

ON TO ETERNITY

VOL. I
EDITED BY
S.C. DUTTA



ON TO ETERNITY
Vol. I
IAEA



INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

On to Eternity

**Record of Presidential Addresses and Resolutions
of
All India Adult Education Conferences
held from 1938 to 1958**

Edited by :

S. C. Dutta

**INDIAN ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
17-B, INDRAPRASTHA ESTATE,
NEW DELHI-110002**

First edition 1959
Second edition 1984
©Indian Adult Education Association

Series No. 144
Price Rs. 25.00 U.S. \$ 7.00

Printed at Raju Printers, 178, Chhajjupur, Shahdara, Delhi.

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND EDITION

1990 is a crucial year for adult educators, because towards the close of 1989, the Indian Adult Education Association will be celebrating its Golden Jubilee, and a few months later we will have established a learning society. This is our pledge and we shall be true to our word.

It is said that once we achieve 50 per cent literacy, we would reach a point which will serve as a spring board for accelerated progress and enable us to reach our goal with faster pace, greater determination and renewed zeal.

"On to Eternity", Vol. I is a collection of presidential addresses from 1938 to 1958 and the resolutions passed in these Conferences. It is not only a record of the Association's role in the development of the concept and programmes of adult education in the ever changing national scene, but a token of our determination to serve the common men and women by providing intellectual inspiration to adult education workers and agencies to broaden their base of operation and deepen their understanding of the problems of the people.

A quarter of a century ago, adult education was insignificant. Today it is recognised as an essential component of all our developmental effort. Adult Education is considered as an instrument of social change and for reducing inequality and poverty. In all the anti-poverty programmes, adult education has been given a pivotal role. It is a part of the minimum needs programme. The political commitment being so clearly indicated, it is for the leadership of the Indian Adult Education Association to catch the time by the forelock and keep our trust with destiny in 1990. It is our hope that we will rise to the occasion and not fail our posterity. Let us redouble our effort and reach our goal in good time. There is not time for us to prevaricate but to do and die, so that the sacrifices of those who came before us may not go in vain, for they gave their best unmindful of personal inconvenience and without caring for any reward. Let us be worthy of the great names in the history of adult education movement and build a dynamic movement as a base for authentic development.

We are presenting this book to large number of adult educators to make them aware of the ideas of the leaders of the movement, because adult education is the oldest as well as the newest discipline. We hope it will serve the field workers, who must devote their time with redouble energy, dedication and devotion to the cause of the poor.

New Delhi
31st March, 1984

S.C. Dutta

INTRODUCTION TO FIRST EDITION

The Indian Adult Education Association came into existence on the 2nd December, 1939, when the Second All India Adult Education Conference formally decided to set up the Association and approved the constitution. This year it enters its 21st year. To mark this coming of age, we are placing before the Indian people "*On to Eternity*" a collection of all the addresses of our Conference Presidents and the Resolutions passed at these conferences.

"*On to Eternity*" is not only a record of the Association's role in the development of the concept and programmes of adult education in the changing circumstances of the country but a token of determination on the part of the Association, that having completed 20 years of its existence, it will go on serving the people, inspite of numerous difficulties and hampering obstacles. The fact that it has survived these long, arduous years and has been able to render some service to the cause of adult education is a guarantee that the Association will continue its work of providing intellectual inspiration to adult education workers and agencies, co-ordinating their activities and acting as a clearing house of ideas and information.

The year 1959 is memorable in the history of the Association for it is shortly going to have a permanent abode for itself. The building is being constructed in honour of and as a memorial to the services of the late Dr. Amaranatha Jha, who presided over the destinies of the Association for over a decade and the late Shafiq ur-Rehman Kidwai, one of the architects of the modern adult education movement in India. Though not yet completed, because of paucity of funds, the building will serve as a source of inspiration to all social education workers and administrators.

Today, the question that adult education workers face is : Where do we go from here? From 1947 to 1959, most of the field work has been conducted under official auspices; hardly any people's agency has been sponsored or encouraged. The result is that adult education programmes have failed to make the impact they normally do and would have done had the approach been adopted which the Association had been advocating, year after year at its conferences and seminars. Trying to cover a large area with ill-equipped personnel was bound to result in

some frustration. In addition the agency set up for the purpose was not conducive to the success of the programmes.

There is still time to right the wrong. Only, we must have the courage to face facts and be prepared to take lessons from experience. A movement like Adult Education which seeks to make an intimate and personal impact on people and to enthuse them to reconstruct the very fabric of their lives, subverting many of the existing socio-economic patterns in society, cannot be conducted by state-run agencies, nor can the problem of inculcation of social values so vital for the very life of India as a democracy be tackled by such agencies which lack flexibility and resilience, so essential for dealing with men out to change the very basic structure of their lives. To achieve this, the State has to leave Adult Education to non-official voluntary agencies. The State should sponsor and assist non-official agencies for conducting adult education work. Autonomous boards with an assurance of steady finance from the State should be set up for planning and executing adult education work at state and district levels. The Indian Adult Education Association, which today can speak for many official as well as non-official workers and agencies, can be entrusted with the task of conducting the work on an all India basis. The Association, pledged as it is to the service of India's common man, should be encouraged and assisted to play its role in this enterprise and to undertake this responsibility.

The Association owes its present position to the farsightedness and sacrifice of many who gave to the Association their best unmindful of personal inconvenience and without any hope of reward. To them we express our gratefulness. They shall always remain shining examples for adult education workers to follow. The field workers and the staff of the Association also deserve our thanks for the devoted service they have rendered to build up the Adult Education movement.

S.C. DUTTA

General Secretary,

May 1, 1959

Indian Adult Education Association

CONTENTS

<i>Presidential Address :</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Sir Shah Sulaiman	1
Shri R. P. Masani	8
Dr. Amaranatha Jha	17
Shri K. G. Saiyidain	22
Shri P. N. Sapru	32
Dr. S. R. Ranganathan	39
Shri Shafiq-ur-Rehman Kidwai	56
Shri R. M. Chetsingh	64
Shri G. Harisarvottama Rau	71
Shri Anath Nath Basu	82
Dr. R. V. Paruleker	89
Shri T. Madiah Gowda	98
Dr. V. S. Jha	108
Shri Bilash Chandra Mukherjee	113
Prof. Mohammad Mujeeb	119
 <i>Resolutions :</i>	
Changing Concept of Adult Education	131
Programmes and Methods of Adult Education	134
Training	142
Social Education and Community Development	143
Audio-Visual Aids	145
Voluntary Efforts and Government Aid	146
Planning and Legislation	151
Organisational Set up—For Adult (Social) Education	157
Facilities for Field Workers	160
Association's Internal Policies	160

Appendices :

Office-Bearers	...	...	167
National Seminars	...	...	172
Regional Seminars	...	...	174
Memoranda	...	...	176

SIR SHAH SULAIMAN

*First All India Adult Education Conference
11th March 1938, Delhi*

It is a matter of great privilege to address the first All-India Adult Education Conference on a subject in which we all are so deeply interested and which is a vital part of every general scheme of education. It is more appropriate that the first session of the All-India Adult Education Conference should be held at this ancient and historic centre, which is the premier town of India. It would be in the fitness of things for the educationists assembled at Delhi to take the lead in placing the Adult Education Conference on a firm and permanent basis.

The problem of Adult Education is entirely distinct and separate from that of imparting literary education through the medium of ordinary schools. The great bulk of the Indian population is ignorant in many ways and the adults are generally too old to acquire much of book learning. Schemes for holding night schools for adults are in vogue in many foreign countries ; and we ought to utilise the experience gained there for the benefit of our own. But in India they have been tried so far only in a sporadic fashion. There has not existed any common organization which would co-ordinate all such activities and also guide our efforts along similar and uniform lines of action. The aim of adult education is not merely to spread bare literacy among the masses. That object is attained more easily by the introduction of free and compulsory primary education, when finances permit. The grown up section of the population stand on a different footing, and adults can also be brought in touch with the advance of practical knowledge without the necessity of books. The method of educating adults must of necessity be somewhat different from that used for educating younger persons. Trying to impart literacy to adults often proves to be a belated and almost futile attempt ; on the other hand, supplying general information to them is of more practical utility. We should entrust our ordinary schools with the task of removing illiteracy, and not confine the adult education institutions within such narrow limits.

The present system of education is certainly open to several serious objections and needs a drastic over-hauling. It is no wonder that from time to time it is subjected to severe criticisms by educationists in all the provinces. There is a growing and insistent demand all over the country that education should be made more practical and useful, and that a new type of school which would equip students for particular callings are more urgently needed.

