These men and women must possess ALL the qualifications to lift people and to win their love.

So—in spite of the fact that the cold war battle is going badly for us in the rest of Asia, these are three big reasons for new hope in India.

Affectionately,

Frank Laubach

(6)

On the train to Bombay  
March 7, 1952

My Dear Friends :

.....The past two weeks have been full of very important events. After the Kasganj project, I returned to New Delhi and the Grays went to Moradabad to work on the second reader with Miss Gladys Doyle and several excellent Indian workers. In New Delhi I found Miss Ruth Ure, literature secretary for the National Christian Council, waiting for me. She was staying with Mrs. Bose, the daughter of Dr. John R. Mott.

We spent the next two days visiting various government officials, Point Four men and Ford Foundation directors. Humayun Kabir, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Education, was charmed by Phil Gray's new charts, in lovely colors, as everybody else is, and wants them to be put in all the villages of India. He was greatly impressed by our whole course of primers and second readers, as well as by the big charts.

Then Ruth Ure and I visited Horace Holmes and his associates of the Point Four program, and they at once asked to photograph these colored charts and have their artist put in the

colors. So they got the biggest photos made in Delhi—20 by 30 inches, which cost thirty rupees each (\$ 6.50).

I think I told you in a previous letter that I had taken the new lessons to Calcutta to be printed. These men ordered three thousand copies of the new lessons. They asked us to give them a list of people who would be able to teach our course in the development centers of India. I gave them the names of sixty who we knew were teaching.

I also promised to cut off a week from other engagements and give that week to teaching their force how to direct the campaign. It is difficult to exaggerate the possible importance of this joint village improvement scheme which the Indian Government is developing.

I saw Ambassador and Mrs. Bowles twice. They are more than cooperative. The Ambassador urged me to help find men in India who could direct the adult education end of their vast project. I promised.

### **Plans for Literacy Center at Allahabad**

I went to Allahabad Agricultural Institute made famous by Sam Higginbottom. The President, Dr. A. Mosher, welcomed the good news that I brought from New Delhi. We plan to open three courses connected with World Literacy at Allahabad.

First, short courses to train people to use our lessons and start literacy campaigns in the villages.

Second, a course in very simple journalism to train the army of writers whom we shall need as the multitudes become a little bit but not very literate.

Third, a course in illustrative art, to be given by Phil Gray, so that the literature to be produced will be as beautifully illustrated as we know how to do it.

## Four Literacy Visits in a Week

### Nagpur

I went on to Nagpur, the seat of the National Christian Council, and told Dr. E.W. Wilder and Dr. R.W. Scott, two of the secretaries, about the miraculous opportunity which this new village development presents to the Christian church.

*Never in India has there been such a chance for the church to prove that she has the one thing India needs most. If the church rises to this challenge the government will sing Christ's praises, the masses will sing Christ's praises, and vast numbers will come into the church. (Italics added).*

Moreover this is the only answer to Communism. This is the only way to convince the masses that we are their friends.

### Akola

I went to Akola (I remember it by the word "Coca Cola") where the Christian and Missionary Alliance has a very flourishing work. I found that about fifty of their members were hard at work teaching illiterates. They are sure as they said that this is their best means of winning converts. One woman taught twenty-five non-Christians and now twenty four of them are in the church. This was the liveliest church I have seen in India this year, and literacy is the greatest effort it is making.

They had a meeting of the leading citizens of Akola in the Alliance Church. Here is a project in which everybody welcomes all the help we can give them. These leaders took me out to see an industrial school founded by the followers of Mahatma Gandhi. I was deeply impressed by the sacrificial spirit of the faculty who are well-educated men making hardly enough to live on because they are followers of Gandhi.

I believe that *Jesus Christ left his heart in Gandhi, and in Gandhi's followers, as truly as Christ is in the best Christian*

*missionaries. It seems to me that we ought to love and work with those self-sacrificing people. Jesus Christ has found a new way into the heart of India, through the beauty of Gandhi. I feel the soul of Gandhi brooding over India. (Italics added) .....*

### **Ahmednagar**

At Ahmednagar we were rushed from the train to the College, where eight hundred people, including some two hundred of their students, were present. This college is very new. It was started by the aid of a gift from William Danforth of St. Louis, and help from Sherwood Eddy and many others. I never saw money better invested. The college is really meeting a great need in that part of India. Here I found a group of students hard at work teaching illiterates. Alas, there was time to talk to them only a few minutes, because we had to get off to Bombay.

My last contact at Ahmednagar was with the Rotary Club which Mr. J.L. Moulton, of the American Board, (Congregational) had invited to his home. Mr. Moulton said that his city work has been handed over to the Indian, and he wants to go out and live in a little bungalow with the villagers. He is making constant good use of "The Maine Pilgrim"—a sturdy station-wagon, given by many donors in the state of Maine .....

Devotedly,  
Frank Laubach

(7)

Katpadi, South India  
April 2, 1952

Dear Friends in America :

We have completed another literacy conference, this one in the Katpadi Agricultural Institute in South India.

Katpadi is in one of the famine areas. Down here in the North Arcot District south-east of Madras, they have not had a monsoon rain for five years. The level of water under the ground is thirty feet or more below its usual level. Farming is practically at a standstill. Fifty percent of the people have left this particular area, trying to find some food in the cities or God knows where. Trees are dying for want of water. People are dying for want of food.

This is also the center of communist activity. The communists have promised to provide both food and water if they get into power. The desperate hungry people say: "we tried the Congress Government and it failed to feed us. Now let us try communism." The great trouble with communism is that when people have tried it they can never get out. All those who dare to oppose it are killed. It is like death: you can try it, but you mustn't expect to get back. This the hungry people do not know, but in their desperate state they listen and hope.

It is for this reason that I believe with all my heart in the program which Point Four is working out with the Indian Government. They say food is the most urgent issue and so are centering everything about it. They know that the farmers cannot be helped much to get more food if they are not also taught to read and are provided with information about agriculture. That is the reason why Mr. Malcolm Orchard of Point Four came to Katpadi and watched our work for three days.

Mr. Jack De Valois, head of the Katpadi Agricultural Institute, Mr. Orchard and I talked about all kinds of plans to get water on the land, because that is priority number one. We started an effort to get experts from our Southwest where we have been reclaiming waterless land for farming, and have them bring oil drills to send down deep water shafts to find artesian wells. There are a few artesian wells in South India already—some four hundred feet deep.

We even talked about the possibility of harnessing the pitiless energy of the sun ; here it runs the temperature up to 130° in the shade. The Indian scientists are making experiments with a desperate kind of optimism that turns its back on the fact that such experiments to produce power economically have already failed in Arizona and in Egypt. God is just waiting until we want to put power to work for better living as badly as we want atom bombs.

Pray for all your inventor friends that they will consecrate their brains for a while on India's waterless lands. When they are ready with an answer, send them out to India by fast air express. They may save India from communism. Atom bombs are absolutely helpless to prevent India from voting for communism.

It was with this depressing sense of the tragic poverty all around us that about twenty-five delegates from South India met at Katpadi to see how literacy could be used to help in this hour of urgent need. Our delegates spent some time translating the new revised Story of Jesus into Telugu, Tamil and Kanarese. Most of our time and thought was devoted to the consideration of writing booklets and articles that would help people out of their present misery. The Telugu and Tamil groups translated our new *Anand the Wise Man* into their languages.

This is packed with the secrets that will enable people to get more food and better health. I hope our office will print *Anand the Wise Man* in English, so that people all over the world may see the possibilities of such a Second Reader and adapt it to their own use.

*Anand the Wise Man* is, so far as I know, the only Second Reader in India that attempts to benefit the new literate with practical new knowledge in every lesson. The book is written in story form to make it more readable than mere advice would

be. Phil Gray is preparing a fine picture to be printed with each lesson.

I guided the delegates in making primers in Telugu and Kanarese, 1952 model. I had not made any lessons in those languages since 1938, and had never been satisfied with them. Our new lessons are a joy ! Phil Gray is hard at work making charts and pictures—marvelous pictures—and these lessons will be printed as fast as possible. That is not so fast as I wish it were, for the presses of India are already crowded with work.

In 1938 I wrote a book called *India Shall Be Literate*. I want to revise that book and call it *India Must and Can Be Literate*. At last, I am confident we have the answer we have so long sought.

I am delighted with the new friendliness I find everywhere for Americans. It proves again how easily and swiftly we can make the world our friend, if we set our heart to do it together. But don't let Congress go back on her present friendly attitude toward India, or we shall lose India to communism within four years. Write your congressman just to make sure, and your senators, too.

Almost as important as water in India is a more just redistribution of the land. Three-fourths of the people have no land of their own, even if they can get water. The Congress Government is trying to find an answer to that problem. But the most astonishing attempt to solve it is being made by a Sadhu named Vinoba Bhave, a former disciple of Gandhi. He is walking all over India trying to persuade the big land owners to give him their land for redistribution to the poor people. He is having much success Mr. Nehru has given him a part of his own lands. In every section of India people are talking about this and that landowner who has surrendered his land to this amazing Sadhu.

Sadhu corresponds to your idea of a saint Like St. Francis, Vinoba Bhave goes about penniless. I suppose nowhere except in India could a holy man persuade many wealthy land owners to give their land away to the poor. In the past six months, Bhave has walked nine hundred miles and redistributed 300,000 acres of land.....

Devotedly,  
Frank Laubach

(8)

New Delhi  
May 1952

Dear Friends of the helpless half of the world,

I have much good news for your from India !

Upon our return to New Delhi from Pakistan on April 20, things began to happen so swiftly that your heads were whirling. Malcolm Orchard of the Point Four program came and said that Mr. Buller of Technical Cooperation Administration, now in India, wanted to see me. So Mr Orchard, Horace Holmes and I met in the office of Mr. Buller. He said :

We have already sent a cable to Washington saying that we want you to take the responsibility for the literacy end of the Village Development Program. We believe that you are the man who can do what is needed.

Then we studied a two page statement of what Mr. Orchard thought the job of the Literacy Team (Myself, Effa, Phil and Ewing Gray) for this year would be :

1. To prepare lessons, as we have done in Hindi, for Telugu, Kanarese, Tamil, Malayalam, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Oriya, and Assamese. We need to go from one area to another to do this.

2. To train the teachers of the Village Development programmes to teach these lessons. We can do this training while we are making the lessons.
3. To discover and train writers to produce simple, fascinating literature for those who finish our first and second readers.

It was estimated that this lesson-building would take us from July 15, 1952 to January 15, 1953. Mr. Holmes had already promised the Indian government that he would try to persuade us to return from America on July 15.

They thought we ought not to be under any one department, but should be free to cooperate with every department of India's government—agriculture, health, education, and so on,—which needs literacy work.

After that interview Mr. Buller sent another cable to Washington so that TCA might get into touch with our World Literacy, Inc. World Literacy has met with the TCA officials in Washington and agreed on the basis on which the Literacy Team will work in India in 1952-53.

By the time we return in July, Mr. Chowdhry, Director of Agriculture and the manager of the press says they will have an abundant supply of charts, primers and second readers printed ready for the big drive.

I leave Lucknow ready to say with calm certainty that AT LAST we have found what we have been seeking for seventeen years, lessons for Hindi that we can recommend to the Government of India with confidence. Now at last, the Hindi lessons are right for the job of teaching illiterate adults to read. Now, the National Christian Council centers will be able to train Christians each one to teach one and win them to Christ.

I am deeply impressed by the present beautiful friendliness of all the Indian people. Tonight I spoke over the All-India

Radio, and the director brought his beautiful wife to the hotel to thank me for speaking. Imagine anybody doing that for a stranger in America!.....

Frank Laubach

(9)

New Delhi

October 1, 1952

Dear Friends in America :

.....It is hard for us to keep up with the swift and visionary expansion of the literacy programs in India. The night after we arrived in New Delhi we met with American representatives of private and government agencies working with the Indian government.

They welcomed us heartily to India, and one of them told me "this is probably the most important assignment you ever had." It is, for here in India we are fighting the most crucial battle of ideologies anywhere in the world. The balance in India hangs largely upon the success of the new Village Development Program. Should this program fail, the masses may go Communist in four years or less. Up until now we are fighting a retreating battle] But I believe, against all present appearances, that we shall win this battle for men's minds in India.

The first few weeks were crowded with flights to conferences in various cities, flying through all kinds of weather. First I flew to Lucknow, where I visited the beautiful Isabella Thoburn College for women. Miss Sarah Chakko, principal of the college, was keen about starting a writers' workshop to train the students to write for village women. For now the women of India are still over 90 per cent illiterate.

From Lucknow I flew to Bombay to deliver a lecture on literacy. They were having their monsoon weather around Bombay. For over an hour we flew through clouds and rain and had one bump so bad it sent the pantry dishes all over the floor.

The Times of India at Bombay agreed to print the colored Hindi charts in a large enough size for display on the walls of villages. I can hardly wait to see them.

On a Sunday evening in Bombay, I spoke to a large and most responsive crowd about the problems of food and health and literacy for the villagers. In India a crowd seldom applauds more than two or three seconds. But when I told them America loves India and admires her as our great sister republic, the applause went on for what seemed a whole minute. Miss Sayani, who had entertained Eleanor Roosevelt earlier this year, came forward and pledged her cooperation. She is a good editor and says she has already trained some writers to drop their classical style, and write for the common people.

Then I flew back to New Delhi, bumping the monsoon all the way, for our two-motored plane could not fly above the storm. Two days later, September first, I was driven to Nilokheri, about seventy-five miles north of Delhi. This was one of the resettlement centers for refugees from Pakistan at the time of the partition of the two countries five years ago.