The underlying policy in the past was to establish as many schools and colleges as possible so as to turn out matriculates and graduates in large numbers. That was a time when there was a marked demand for educated men, as posts in the Government services were available to them in plenty. The system of establishing more and more educational institutions therefore worked pretty well and men who qualified succeeded in obtaining suitable employments. Acquisition of even a literary education was economically advantageous, and those who received the benefit of such education were certainly better off than those who had neglected it. With the enormous growth in the number of students the situation has changed completely, as there are not enough vacancies in the offices to meet the supply. Ordinarily speaking, mere literary education has ceased to be of any great practical utility. The educated classes are now faced with a very serious problem of unemployment. With a multiplication of educational institutions and wide-spread expansion of literary education, conditions are bound to get still more chronic. A heavy duty is therefore cast on those who are working for the cause of education to remodel the existing institutions so as to give the students a decided bend of industrial and commercial line in order to fit them for that special skill which a workshop or a factory would require. It is most essential that quite apart from the literary education that is being already given in our existing schools, there should be a well-organised effort to provide facilities for grown up people to learn in their spare hours what could be more useful and helpful to them in their individual occupations. A wide-spread scheme of adult education, as supplementary to the school education, would go a long way towards solving the unemployment problem. Of course it must be conceded that education by itself will never be able to create new openings or bring in to existence new industries so as to provide further and more numerous opportunities for employment. But vocational training will certainly enable people to avail themselves of industrial opportunities that exist, and accelerate the utilisation of the vast natural resources for the development of indigenous industries.

Mere perfunctory literary education for the poorer classes

is by no means popular. In order to make it appeal to them, it is necessary that the nature of education imparted in our schools should be such as to adapt the pupil to the particular occupations or callings which they wish to enter, for such practical knowledge would enable them to earn their livelihood better.

If Adult Education were confined within a limited scope and attention be concentrated solely on literacy as a narrow objective, adult schools are not likely to survive long. Men who have to earn their living by hard work during the day are not likely to be in a mood to come at night to take instruction in literacy. Their minds not being as easily impressionable as those of the young, it cannot even be expected that they would make much progress in learning how to read and write, and like the boys of the primary schools may forget what they have learnt after leaving school. On the other hand, vocational training would not be so distasteful and would evoke enthusiasm, specially if the training is directly connected with the day-to-day occupation of the student.

It is a mistake to suppose that we already have too many workmen. Perhaps we have a sufficient number of them, but only a very small percentage of those who can be regarded as skilled workmen and artisans. Skill in the various crafts will enable the workmen to do their work better and such training would be both profitable to the workers and conducive to the general development of the Indian cottage industries. There would not be the same amount of repugnance towards manual training, nor any false notion that it is derogatory to one's honour or status, if such training were to yield a good return for the work done.

Adult Education can have many branches

In its higher forms we can have university extension lectures, talks on the radio, broadcasting of speeches, holding of public lectures and delivering of popular address. But in more modest way, a good deal of practical and useful work can be done by providing vocational training in commercial pursuits, and make it available for those who wish to take a course of instruction in the evening. Inclinations differ with individuals and it will be necessary to have a very large variety of optional subjects of vocational study so as to furnish a wide and comprehensive field of choice to the students to make their selection from. The catalogue of such subjects would be a huge one and their full enumeration is not at all necessary.

Adult education is undoubtedly a matter of far-reaching importance, and if due attention were paid to it even the higher

forms of industrial and commercial training can be easily secured. The great possibilities of wide-spread system of adult education cannot be doubted. The essential thing is that adult education should be conducted on vocational lines so that even literates can find leisure from their ordinary avocations of life to attend night classes or holiday courses.

On the continent of Europe and particularly so in Germany, a system of vocational schools exists where students are being trained for some vocation or other. Students trained in the various branches of vocational study are always available, and a large percentage of them are able to organise large businesses, providing a better source of income for themselves and for their families.

The problem of education in rural areas presents a still greater difficulty as the villagers are unable to appreciate the benefits of elementary literacy, as they find that it does not make them more fitted for their hereditary occupations. One fears that they are not far wrong in thinking that there is no permanent benefit conferred by teaching them just how to read and write, when they have to go back to their agricultural pursuits and soon forget what they learnt. If instead, they had been given some practical knowledge of farming and agriculture in which their family is engaged, they would find their learning decidedly profitable. Before a general programme of education for the rural areas is taken in hand, we have to make up our minds as to the exact kind of education that is going to be given in the village schools. There is not much need there for the present type of schools, which impart education of a character that has a tendency to turn out literates, who cherish dislike towards their industrial occupation, without having been fitted for any better calling. Would it not be much more useful to teach a village student the qualities of the various kinds of seeds, the advantages of good manure, better methods of irrigation and new methods of cultivation, which would stand him in good stead? Information about harvests and rainfall would be highly interesting and practical training in modern farms certainly more useful. We should not be too prone to follow blindly the lines of the urban scheme, but would have to devise a special scheme suitable for the needs of the countryside.

Handicraft centres of various types are likely to be more popular with the poorer classes than the literary school which they consider useless. For such people the benefit of education should be judged from an economic point of view and practical training regarded essential. The need for it is unquestioned and is recognized on all hands. What is really wanted is the creation of a sufficient interest in the wide possibilities of such national work.

The aim should be to open schools for adults in every city, town and village and direct attention of the people to pursuits of a vocational type. The great masses of the urban and particularly, the rural population, belong to the working and labouring classes, to whom practical knowledge is of far greater benefit than what attendance at a literary school can give. A wide-spread scheme of vocational education is likely to relieve the pressure of employment which is weighing upon the middle and the lower middle classes in a crushing manner. Elementary night school and classes have been in existence in many places but the progress made has been very slow because there has been no well-chalked out plan for their development and expansion. For the success of such a movement a large body of trained teachers and instructors, who are willing to volunteer their services, would be a necessary requisite. We should endeavour to enlist the sympathy and support of public-spirited persons in establishing an extensive organisation for starting centres of activities in every local town, later to be extended to rural areas as well. Let us hope that persons specially qualified and trained would offer their services and spare a few hours every week or even month to help in promoting such schemes.

I must however sound a note of warning that there is always a danger that many parents who, but for such night institutions, would have sent their children to day-schools, may retain them during the day for earning some wages and send them to night-schools as substitutes for day-schools. This can be effectively prevented if the night schools are strictly confined to adults who are no longer school-going age. Young children should not be allowed to attend such schools at all. Nor should night schools be a mere device for day-school teachers to earn an extra income by holding classes outside school hours. I would suggest that the instructors in such schools should not be recruited exclusively from the ranks of the day-school teachers who would like to have an extra remuneration in their spare time, but should consist mainly of those who follow the trade and the profession they teach. Teachers, who teach in day-schools for several hours a day, would feel too tired to continue their work at night. Over-worked teachers are neither likely to be enthusiastic about working overtime, nor to have a fresh mind for such work.

Owing to extreme ignorance and illiteracy as well as poverty, India suffers from a blind pursuit of the antiquated industrial methods inherited from the past generations. It is therefore not at all a matter of surprise that village industries have become stagnant, and conditions are stationary. Unless the Indian cottage industries get a new lease of life from the

supply of a better class of workers, with more specialised knowledge, their further deterioration is inevitable. It is our bounden duty to awaken the Indian industries and to save them from extinction and ruin. We must save our indigenous arts and crafts from utter annihilation, by reviving and stimulating them and re-adapting them to modern needs. Cottage industries on both big and small scales, even in the presence of machinery, have survived in all countries not even excluding Japan. Unless we take immediate and effective steps to protect them many of the old smaller industries would soon be completely destroyed and become incapable of being resuscitated.

Now that we have Provincial autonomy, and Indian ministers are in charge of the departments of education, it is all the more incumbent upon them to take stock of the present situation and seriously consider the overhauling of the existing system. If a representative body like the All India Adult Education Conference were to prepare a complete scheme and submit it to the Provincial ministers for their consideration there is every reason to hope that due attention would be paid to their recommendations. But there need not be too much dependence or reliance on Government grants. Education should essentially be a matter of local interest. It should be the genuine concern of the Municipalities and Town Area Committees to help such schemes and also to supervise them. And private philanthropy must in an equal degree offer generous help.

What is really lacking at present is an organised system of adult education for the whole of India, based on a uniform policy and brought about by the co-operation and co-ordination of all like institutions which are working for the same purpose. An All-India Adult Education Conference is in the best position to give a lead, if not also to guide and control the activities of the institutions of this kind. A serious effort should be made to give a new impetus to this movement by forming, not only in every province but in every district and town, institutions which would carry on adult education work on a well-prepared plan and with a well-financed scheme. Unless there is an all-India Association which has a well-thought out plan ready for adoption, adult education is bound to be conducted in a haphazard manner without any concerted action.

It is for this Adult Education Conference after full deliberation to devise a well-considered scheme, and fix upon the various subjects for training, and to prepare a progressive course for each handiwork as the necessary subject of instruction.