At Nilokheri Mr. S.K. Dey made such a record with his program of rehabilitation that he is now head of the Village Development Organization for all of India. This is the program which we are assisting with literacy and simple literature.

Here I worked with a group of men experienced in literacy work. They are men who will train village workers. Eight of them are district inspectors of adult education. Every one of them knows his stuff and in this preparatory conference I felt that they gave me as much as I gave them.

We all realize that the success of the Village Development Program in India is one of the most crucial issues in the world. That is why the Committee on World Literacy has postponed calls to work in other countries and why we are working all this year and half of next year with the people of India.

Devotedly,  
Frank Laubach

(10)

New Delhi,  
November 1952

Dear Literacy Partners,

.....We have just finished another conference, this time with the American Point Four men who are here in India working on these village development projects. I want to say that they are a swell group of men. Nearly all of them are bright wholesome farmers from the midwest and the south. The largest group is from Texas, and the second largest group is from Michigan.

These American farm technicians have been out in the field for from three to ten months, contacting Indian government officials and trying to find out the best way to start the projects. It was thrilling to hear them exchange their ideas. They all broke up into groups to thrash out their problems. As I sat and listened to them planning to help India tackle her problems, I was proud of America.....

### **The Role of Literacy**

What part does literacy have to play in this program? This can be seen by what we told this conference:

We want literacy to be a strong aid to your program of improving the villages. Illiterates are the most conservative people in the world. They resist innovations. Custom is their law. But if they can read, they believe what is in print. We are putting in our second reader exactly the ideas you want them to believe.

We are about to write a third reader and we want you to tell us exactly what you want in that reader. The villagers will memorize every word and every idea. Then when you inquire what they want, they will ask you for the very things you want them to learn. That will help them help themselves. You will find perfect cooperation.

### **The Village Development Program**

India is embarked on a tremendously ambitious program for the uplift of its villages. The whole country is divided into "blocks" of 100 villages. Each "block" has a Village Development Center. Each Center will have an agricultural specialist, a health specialist, two social workers, a road-building and house-building specialist, a veterinary specialist, a school specialist, a literacy specialist and probably a home economics specialist.

Below them are the village workers, each of whom has charge of three villages. These workers will carry out what the specialists start.

The American Point Four men (over here they are called TCA men—Technical Cooperation Administration) help everybody who needs help. They can visit governors or villagers, wholly free from the usual government red tape. They are resource people who see that everybody is happy and that everything works smoothly.

The "specialists" for each center are Indians who are not yet trained in those different jobs. The Ford Foundation is starting schools to train them. We are just now setting up a school to train literacy specialists. We will try to train these literacy men in two months. Phil Gray and I will be assisted by three of the best Indians we can find. We hope that after four months the Indians can take over the schools, and we can attack some other point on the battle front.

### **Teaching India's 250 Millions**

There are at least 250 million Indians over five years of

ago who cannot read and write. You may be included to say, "What can a few hundred trained literacy men do each year with 250 million students?"

Here is the answer: The Village Development Centers are scattered pretty evenly all over India. We expect our literacy specialists to conduct several model campaigns in each state, with all the latest techniques to make people literate.

Nearly every state in India had a literacy campaign between 1935 and 1940 when we made our first visits to India. These were halted by the war but most states would like to start again. They are using the best methods they know, but these methods are not as good as they ought to be; indeed, some are very poor.

If they see good progress in the Community Development Projects which are using our new charts and primers, the states will, I believe, be quick to adopt them. We can provide the demonstration centers where the teaching will be under our supervision.

Our greatest problem is going to be to supply these centers with the charts and primers and second readers they will need. The number needed just to supply the community projects grows until it makes us tremble. In about three years we will need two million copies of each text book. Now that is a perfectly tremendous order for the presses of India. We just don't see where we are going to get the printing done.

But suppose the states then decide to adopt our books and methods? Then the number of books needed will go up ten times or even twenty times the amount we now anticipate. Nobody in the world can tell what may happen.

We are preparing materials in ten languages: charts, primers, second readers. Then there must be a third reader, then a village newspaper.

You can know what it is that keeps us gasping. This is far, far the biggest literacy campaign being undertaken in the world today. We do not yet see how we are going to solve this text book problem. We are talking of more presses, faster presses, bigger presses, and trying to decide where they ought to be located.

### **We Must Not Neglect India's Women**

One thing that has worried me in this Community Development Project is that thus far, women are being neglected. I talked to Mrs. Chester Bowles, and to Mrs. Pandit, sister of Mr. Nehru, and many other women whose names are not so well-known in America. One of these, however, is known in America and indeed in the whole Christian world! She is Miss Sarah Chakko, Principal of Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow.

She is enthusiastic about having courses in her college to train her girls how to write simply for the village women. The result is that such a course will open, perhaps in January. Mrs. Welthy Honsinger Fisher is already here, and Miss Margaret Lee Runbeck is arriving this month. The Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature is sending them at our request to promote and help set up these courses. That may be one answer to the question of meeting the needs of the village women.

The charts on village walls will be accessible to women as well as to men; and believe me, the women will take advantage of them. They ought to learn, too—more than half the votes in the last election were cast by women. Over fifty million women voted.....

.....The census office tells me that about 36 millions more can read in 1951 than in 1931. Between 1910 and 1931 there was an increase of only five million literates. Great Britain says that the census of India is one of the most accurate in the

world. To what can this great jump in literacy be attributed? Certainly not to a marked improvement in the schools, for nobody claims that this took place.

### **Literacy Campaigns Have Worked Wonders**

More than any other one thing, this jump in literacy must have been due to the dozens of literacy campaigns that took place between 1936 and 1940 in almost every corner of India. Many of these were church-sponsored and were initiated by the provincial committees of the National Christian Council. These campaigns were not integrated into one. No records of final results were collected. The only thing we have to guide us is this census. But 36 million new literates in 20 years is enormous.

Ninety per cent of the lessons used in India to teach illiterates have been stimulated by our own efforts and have taken ideas from our lessons, as is quite generally admitted. I think most Indian educators will say also that the great literacy advance of the past twenty years might not have started without the stimulus of the World Literacy Committee and the persistent work of the Central Committee on Adult Education at Nagpur.

I say this because the figure 15 million has been published by the New Yorker and quoted by other magazines. It is a figure that needs explaining. If you seek to find how many people have learned to read under the stimulus and by the methods suggested by Word Literacy, there are at least 60 millions. If you mean people who learned to read by the lessons which World Literacy itself has published or sponsored, 15 million is probably right.

### **How the World Literacy Committee Works**

Some people do not understand just what we do. We consult with educators about the best form in which to build lessons. We advise them while they make the beginnings of

their books, and then leave them to complete and change them as they wish. Often our fanatical zeal for literacy has helped stir up many nations to work for literacy campaigns which otherwise would have faltered. In ways like these we have had a hand in the preparation of books which have taught fifty millions to read.

In concluding this letter, I want to say that we are still fighting a retreating battle against communism. The Blitz, a communist paper, is fighting the American effort to be a good neighbour to India. Communist parades are still seen occasionally displaying the placards, "Americans, go home."

Mr. Nehru is amazingly popular with the people. It was he who won the last election for the Indian Congress Party, as everybody will admit. As Ambassador Chester Bowles says, "Make no mistake about it : if Nehru fails, communism takes over."

The next few months here are going to be exciting. Keep up your prayers and support for us all and for India's great vision for her future !

Affectionately,  
Frank Laubach

(11)

New Delhi Airport.  
January 2, 1953

My Dear Loyal Backfield for Literacy ;

Our plane to Bombay is held up here for four or five hours by the fog. May be this is the Lord's way of telling me to write to you. I'm standing up as I write, too excited to sit down. God is opening doors every day and I never cease being surprised.

The latest happened an hour ago. Dick Cortright asked, "Isn't that the Prime Minister?" It was. He too was stranded by fog. I walked up and found him most cordial and interested in our progress and plans. I was able to introduce both Dick and Margaret Runbeck. This is the second time in two months when circumstances (No! God!) have brought Mr. Nehru and me together to consult on literacy.

Another miracle happened yesterday. A man named Leigh Danenberg is here from Connecticut. He owns two newspapers and a big comic strip color printing press. He is here with the United States Information Service to talk about using the mass production technique of the comic strips to print what is needed by the Point Four program. I found him getting deeply interested in getting enough copies printed to enable India really to make a BIG advance.

If we print from 300,000 to a million copies of the lesson books on his presses we can get them out at one and a half cents each. This would be far, far below any figure yet presented to us. Until Mr. Danenberg came I saw only little peanuts to feed an elephant. Since he came, we see how to satisfy the elephant.

The only problem is to find enough money for the 300,000 copies. We must have \$ 4,500 for each of eleven languages in which we are making lessons. If we can sell these books at about three cents, we can use the returns to print larger and larger editions. Happily, some very good friends furnished enough money while I was home in December so we can print small demonstration editions now in all these languages. Later they can be printed in the larger quantities.....

The coming to India of Mrs. Welthy Fisher, Miss Margaret Runbeck, Dick Cortright, and Betty Mooney are four more miracles in a package. Every one of them is exactly the right person at the right time. Mrs. Fisher is stirring up the women of India to write for their illiterate

sisters in a really miraculous way. Margaret Runbeck is showing a positive genius for meeting the people and winning their love. Dick Cortright goes everywhere and meets everybody and is absorbing India like a sponge. He speaks some Hindi and the people like that. Betty was here before and so knows a lot of the language. In a very practical business like manner she is getting ready for the courses she is to teach in the Agricultural Institute at Allahabad.....

In literacy, I have walked by faith all these years, hoping that somehow, somewhere God would show how the little thing we did would catch on and become nation wide. It has happened in a good many countries but too often when the scholars got around tampering with my material they saddened my heart, because they usually made it harder. They thought it ought to have "dignified, formal" words and grammar, the kind the villagers never use.

This could happen in India. The whole principle of our lesson is "from the known by a very easy step to the related unknown." In other countries after I departed, they strayed from that principle. And wherever they did so, the lessons suffered.

This is why we want to stay here and see these letters through the presses. If officials change, one never knows whether the lessons will get pigeonholed or will be changed by some man who works on a different theory from ours. So we are seeking enough money to print large editions and have them ready for any state or mission that wants them. The really astonishing response which came in the two weeks I spent in America gives hope of its success.

If you are one of those backing literacy, I want to assure you that you never invested in a program which would have more direct bearing on saving the peace of the world. If we succeed on a large enough scale, the other programs for the relief of misery in India can be successful. Then India, the

world's largest free country, can be saved. So when you pray: "Lord, I want to invest where the world needs my gift most" —this is it! .....

This year 1953 is going to be the biggest in the history of World Literacy. We are in the birth pangs of a new Asia. Yesterday Mr. Nehru talked to the World Council Churches in Lucknow. He is perfectly sympathetic with any effort of the church to help India up out of her tragic poverty and ignorance. I pray that World Council may become big enough for this terrible, wonderful age.

I prepared "A New United Attack on Illiteracy." Mr. Nehru said he had read it, and he recommended it to his daughter. Ambassador Bowles writes, "I enjoyed your report very much indeed. I certainly hope that arrangements can be made for getting the printing presses and giving this program the support it needs. It would be very useful to me to have a somewhat shorter version of your report, which would outline what opportunities are here for making a literacy program, give the real praise that is due India, spell out the steps which must be taken if the program is to succeed, plus a statement of the technique that would be used."

That was a larger order than I could deliver without a secretary. But here is another miracle: two Methodist churches, one in Los Angeles and the other in Oklahoma City, supplied some funds for June Dohse of the World Literacy Office to come out and be my secretary. Before you see his letter I hope she will be working on the report to Mr. Bowles. And we have enough other ideas to keep her working night and day.

The Ford Foundation is opening five schools to teach people the techniques of literacy, and I was asked to recommend men who were competent to teach these courses. I have recommended a few; but more are needed and all must get on with their training.

I'm afraid this is poor literature, but then it's just the irrepressible exuberance of an exultant and exhilarated friend. Our God is marching, marching, marching on !

God bless you all. Keep praying.

Frank Laubach

(12)

Allahabad, India

(February, 1953)

Dear Loyal Friends at Home,

.....Recently in the city of Rajkot at the farthest west corner of India we made lessons in the Gujarati language. This was the language of Mahatma Gandhi and of many other Indians. I made lessons in Gujarati in about 1938, but those lessons are now many years out of date.

Phil Gray went along to make his wonderful pictures. He got into a huddle with a Bombay printer. They agreed exactly what colors to use so as to produce a good chart without prohibitive prices.

I haven't finished with miracles. Another is the reception we are getting from all the states in India. Nearly every state has invited us to come. Only one said "No"; that was Kashmir, which is terribly poor. We would get an invitation there, too. if we told them we would pay our own way. But we have so much to do now we could not handle another invitation.

Every state we visit brings out the best educators they have. They see our lessons demonstrated and they ask where they can get them. In every language our printing is lagging behind the demand.

In states where it is not necessary to make new lessons Dick Cortright and Mrs. Welthy Fisher go and lecture and

train the leaders. They are getting attentive hearings and come back tingling with enthusiasm.

Our bottleneck is production. I will show you just what a problem that is.

There are 500,000 villages where charts must be placed. The printing and pasting of these charts on village walls will cost twenty cents each. That is \$100,000.

There are 300 million people to be taught to read—twice the population of the United States. Printing and distributing the lessons is going to cost two cents each. That is six million dollars.

We expect the states or the illiterates themselves to pay for these lessons, but there is need of a large initial investment if we are to keep up with the demand.