It is a very good augury for the future progress of adult education that this Conference is meeting at Delhi to draw up

a programme of action and to devise schemes to be put into effect. The various organisations in the different provinces should treat each other as sister institutions and work with mutual good-will and co-operation. If there be a co-ordinated and united action on a fixed plan, there is no reason why advance should not be made in an ever-increasing degree. Real progress will be made by local efforts, which alone will give the movement a practical shape and prove to be economical. Adult Education societies all over the country should undertake the training of young men and women in the various arts and crafts as well as in the trades that flourish locally, so that the workers may get the benefit of improved methods. The introduction of new designs and greater skill would produce new articles of greater workmanship and utility and in that way create a new demand for such products. The importance of arts and crafts in the scheme of national life has to be well-recognised. Excessive industrialism may throw out of employment many who were depending on small cottage industries. Adult-Education conducted on vocational lines may alleviate the sufferings caused by rapid industrialisation. To prevent the arts and crafts from being ruined and exterminated by modern machinery, we would procure for them more skilled workmen. A real development along such lines would be greatly welcome.

The Handicraft Department of the Delhi Indian Educational Society has put training in handicrafts in the fore-front of its educational programme, and has already organised instruction in (1) cane work, (2) tanning, (3) toy-making, and further proposes to extend training in (i) electro-plating, (ii) leather work, and (iii) stencil drawing in the immediate future. This is a good lead.

We certainly start with many handicaps; and there would in the beginning be obstacles and difficulties in the way, particularly of a financial character, and we may also suffer from a lack of enterprise, energy and enthusiasm; but there is no reason why we should be despondent and despair of the future. If only everyone who is interested in the cause of education were to do his utmost to further it, no matter how small may be his contribution, the combined effort put up is bound to produce a solid and substantial result. The task is undoubtedly great and arduous, but let not gloom overtake us. Let us work courageously and steadily with our hearts full of inspiration, and full of hope that our efforts will ultimately be crowned with success.

DR. R. P. MASANI

*Second All India Adult Education Conference
1st December, 1939, Bhagalpur*

This year we meet when the whole of Europe is once more in eruption despite hopes of international peace and good-will entertained after the last war. It is, however, a reminder to us that it is futile, if not also fantastic, to hope to reconstruct society and to rear new institutions for giving a new orientation to the life of nations, without human material of the required quality for their foundations. Enlightened citizens are wanted for an enlightened social order. It was recognized in Europe and America long ago that while building for the morrow by educating the children of today the parents of those children, who constitute the nation of today should also be taken in hand. The population in the western countries is literate, and educated. Grown-ups there are going to school in large numbers, yet even in those countries the problem of rearing enlightened citizens, which is the object of educating adults, is a vast and difficult one. How much vaster and more complex must it be in India where ninety per cent of the population is illiterate and ignorant.

There is no need, however, to harp on the necessity or the complexity of the problem of adult education before an audience such as this. About six years ago, when the citizens of Bombay inaugurated the Bombay Presidency Adult Education Association, many in India had heard of the need of adult education but few had given serious thought to it. Even four years later, when the first Indian Adult Education Conference met in March 1938 there was little enthusiasm about it in the country. Today, however, adult education is a live issue throughout the land. Everywhere the movement has emerged from the region of discussion into the realm of action. Every Provincial Government has interested itself actively in the problem. No doubt, the connotation is not the same everywhere, different people mean different things when they speak of adult education. But such different views in regard to aims, scope and methods of approach are a sign of health. What is for us a matter for supreme gratification is that throughout the country adult

education is now recognised as a national necessity. One may safely say that it has come to stay as an additional branch of the educational system in the country.

Co-ordination—The Immediate Task

The problem before the Conference is : How to give greater impetus to the movement launched year ago but vigorously pushed forward only during the last two years ? How to help and extend it ? How to encourage those who are engaged in it with information and hints based on the study and experience of similar activities in India and abroad and, if funds permit, with skilled and experienced workers to infuse more life into the movement and to promote new developments ? How, moreover, to get together existing workers and to place them in touch with one another so as to secure the co-operation and such co-ordination of effort as may be practicable, of the different organisations working at different places ? We must solve these questions not merely by papers and resolutions but by action—such action as it lies in our power, despite lack of adequate funds or machinery of administration. It should, I submit, be sufficient for our immediate purpose to have a central organisation to offer advice, to spread the literature on the subject, to suggest methods of approach, to arrange for opportunities for an exchange of views and crystallisation of ideas based on the varied experience of workers in different provinces, and to take all possible steps to further the movement.

The provincial Governments have blessed the movement. The Teachers' Associations and Conferences are anxious to play their part in it. Different organisations in different parts of the country are individually doing their bit. Several literacy drives in different areas have awakened the population to the mysteries of three R's. A good beginning has thus been made, but one might be pardoned for asking, in the words of Walter Savage London, "Is this the mighty ocean ? Is this all ?"

Hundreds of thousands of our men and women are still illiterate and ignorant. But though illiterate, they have learnt to articulate. Thanks mainly to Congress propaganda and the educational activities of the Congress Ministries during the last two years, the once ignorant and inert masses are pulsating with new aspirations and are yearning for new outlets and free expression. What better service can we educated classes render to the country at such a juncture than by concerting measures to help those people to find such outlets ?

What Policy can we Adopt ?

Attention in India is at present focussed, and rightly, on the more urgent aspect of the problem, namely removal of illiteracy. But in spite of the increased interest evoked in this department of national service in spite of the growing number of volunteers coming forward to organise and run literacy classes, in spite of the grants-in-aid received from Provincial Governments, it will take years before even half the population of India is freed from the shackles of illiteracy. What, then, can be done to reach the goal within five or ten years, or within, at the most, a generation? Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan suggested the other day that there should be legislation making it obligatory on employers of labour to maintain classes for the education of their workmen. As the last resort, an appeal to legislation has much to commend it. But it is not known whether it is intended that the proposed legislation should also provide for the compulsory attendance of workmen after a day's hard work or during the hours of work. Moreover, what of the numerous other illiterate men and women beyond the reach of the employers of labour and, therefore, outside the purview of such legislation?

Let us consider what concerted voluntary effort may achieve, supported by the educational authorities in each centre. In my opinion three essential preliminaries must be satisfied before great strides forward can be taken towards the extension of adult education :—

- (1) There must be a general demand for such education;
- (2) Voluntary effort must be forthcoming to satisfy the demand and to sustain the movement; and
- (3) Government and municipalities should be prepared to provide the maximum amount of funds which can be rendered available, particularly, for such areas as are unable to get adequate voluntary service.

The structure of adult education we aim at rearing should rest not on compulsion but on a lively sense of fellowship and service. Every educated citizen, man or woman, must be taught to regard it as his or her sacred duty to co-operate in this great task.

The best way, in my opinion, to secure such co-operation is to make schools, colleges and other educational institutions in the country, centres for social service, with adult education in the fore-front of their programme. If the Conference were to send out a few missionaries to preach the gospel of such service to the teachers and the pupils of such institutions, the response, I feel confident, would be heartening. It should be impressed

on students of both sexes that knowledge is not an end in itself but only a means of social service, and that they should come forward in greater and greater number, to pay the debt they owe to society, for the boon of education they have received, by taking a hand in the education of the vast adult illiterate population of the country. If they cannot do more, they should be shown how they could attempt to educate at least their ignorant relations and friends.

There is a historic illustration I have in view of such voluntary effort in connection with the movement for the education of girls in the Province of Bombay.

The early Elphinstonians found themselves living in an age of ignorance and submerged woman-hood. For men there was little at home to inspire or cheer. On many an occasion the educated youths of the day had read papers and passed resolutions on the necessity for educating women, but nothing practical had been achieved. On one memorable day, however, (August 24, 1849), the author of a paper read before the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, Behramji Khurshedji Gandhi, made a fervant appeal to the member of the society for action.

"Let every student here present, use his influence with the members of his own family to get one pupil at least."

"Yes" responded scores of voices.

"Let us teach the students ourselves, and show that we are in earnest."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed all.

A resolution was there and then adopted by the meeting for opening experimental schools. There was no appeal for funds, severel members volunteered to act as teachers and others offered apartment in their homes for opening schools. In those days of orthodoxy, it was most difficult to get parents to send their girls to schools, but within a couple of months the volunteers were able to run three Hindu and four Parsi girls' schools with 24 Hindu and 44 Parsi girls on their rolls. For a long time, those students continued their selfless labours with single-minded devotion until regular societies were formed with funds to conduct the schools with paid teachers.

The foundations of female education were thus laid in Bombay by voluntary effort. Can we not stir the youngmen and women of today with the same ideals of service and sacrifice to uplift the illiterate men and women in their neighbourhood? Many of them have already splendidly responded to the call in various places. We should now make a countrywide effort on an organised basis. With the co-operation of the authorities of schools and colleges, we should aim at converting every school

or college into a social centre, or rather a club for the adult population in the neighbourhood, particularly, for parents and relations of students and teachers.

The knowlege of three R's does not make a man educated. The chief object of the promoters of adult education should be to create an awareness in the individual, a recognition of his mission in life, of his simple rights and duties as a human being, and particularly, to inculcate, in terms as simple as possible, the elements of citizenship, including the elements of child psychology and parental responsibility in rearing good citizens. This can be accomplished even without elaborate attempts to wage a war on illiteracy. In conjunction with the existing organisations for adult education and social workers, and volunteers, school and college buildings could be utilized for periodic meetings of people residing in the neighbourhood, both adult and young, both men and women, to bridge the gulf-separating the educated, the semi-educated and the non-literate. Teachers and students of a particular school or college and social workers in the neighbourhood may form themselves into separate groups to initiate people into a deeper knowledge of their vocations, general knowledge of subjects that intimately affect their lives, such as health, personal hygiene, sanitation, superstitions and otherwise injurious customs and social scourages such us drink; to help them to understand the world in which they live and to place before them the prospect of a fuller and richer life; to provide amusements for them, and by varied activities such as concerts; singing of folk-songs, illustrated talks on varied subjects, motion pictures and exhibits of handiwork, to offer opportunities for recreation and friendly intercourse and co-operation.

Three categories of Adult Education

The ultimate object of such activities among the non-literate must be to create in them a longing to acquire the key to the sealed book of knowledge. Opportunities, should therefore be freely given to them to acquire the skill to read and write. But we cannot stop at literacy. The mind-hunger grows after literacy. That hunger must be satisfied, or else the literates will lapse, as is our sad experience, into illiteracy. There are many thousands literate who need assistance to enable them to go on growing intellectually. I would classify them into three groups.

(1) Those who may be called literate but who need general enlightenment and a widening of their outlook just as much as the illiterate. They have to be induced to take advantage of the centres similar to those advocated for the non-literate adults, centres where they may acquaint themselves with the world

they inhabit, and learn how to enrich and enjoy life and how to use it to the full in the service of humanity.

(2) The educated or so-called educated classes who are interested in the study of cultural subjects such as art, music, science, literature, or civics and administration, and who are eager to invest their leisure in the pursuit of knowledge and to acquire such knowledge for the sake of knowledge. For them numerous clubs, study circles and discussion groups and classes will have to be organised and in setting up such organisations, we would do well to draw on the experience of promoters of adult education in Europe and America. I believe, in India the Y.M.C.A. was the earliest in the field. The Bombay Presidency Adult Education Association, which is doing more intensive work in the same field, has now the experience of about nine years' working of the classes for such cultural courses. These classes, the popular science classes in the vernaculars and lectures organised by the Association on subjects of general interest have drawn steadily increasing audiences. Several adult students have been with the Association right through and have taken one course after another. There are not a few women among them, and their age varies from 20 to 60.

(3) Those who for one reason or another were unable to join the University, but are anxious to have university education. For them we have to organize, or move Universities to organise extension courses leading to University Diplomas and Degrees.

Universities must Serve

Towards the adults falling in the second and third categories our Universities have their obligations. The days are gone when it was held that the purpose of a University was merely to encourage liberal education by holding examinations and conferring degrees. It is now increasingly recognized that the University has its responsibilities to the community at large. Our Universities have, however, so far served only indirectly the world outside their walls. It is time they render direct service to the public generally by opening its treasures to the less fortunate. But Universities alone cannot finance the movement. We need various voluntary organizations in co-operation with which such service could be rendered by the Universities. Even the resources of Government are not sufficient to cope with the responsibility, unaided by voluntary effort and financial support from the public. This is not to extenuate the neglect of Government in this respect in the past. Indeed, the only title on which any Government can rely for the tenure of its office is the quality of the service which it renders to the people, and education is the acid test of such service. The task immediately

before the Conference, therefore, is to create greater and greater interest in the movement, to inspire and enlist workers, and also to move Government, Municipalities and Universities to discharge their responsibilities in the matter. This work can be efficiently accomplished only by the Conference, if it has a few paid workers of requisite ability and experience to tour different provinces as evangelists of the gospel of adult education. While their visits to different places would give a great impetus to the movement, the experience acquired by them of local conditions and local organizations would enable the Conference to decide what practical measures it should suggest and what action, if any, it can itself take for securing co-operation of different units in different areas and for co-ordinating their effort.

Directory Needed

The first practical steps towards co-ordination of effort should be the preparation of an Adult Education Directory in India somewhat on the lines of the Handbook and Directory of Adult Education compiled under the auspices of the British Institute of Adult Education. This Directory contains an account of various voluntary bodies concerned with adult education and of the work of local Education Authorities and Universities. It also furnishes valuable information concerning the main forms of adult education, the growth of the Movement, the work of the Institute, literacy facilities, prison education bursaries and scholarships available for adult education and a geographical survey of the activities in progress in the field of non-vocational adult education. Were a similar Directory for the Bombay Presidency compiled including a survey of activities in the field of the vocational education, thousands who are at present merely lookers-on will find that there is a place for them as students, tutors or organisers, or as donors or founders of endowments for the furtherance of the movement.

Means to be used

The methods for imparting general education, to old and young alike, are well-known. They are divided under four heads; (1) the spoken word; (2) the printed word; (3) picture; and (4) action (manual activity)—In a land where the oral tradition has been very significant, "the spoken word" must be the chief means to dispel the gloom of ignorance. It must, however, take years before a considerable portion of the population would be able to read and write and benefit by the written word. Hence the most patent means of adult education, for some years at least, will be the spoken word. But we have not the resources to engage the required number of speakers and preachers to teach people to live a better and richer life.

Fortunately, we have the Radio to overcome this difficulty. But most of our schools cannot spare even the small amount required for a receiver set and the educational broadcasts at present reach only a fraction of the children. Similarly, the poverty of the population militates against the extensive use of the Radio in private homes. The conference would do well to impress on the provincial governments the necessity to provide the necessary funds for the schools under their control and to call upon the local bodies and authorities of proprietary schools to equip their institutions with radio sets. The attention of charity trusts, which give away thousands of rupees in charity every year to various purposes, with or without discrimination, might also be usefully called to this essential preliminary for the education of children as well as adults.

We are also as yet very backward in respect of visual instruction, and the Conference would do well to call attention of the educational authorities to the need for equipping schools with magic lanterns, at least, if not with projectors. Without the written word, however, there can be no permanence.

Adequate Simple Literature

We are already turning out literate by thousands. Is there adequate simple literature for them? I would suggest that for the guidance of those engaged in the work of adult education, the Conference should undertake to prepare or assist in the preparation of such literature. Although in recent years educated Indians have enriched in some measure their provincial literatures, here is a field in which much can be done that might promote the cause of adult Education.

Methods of Adult Education

There is one point in regard to methods to which I should call special attention. It is undoubtedly necessary to think of improvements in the methods of teaching how to read and write and the preparation of new text-books suited to the requirements of adults. But nothing creates greater interest in a subject among young and old alike as discussions and debates. The ancient Greeks and Romans have familiarized us with the use of the forum as an educational agency for the training of people in citizenship. The credit of being pioneers in civic education belongs to the Greeks. Having enunciated the doctrine of the chief good, Aristotle discussed the methods by which his audience could be trained to pursue it. Before him, however, the ancient Iranians had actually conducted Institutes for Adult Education of a definite type. An interesting account of those Institutes has been given by Xenophon in his *Cyropaedia*—"In every Persian city, is a free square, from which commerce

and industry are rigorously excluded, and which contains the palaces and the chief municipal buildings. On one side in the school for children from five to sixteen (upto five they live at home in the nursery), on the second, the institute for youth from sixteen to the full manhood to twenty-six, on the third, that for the man of mature years, on the fourth, that for the elders who are past the age of military service. The curriculum is remarkable ; there appear to be no lessons, but only debates and 'trials' dealing with the practical events of the school life and conducted under the presidency of an appointed elder. These occupy the greater portion of the day ; the rest is occupied with riding and shooting on the campus."

The trials in which the pupils took part were not imaginary displays but real actions for theft, fraud, assault, libel and ingratitude "the crime for which, in general there is most odium and least legal remedy."

I commend this curriculum of studies for the consideration of organizers of adult education, particularly the methods—debates and trials. Education in those days had its roots in religion. The prophet of Iran taught that man's mission on earth was to be God's comrade-in-arms to resist and rout the forces of evil and to be His co-adjucator in spreading His goodness and making the world more habitable than he found it. To be His comrade one must be like Him and be able to do good deeds like Him. Charity was one of the good deeds specially commended, and charity consists not merely in satisfying the physical wants of the needy, but also in ministering to the intellectual, moral and spiritual wants of our fellowmen. According to the Parsi scriptures, whoever from the little knowledge he possesses gives knowledge to others offers a love-service more acceptable to God than he who, though he knows more, yet does not benefit or help deserving persons. May it be given to each one of us to render such love-service, however limited may be our capacity for it !