That is only the beginning of the enormous problem. For all these hungry minds need to be supplied with literature. They must have simple newspapers. They must have easy and interesting books. I do not of course mean that we must do it all. But I do mean that we must plan for it be done—that we must challenge Indian and American teachers and writers to do it.

Cooperative allies have won many battles. Indian American team work can win the battle for men's minds in India !

Zealously,  
Frank Laubach

(13)

Allahabad Agricultural Institute,  
March 18, 1953.

Dear Home Folks,

Most of you will recognize this address as the former home of Sam Higginbottom. Years ago Sam came out here as a

missionary with a major in philosophy. He soon found that philosophy is the strongest point in Indian education, but what the Indians lack most is food. So on his first furlough he studied agriculture at Cornell and returned to India with a new vision.

Allahabad Agricultural Institute, the foremost agricultural School in India, is the result. In the post-war years, under the leadership of Arthur Moshier, the Institute has carried its good work into hundreds of India's villages.

This month we World Literacy workers are running a school to train literacy teachers and writers for new literates. This school cooperates with the Extension Department of the Institute.

I had better explain what the Extension Department is. It is the actual work of the students in three hundred villages around Allahabad. It trains people to go out into the villages and help in every way. About forty men and women at a time work and live in the villages, and come back to the Institute every two weeks for three days to study their problems together.

The Extension Department is growing by leaps and bounds. The Indian government now sends students here in ever-increasing numbers. With a grant from the Ford Foundation, the Institute is now increasing its training facilities and putting up new buildings to house the students.

Last year I made a recommendation to the Ministry of Education and to the Community Development Projects Administration. This resulted in planning five new Social Education schools to train workers in all aspects of social education, especially in literacy. The central one of these five schools is to be at the Institute, and starts in April.

Only about half the students this month are from the government. The other half are Christian workers whom we

invited to come so they could learn to teach illiterates and to write for them. They are a very unusual group, and all are thrilled and excited. And no wonder, for they are getting such a course as never before was offered in India !

### Our New Readers Are Thrillers

Something new and exciting has been added to our training: Margaret Runbeck's course on how to write a short story. She is helping all of us to make the Anand reader over into thrilling fiction.

All of you who read our letters know that we have been writing a series of readers : *Anand the Wise Man*, Last year we wrote forty chapters to show the triumphs of Anand over his environment since he found a friend who knows many secrets. That friend is the book he has just learned to read.

This month we have written twenty-five more stories, and Margaret shows us how to fill them with hair-raising crises and escapes. Our plots run like this : Anand the hero gets into trouble—he goes down deeper, deeper. Perhaps there's a ray of hope, but again he goes down, down, down to the "blakest moment"—when he consults his friend the book—and finds the secret to victory ! Or, the villain may get the upper hand, going up, up, up until suddenly—CRASH !—the hero appears and over-whelms him !

The villain of these stories may be malaria, or the Japanese beetle, or a scorpion, or drought, or poor seeds. The secret to victory which Anand finds may be improved seeds, a deep well, or nitrogen for the soil, a cow brought back to health—or even something his bright wife finds in the book !

Now ! Don't you want to read *Anand the Wise Man* ? I warn you, though, that it is all written with a very carefully controlled vocabulary. Every new word is repeated five or more times. Not over ten new words are allowed to a lesson.

Everybody here writes stories, then we work out the word count together, then Margaret helps put in the zing.

Betty Mooney, who took the Syracuse University course in literacy journalism last year, is our hard-working director of Allahabad's literacy program. She is showing real ability in directing and organizing. Her greatest triumph was last night, when a tremendously successful graduation was held in the village two miles away. It was the climax of three weeks of work.

### **Lamplight Literacy**

Betty and Dick Cortright had taken our student teachers to three villages to teach illiterates. They had to go with a flashlight over hazardous paths from one village to the other.

In the villages they had to put up with dim little so-called oil lamps, or even dimmer candles. Twenty men or women would try to see by the light of one candle in the center of a ragged old blanket on which they sat. How anybody could learn or even see a letter in that light is a mystery to me.

They couldn't hold the classes for the men in the day time because all the men work in the fields until seven. The question was whether anybody could finish the primer and be ready for graduation under such conditions. But Betty and Dick kept on going out to the villages, night after night.

The last evening they invited me out to help give their students an examination. The lights were so bad I could not see whether the students were reading or not. My heart went out in a great wave of pity for these poor people who struggled so hard against such odds—they wanted to read so much. And they knew the book. They knew it! I don't know whether they could see. I couldn't, but they must have known it by heart.

Then and there I made a resolution about those lights. We have to help those villages get better lights. The class where the women were happiest and learning rapidly was lighted by a new (to India) lamp where the burning oil makes a mantle glow brilliantly.

I am asking the United Church Women back in America to take on a long-term project that will supply these Indian villages with small libraries. Each library will include : 1) one of these bright lamps, 2) forty to sixty small, simply written books, 3) a pest-and damp-proof case to hold the books. The whole unit costs about twenty-five dollars. The United Church Women will need lots of help, there are thousands of Indian villages. Let's take on Allahabad's three hundred villages first.

### **The Grand Finale : Graduation**

The grand finale last night was something to see ! About five hundred people, everybody in that village and many from two neighbouring villages, were there. Thirty people passed the exams and received diplomas. There were lots of ardent speeches. The one that got the biggest applause was Dick's because he spoke in slow but good Hindi. The old chief of the village, with a long beard, put his arm around Dick and pointed to his heart. The big chief made the final speech of the evening. A loud-speaker blasted the speeches and songs far down the street.

Among the graduates were several women untouchables, who kept their faces hidden while they had garlands put around their necks and received their diplomas.

And there was a puppet show about a man who, because he could not read a health poster, got small-pox, and lost one eye, and his fiancee and everything. The moral was "Learn to Read."

The night ended with gorgeous fire works which the village government put on as a surprise to us all. It's a night burned into our hearts forever,

Pray for India's villages,

Frank Laubach

(14)

New Delhi, India

April 22, 1953

Dear Fellow Workers,

.....We had been invited to come to Assam by the Ministry of Education to make lessons in Assamese. They put us up in the Government rest houses in Gauhati. Where Effa and I stayed was no "Rest House", for they were installing plumbing from top to bottom so that the President of India could occupy our apartments two weeks after we left. He is to lay the cornerstone for their new Gauhati University site. (If you have trouble remembering the name "Gauhati", remember it the way I do—gau means cow, and hati means elephant—so Gauhati means cow-elephant ! )

We did our work in one of the class rooms of Gauhati University. Dr. Borkakoty, Assistant Director of Education, was with us, and he had collected the best education, was with us, and he had collected the best educators in Assam to help us. Dr. Borua was a phonetician. Dr. Dasgupta, formerly of the University of California, was a psychologist. The most brilliant man in lesson making, however, was Under Secretary of the Legislative Department, a lawyer named Shri Chaudhury.

I feel like doing justice to those dozen men by naming them all, but who in America wants to read strange names ? One man named Mr. Dutta came to our rooms and escorted me to the University every morning and every noon, and worked like a Trojan. He is in charge of Adult Education.

With this brilliant group, we finished the charts in time for Phil Gray to make pictures the first day, and the entire primer the second day. After Phil made the first chart, a half dozen missionaries and an equal number of Christian teachers came to see our first test of the new Assamese lessons.

The lessons work like magic. Phil gets better all the time. He had three artists working for him in Assam, so they are making fast time and learning his secret. And he has a secret that few other people in the world possess. He can make the letter "b" look like anything from a fat man to a humming bird.

### **Missionaries Show Great Interest**

The missionaries have taken a great interest in our work in Assam. At least two missionaries were present at every session. One was Mrs. O.L. Swanson, for many years a missionary in Assam. She knows the language at least as well as those professors, and knows villagers' vocabulary better than the professors. It was her influence that led the government to invite us to Assam.

The other missionary was Miss Julia Rose, who came a long way down from the tribal country to get help in making lessons in one of the Naga languages called Kabui Naga. These are the most primitive people in India. We helped her finish her lessons, and Phil agreed to remain in Assam and finish the pictures for her charts.

Mrs. Swanson had translated our Anand book into Assamese at prodigious labour before we arrived. After we had the primer completed, we all worked together on a revision of her book. She had done extremely well.

The deeply interested government officials came daily to see us work. The officials were astonished by the speed with which every student learned and by the smiles and exultation on their faces. Both the Director of Public Instruction and the

Minister of Education were excited when they saw the illiterates learn, as easy as eating cake. The Director of Education said that they would put those lessons in all their schools. He said they will get these printed just the moment they are ready for the press. We have not had such an enthusiastic and all-out response from any other state government of India.

### **We Hear from the Team in India**

Our team in Assam consisted of Phil and Ewing Gray, June Dohse, a young Indian named Dan Souri, Effa and myself. The rest of our forces remained in Allahabad for the second course in literacy and simple writing. I have just received evidence of their hard work. They have prepared three more volumes of Anand readers, with eight chapters each. Margaret Runbeck has written it like a novel. She followed the technique which she taught us of starting with the hero in trouble and keeping the reader in suspense.

In Volume VIII, called "Old Ways and New," Anand tries to introduce new ways into his village, and runs a foul of a villain named Gopal, who does not want new ways. Gopal sets a trap for Anand. They are to have a jumping contest, and Anand is to fall into a deep pit. But a bull comes after them, and Gopal falls into his own trap.

In Volume IX, Anand's son falls in love with an outcaste girl, and finally marries her, Plenty of excitement! But I'm going to let our hard working group there at Allahabad tell their own story.

Your loyal partner for a literate world.

Frank Laubach

## 9

### **LAUBACH'S LITERACY MISSIONS TO INDIA : THIRD PHASE (1956-1970)**

During 1961-62, Laubach visited India in his capacity as the representative of Laubach Literacy Fund. His main purpose was to provide professional support to the Indian field workers of the projects funded by the Laubach Literacy. Since these projects were mainly located at Kerala and West Bengal, he visited these two places and met the project Directors, Dr. A.K. John and Dr. Satyen Maitra and their colleagues. Besides Laubach also visited Delhi and met the officials of the Ministry of Education to explore the possibilities of using the PL-480 funds for the adult education programme. Laubach had recorded the details of his visit to India in several tapes and letters. The following are the relevant portions from the letters and tapescript available in the *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 117—Ed.

(1)

**Calcutta—India (Tape No. 7) December 23, 1961**

Last night, December 22nd, we were guests in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Maitra. Mr. and Mrs. Maitra, Ellen High, Fern Edwards, Hug Gaval and others spoke greetings to America into my tape recorder.

Mr. Maitra is a good friend and close associate of Fern Edwards in her Literacy work. He is a member of the **Brahma Samaj**—one of the finest organizations in all India. Fern

Edwards testifies that the Brahma Samaj is sometimes more public spirited and compassionate than some Christian groups.

Mr. Maitra has put a tremendous amount of work into helping Fern Edwards in her preparation of the magnificent BENGALI PRIMER—a copy of which I will bring home with me. They also prepared ANAND THE WISE MAN—and will produce many more books in the future. I am arranging to have a copy of INDIA SHALL BE LITERATE sent out here. Fern Edwards probably will make a revision of this book. Perhaps Lily Quy would cooperate with her. I think it would be a very great benefit for this country to have an up-to-date edition of INDIA SHALL BE LITERATE.

Yesterday was so very busy with so many things I hardly know how to begin to tell about them.

First, a man named Mr. Menon of the U.S.I. came..... Then we visited Mr. Banerjee at the Community Development Center—the one where I used to work with in 1952. Then we visited Mr. N. Roy, chief inspector of social education for West Bengal and found him very enthusiastic and cooperative. After lunch in an Indian restaurant, at three o'clock we visited the minister of education, whose name is Ri Harendra Chaudhuri. A very nice man, he was greatly interested. At four o'clock I spoke to the training class Mr. Maitra and Fern Edwards have been conducting in Literacy. There are 35 in this class. After I spoke to them, a photograph was made of the class, with me and the teaching staff. We then had tea, afterward visited some of the night schools. The most astonishing one was out on a very busy sidewalk. The teacher teaches very eager students on the side of the sidewalk, without any interference from the police. How interesting it would be if they had 500 such side walk classes in Calcutta ! In fact, they could. The young man who was teaching on the sidewalk is from the Rabindranath Tagore College.....

Here in India there are at least three programs which I hope we may interest our own government in supporting. One is the fine work Fern Edwards is doing. They hope to have a school in this area when Mr. Maitra has his building, which is already there in a slum area of Calcutta which is in great need. The second place is Douglas Oliver near Bangalore. The third is A.K. John. Perhaps after talking with Ellen High today she may have number four.

It has turned out that, after talking to these people and getting their needs down on paper as nearly as I can, I shall have to go to Delhi and talk to my old friend, S.K. Dey, who is head of the Community Development Project, and then to my other old friend, Mr. Saiyidain of the Ministry of Education in Delhi, and see if they will request of our government that these four places be subsidized by American money.....

.....This morning Ferd Edwards and Ellen High came here. We spent an hour and a half talking over their problems. I think we saw more clearly than we have before what needs to be done here.

The Social Education Center of the Bengal Social Service League is a splendid center for the development of a school somewhat like that which Welthy Fisher has at Lucknow for training people to teach Bengali. Since it is not religious, it seemed to us to be a legitimate subject for the government to help. Fern Edwards started to prepare a budget showing the need they have for that center. It will meet a very great need.

Ellen High's present location is not advantageous, since she is now the convenor—in fact the Bihar Province director of adult education for the National Christian Council—as well as being our own literacy expert. So she will probably move soon, and will need rent and a larger budget. I told her she should use the funds which were coming to her in

whatever way which seemed to her to best meet the need of literacy.....

(2)

**Madras, December 28th (Tape No. 6)**

.....I drove over in a taxi to the Christian Literature Society—the other name for it is the Dioscesan Press. There I found Mr. Mathews. He was in charge of it. He showed me the Tamil literature which is being used for new literates. My old chart was there, together with a revision of it. Also a Tamil book, which Mr. Samuel made and which I also made when I was here.

They said literacy is progressing very well in the Tamil area. This is corroborated by what they said at Christ Church. Illiteracy seems to be down now to sixty percent.

I had the books written in Tamil sent on to America. However, the impression I get in this town—and in my entire trip—is that people want access to the tremendous English library. I visited the USIS Library and also the British Library and each of them must have 50,000 or 100,000 books. It is probably that we could not find 1,000 books in Tamil that would be worth reading. This is why there is such madness throughout Asia to have access to this rich treasure of books in English.

The libraries established by the USIS and by the British have no doubt greatly stimulated the desire for English—and I must say that I myself coming to the belief that if we teach people Tamil or Hindi—and leave them there, we have not done the best thing for them, nor for the world. We must have a world Lingua Franca and that is why I am wild with enthusiasms about the New Way to Teach English—which I am working on every day.....

(3)

Bangalore,

January 2, 1962

Dear Colleagues and All Friends of Illiterates,

The morning finds me exultant, and with rising hopes for literacy !

Douglas Oliver has been approaching the problem here in Mysore State with Wisdom. He has been most fortunate in securing John Kabir as his associate. He is the nephew of Humayan Kabir, now Minister of Cultural and Technical Affairs. Through John Kabir, as chief diplomat, Mr. Oliver has secured the endorsement of the Director of Education and of the Vice-Chancellor of the University at Mysore. He is to see the governor soon. In fact, he would have done so tomorrow if I had not been leaving for Delhi.

Today we had a conference with the teachers of literacy and the assistant to the Director of Education. They examined the revised charts which Douglas Oliver and his associates have prepared, and had very few criticisms to make. Up to this time they have used the ancient method of teaching the sound of each letter, with no meaning at all. The lessons which I prepared eleven years ago when working with T.C.A. and Community Development were rejected, I understand, because some of the words chosen then were not acceptable. If Douglas Oliver had not come here, our method would never have been accepted. Now it has an excellent chance of becoming the official method—as it is in Hindi.

John Kabir insists that unless exactly the right people, with the right authority, in India give their endorsement, our lessons will never be used, but if the proper authority gives its endorsement, ours will be the only ones used.

Douglas Oliver and I are going to Delhi together on January 7th, to see the Minister of Education in Delhi, and also Minister Kabir. His nephew John Kabir is starting to Delhi today, to prepare our way. In India, more than in the United States, everything depends upon "proper channels."

I shall hope to see Ambassador Galbraith, and also the Director of AID and of the Ford Foundation—if possible. After that I am planning to go on to United States .....

Douglas Oliver opened his 1962 literacy and writing classes last night. The literacy training classes are held at 5:00 P.M. at the fine school of the Assemblies of God—a strong group in Bangalore. There were at least fifty in the class, most of them preparing to be ministers. That class is an assured success. At 6 : 30 the class in writing was held at one of the Y.M.C.A.'s. For historical reasons, they have three Y.M.C.A.'s in Bangalore, and one of these is little used. It would be an ideal center for our Literacy House. Here is where the first writer's class was held.....

(4)

Karthicappally,

Kerala

January 2, 1962

Here in Karthicappally, where the Johns have their school and Laubach Literacy Center, I am a curiosity. All the boys get as close as they can get to look at me. It is HOT! I removed my shoes, stockings and undershirt, folded up my sleeves. I got one thing straight here, which may be a puzzle for you. Formerly there were three provinces along this coast : TRAVANCORE, Cochin and MALABAR. But, when the provinces of India were re-divided, these three are united to form what is now called KERALA—which means : "LAND OF THE COCONUT."

Here is a surfaced road, fairly good, running north and south the entire length of Kerala—but the roads leading east and west are mostly dirt, full of mud in the rainy season.

Johns have managed to build a really nice group of three buildings here for the school. This being the holidays, I have not seen their school in.

As we came down the seventy miles from Cochin I am sure we saw 2,000 children going home from schools—perhaps to ten different schools. While I write a dozen girls watching from the door.

What we hope is that a school for teachers of adults will start here.....

Kerala is the most literate province in India—48 percent. Dr. John said that the illiterates are communists, while very few of the educated people are communists. I was pleased to get that figure, for it corroborates what I have constantly said: that it was the hungry illiterates who went communist in the backward areas. Kerala is Exhibit "A" of that fact. Here is also proof that the most effective weapon against communism is to educate the people and provide them with the right literature.....

**PART—IV**  
**LAUBACH'S METHODS AND**  
**MATERIALS**

## 10

### THE MIND OF THE ILLITERATE ADULT

This is one of the earliest writings on the different aspects of teaching illiterate adults. In this section Dr. Frank Laubach points out the differences between teaching children and adults. Further, he specifies the characteristics of a successful adult educator and an effective lesson for the adult illiterates. Laubach provides some hints for the successful teaching of illiterates and discusses the advantage of Each One Teach One—Ed.

Lessons and teaching methods which fit the minds of children are not suitable for adults.

In the first place an illiterate adult knows great deal more than a child of six knows. Our experience indicates that the average adult has a clear idea of the meaning of from five to ten thousand words, while a child of six may use only that many hundred words. The child has the great handicap of needing to build up a vocabulary from small beginnings. The illiterate man already possesses his vocabulary, and has only to learn how his vocabulary looks on paper. Of course if we try to teach him a foreign language his difficulties at once may become even greater than those of a child.

The next fact is not so obvious excepting to those who, like ourselves, daily experiment with adults and children. Children do little synthetic reasoning and do not lean upon judgement to assist their memories. Adults reason constantly,

and lean upon their powers of synthetic reasoning to assist memory. Our experience shows daily that adults can be taught letters and syllables through various memory devices and, when they know these, they can pronounce all the words they have used in their spoken vocabularies. Most children cannot do this. The syllabic method is therefore a tremendous short cut for adults, but it is the wrong method for children, and should not be used in teaching them. To those who hold otherwise, we can only suggest the test of experience. Let the teacher of children keep an open mind on the matter until he has tried teaching adults with the lessons suggested in this book. The adult is not a grown up child, but has a different type of mind.

### **Lessons for Adults**

Lessons for adults thus should not copy tedious courses intended for learners of a foreign language or for children. Both are far, far too slow. We need a course adapted to one purpose. For not only can the teaching of adults be much swifter and easier than teaching children, but it must be so. Children are compelled to attend school. But in most countries adults only study voluntarily. They must be captured and kept by a sense of achievement. If they fail to progress rapidly, or if they find the course too hard, they will drop out of the class.....

Swift progress is necessary because the illiterate adult has a sense of inferiority and is easily discouraged. There is a wide-spread but mistaken impression that children can learn and that adults cannot, that the brain hardens gradually and that the time to learn is before we are twenty-five. Educational psychologists under the lead of Professor E.L. Thorndike have exploded this mistaken idea, but few people have yet learned the truth. There are some things a child can learn better than an adult, it is true. But there are many things that an adult can grasp and remember better than a child can. What

he may have lost in retentiveness has more than been compensated by the enormous background of experience into which he can relate his new knowledge, and by the interest which he has in things outside of the child experience. You can teach an adult about politics, industry, hygiene, and agriculture, because the adult realizes his need of this knowledge and because he has had much practical experience in these fields.

The average adult can also grasp mathematics more quickly than a child because his powers of reasoning have been more developed, and because he has often felt the need for more skill in computing. The adult grasps anything meaningful better than the child does, and anything meaningless probably less well.

By the same token if the adult is taught to read within his own vocabulary, every word he hears is rich in meaning caught from countless experience. If in teaching we lean heavily upon his experience and his reasoning and not too heavily upon sheer memory, the adult can read within his own old vocabulary in far less time than the child. Indeed in most instances the progress of the adult is incomparably faster. No child can learn to read in a day, in any language, because he has too much to learn. Adults have frequently done so in the languages with perfect phonetics, because they know everything excepting the phonetic symbols.

The very first lesson must make good progress without once involving the adult in embarrassing difficulty. Every lesson thereafter from start to finish must prove as surprisingly easy and rapid as the first one. The student must find his self esteem rising each succeeding day.....

The subject matter of a lesson must not only remain within the vocabulary of the adult, and consist of grown-up material. The lesson must also be built so that the adult student can take the lead as soon as possible, for he does not like to

follow long. There must be the fewest possible words on the part of the teacher and the greatest possible activity on the part of the student. Nothing so annoys an adult as for the teacher to get in his way.....

### The Teacher's Art with Adults

If the lesson is the road to literacy, the teacher is the chauffeur. He must stay on the road. There is usually one best track to follow. We drill our teachers in detail, so that they may never lead their students astray. *Chart and method should fit like hand and glove.* (Italics added). There will, to be sure, be variation in teaching after the teachers know the most approved method. We are tireless in our search for ever better and swifter teaching.

It is better to tutor adults one by one or in very small groups than to teach classes, such as are customary for children. There are many reasons for this. Every adult is sensitive about making mistakes before other people. The illiterate adult chafes under class discipline and dislike to await his turn. There is much more unevenness among adults in their speed of progress than among children.....

The teacher remembers that the student will be at his best in the beginning and will gradually grow weary as the minutes pass. So the moment the student is ready to begin, he must go straight to the point. No speeches by the teacher; no needless work; no digressions; no false leads; direct progress to the finish! It is amazing to find how much time can be saved by applying efficiency to his teaching.

The highest art of the teacher is to keep out of the student's way, neither pushing nor retarding him. For example, one should never try to dig deeper neuronc paths by repetitions like 'Say it again, again.....' Never that! It is unpleasant and it is not progress. On the other hand one should not ask the student questions which he cannot answer. There are no

examinations to find out what he does not know. There are no embarrassing pauses. When the student needs help, let it be given in a gentle pleasant tone of voice, not the tone a teacher usually uses with a child, but the tone a man employs with his equal or superior. The remark "Don't you know that?" and the attitude it implies must be ruled out.

*Teachers of adults need to have their voices under control.* (Italics added). They must avoid speaking louder or more emphatically than usual, though pronunciation must be clear. It is the nature of all of us to remember a whisper better than a shout. We forget a shout because it is disagreeable, and disagreeable experience must be forgotten as soon as possible.

What a student has already said correctly should not be repeated after him. We all know how parrots annoy us. If the student says "mala," the teacher may throw the word into a sentence, for example: "How mala (large) is your house?"

If a word is incorrectly pronounced by a student, one should not say "No, this way." Nearly everybody uses the word "no" to excess. It is well to eliminate it from one's vocabulary while teaching. If a student says mula instead of mala, you may say "Yes, you have a mala house." Say "yes" when you mean "no!" Many a New England conscience spoils the art of delicate consideration.

A teacher ought to strive for graceful teaching, free from superfluous motions and nervousness. The teacher must not use his pointer to hunt for a word. To do so is to lead the pupil's eye astray. Until the teacher knows exactly where he is going next, the pointer remains perfectly still and then it moves slowly and smoothly, so that the student's eye is led, not bewildered. There are no nervous jerks of the hand, no pacing the floor, no mannerisms. *The whole process should be unhurried, poised, pleasant, and as free from vibration as a strong silent engine. Nervous men should not be asked to teach, at least at first.* (Italics added).

All of these factors are far more crucial in teaching illiterate adults than in teaching children in school.

If the student has been allowed to lead and has made rapid progress with the adroit and almost unnoticed aid of the teacher, he will finish the whole lesson even more enthusiastically than he began it. But if he yawns, one must stop and ask him to write what he has studied. It is fruitless to try to teach him when he is tired. One way to change the activity of the student is to have him teach somebody else at the end of each line. Usually weariness on the part of the student is an indication that the teacher has talked and led too much.

As the illiterate has a sense of inferiority and is very apprehensive lest he may not be able to learn, it may prove difficult to persuade him to try. He may offer false objections—too busy, not interested, does not need it, some other day, has an engagement—while his real reason is his dread of appearing stupid. We must find a rather powerful motive for study before we can overcome this fear of failure. *The most potent argument is the fact that his neighbours are learning something he does not know and that they are enthusiastic about it.* (Italics added). The pages they can read contain secrets he thinks may give them an advantage in business or in securing a government appointment. In the Philippines our teachers tell them about some of our “graduates” who are in government positions now that they can read and write. Or they talk about the Independence of the Philippines and how necessary it is to vote. Or they talk about being able to understand the titles to their lands so that they will not be swindled. Or they talk about the beautiful epics and lyrics which are being printed. Often they read a few lines of some coveted poem and tell people they can learn to read these by a few hours of study. Frequently they start by having illiterates write their own names, and perhaps the names of their friends. *Women especially seem to enjoy writing first.* (Italics added).

But in the beginning of a campaign nothing is more effective than to choose a man and tell him he is to become a teacher of the village. The fact that he is to teach somebody else in a few minutes keeps him alert. He does not worry about failing to learn the lesson because his mind is fixed on the method of procedure.

There are several reasons why a student should be made into a teacher at once.

1. Knowing that he is to teach, gives purpose to his learning.

2. Teaching the lesson several times fixes it in his mind. We never really know a thing until we have used it.

3. The new teacher is given a higher status in his community. The ambition of everybody is to be called guru—"teacher."

4. He discovers that service can be a deep joy, and realizes that what one learns he ought to share with others.

5. By making teachers out of all students we teach the community at small cost by geometrical progression.....

Illiterate Christians usually are eager to study so that they can read their Bibles, song books, prayers and other devotional matter. Among the Christians of India this motive is incomparably stronger than any other. Where this is the case the subject matter of the lessons should be religious.