Our difficulties are, at the moment, enhanced by the disastrous conflict now raging in Europe. Our hopes for ushering a new order of goodwill and peace rest on adult education. However disheartening the present situation may appear, let us not forget that the world belongs to the catholic, all-embracing creed of human unity, the religion of humanity. Let us not mistake the eddies for the stream. Let us not think of the present and its passing phases, but of the times which are yet to be, when men may rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things.

Come, my friends—

Souls that have toiled and wrought and thought with me—

'Tis not to late to seek a newer world.'

DR. AMARANATHA JHA

*Third All India Adult Education Conference
27th December, 1942, Indore*

I am deeply sensible of the honour you have done me in asking me to preside over this Conference. In many respects the task before the Indian Adult Education Association is overwhelming because of the immense range it covers, its innumerable problems, the prejudices it has to contend with, and the appalling illiteracy it has to face. The comprehensive character of its work is further enhanced when one recognises that the process of education is continuous and unending, that even the best educated among us are ignorant of vast fields of knowledge, and that as long as one lives the process of improvement and perfection must go on. As Plato put it in the *Laws* "We must not be indefinite about the meaning of education. At present, when we are criticising or praising a man's upbringing, we call one person educated and another uneducated, although the latter may be sometimes very well educated for the calling or a retail trader, or of a captain of a ship, and the like. But we are not speaking of education in this narrower sense, but of that other education in virtue from youth upwards, which makes a man passionately desire to be the perfect citizen, and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey. This is the only education which, in our view, deserves the name ; that other sort of training, which aims at the acquisition of wealth or bodily strength, or mere cleverness apart from intelligence and justice, is mean and illiberal, and is not worthy to be called education at all. But let us not quarrel with one another about a word, provided that the proposition which has just been granted holds good ; I mean, that those who are rightly educated generally become good men. And we must never disparage education, which is the first and fairest thing that the best of men can ever have ; it may take a wrong direction, but it can be reformed. And this work of reformation is the great business of every man while he lives".

Even Our Best Educated Need it

Our task becomes more urgent as we see how miserably modern Indian Education has failed in bringing about the moral elevation of which Plato speaks, how much of hatred and distrust has been engendered, and how many of our worst passions come to the surface and drive away our nobler instincts even in the case of the best educated among us. It is a sad confession to make, particularly for one who has for over a quarter of a century been engaged in education, but I am satisfied that the education now imparted has but touched the surface of the intellectual life ; the moral life has not only been left undeveloped, but it has actually been warped and dwarfed. While the indigenous system of education has more or less languished, what has replaced it has not performed the twin function of character-building and religious instruction. One might almost imagine that Pestalozzi was writing in 1942, instead of in 1800 when he said : "Deline to barbarism and slackening of all vitality including the true spiritual forces : this process is going on under the cover of increased progress and general culture." The final aim of education in all its stages is to train the mind and the practical capabilities so as to subserve the higher and permanent needs of the spirit ; to produce an urge for service ; to make one a source of happiness to oneself, to one's family, neighbours and society ; to render life beautiful and to prevent ugliness in thought and action ; to attain wisdom and the even-balanced soul. More particularly is a moral and religious bias important in adult education. The grown-up man, immersed in worldly pursuits, in struggle for existence, in endeavour to get his daily bread, needs more and more to have his attention drawn to the higher and nobler ends of life.

In a world cast adrift the necessity of some mooring is urgent, there must be something to which one can hold fast, some source of abiding comfort, some strength when all else fails, some standard of conduct, some light that will burn for ever bright. Let all workers in the field of adult education place this work of moral and spiritual enlightenment in the forefront of their programme. for "every good gift and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Theophrastus, the leader of the Peripatetic School makes fun of 'late learning', describing it as a laborious pursuit of knowledge unsuited to one's age. But if learning is truly the augmentation of knowledge and augmentation of enjoyment, there is no one too old to learn. Learning ceases only with life. Even an adult needs, not only to understand the reasons under-

lying his day's work but also to discover how it can be improved. He needs to know how his work is related to that of others and what place it occupies in the scheme of society. In a democratic state where every individual, at least in theory, has a right to determine the affairs of the State, the importance of continuous adult education cannot be exaggerated. In a recent thought-stimulating book ("Education for a New Society") Mr. Ernest Green says :

"The character of our democracy ultimately depends on the collective wisdom of its adult members. Adult education is, among other things, a device for making good the intellectual starvation of past years and for correcting the mistakes of early education. In the post-war years it will be no less important for providing the avenue to serious thought and discussion on the fundamental problems of the new society and for guiding democracy in the wise exercise of citizenship. For, the new society will have to face fundamental problems just as the old one had to face them, with the difference—that while today social initiative and action depends upon a small minority of the people who have had the good fortune to be equipped for the task—or who have struggled against all odds to equip themselves, equality of educational opportunity and a conception of values in the content of education suited to a new society, will produce men and women educated, for responsibility and capable of living the way of life which makes democracy a reality".

In India, we have to tackle first the problem of illiteracy and then to prevent the lapse to illiteracy. For this purpose we must bring out a series of publications in each of the major languages, called the *People's Books*. They should be cheap, readable, short, and simply written. Each provincial organisation should undertake this work. The books should be graded and suitable for persons of different ages and mental capacities. They should be on as many subjects as possible. We should attempt by this means to impart elementary knowledge to those who have been deprived of the benefits of systematic education and fresh knowledge to those who already possess some rudiments of it.

Universities

The Universities should undertake to arrange short term courses intended to serve as refreshers for those who have already received University training, but are out of touch with the latest development in their special subject. They should organise also courses for part-time students, on the lines followed in Great Britain by Colleges for Further Education ; some of

these Colleges have evening classes in mechanical and electrical Engineering, Building and Chemistry, as well as technical classes for the trades. A college in a textile district may have evening classes in Cotton Spinning & Weaving. A College, in a commercial centre, may have evening classes in accountancy, commercial law, book-keeping, and modern languages. Another college may have classes in domestic subjects and women's trades. In addition to all this, Universities can also do a great deal for the spread of literacy.

Work at the Allahabad University

Perhaps, I may be permitted to give a brief account of the modest work that is being attempted at Allahabad. The University Social Service League established late in 1938, put Adult Education in the forefront of its programme. It adopted a Suburban area, Tallierganj, as its centre and established a night school there. Members, by rotation, gave instructions, which consisted of the three R's. The number of pupils soon grew to 40, including both adults and youths. It was found that for the adults mere literacy classes did not have much interest; so along with school, and as a part of its normal work, recreation programme (including music parties) was provided, and twice a week general talks were given on subjects of practical utility. Some festivals were celebrated and a play was staged. Some other literacy classes were run in the suburbs of Untkhana, Baghara, and Salori,—all in the neighbourhood of the University. Besides Adult Education, the League has taken up other work, such as village sanitation; magic lantern lectures were frequently delivered. Literacy classes have been organised for Hostel servants, and almost all of them are now literate. A night school has been started in a village, Usarhi, 10 miles from Allahabad. Adult education work has been done also in village Tharvi, 8 miles from Allahabad; weekly meetings of adults have been organised, where besides music and kirtan, newspapers have been read out and explained, recitation, competitions have been held, and talks on general subjects have been given. The programme has proved to be very attractive to the villagers. An educational exhibition of crafts and cottage products has also been organised. It was found that the available books were not very suitable; so the League has published two primers in Hindi, written by its members; they have proved very interesting and useful. There is a programme for further publication in order to ensure that those who become literate should not relapse into illiteracy. The books that have been already published have been found useful by other organisations also, notably the Harijan Sewak Sangh. The League has thus tried to reach the poor population in the suburbs and in the

neighbouring villages. More organised work on an ambitious scale will be undertaken as soon as better conditions prevail.

The Universities should also follow the lead of Dr. Clifford Manshardt and of the University of Mysore and establish University Settlements. Dr. Manshardt's pioneer work in Bombay is truly inspiring. Here is how he sums up the work done at the Nagpada Neighbourhood House :

"We have seen a section of the city which was rapidly disintegrating, begin to achieve a civic consciousness. We have seen boys, who were ashamed to admit they belonged to Nagpada, become young men who are proud of Nagpada. We have seen scores of potential street loafers and delinquents become attached to higher ideals. We have seen an infant death-rate, which was for years the highest in the city, reduced by dint of constant effort and education, to a figure lower than that of the city average. We have seen women, who were practically prisoners in their homes, experience the joys of play, unlocking the treasure of knowledge, and learning such useful arts as sewing and homemaking. We have trained young men and women for better business positions. We have heard hundreds of cases of family troubles and have had some hand in their solution. We have given men new hope through our employment service. We have returned workmen to the new day's toil recreated, in the best sense of work."

What an admirable piece of work and how thoroughly worth the ambition of all living centres of education ! There should be also attempts at the development of folk-culture through community centres.