### **The Spirit in which Progress is made**

Half the art of conducting a literacy campaign consists in "selling the idea" to the illiterate, so that he will go out of his recitation tingling with eagerness for more, and spreading the news to others. To produce this result the teacher needs something besides technical perfection, he needs a warm heart. He must call upon all the resources of refinement and courtesy.

He must make the experience of learning thrillingly delightful. There is never a frown nor rebuke, nor a yawn, nor a gesture of impatience. The teacher looks pleased and surprised at the rapid progress of the student : with glances of admiration he pats the student on the back and says "That's fine !" The student is doing far better than he expected to do, and he hungers for applause. Of all things, what the humble, ignorant people of the world want most is to have some hitherto undiscovered ability revealed in them. If you find an uncut diamond in a man, he will die for you. One notorious character whom we taught in this delightful fashion, was so enthusiastic that he took me over to a corner and whispered in my ear :

"You are the best friend I have in the world, for you have taught me to read. Now I am going to do something for you. Is there anybody in the province you want me to put out of the way ?"

Perhaps an observation made by Dr. Wilder brings us closest to the secret of teaching illiterates. At Madura in southern India the teachers of the city had gathered to witness a demonstration. Before them sat on the floor a row of children and illiterate women. The brightest boy was taught the Tamil chart, he taught another boy, he taught a woman, she another, until the row of students was finished. At the close Dr. Wilder said :

"I have watched this remarkable demonstration and have decided that the secret of it is love !"

Certainly love is a secret, an indispensable secret. *The illiterate cannot read books, but he can read human nature as well as literate people can read it.* (Italics added) If the teacher shows the least indifference or impatience or disapproval the student is likely to give up and go home, perhaps never to return. He keeps on studying because he is enjoying a

charmed spell of success and interest such as he never before experienced. Learning to read can be the crowning thrill of his life.

For this reason one should teach illiterates only when one is at his best. It is not a question of the number of hours one spends with illiterates, it is a question of the overflowing good will he manifests. It is much better to teach a few hours or even one hour in the spirit of patience and good will than to teach many hours with low spirits. If a literacy movement can but be kept radiant, it will spread with great rapidity without any strenuous labor on the part of a few, because everybody will be teaching everybody else. If the leader permits himself to be worn out and impatient his campaign may be ruined. It is quite as essential for him to be radiant as it is for an actor who appears before the public to be so. Chart and technique can be prepared with scientific exactness. But love, courtesy, delicacy, and joy are qualities in a personality which can be acquired only by long years of breeding.

In the ordinary school, the students are compelled to attend classes regularly, whether they like it or not. Hence, there may be disagreeable days and grumbling teachers, providing the general average is satisfactory. In a literacy campaign love has no substitutes, and when it fails everything fails. There must be no bad days. If we have been out late the night before, or have a headache or a cold or indigestion or irritating troubles, we should go into hiding until life sings for us again. Every man conducting a literacy campaign needs a convenient retreat. Fortunately we do not have to keep schedules, and can give our very best selves. The advice needed in this case is quite the contrary of that given in other undertakings. Instead of saying: "Work hard and you will succeed," we say "*Do not teach at all when it seems like work, or you will spoil your cause.*"..... (Italics added).

.....The teacher of illiterates ought not to make enemies. He ought to keep aloof from controversies and from politics. He should under no circumstances criticize the religion of the people with whom he is working. If he lives the life of loving service, his life will cause the people themselves to criticize whatever is wrong in their own customs.

*What a teacher is teaches more than the books he employs.* (Italics added) The teacher who goes about with wistful leisureliness, alert for an opportunity to help, will presently have the joy of seeing others following his example. Love is contagious. We have never achieved our goal, we have never really helped anybody much, until our burning heart has set his heart on fire to help somebody else. A literacy campaign in which we start everybody at work teaching others will change the atmosphere of a whole community, if the men and women at the center of the movement are unfailing dynamos of love.

Extreme care must be taken when the beginner is teaching another for the first time, not to interfere so as to cause the new teacher to lose face. We remain as quiet as possible, with an occasional nod and a look of enthusiastic approval. We help only when the new teacher forgets, or if he loses his place, help him back with the least possible interference. When he gets through, we say :

“You are going to make a fine teacher. The usual way we teach at this point is to say,.....” In this way we avoid interrupting or correcting him. He will leave zealous to teach everybody. *Spirit is more important than perfection in technique.* (Italics added) A true gentleman will know how to achieve both. If there is much correcting to be done, take your student-teacher out of hearing of everybody else.

A really loving teacher interests himself in the future plans of his student. After the lesson is over one ought to ask

questions and make suggestions. Portray to the student the new world of opportunity that reading may open before him. He must see how it will function in his life. If you can inspire him with new ambitions to serve his fellowmen near and far, you will have finished a great work. *For a literacy campaign is a means to that end, or it is of no value at all.*<sup>1</sup> (Italics added)

#### REFERENCE

1. Frank C. Laubach, *Towards A Literate World*, New York: World Literacy Committee, 1938. pp 13-24.

## HOW TO TREAT THE ILLITERATE

In this classic write up, Laubach has emphasised the importance of making teaching-learning process a pleasurable experience. He has stressed the need for 'quick lessons' which could be covered within twenty minutes. He has cautioned against testing the knowledge of learners through formal tests and questions. According to Laubach, if a newly literate could teach an illiterate that would be the most appropriate proof of learning. This write up, first published as a chapter in the book—*India Shall Be Literate* (1939) has been reprinted several times—Ed.

.....The untrained volunteer teacher.....will as a rule get the best results if he confines himself to a class of one to four pupils. (Do not mix adults and children.) Even if he has several pupil it is well to let one do all the reciting while the others are silent observers. This is called "tutoring". The tutor should sit as low as his pupil, not stand over him. The voice of the tutor should be as low as his pupil, clear and just loud enough to be heard distinctly. The teacher must save his words, not saying one needless sentence.

Teachers trained in normal schools can handle larger classes but they will do well to experiment with the plan of teaching one bright student while the class observes, and asking this student to teach another what he has just learned. Nothing more quickly lifts an adult out of his sense of inferiority than this proof of confidence. A trained teacher can have a roomful of adults all teaching one another.

The teacher of children confronts a wholly new situation if he tries to teach adults. He must reverse many of the practices to which he has long been accustomed.

He must treat his adult student not like a child or an inferior, but as politely as he would treat a high official. The slightest suggestion that the teacher feels superior will ruin the teaching.

For the illiterate adult is extremely sensitive. He suffers from a sense of inferiority. Even when he boasts and swaggers, he is revealing an "inferiority complex"—which means that he tries by bombast to hide from himself and others his real feeling of insignificance. It is exceedingly easy to discourage the illiterate. If we say "no" to him twice, he will probably refuse to recite the third time. For this reason the word "no" is crossed out of our vocabulary when teaching adults. We say "yes" when we mean "no". Unless his mistake is rather serious we ignore it. When it is necessary to correct him we do so in an indirect way. For example, if he should mispronounce "hat", calling it "hate", we could point to a hat and say, "Yes, what a pretty hat you have!" Give him a compliment instead of a correction!

Treat him like a Raja! If you heard a Raja, mispronounce English you would never say." Raja you didn't pronounce that word correctly."

Many a teacher stands over his class with ear cocked to catch the first small error and pounce on the pupil like a hawk swoops down a chicken with beak and claws. The class becomes a battle between teacher and pupils, who develop into implacable enemies; the recitation comes to resemble running a gauntlet more than cooperation for a common good. The three most pitiless "hawks" I ever met in my life were professors in a state teachers' college! I tremble at the memory of them yet, after forty years. A large percentage of

children become poor students because such teaching frightens both memory and reason out of them; they are scared stupid.

The unhappy children have to remain in school even when they are suffering torture; for fear holds them. But if the illiterate adult is made unhappy for one minute he will get up and leave your class, and denounce literacy to everybody he meets. He can be kept studying only if he is happy and increasingly enthusiastic about his rapid progress. *What everybody in this world loves most is somebody who will discover an unsuspected diamond in him.* (Italics added). The illiterate, paralyzed with despair, if you tell him how bright he really is, tingles from head to foot. I have seen tears fill many eyes, tears of a new hope and love.

One of the best books to read in preparation for teaching illiterates is Dale Carnegie's *How To Win Friends and Influence People*. The secret which he uses a whole book to illustrate is: "Find out what people are most interested in and appreciate them with all your heart."

Never teach a man if you do not like him. *The illiterate cannot read books but he does read human nature,* (Italics added) and he knows in a second whether your smile reveals real brotherly interest. You must learn to love people, not for what they now are, but for what you know you can help them to become. Personally I try always to pray for my student, conjuring up the finest dream I can imagine for him, wondering what God would make out of this man if he had a perfect chance. "God," I keep saying silently, "help me to give this student the greatest hour of his life, and the beginning of all Thou dost hope for him." Whether telepathy or some gentle smile on one's lips reaches the student I do not know, but whatever the cause, he responds with a new light in his eyes and a new ring of confidence in his voice. His shoulders go back, he laughs with delight at this, the profoundest stirring of his soul since he was born. To have felt this new

awakening in hundreds of illiterates sitting by my side, has, I testify, been my greatest source of happiness. *I do not recommend the teaching of illiterates primarily as the duty of educated people, but as the source of one of life's keenest joys.* (Italics added).

Sometimes illiterates stop in the midst of this happy experience and ask, "Why are you teaching me like this without any pay at all? Our 'Gurus' make us pay in advance." I like to tell them: "I have studied the life of Jesus, and notice that he spent every minute of his day helping somebody. From the time he awoke in the morning until he closed his eyes at night he was teaching, healing, encouraging, defending, saving people—every minute. That is a beautiful way to live. If all of us treated one another like that, our world would be a paradise. But when I try to beat somebody or get his money I feel mean and I am mean. When I spend all my time teaching people and see the joy in their faces it makes my heart sing. When you have finished this lesson I want you to teach it to others and then your heart will sing!"

One of the attractive aspects of this type of volunteer literacy campaign is the joyous experience people derive from teaching as well as from learning. The more people we persuade to help one another without pay, the nearer we approach to a really blessed human society. It is down this road of mutual aid and love that the hope of the world lies. We cannot make the world over merely by lecturing or preaching; we help people to engage in projects of loving helpfulness like Each One Teach One or in cooperative societies, and they learn love in action. This is one of the basic principles of modern education — "learning by doing."

One of the faults which most teachers need to overcome is a misuse of fingers as pointers. The teacher's finger should not jump about nervously asking for the right word, for the student's eye follows it around and becomes confused. Remain dead still until you know where you want the student's eye to

follow and then move in a slow curve so that the eye can follow easily. Graceful curves free from jerks are beautiful.

Some people would teach better if they were handcuffed. They are forever watching an opportunity to shoot a long shaky finger into the lesson at the slightest pause, as though good teaching consisted in proving how much quicker and brighter they are than the student. This, of course, is all wrong. We are trying to convince the student that he is bright, not to prove our superiority.

Another important bit of advice is this : Do not repeat a word after the pupil. If he says "flower" correctly do not say "flower" after him. It sounds patronizing and irritates adults. Besides it wastes time. Nearly every teacher violates this advice without realizing it. Ask somebody to remind you when you parrot your students and you will find your teaching speedier and happier when you have broken the habit.

Do not waste a second or a word. The first fifteen minutes are the most precious with illiterate adults. *The lesson is best when it is swiftest, when it is finished before the student realizes it has more than begun.* (Italics added). Then he leaves, exclaiming, "This is the easiest thing I ever saw." You reply "Easy for you because you are so bright."

Resist the temptation to indulge in a speech before the lesson. One minute rightly employed will persuade almost any illiterate to study if his mind is not worried about other matters. The fascination of the pictures and very rapid progress will carry him on. He will be finished before his is tired or dreams of stopping.

This becomes doubly important in India because illiterates toil very hard and have little spare time or spare strength for study. They do not have enough food or a balanced diet and hence grow mentally tired within twenty minutes. Any teaching beyond twenty minutes violates the rules laid down.....

Some of the text book in India explain how to drill, but all drilling is disagreeable and at times, painful. Drilling means going around and around like the drill which a dentist uses to make a hole in a tooth. Our lessons have no drilling whatever, no going around in a circle and no pain ! Adults want progress, the faster, the better, so long as it is easy. If a student can cover a great area in a short time with little effort, the exhilaration he derives will lure him back for the next lesson.

Sigmund Freud's Psychopathology of Everyday Life gives another reason for making the lesson delightful. Freud proves that we remember pleasant associations and tend to forget all that is disagreeable.

Keep out of the adult's way. He will almost invariably learn faster than children learn, but how fast or in what way he will learn best, one can never predict. Adults differ far more than children in their knowledge and mental alertness ; this is one reason why the "one by one" method is preferable. Almost every illiterate recognizes a few letters and some illiterates know all the letters without being able to read words. You must neither hold the student back nor push him faster than he wishes to go. Let him take the lead and go at his habitual speed, for then he will be happiest and make the best progress. Suit yourself to his character and background.

Do not tell him what he already knows. *Do not ask him any question he cannot answer. There must be no tests or examinations to find out what he has learned, none ! Every failure will push him back into the slough of despond from which you are seeking to pull him. When he teaches another, that is sufficient testing.* (Italics added).

Do not rush in to fill every momentary pause, but on the other hand do not allow the pauses to become embarrassing. What the student has forgotten, tell him with the least possible emphasis, with no raising of eyebrows, or loud voice, or tone of disapproval, or question like : "Why have you forgotten ?"

Never ask a question twice. Tell the student at once if he hesitates to answer. Never cause him to blush or feel uncomfortable for a single moment. This requires courtesy and imagination.

Thousands of experiments prove that an average adult will learn in less than one-fifth of the time required to teach a child. This is because the adult has a large speaking vocabulary and needs only to learn what old familiar words look like. The average child must build up vocabulary from small beginnings.

The adult may not have quite such a keen memory as the child (at forty-five it is about four-fifths as retentive) but he can reason ten times as well as a child. *When lessons and teaching lean heavily on reasoning and lightly on memory, the progress of many adults is astounding.* (Italics added).

If a student yawns, we should stop at once and ask him to write. It is fruitless to try to teach when a student is tired. If this happens more than a few times, it indicates that the lessons are uninteresting, or more probably that the teacher has talked too much.

Sixty percent of the success in teaching adults lies in the manner of the teacher. Since the spirit of the teacher is so important he ought not to teach when tired. It is better to teach a few hours or even one hour radiantly than to teach many hours with signs of fatigue.

It is especially necessary for the director of a campaign to radiate confidence. There must be no bad days for him. If he has been out late or has a headache or indigestion or troubles, he should go into hiding until he can give his best. The manner of all the volunteer teachers is likely to be patterned after that of the director. For this reason infinite care should be exercised in the selection of a director with an overflowing heart and native born courtesy. In a *literacy campaign we need*

*faith, hope, love..... ; and the greatest of these is love. It has no substitutes. When it fails, everything fails.*<sup>1</sup> (Italics added).

12  
REFERENCE

1. Frank C. Laubach, *India Shall Be Literate*. Jubbulpore : Mission Press 1939, pp. 53-58.

# 12

## BASIC WORD LISTS

Laubach was one of the first adult educator in India who had recognised the importance of preparing basic word lists prior to the development of lessons for illiterates. He believed that if the literacy lessons were to be easy they ought to begin by employing words that the illiterates understood and used frequently. Basic words are those which are regarded as sufficient to express ordinary ideas in a given language and they are prepared after listing one million words. In this write up, Laubach has discussed the attempts made in Hindi language, besides describing the different methods of preparing basic words.....Ed.

### Why We Need Them

The literacy problem is a double headed giant—making people literate and keeping them so, and nobody in India yet knows which will prove more formidable. Before a campaign begins, we are tempted to believe that the second problem will somehow solve itself when we come to it. Experience however is proving that this is not the case. Keeping India literate seems likely to be the more difficult problem of the two.

The first obstacle we encounter is the fact that nearly all the adult books and Journals are too difficult for new literates. An Indian teacher said ruefully : I have made some people literate ; but they cannot read” ! This is not so absurd as it sounds. After an illiterate has learned to read syllables and can pronounce every word he meets in conversation he may honestly be called “literate”, but he will not be able to under-

stand standard literate until he has learned the meaning of many new unspoken words, for every Indian language employs a large classical vocabulary in writing which is never spoken by illiterates. The student must also learn many new prefixes and suffixes which are employed in writing but which illiterates never use in speaking.

Illiterate villagers in six leading language areas were asked to tell what words they understood in 1. The Book of Acts, 2. A Standard newspaper, 3. A typical classical book. These were the answers : (Proper names were not counted).

In Gujarathi :

Acts—One word in fourteen was unknown to villagers  
Jaruna Chumi, daily paper—one word in sixteen was unknown

Gujarati novel—one word in seven was unknown to villagers.

In a Marathi Village :

Acts—One word in eleven

Newspaper—one word in eighteen

Classic—one word in seventeen

In a Tamil Village :

Acts—one word in every nine not known

Newspaper—one word in twenty-seven

Ordinary book—one word in eight

In a Telugu Village :

Acts—one word in eight unknown

Newspaper—one word in 9 unknown

A secular book—one word in 6 unknown

Simple "Uncle Tom's Cabin"—one word in 14 unknown

In a Hindi Village :

Acts—one word in 16 unknown

Newspaper—one word in 9 unknown

Classic—one in 11 unknown

In a Punjab Village :

Punjabi Acts—one word in 28 was unknown

Urdu Acts—one word in 24 was unknown

Sixth standard story book—one word in 34 unknown

“Milap”, newspaper with wide circulation—one word in 14 unknown

This indicates that Urdu is much more satisfactory than any other language in Biblical translation, but not in newspaper.

India does not differ from other countries in the world which have a small aristocracy of readers. We find the same cleavage between spoken languages and written Mandarin in China, the same cleavage between spoken and written Arabic in Egypt. As India becomes literate the written and spoken languages will tend to become one; they will level up and level down, just as they have done in the West. In Europe, Latin was the written language before the people became literate. The gradual process by which people began to read the spoken languages of Europe is a fascinating study. But in India today we cannot wait for such a slow evolutionary process. The chasm between “literacy”, and “standard literatures” must be bridged at once.....

When we speak of using only words which illiterate villagers understand we must at once ask : “What words do they understand ?” The answer is not as easy as it may at first appear to be. A writer may know the colloquial language of his own immediate neighbourhood, but he probably does not

know how many of those colloquial words are used in other regions. Spoken language sometimes changes within a radius of twenty miles. In every language area there is need for the preparation of a "basic" list of the most frequently used words, such as we now have in English and the other principal languages of the West. Rather we have need of two word lists, one at each end of our problem. At one end is the illiterate—what words does he know? At the other end is standard literature. What are the most common written words which the illiterate must begin to learn before he can read newspapers, magazines and ordinary books?

### **How to Prepare Basic Word Lists**

To prepare these two lists we must follow two wholly different methods. The first, the basic written words, can be gotten by counting words in books, and magazines. The second list must be derived from the illiterates directly.....

Rev. J.C. Koenig's "Teacher's and Author's list of Four Thousand Important Hindi Words" is the best-known list in India. In making this list, he words in 153 Hindi books suitable for primary children were counted. No poetry was included. Over two hundred students and teachers in Normal Schools cooperated "for many weary hours" in listing one million words. There were found to be 12,500 different words in these million. Nine of the words were used more than 10,000 times each, while there was one word which was used only one time and this was used in a school primer. Four thousand words appeared at least ten times each, and these were listed by Mr. Koenig in four columns, the 1000 most frequently used in column I, the second thousand in column II, the third thousand in column III, and the least frequently used of the four thousand in column IV. The list Mr. Koenig tells us was made first of all to help in the preparation of Hindi text books for primary schools. The old text books for primary school are deadeningly difficult. Modern educators

believe that in writing primers only one word in thirty or at most one word in twenty ought to be a New word. At least nineteen words in twenty ought to be words that have already been used. None of the Hindi readers that Mr. Koenig examined followed this principle. But the Moga series of Urdu Readers approached it; so Mr. Koenig adapted this series to Hindi. 'Most astonishing was a Hindi primer in which on an average every second word was a new one'. "New words piled upon one another in this fashion, make the passage difficult and incomprehensible." This is as true for adults as well as for children. The mind being occupied with the recognition of new words, has no time to grasp the meaning of the passage. If however new words are introduced sparingly the mind can comprehend their meaning. The important attitude of expecting an interesting message from the printed page, is thus developed. The well-known law of learning, namely that the mind tends to repeat that which gives satisfaction, then comes into operation, and reading thus becomes a habit and a pleasure.

In India complaints are frequently heard that new literates often revert to illiteracy; also that there is very little demand for literature on the part of many literates. May this not be due to the fact that many literates never have had access to a text which they can read without hesitation and understand without difficulty? One who has never experienced any pleasure or profit from reading cannot be expected to demand much literature.

The first principle in building primers should also be followed in writing for adults. The first principle is :

*Keep the number of new words down to one in twenty, but keep introducing fresh interesting material. (Italics added)*

The second principle is : *Use each word introduced in the text at least ten times, soon after it first appears, since ten is*

*the minimum number of repetitions required for the mastery of a new word.* (Italics added)

In modern primary schools only 250 to 500 new words are taught in a whole year. The Moga readers have 300. During the first four years from 2000 to 3000 may be introduced — “The average man uses a vocabulary of 2000 words.”

The third principle is that the most common words should as far as possible be used first, and the less common words later. This must not be followed so strictly however as to interfere with interest in the story.

Koenig finds from Government educational reports that only 2 percent of all the literates of India have reached the high school level (that would be two-tenths of one percent of all the people in India, or about a half million people.) It would seem therefore, if these figures are correct, that nearly all the literature to be found in the libraries of India is read by not more than 500,000 who have reached high school. Only about 5 millions, or 20% of the literates, have reached middle schools. There are not many magazines and still fewer books easy enough for them. For the twenty millions who have studied, but not beyond fourth grade, there is next to nothing save school books, and many of these are so dull that students loath them

“A literature must be created,” says Koenig, “written on the third or fourth grade level.” This means that the author of such literature must limit himself to a basic vocabulary of approximately 2000 words. Experience has shown that one can write on a large variety of subjects in Hindi using not more than about 800 different words in 100 pages of 14 point type

.....

The second type of word list—that derived from the conversation of illiterates—is illustrated by the many working vocabularies prepared by missionaries for their own use in

learning to carry on conversation. None of these, however, meet all the requirements, though they are of great value as a basis for a more scientific list. Their defect is that they do not cover a wide enough language area. Word lists from all the dialects of a language area need to be compared and checked with dictionaries and with illiterates themselves.....  
.....

The procedure for those desiring to make a spoken word list, is as follows :

1. Hold a small conference of linguists who are close in touch with village illiterates. Decide upon the number of sub-dialects spoken by illiterates in the area covered. Then select the best available linguist in each subdialect area to be studied.

2. Let a committee collect all dialect word lists, and prepare a composite list, making sure that it indicates the region in which each word is spoken. Supply the chosen sub-dialect research workers with this composite list.

3. Each research worker will go through a dictionary of his language, marking those words, and only those words, which he has heard his illiterate neighbours use.

4. Each research worker will call together ten illiterates (paying them a small hourly wage), 3 men 3 women, 2 boys above fifteen, 2 girls above fifteen. He will try on these ten persons, each word in the word list and those he selected from the Dictionary. He must say : "We desire the most common thousand spoken words. So raise your hands at each word. If you believe everybody knows the word, raise your hand when I say 'Well Known'. If you think not everybody knows the word raise your hand when I say 'not'. You are judges. Not what you know, but what everybody knows." Then each word is read, thrown into a short sentence or phrase, and the vote is taken. He will record how many vote : "well known." If only one votes "well known", he will write "I" after the

word. If 6 vote "well known", write "6". If all favour it write "10". If nobody wants it, write 0. So continue to the end of the mimeographed word list and the dictionary. The record can be written with pencil, in the dictionary, beside each word voted upon.

5. The research worker may now either prepare the list of words chosen by his ten illiterate helpers; or if he is too busy, send his marked dictionary and mimeographed word list to the Central recording office for them to tabulate his results.

6. The central tabulating office (one intelligent secretary is enough) will make a form for recording words, in the following manner. Secure a large sheet of paper wide enough to contain a 2 inch column for each sub-dialect reporting, plus a column for the words as they appear in the dictionary. The dictionary words in dictionary form are written in the left hand (first column).....Each subdialect has its own column with the same word spelled as it is pronounced in that district. After each word place the number of illiterates who voted for it in each district.

7. When all words have been thus listed, the next process is to classify them. List 1 will consist of those words which both appear in the dictionary and have the vote of all illiterates. List 2 words in the dictionary that are known though not accepted unanimously (number of votes should be noted) in all districts. List 3 words in the dictionary that are known in all but one district. (District where unknown should be noted.) List 4 in all but two districts. And so on.

The first two thousand words derived in this manner—if that many words are common to most districts—will constitute our basic spoken list, arranged in four column, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th. It is this list which should be used in preparing the Phonetic charts and also the Primers to be used by illiterates for the first two weeks.

8. The list should not be compared with lists made by book-word-counts like that of Koenig, in order to make a third list, consisting of the most common words found in books but not on the spoken list. This third list is easily made by crossing from the Koenig list, words which appear in the spoken list. What remains will be the words we must gradually introduce into our first and second readers and our newspaper for new literates,—not more than one such word in twenty, repeating each new word as soon as convenient ten or more times.

The literature to follow the primer will fall into three classes.

1. The text books graded, Part 1, Part 2, Part 3, Part 4, Part 5.
2. Auxiliary books and pamphlets on the level of the various graded text books.
3. A periodical intended exclusively for the adult new literate. This may be two or four or eight pages in length. It is advisable not to include articles for advanced students, as these will discourage beginners.<sup>1</sup>.....

#### REFERENCE

1. Frank C. Laubach, *India Shall Be Literate*, Jubbulpore: Mission Press, 1939, pp. 155-164.

# 13

## HOW TO TEACH "EACH ONE TEACH ONE"

In this write up, Laubach has clearly laid down the strategy and steps of teaching illiterates through the technique of Each One Teach One. Highlighting the importance of giving due respect to the individual learner, Laubach has discussed the ways of winning the learner through certain techniques—Ed.

The first thing the teacher must have clearly in mind is that he **MUST** help the student : *feel triumphant, feel at ease, feel grateful, feel confidence in the teacher, feel rested at the end of the lesson.*

.....We will discuss the manner and personality and atmosphere of the teacher. We call this the "psychology of the adult." Here are the rules to follow :

Speak and move **SLOWLY**. Nervous, jerky, quick motions worry and weary the student,

When pointing with your finger, move it very slowly, and only where you want the student to look. When pointing to a word, keep your finger there until you want your student's eyes to move to another point.