Other Agencies

I have devoted so much time to the contribution which Universities can make to the Adult Education Movement because I am more in touch with them. But much valuable work along these and similar lines can be done by other institutions and associations. Indeed, the larger the number of organisations engaged in this work, the better for the country. As Professor Dewey says : "With the spread of the ideas of democracy, and the accompanying awakening to social problems, people are beginning to realise that every one, regardless of the class to which he happens to belong has a right to demand an education which shall meet his own needs, and that for its own sake the State must supply this demand." Let those who have the opportunity do this great deed and in their own spheres of work unbar the gates of light.

SHRI K. G. SAIYIDAIN

*Fourth All India Adult Education Conference
29th December, 1946, Trivandrum*

I value greatly the privilege of presiding over this Conference because, it gives me a welcome opportunity to renew old contacts, to establish new ones and to suggest for your consideration and discussion certain ideas that strike me, personally, as relevant to the problem of Adult Education in India. It will perhaps be helpful if, by way of providing a background for our deliberations, we could go over what may be regarded as the area of common agreement amongst all intelligent workers in this field. It may not be intellectually "glamorous" to re-state a few obvious truths but it is useful to know where we stand and from where we are to start.

Political and Human Justification for A New Approach

I am sure you will agree with me that there is now a fairly widespread realization of the desperate urgency of the existing situation. Politicians, administrators, social workers as well as educationists feel that no planning, no social and economic reconstruction will be possible unless Adult Education is provided not only on a larger scale but also quickly and in a generous measure. In the past, too, many far sighted individuals and groups did realize the *importance* of this work but the sheer magnitude of the problem—the education of about 350 millions!—was apt to convince them that it was not a "practical" or "feasible" proposition—these are useful words for they and their kind can always be used to camouflage lack of courage and imagination! But during the last twenty or thirty years, the tempo of life and thought has been quickened enormously. We have seen with our own eyes the success of gigantic Five Year Plans in other countries; we have observed how, under the stress of war needs, co-ordinated and co-operative human effort can achieve miracles of production as well as destruction; we have become acutely conscious of the tremendous part that the modern media of mass communication like the Press, the Radio, and the Cinema can play in the education (or mis-education !)

of adults. Under these changed circumstances there is far less justification for facing this issue with folded hands and a sense of resignation and we have no alternative to-day but to go ahead with vigorous schemes of educational expansion.

It is not, however, only the greater technical efficiency that we possess in organizing large scale enterprises—social, economic or educational—which has forced this issue to the front. There are also more significant and positive reasons which may be described as *political* and *human*. We are on the verge of great political changes which will determine, perhaps for centuries to come, the shape of things to come in our country. Even the bitter, fratricidal conflicts that poison our national life will roll away, one hopes sooner or later like the threatening clouds of a nightmare, and we shall emerge in to the clear day of reason and freedom and common sense. But, if I may repeat a truism, political freedom cannot, by itself, guarantee the “*good life*”, for any community or people. We know only too well how many nations, which are politically free, are enslaved by other chains which bar the way to the good life, which is really the gracious fruit of high and noble and unselfish endeavour which, alas, is not easily forthcoming. People cannot, in fact, retain even their political liberty unless they are prepared to pay the price for it in terms of that “*eternal vigilance*” which postulates proper civic and political education. If our objective is higher and we wish to use political freedom as a stepping stone to social freedom and economic democracy, then obviously we need a much higher standard of education amongst the masses of the people. Otherwise, there is the ever present danger that the so-called “*freedom*” may be exploited by the intelligent but unscrupulous people for their own unworthy ends. This is what I would call the *political* justification for an immediate and large scale campaign of Adult Education.

The *human justification* follows directly from these considerations. The modern conscience is perhaps more acutely sensitive than ever in the past—I am speaking, of course, of the general tendency and not of great individuals whose spirit was finely attuned to great human values—of the bitter tragedy that a large majority of our fellowmen are literally *starving in a world of plenty*, both in the material and the cultural sense. In *actual* fact there are ample material and cultural resources at the disposal of the modern man—*potentially*, they are unlimited! But the “*masses*” continue to lead poor, barren, unsatisfying lives, frustrated in mind and body, with access neither to economic security nor to cultural riches which are man’s most valuable and essential heritage. The greatest single problem of the 20th century, in my opinion, is to retrieve them from this cruel impasse and to *enrich their lives with significance*. Modern

conscience at and its best—I hope I am not idealizing it unduly!—should not, will not, be satisfied with regarding the poor peasant and the labourer and every one else engaged in humble, every day productive work as just good enough to do his job and entitled, at best to protection from starvation or the rudiments of learning. He is a human being in his own right with a capacity to enter into the kingdom of the mind and the riches of the spirit—with eyes for pictures and ears for music and some appreciation and discernment for good literature and drama and art and other manifestations of beauty in life. He will *not* be denied access to these treasures which certain privileged classes have hitherto regarded as their special preserve. It is a far cry, indeed, from the traditional view which identifies Adult Education with the imparting of literacy. What a travesty of truth is that limited view! Mere literacy is often lost more quickly than it is acquired and it fails to make any impression on the life of the rather unwilling and bewildered adult grappling with the mysteries of the alphabet in his moments of fatigued leisure. In fact, there is a rather curious and *practically* important relationship between literacy and the broader concept of Adult Education that we are now beginning to regard as correct. Experience has taught us that, unless we can bring the total impact of an enriched Adult Education to bear on the life of the illiterate adult and widen his horizons of knowledge and appreciation, we cannot succeed even in our narrow objective of imparting literacy. That is the only way in which we can enlist his active co-operation in our effort. Surveying the present position as a whole, it may well be claimed that, in the field of Adult Education, there is a marked *shift emphasis*—from small scale to large scale effort, from narrow literacy—the desire that a dubious signature should take the place of an authentic thumb impression—to a generously conceived *education* which is to include training for intelligent citizenship as well as cultural appreciation.

Debit and Credit Side

I have taken a little of your valuable time in this assessment of tendencies because it gives us the background as well as the perspective of our problem. Let me remind you, however, that what I am talking about is *not* what is being *actually* done but what our best informed and mentally alert workers think *should* be done. It is only in a few centres of progressive educational effort that anything like this has been attempted—the Jamia at Delhi which has the vision of a Zakir Husain and the organizing ability and energy of a Shafiqur Rehman; the Shanti Niketan at Bolpur which has broken out of its quiet, academic abode and tried to develop extramural activities and

contacts, the Indian Adult Education Association which has tried to keep aloft the banner of right ideas—often with Chetsingh as the only official standard bearer! There have been a few sporadic attempts from time to time in various Provinces and States and there is the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education which attempts, for the first time, to present a comprehensive, full-length survey of the position and gives an outline programme. This is practically all that we have on the *credit* side.

On the *debit* side we have, firstly, the stark fact that, quantitatively speaking, hardly anything has been done. If some one were to prepare a literacy map of the world and colour the illiterate areas of the earth black, India will, to our shame, look like a dark continent! This is a state of affairs which makes me feel both ashamed and indignant—ashamed that a country, which prides itself on one of the oldest cultural traditions in the world, should have come to this pass; indignant, because we have been content to put up with this blot on our reputation for so long! Secondly, whatever work is being done lacks planning and co-ordination and is neither related to any coherent policy nor inspired by a generous vision of what Adult Education means and what it can achieve. Do you believe it is possible to secure the interest and enthusiasm or even the attendance of adults at what are hopefully called Adult Education Centres—usually dark and dismal rooms or disused sheds or dingy school buildings, without proper seating or lighting arrangements, without books and charts and other equipment, without any facilities for developing social and corporate activities? I am well aware of the value placed on simplicity and the nostalgia for “schools under trees” and I admit both have their proper place. But I am not prepared to regard this depressing *milieu* as good enough for the education of the masses and, if austerity in this sense is such a good thing, why don't the preachers practice it for a change! I am not asking, mind you, for luxurious premises but I do stipulate that these centres should be neat and artistic where adults will come spontaneously—to read or talk or discuss or meet common friends or practice their hobbies, because it is the best place in the locality for the purpose.

Financial Bogey

Does that sound too ambitious? Will it be argued that our ‘poor’ country cannot afford to provide educational facilities of such magnitude? May I suggest, in answer, that there is only one kind of poverty that is incurable, *the poverty of the spirit*. All others can be tackled if we are seriously inclined to do so. It is a trite remark but it will bear repetition that this

'poor' country was actually able to spend millions on a war that was none of her making. Is there any reason, in the nature of things, why an equal measure of effort should not be possible in the cause of education, which is ultimately the cause of peace and humanity? I believe it is wrong to look upon great problems of national reconstruction from the view-point of the narrow minded financier, "We have a budget of so many millions and, on *this* 'lavish' scale, Adult Education alone would cost so much—so it is ruled out as an impracticable proposition". To my mind, the proper approach is not whether we can afford a good educational system or a sound health policy but *whether we can afford to do without them*. If it is agreed that no country can afford to remain predominantly unhealthy and ignorant and culturally impoverished, then it is the business of the Government, the Finance Department and the Planners of National Economy to find the money and if this involves large scale industrialization or modernization of Agriculture or tapping new sources, or attempting better distribution of wealth, let us by all means go ahead with such schemes and not hold up urgent national enterprises on the ground that money is not available. I think there is a great deal of truth in an old Indian proverb: "Money is the dirt of the hand"—let us not make it the arbiter of our cultural destiny!