Do not hunt for a word with your finger, for the student will follow your finger, and will be confused if it points at the wrong word. So find the next word with your eye, and move your finger **ONLY** where you want the student to look. Move

with a slow, even curve to the next object. Take it easy ! Never hurry, and never hurry your student. Do not stammer with your finger !

And do not stammer with your tongue ! Say precisely what needs to be said, and nothing else. Say it once. Do not try to "rub it in."

Many people think they make a point by repeating, sometimes in a loud, disagreeable voice. They drill, they hammer it in. It feels like a dentist drilling a tooth ! If you say it clearly and slowly once, the student will remember it. People like a whisper more than a shout. When a young man makes love successfully, he whispers in his sweetheart's ear. He never shouts, if he hopes to win the fair lady. No more will you win your student if you hurt his ears.

Take it easy ! Make haste slowly. Never push your student, never hold him back. This is why tutorial instruction is so superior. You can go as fast or slow as your student is accustomed to moving.

Teach for a half hour, then stop !

### **How to encourage and win your student**

You ought genuinely to love your student. Love him and pray for him. You should pray for him quietly all the time he is studying with you. Then there is sure to be a beautiful rapport between you.

Never frown, Never look disapproval or disappointment, Never scold, Never Yawn, Never ask a question the student cannot answer. Never tell him an answer if he can tell you, Never repeat after him what he has just said correctly, Never say "No". Cut "no" out of your vocabulary, Never shake your head "no". In fact, don't shake your head at all.

If your student makes a mistake, do not notice it. Say "yes" and pronounce the word as it should be.

Treat your student like a king, not like an illiterate ! That is why you should never say "no" to him. You never contradict a king.

The adult illiterate is the most sensitive of all persons. He is alert for signs that you feel superior; he is quick to misinterpret your words or attitude as derogatory or insulting. This is because so many educated people have mistreated, oppressed and swindled illiterates that they consider this to be normal, and are surprised when they are treated as equals. In fact, they suspect that there must be some swindle back of this unnatural kindness.

The advantage of "each one teach one" is that you can sit down beside your student. This helps him realize that you do not feel superior but regard him as your equal.

Always look pleased and surprised. Your student will learn these lessons far more swiftly than he had ever thought possible, and he will want you to share his admiration of himself. Give him the credit. Do not say "the lessons are easy." Say, "Mr. you are doing fine, aren't you?" Let your manner and your words all indicate your admiration at his brilliancy. He is starving for appreciation. So be generous with "that's right" and "fine !" and "Mr. you are doing well !"

At the end of the page you should say : "You are doing so well that we will want you as a teacher. Would you be willing to teach somebody to read ?" That compliment will well-nigh break his heart. An hour ago he was an illiterate. Now you are suggesting that he may become a professor ! Sometimes women cry with joy when you tell them that, and men often talk hysterically.

If your student wants to talk, let him talk, and appreciate his words, for they are important to him.

Dale Carnegie says that everybody craves a sense of importance. This may be why some teachers try to impress

their students with the teacher's superiority. The teacher makes himself important. In an ordinary school the poor little children must endure such a teacher. But in an adult "each one teach one" class, adults will never come back to such a teacher. The teacher should try to prove that the student is important by praising him and treating him like an equal, or like a VIP !

So, emphasize the positive in him and forget the negative ! There is a noblesse oblige, which one meets occasionally, but which cannot be described. If you know how to employ this courtesy properly you will give your student the greatest hour of his life. Up to this time he has never been praised by anybody. He has always felt a sense of inferiority. But now you are discovering in him unsuspected ability; you are making him feel far more important than he ever felt before. You give him the greatest hour of his life.

He falls in love with you ! A thousand silver threads wind themselves around his heart and yours. He will believe anything you say to him"<sup>1</sup>.....

#### REFERENCE

1. Frank C. Laubach, "Report : How To Teach Each One Teach One Primers", in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 299, pp 21-28.

# 14

## LAUBACH MATERIALS AND METHODS

When Laubach was a U.S. Consultant to Government of India, he had developed a series of graded materials for adults known as The Anand Graded Series. In this write up Laubach has described the methods of teaching those materials.—Ed.

These books are called Anand, because they make the students very happy in their astonishingly swift progress. Nobody will believe how swift and easy and delightful this course is until he has seen it taught the right way.

These books must be taught the right way if we expect to get swift and delightful results. Fortunately any teacher can learn this right way in an hour. The chief thing the teacher must know is NOT TO TALK MUCH, but to say the right word at the right help from the teacher.....

### The Charts

In highly literate countries, children are taught the alphabet at their mothers' knees before they go to school. In India the adults can also learn the alphabet without formal teaching by means of the phonetic charts, which are being placed on the walls of the villages where the people pass them going to and from their work. There are from four to six of these

charts, six letters to a chart. The shape of the letter is associated with an object whose name begins with that letter. Anybody can easily learn six of these letters in ten minutes.

On the day when these charts are placed on the walls, a mela is held to celebrate this first step toward complete literacy. The speaker tells them that everybody in the village is going to learn the letters on these charts. Then he shows them how to teach themselves the letters. He tells them, "In one month a teacher will come and teach the first reader to all who can read these letters on the charts." It has been found that everybody in the village will learn every letter in one month. The charts are varnished to protect them from rain or insects. They are left under the protection of the village panchayat to prevent children from defacing them.

### **Primers**

At the end of a month, the literacy director moves in with his primers. He calls a meeting of the educated people of the village and organizes them into the literacy council. He shows each of them how the lessons are taught and holds a demonstration with illiterates. They then are asked to teach members of their family or their neighbours in their own homes at convenient hours. Meanwhile the director, perhaps with the cooperation of the village teacher, starts night classes at convenient points. Carbide lights, which can be obtained for Rs. 3/- each, make the most satisfactory light. All who have learned the letters on the large charts are allowed to read the primer. These primers begin by reproducing the charts in small size, and then add stories and gradually teach the 'matras', one 'matra' for a lesson. There are twelve lessons in the primer. Many students read from two to four lessons at a time. The most backward student can finish the book in two weeks.

### **Graduation**

Then a graduation ceremony is held. The most prominent

man available should be invited to come and speak. Bhajans and dramas and folk dances help make it a memorable mela. People from all the adjoining villages should be invited. Each student who has completed the primer will come forward to receive a diploma. This diploma will say :

“.....has completed the primer and is now ready to read the Second Reader. Signed,.....”

Receiving this simple paper in the presence of hundreds of relatives and neighbours will be the greatest event in the lives of these new literates. It will inspire them to continue and it will make their neighbours strive to get a diploma at the next graduation.

All who taught these graduating students will also come forward and receive a “Certificate of Patriotic Service.” That will make them eager to teach more.

These teachers and also the new graduates should all be urged each one to teach one before the next graduation ceremony. At the end of two more weeks, have another graduation, two every month until the village is wholly literate.

### **The Anand Second Reader**

Meantime the teacher and literacy director have classes to teach the Anand Second Readers.

These readers are very scientifically built upon the primer. One feature of all the Anand Graded Course is that it teaches only ten new words a day, and repeats them at least five times so that the student memorizes them as sight words. Every lesson from the first chart to the final lesson,....., is very easy, with a scientifically controlled vocabulary. At no point will the student experience difficulty or discouragement.

Another feature is that each chapter teaches the villager some new secret which will enable him to have better health,

raise better crops and live a happier and more useful life. The contents were all suggested by health and agriculture and home economics experts. They were asked this question: "What are you trying to tell the village people to do to better their condition? Tell us, and we will write it into our second readers." .....

These are not written in the form of advice; people do not like to read sermons. They are woven into a story about Anand the wise man and his adventures in reading and applying his knowledge. Experience shows that the villagers are intensely fascinated with these books. They see how Anand became healthy, wealthy, wise, happy and famous, and they say, "If Anand could do that, I can too."

When the village worker or the government expert comes to talk to these villagers, they do not need to be persuaded, for they already believe what he tells them. They read it in their book, and they believe everything that is printed.

Illiterate villagers are afraid of strangers and are always suspicious that new ideas may get them deeper into debt or beat them in some other way. Teaching them to read is the best way to convince them to try new things. With many villagers it is the only way.....

At the end of the last book,.....the student has learned over 1,000 words WELL, and is able to pronounce any other word in Hindi, since the alphabet is perfectly phonetic. He is now ready to read many of the simpler Hindi books like the Jamia Milia series. He can also read simple newspapers like that being prepared by I.C.A.R.

### **How To Teach The Anand Books**

The Anand charts and primer represent the work and testing of more than five thousand Hindi-speaking teachers over a period of eighteen years. The vocabulary has been

sifted and tested until it is certain that every word in the entire primer is known to every adult illiterate who speaks either Hindi or Hindustani. This enormous labour was necessary because the basic principle of teaching illiterate adults is to go from the known to the unknown by easy, logical steps. Any word not known to all the illiterate villagers is out of place in this primer.

Infinite pains have been taken to make each step in these lessons short and easy. We streamline our teaching and say not one needless word. We have our teachers memorize what they are to say in the first lesson. The pattern of the other lessons is the same so that they can do them all well if they can do the first one well. Here is what the teacher does and says.

Teacher : (Points to *Am*) *Am, bolo am*. Note : the teacher does not say, "What is this ?"

Student : *Am*.

Teacher : It has three leaves. (Points to the big letter.)

This akṣhar has three leaves like *am*. Runs his finger under the word *am* from left to right. This is the word *am*. *Bolo Am*.

Student : *Am*.

Teacher : (Covers *m* with right finger. Points to *a* with left finger) *Aa, bolo aa*.

Student : *Aa*.

Teacher : (Points to *a* under *am* and asks) What is this?

Student : *Aa*.

Teacher : (Points to the straight vertical line and says).

This is also *aa*. *Bolo aa*.

Student : *Aa*.

Teacher : (Points to the other four *aas*. Let student say them.  
Don't tell the student).

Student : *aa aa aa aa*.

Teacher : Shabash.....

(The rest of the page is the same as the above—See Appendix—A.)

If taught properly, the student will seem to himself to be marvelously bright. Give him plenty of Shabash and look surprised with him. You may ask him, "How many years did you go to school?" If he says "never", then say, "You are bright. You ought to teach other people." This kind of compliment gives him confidence and enthusiasm for more lessons.

### Teaching Writing

Let the student write the letters *a*.....which he learned.....Write the letter first, then let him imitate it. Hindi letters are very easy to write.

**Teaching the story page of lesson 1 :** Let the student say all the words he can without help. Do it thus :

Teacher : Points to the word *am* on the picture page, asking,  
"Ye kia hai ?"

Student : *Am*.

Teacher : (Runs finger under "*am hai*" on story page and says, "*Am hai, Bolo.*")

Student : *Am hai*.....

### How To Teach The Anand Second Readers

Start by telling the students that there is a secret hidden in each chapter of this book which will increase their crops and make them healthier and happier. Tell them to look for

this secret in every chapter. Read rapidly, and have the student read rapidly.

The teacher may read the chapter very rapidly first, and then help the student to read only when necessary. There is so much repetition that it is very easy for the student to read. Teach him to read rapidly. Let him get the fast reading habit from the first.

Since the purpose of reading these Anand chapters is to plant a new helpful idea in the minds of the readers, it is well to ask each member of the class to say what he thinks of the idea and what he can do to carry it out. Thus reading will become a means to an end. The student will learn to read for valuable information. This will develop the habit of reading books and magazines that are really worth while and helpful.

Each Anand book has a variety of subjects, because it is necessary for everybody to read every chapter in order to learn all the 1000 words. This is why we do not group them under various themes, but try to scatter the subjects so that there will be something of interest in each book for every adult.

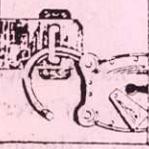
At the end of this Anand series, the student has learned far more than reading. He has an all-round view of every subject considered vital by the Community Projects Administration. He has also acquired a taste for useful knowledge, and will be eager for more. He has acquired the habit of reading worth while books. He has learned to be a rapid reader.<sup>1</sup> (See Appendix—B).

#### REFERENCE

1. Frank C. Laubach, Pamphlet on How to Teach The Anand Graded Series, in *Laubach Collection*, Box No. 246.

A LESSON FROM HINDI PRIMER  
DEVELOPED BY LAUBACH IN 1952

पठ १

	<b>आ</b>	आम आ आ	आ आ अ अ
	<b>ब</b>	बनिया ब	बा बा ब ब
	<b>त</b>	ताला ता	ता ता त त
	<b>ज</b>	जामुन जा	जा जा ज ज
	<b>क</b>	कान का	का का क क
	<b>म</b>	मकान म	मा मा म म

## पाठ १

आम है बनिया जामुन लाता है  
बनिया है । बाबा जामुन लाता है ।  
ताला है । काका जामुन लाता है ।  
जामुन है । मामा जामुन लाता है ।  
कान है बनिये का कान है ।  
मकान है । बाबा का कान है ।  
बनिया ताला लाता है । काका का कान है ।  
बाबा ताला लाता है । मामा का कान है ।  
काका ताला लाता है ।  
मामा ताला लाता है । बनिये का मकान है ।  
बनिया आम लाता है । बाबा का मकान है ।  
बाबा आम लाता है । मामा का मकान है ।  
काका आम लाता है ।  
मामा आम लाता है ।

## A LESSON FROM ANAND THE WISEMAN

This is a translation of the first lesson of the second reader in Hindi. The story development and the grammar are extremely simple. The student begins this book right after finishing the charts and primer. He may be only a month or less removed from total illiteracy.