Record of Other Countries

What I am advocating is not something utopian which has not been tried anywhere in the world. Perhaps you might be interested to hear something of what other countries have done or are trying to do in this field. In the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. which differ basically in their political and economic structure, there is a keen appreciation of the value of such education, and widespread cultural facilities have been provided for the people in Schools and Colleges, Clubs and Institutes, music and drama and discussion groups and many other agencies for raising the level of popular culture and efficiency. The "Folk Schools" of Denmark, which have won a deservedly high reputation, have brought culture down from its "ivory tower" and presented it as an offering to the common people working on their farm or in their factories and workshops. "What is most important", remarks an Inspector who visited these schools, "is not the amount of knowledge the students acquire but the fact that they are mentally and emotionally roused. They may forget a good deal of the instruction; but they leave the schools as different people, having learnt to hear, to see, to think and to use their powers"—no mean achievements, these! Great Britain, has just been through the most terrible war in human history, from

which she has emerged battered and financially bleeding—but *not* broken in spirit ! In 1944, she placed on the Statute Book—as you are no doubt aware—a new Education Act which will increase her already generous education budget by about one hundred million pounds. It provides amongst other things, for a rich, generous and varied system of Adult Education to ensure that all her citizens will have at their disposal a good deal of what national culture has to offer and the marvels of modern technique can convey. I should like to refer particularly to the scheme on the establishment of Peoples' Colleges (or Country Colleges, as they are called) where all young persons above the age of 15 or 16 will be required to attend either two or three half days a week or (in rural areas) for a whole term continuously. These colleges will provide "further education", including physical, practical and vocational training, to develop their various aptitudes and capacities and prepare them for the more exacting responsibilities of modern citizenship. I visited one such institution a few days ago at Bottisham, near Cambridge, where an English educationist of great insight and vision, Henry Morris, has established a number of colleges in order to cater to the educational and cultural needs of the surrounding villages. The college is housed in an attractively planned and well equipped building and provides a large variety of activities—social, academic, practical and artistic—which are welcomed and utilized by the local communities to enrich their individual and collective life. You can find an enthusiastic account of the college at Impington in Joad's delightfully readable book; *About Education*, a few lines of which are well worth quoting :

"A whole wing is reserved for adults, complete with kitchen, canteens, common rooms, games room, lecture room, committee room, and Library ... Here the life of the village is centred ; here the various clubs, the domestic and musical societies hold their meetings; here the debating society conducts its discussions ... The College is, in fact, a hive of activity where you can eat, drink, dance, make merry and fall in love, as well as learn, attend lectures, talk, and practice the art and crafts of cookery, metal work, wood work, painting, music ... I wish I had the descriptive power to convey the comforts and grace of the environment in which these various activities take place. I can only emphasize the general impression of light and air and space, of graceful and harmonious lines, of rich and tasteful furnishings, of walls hung with the prints of some of the great pictures of the world..."

It is not only through the new institutions like Peoples' College or the Service of Youth, contemplated in the Education Act, that a cultural campaign is to be undertaken. There are

many other official and non-official agencies, with ample resources, which are engaged in tackling different aspects of this problem e.g. the Workers' Educational Association, the British Council whose function is to present British culture to other people and also to interpret it to the Britisher, and the Arts Council which has been striving with vigour and imagination to bring better music and drama and pictures within the ken and the imagination of the common people. If all these things are necessary in a country like England where there is practically 100% literacy and the availability of educational and cultural resources is incomparably greater how much more urgent is the need to provide suitable cultural facilities for Indian villages where people lead lives, which are often mentally and materially subhuman.

Task of the Association

I do not wish, however, to take your time in painting a gloomy picture of the contemporary scene. Nor should we fall into the temptation of concentrating too much on the discussion and analysis of the programme to be followed. A good deal of thought has been given to it already and the Post-War Plan of the Advisory Board gives us a fairly comprehensive idea of what is to be done. In any case, no fool-proof programme can be perfected on paper; it is ultimately in the curcible of action that programmes are not only tested but completed. Action generates its own dynamism which not only distinguishes between the good and the bad, the practicable and the impracticable but also provides new points of view and new goals. Perhaps in a locality we may start in a modest way providing only facilities for social contact or a discussion group or a literacy centre or a sports club. But, if our psychological approach is right and the workers are sincere and sensible, we will find many new and fruitful avenues opening out before us. I have seen this happen over and over again in my experience and I have no doubt your experience will confirm the truth of this position. Therefore, so far as I can visualize the functions of this Association, there are *two* things that it should do. It should mobilize public opinion and political influence to ensue that an immediate attack is made on the Adult Education front on a nation-wide scale and all Provinces and States *do* actually launch carefully thought out programmes. Secondly, it should provide what I might call *technical leadership* i.e. offer sound advice on any issues that may be referred to it by official and non-official organizations engaged on this work and it should conduct small scale experiments in new ideas by way of demonstration e.g. by establishing a People's College, organizing special training course for leaders, taking up community welfare work and so on. I

know how meagre are the resources at the disposal of this Association at present. It is, therefore, imperative that all its well wishers should make a strong effort to place it on a sound financial and administrative footing. With this objective in view, an approach has been made already to the Education Department of the Government of India and I have reason to believe that the matter is "under sympathetic consideration". But that is not enough. Private individuals, charitable organization and Trusts should realize that an Association like this, dedicated to service, has a perfectly valid claim on their wealth which they hold, in the ultimate analysis, not as an irresponsible private possession but as a social trust and, in this age of a dawning civic conscience, their possession of it can only be tolerated if they have the understanding and the decency to use it for public good. I hope the Association will take necessary steps to bring its needs and programme of work to the notice of relevant bodies and that they will respond to the situation adequately and intelligently.

Role of the Mass Media of Communication

While I do not propose to discuss the programme of Adult Education, there is one aspect to which I should like to bring to your notice because it has not, in my opinion, received due amount of attention—namely, the part that agencies of propaganda, like the film, the radio and the press can play in this field. This point was brought home to me strongly when I was recently working on a Unesco Commission dealing with the "media of mass communication". I do not wish to recapitulate the interesting discussions we had but only to elucidate the peculiar position of these agencies in India. In many advanced countries; there are already powerful agencies and the concern of enlightened and progressive opinion is to improve the quality of their programmes and output. In our country they are still in their infancy and, therefore, we have the twofold problem of expansion and development as well as proper orientation. This is in some ways, an advantage, because, in countries like America and Great Britain, powerful vested interests have secured a vicious hold on them and it is no easy matter even for their national governments to dislodge them. In India, while the general tendencies and set-up is the same, the evil has not taken very deep roots yet. We have no powerful Hollywood, no competing commercial Radio Stations, no unholy Press combines like the Hearst or Beaverbrook chains of papers. It is, therefore, more easily possible for a wide-awake National Government to adopt a policy which will stop these powerful agencies from passing completely into the grip of people who have no social conscience of sense of social responsibility and whose only criterion

of success is the "box-office". In the world of the future "the man with the money bags" should not have the authority to determine what mental and cultural fare is to be offered to its citizens. But this can only be done if the people as well as the Government have the intelligence to visualize all these agencies as integral parts of a single, coherent educational pattern so that Schools, Colleges, Adult Education Centres, Journals and Newspapers, Films, Plays, Radio Programmes may all pull in the same direction—the direction of cultural enrichment and international goodwill—instead of working at cross purpose and nullifying the good results that might have otherwise ensued. In some ways, these agencies of mass communication, work much more quickly and effectively than ordinary educational institutions and, in a country like ours, where there is so much to be done, we cannot afford to ignore these powerful instruments of visual and auditory education. I would plead for a careful study of the whole problem with the object of integrating them properly into our educational structure.

What is to Triumph—Humanity or Beastliness ?