### Lesson I. Anand Learned to Read

Anand learned to read

Anand learned to read books

Anand learned to read good books

Anand learned to read

Anand was a good man

Anand read to his wife

He read to his wife

Anand read books to his wife

He read books to his wife

Anand read good books to his wife

Anand was wise

Anand was a good man

Anand said to his wife

This is a good book

There are good things in this book  
Anand said to his wife  
We will do these things  
We will do the things in this book  
We will do the good things in this book  
There are good things in this book  
We will do these good things.

In the Anand Second Reader there were forty chapters, on a variety of practical themes relevant to the Indian Villagers. Some of them are :

Anand's Wife and Her Neighbour  
Anand Reads About Itch and Flies  
Anand Makes a Latrine  
Anand Learns to Grow Better Crops  
Anand Gets Seeds from the Government  
Anand Reads how to Make Sore Eyes Well  
Anand's Wife is Revati  
Revati Learns What to Feed a Baby  
Revati Reads How to make a Tomato Chatni  
Revati's Daughter Has a New Baby  
Anand Buys a New Plough  
Anand Plants Fruit Trees  
Importance of Vaccination  
Anand Reads About a Safe Well  
Anand Reads About Malaria  
Anand Reads How to Kill Mosquitos  
Anand Learns How to Raise Better Chickens  
Anand Reads About Leprosy  
Anand Reads that India is a Republic

## A SELECT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

There are not many adult educators who wrote as profusely as Dr. Frank C. Laubach did. During his forty years of literacy career (1930-70), Laubach wrote forty major books and thirty two booklets on a wide range of topics viz., literacy, religion, culture, society and polity. Besides, his name is directly or indirectly linked as an author of literacy primers in 315 languages. Apart from a doctoral dissertation on Laubach's involvement with media, five important biographies have been written about him. Recently a comprehensive collection of his major writings has been published by the New Readers Press in Syracuse. The following two compilations have listed most of the publications by and about Laubach.

1. *The Laubach Collection : Personal Papers of Frank C. Laubach And Documents of Laubach Literacy Inc.* compiled by Deborah R. Chmaj and Meubera Wolder, Syracuse : Bird Library, 1974.
2. *Frank C. Laubach : A Comprehensive Bibliography*, compiled by Ann L. Wiley, Syracuse : Readers Press, 1973.

The first compilation provides a list of the manuscripts under the following titles : correspondence, personal papers, Administrative papers, Financial papers, project-domestic, project overseas, Languages, articles, miscellaneous. The second compilation has listed 47 monographs, 236 addressess, lectures, essays, 252 literacy materials and 145 biographies and critical writings.

## I. Primary Sources :

(a) **Manuscripts** :—The papers of Laubach are subject wise arranged and kept in 438 boxes at the George Arents Research Library. The following boxes contain useful materials for the study of adult education in India.

Box Nos.	Contents
2	Laubach's letters to his father and colleagues describing the different aspects of his early experiments in literacy in the Philippines during 1930-38.
3, 4, 5	Laubach's correspondence with Humayun Kabir and some of his missionary colleagues in India during 1954-56 regarding the publicity, printing and distribution of the literacy primers.
9	Correspondence with Douglas Oliver and Dr. A. K. John connected with adult education programme in Kerala (1960) and opening of St : John School at Karthi-cappally.
80, 82, 84	Correspondence with Dr. S. C. Dutta, Professor Mujeeb, Lily Quy regarding support to Indian Adult Education Association and scholarship to Indians to study literacy journalism at Syracuse University during 1958-61. Correspondence with Satyen Maitra, Richard Cotright, Ellen High, Douglas Oliver regarding literacy work in Calcutta and Patna.
89	Papers connected with the visit of Laubach team to Kerala during 1966 and report on Laubach's visit to Kerala in 1961. Corres-

- pondence with Dr. A. K. John regarding the impact of Chinese war on the enrolment in literacy classes.
- 110 Papers connected with the work of World Literacy and Christian Literature in India during 1942-54. Report of the Committee on Adult Education set up the National Christian Council. Report of the first course on literacy journalism held at Nagpur in 1953.
- 111, 112 Laubach's diaries and notes for the years 1929-44 providing details of his visit to different parts of India and discussions with Gandhi, Tagore and Nehru. It includes observations on the ongoing literacy programme in India and some impressions of his work in the Philippines.
- 113 Laubach's essays on Each One Teach One programme. His speeches, on different aspects of literacy delivered during 1951-53.
- 119 Papers pertaining to Laubach's work as U.S. Consultant to the Government of India during 1951-53. His "Plan for a Nationwide literacy Drive" submitted to Government of India. Details about the development of teaching of literacy primers and graded reading materials—Anand the Wiseman—and reports of the training programmes conducted by Laubach.
- 122 Manuscript of a book titled as "Foreign Reading Book", written in 1943, which describes, Laubach's tours to different parts of India.

- 126 Memorabilia provides glimpses into the life and work of Laubach. Outline of a course on literacy training programme. Topics for a book for neoliterates.
- 139, 140 Laubachs' letters and reports from India during 1952-53 describing his literacy work and his role in India—all published in the World Literacy Newsletters, Minutes of the meeting of Board of Trustees of World Literacy and correspondence with Dr. K.G. Saiyidain and South Indian Adult Education Association. Tapescript of Laubachs' visit to India during 1960-61.
- 199 Laubachs' visit to Madras during 1949, and the typescript of his speech delivered regarding the importance of launching a literacy campaign.
- 246 India : General materials and reports on literacy work.
- 247 Programme of literacy House, Lucknow, Syllabus of Functional Literacy programme.
- 259 Laubachs' letter to Indian Colleagues during 1956 regarding the starting of a literacy centre in South India.
- 299 A spiritual Diary written during the visit to India in 1937. Impressions about Tagore and importance of selfless service. How to teach Each One And Win One For Christ.
- 313 World Literacy And Christian Literature Newsletters 1961-63.

- 325 Miscellaneous correspondence with Indian Literacy workers viz., Ellen High, A.K. John etc.
- 341 Papers and newsletters of World Literacy Inc. during 1969-73.
- 410 Newsletters of Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education, Lit Lit, *Indian Journal of Adult Education*. Adult Education Literacy News Bulletin of National Christian Council for the years 1949-73.

**Literacy Materials :**

- 210, 269, 292 Hindi primers developed at different periods 1937-57.
- 215, 246, 325, 348 Primers in Bengali and materials on Bengal Adult Education programme and Bengal Social Service League.
- 247, 277, 325, 117, 330, 358, 413 Literacy primers in Malayalam and materials related to Adult Education programme in Kerala.
- 248, 264, 290 Materials on Assam adult education.
- 286, 287, 295 Tamil and Telugu Primers.
- 288 Urdu Primers
- 266 Chattisgarhi primers
- 269 Gujarati primers
- 278 Naga primers
- 279 Oriya primers
- 281 Panjabi primers
- 282 Santali and Saora
- 201, 234, 250, 262 Anand the Wise Man—Graded reading materials.

## (B) PRINTED SOURCES

The following books written by Frank C. Laubach are relevant for the study of adult education in India. It may be noted that there is a lot of repetition in most of the books. These books are arranged chronologically.

1938 *Toward A Literate World*, New York : Columbia University Press.

This was the first major scholarly publication of Laubach which dealt with different aspects of adult education. His writings on the psychology of adult illiterates, the art of teaching them are relevant even today. He has discussed briefly his visits to India during 1935-37.

1939 *India Shall be Literate*, Jubbulpore : Mission Press.

This book is based on his study visits to India during 1937-39 which were sponsored by the National Christian Council of India under the direction of the World Literacy Committee of New York. This book provides an authentic account of the early history of adult education in India. It discusses literacy situation in different parts of British India and the prevalent methods of teaching adults and provides a list of literacy materials that were in use during late 1930's.

1945 *The Silent Billion Speak*, New York : Friendship Press.

In this book, Laubach traces the literacy situation and movements in different parts of the world during 1930's.

1947

*Teaching The World To Read : A Handbook For Literacy Campaigns*, New York : Friendship Press.

To a certain extent this is an elaborate version of the book—*Toward A Literate World*. In this Laubach has discussed the role of literacy for peace, social reconstruction and importance of women's literacy. Besides surveying the literacy situations and programmes in different countries, Laubach has discussed the strategies of organising spiritual literacy campaigns.

1952

*Anand The Wiseman : Second Reader For Neo-Literates*. New York : Committee on World Literacy And Christian Literature.

This book has forty chapters which discuss the themes on health, hygiene, agriculture, cooking, civics etc.....Each chapter is written in the form of a story revolving around the main character 'Anand' and his wife "Revati". They become wise and successful as a result of acquiring new knowledge through reading.

1953

*How it Can Be Done : A Suggested Plan For A Nationwide Attack On Illiteracy In India 1952*. Maryland : Koinonia Foundation.

This was the five year plan that Laubach had prepared for launching a national campaign for the liquidation of illiteracy in India during 1951-56. In this plan, Laubach has analysed the drawbacks of earlier adult education programmes and worked out yearwise programmes and budget estimates.

1956

*Learning The Vocabulary of God : A spiritual Diary.* Tennesse, The Upper Room.

The major portion of the diary was written during his visit to India in 1937. It mentions his meetings with Tagore and other adult educators and impressions about them.

1960

*Towards World Literacy : The Each One Teach One Method.* Syracuse : Syracuse University Press.

This book is in two parts. The second part was written by Dr. Robert S. Laubach, the son of Frank C. Laubach. In the first part, Frank Laubach traces the evolution of Each One Teach One method with examples from different language primers and discusses the role of teacher. In part two, his son deals with the technique of writing for neoliterate and various aspects connected with the training of writers and production literature.

1970

*Forty Years With The Silent Billion : Adventuring In Literacy.* New Jersey : Flaming H. Revell Company.

This was the last and the most comprehensive book written by Laubach. In sixty chapters Laubach gives a chronological account of his visits to different countries starting from 1929 and the role of Laubach Literacy International. In fact the first eight chapters were originally published under the title, the *Silent Billion Speaks* in 1943, and then it was enlarged by adding

thirty-two chapters and republished as thirty years with silent billion in 1960.

### (C) AUDIO-VISUAL SOURCES :

There are ten cartons of audio-visual materials in Laubach Collection which are in the form of audio-tapes, slide tapes, film stripes, motion pictures and kinescopes and they cover a variety of themes on methods of teaching, workshop scenes, literacy tours etc., during the period 1948-1962. The following materials pertain to the adult education in India.

1. *Film Strips (1952-53)* — Depicting Laubach's Literacy tours in India, scenes from his visit to different adult education centres at Allahabad, Nagpur, Calcutta.

2. *Audio-Tapes (1959)* — Deals with the different aspects of village literacy work in India.

3. *Films on Each One Teach One (1960)* — It demonstrates the Each One Teach One method and method of teaching the Anand Graded series. It is a 20 minute film.

4. *Film On Laubach's Literacy Tour (1960)* — Depicts the details of his visit to Lucknow, Calcutta, Delhi and participation in the ongoing literacy programmes.

5. *Audio-Tape (1962)* — Deliberations of an International writers seminar on documenting Illiteracy in India — "The right to read."

6. *Audio-Tape (1962)* — An interesting and inspiring talk by Laubach on the plight of desperate billions of illiterates in the world.

### II SECONDARY SOURCES

1954 Medary Marjorie, *Each One Teach One : Frank Laubach, Friend To Millions*. New York : Longman, Green.

Written during Laubachs' life time, this biography provides a comprehensive account of his early life and experiments in literacy in Philippines, India and Africa. It also evaluates his contributions to the cause of literacy.

1961 Davey, Cyril J. : *Growing Bigger Everyday : Frank Laubach*, London : Edinburg House

This is in fact a very short but crisp biography of Laubach.

1961 Roberts, Helen M.; *Champion of the Silent Billion*. Minnesota : Maclaster Park Publication.

Provides a brief biography of Laubach.

1966 Mason, David E., *Apostle To the Illiterate : Chapters in the Life of Frank C. Laubach*. Michigan : Zondervan Publishing House.

Written by a colleague of Laubach, this biography focusses more on the work of Laubach as a literacy pioneer and teacher of millions in several countries during 1955-60.

1967 Manson, David. E., *Frank C. Laubach : Teacher of Millions*. Minneapolis : T.S. Denison Company Inc.

Discusses the operationalisation of Each One Teach One method in different countries.

1980 Scofield, Willard Arthur, *A Study of Frank C. Laubach's Methods of Communicating A Concern for Adult Literacy Education to the People of the United States*.

- 1984                      Doctoral dissertation, Syracuse University (Microfilm).  
 Laubach, Bob, *The Vision Lives On*. Syracuse : New Readers Press.  
 A brief pictorial biography of Frank Laubach by his son, Robert Laubach.
- 1990                      Norton, Karen S., (Compiled with an introduction) *Frank C. Laubach's Heritage Collection*. Syracuse : New Readers Press  
 This is a compilation of all the important writings of Laubach with an excellent biographic introduction.

### III LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED DIRECTLY OR THROUGH CORRESPONDENCE :

1. Dr. Robert S. Laubach, son of Dr. Frank Laubach and the former Executive Director of Laubach Literacy International.
2. Professor Alexander N. Charters, Emeritus Professor of Adult Education, Syracuse University and one time member of Board of Trustees of Laubach Literacy International.
3. Dr. Robert F. Caswell, Executive Director of Laubach Literacy International.
4. Carolyn Blackley, Former editor of Laubach Literacy Newsletter.
5. Robert A. Luke, a contemporary of Frank Laubach.
6. Dr. A.K. John, Director, Laubach Centre, Karthikapally, Kerala.
7. Professor H.S. Bholra, Indiana University.
8. Dr. Prem Kirpal, Retired Secretary to Government of India.