May I, in conclusion, address a few words to you about a problem which is not normally reckoned as forming part of Adult Education work but which is so important, so desperately urgent that it overshadows all other problems in India. If it is not tackled in a courageous and imaginative manner, no other problem has the remotest chance of being satisfactorily dealt with—I refer, of course to the problem of communal understanding and good will. What has happened recently in the way of communal frenzy in the different parts of the country is a source of shame, almost of despair, to all who work in the field of education and who have watched helplessly, the decencies and civilized ways of life crumbling to pieces before their eyes. As Dr. Zakir Husain put it aptly in his recent address at Delhi, it is not today a question of which party wins or loses but whether beastliness is to be allowed to triumph over humanity. One of our primary and urgent concerns in all programmes of Adult Education should be to rebuild the shattered and bleeding fabric of these human values and to instil into *all* our fellow countrymen a genuine appreciation for decency, tolerance, freedom and respect for human life. I cannot discuss here all the manifold ways in which this may be attempted; we must all cherish a common *objective* but think out different *means* for attaining it in the light of our special circumstances. But there is one idea—the germ of an idea—that has always been nibbling at the back of my mind and I should like to place it before you for what it is worth. I would like to see built up in every village and city and town, in every school and college and university, Peace

Brigades consisting of members of *all* local communities who would pledge themselves to resist with all their power,—if necessary, to lay down their lives in the attempt—mass frenzy and communal madness whenever and wherever it raises its head. What Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said courageously in Bihar needs to be repeated on behalf of hundreds of thousands of individuals and groups : “If you want to kill a Muslim, you will have to kill me first and then do so over my dead body”. If these Peace Brigades—all members dressed alike and pledged to unity—seriously proclaimed to an infuriated mob: “If you want to kill any Hindu or Muslim or Sikh you will have to kill us first and then do so over our dead bodies”—if they said so and really meant it, I cannot believe that even a mad mob will dare attack them indiscriminately. But if they did so once or twice, I can think of no more enviable or glorious or *useful* sacrifice—the blood of such martyrs may well become the seed of a new Church of human unity and decency. These values are, at least, not *less* important in life than political wranglings and tactical success. For what will it avail us if we gain Akhand Hindustan or Pakistan or the whole world for that matter, if we lose our soul in that process? May we not perchance discover, when it is too late, that we have paid too high a price for our success’ and that, in the very moment of our triumph, it tastes like dead ashes in our mouth. If an appeal from this (or any) platform can be of use, I would appeal earnestly to all young men and women who inhabit this great land which is today plunged in shame and mourning at the misdeeds of its own children—to realize whither we are going and to cry halt to this madness. It is not merely a question of a few hundred or a few thousand innocent people being murdered; it is a permanent poisoning of human relations, it is a murder of decency and kindness and neighbourly virtues; it is a denial of culture and civilization. We who teach and educate and fight for a better life cannot tolerate this state of affairs and it is our duty and our privilege to throw ourselves on the side of decency in this unholy conflict. No one dare to stand aloof from this struggle. For in the words of the Holy Quran; Beware of the catastrophe which, when it befalls, will not be confined to those who have specially transgressed, but will sweep all into its train.”

SHRI P.N. SAPRU

*Fifth All India Adult Education Conference
29th December, 1947, Rewa*

On the 15th August, 1947, an event of far-reaching importance to the human race took place in this country. For it is on that day which will ever remain enshrined in our memories even as the great people of the United States remember their independence day that our ancient land acquired its freedom. The exact shape and form which our independence has actually taken was not visualised by the architects of the national movement. To admit this is not to minimise the limitless character of the opportunities which a free India devoting herself to work of a nation-building character will hereafter possess. Of one thing we can now be certain ; it is we and we alone who are now responsible for the destinies of our country. For anything that goes wrong, we cannot hereafter blame any outside agency. Independence has, therefore, brought with it very heavy responsibilities and it is for us to rise to the occasion and to pursue policies which will ensure that the power which our state possesses will be used for the promotion of that good life of which the architects of our independence saw the vision.

Fair Deal

We live in an age which is constantly revising its values. The problem in all countries is to give to the common man a fair deal. The merit of a democratic system of government is that it helps the individual by making him a participant in the active functions of citizenship to develop his personality. Within the next year or two we shall have a constitution which will be based upon adult franchise. The attainment of that franchise is but a step as I see it towards the goal of a society which provides equality of opportunity for all its members. The life of matter and the life of the spirit are inter-connected and it strikes me that even for the realisation of this ideal of a perfect democratic order, it is essential for us to evolve an educational system which will provide facilities for mental training

for the citizens of this vast land. For without a really educated and disciplined democracy, it will neither be possible to improve the standards of life nor the cultural level of our people. For the successful working of democracy in our country, it is obligatory on us to evolve an educational system which will ensure a high level of technical and civic competence among our citizens. There are men and women whom nature has endowed with capacities of a high order. They get either no chance of a school education or they leave school early. They have perforce to lead frustrated lives and are unable because of a lack of proper education to contribute their best to the nation and society of which they are integral parts. We have, therefore, to work for a sound system of education for our masses which would enable us to discover people of talent, wherever they exist. The problem of adult education is essentially in this sense an ethical one. It is not possible for people to learn their responsibilities and obligations to themselves and to others unless they are made to feel that technical competence and good character have their own rewards. A society which neglects education is preparing for a generation of maladjusted individuals without any appreciation of the things that go to make the world in which they live a place of joy and beauty. Important as the question of education always was, it has become, after the attainment of our freedom, a burning issue. Without a diffusion of that higher intelligence which is essential for the right pursuit of worthy ideals, democracy will not be able to realise its objective. The task before us in the sphere of education is of a two-fold nature, namely to increase the productive capacity and the intellectual stature of our people. To deny to any individual a chance of education is to deny equality of opportunity. Education is the broad highroad for the realisation of that democratic society which it is our objective to establish in this country.

People's Colleges

It follows from what I have said that one of the problems for those who are interested in the question of adult education is that of correlating the work which our universities and colleges perform with the needs of the common folk who inhabit our villages and our towns. The view which has appealed to me and which I desire to place before you for consideration is that the work of advancing knowledge which is the main function of a university is separable to some extent from that of presenting it in a form intelligible to the common people. To make popular adult education, the chief function of a university may hinder the utility of it as a place which must be able to advance the bounds of knowledge. I must not be understood to say that

extension work or extramural teaching is not a proper function of a university. What I wish, however, to urge on you is that institutions which are independent of our universities, colleges and schools can and should play a part in bringing education to the door of the common man in this country. People's Colleges and Institutions for adult education, working in cooperation with universities but without being integral parts of it, can conceivably possess the advantage of specialisation in skill of presenting knowledge in a popular form. Let me emphasize once again that I do not suggest that it is not the function of a university in a democratic community to take steps to bring knowledge within the reach of those who are now its regular scholars. What I am suggesting is that there is a place also for specialized agencies such as people's schools, colleges and institutions which keep as their chief aim the spread in popular form of the knowledge gathered in and enlarged upon by our universities and colleges. It is for this purpose that the Indian Adult Education Association exists. Its work, therefore, is complementary in this sense to that which is being performed by our university, colleges and schools. It is an agency for providing facilities for the acquisition by common men of knowledge of those advances in the sciences, technological developments, arts, law and music for the promotion of which our universities and colleges and schools exist. No apology and no justification are therefore needed for our existence.

Role of Teachers

It is obvious that no vast programme of adult education is possible without a very considerable increase in the number of our teachers. Simultaneously with a drive for a vast increase in the number of our teachers, there must also be an effort in improving their quality. The teachers of today and tomorrow must be persons imbued with the ideals of social functions of education. It is essential for them to possess a knowledge of the theory of education from a democratic point of view and a firm belief in the values which are sacred to democracy. Personally, I do not believe in a teacher who has no capacity to participate in the life of the community in which he is teaching. Teachers who lead isolated lives, who are unable to share in the joys and sorrows of the community, they are intended to educate, who have no enthusiasm for social service, who feel themselves divided by social barriers from the class whom they are intended to benefit by their knowledge and experience, who can only move in their own professional group and who cannot combine faith in moral values with an energising belief in material progress are not exactly the sort of persons who can provide material for building up, for shaping the lives of those who come into contact

with them. It may be that for the production of such a class of teachers it will be necessary for us to experiment with a system which makes it incumbent on young men and women who pass through the portals of our training schools and colleges to spend, before they qualify for a teaching degree or diploma, a portion of their time either in rural surroundings or in the workshops and establishments where they can come into contact with the most important factor in production—I mean, the human material which we often designate as “labour.”

Responsibilities of Educationists

Adult education is yet in its infancy in this country. The problems which it has to face are necessarily somewhat different from those where societies and movements for its spread have existed for a number of years. I have not deemed it, therefore, necessary to review the history of adult education or point out to you the problems which face countries which have made advances in it. That is a task which incidentally I am not capable of doing for you. It has been my endeavour to place before you a few thoughts so that by cooperative effort we may be able to devise some machinery which would enable us to carry forward the work for which the Indian Adult Education Association exists. It goes without saying that no great objective can be realised without adequate funds. Adult education furnishes us with a vast field in which all men and women of good-will can cooperate without distinction of race, religion or caste. It is by working cooperatively and by actually handling in a spirit of service our common problems that we shall learn most effectively the art of democratic living. It strikes me, however, that this work of adult education cannot and should not be left in the hands of political or sectional organisations. As educationists, you have certain responsibilities and you cannot escape them without being false to the ideals which animate you. The true hall-mark of an educated man is freedom from dogma. Freedom to think one's own thoughts, freedom to work co-operatively for the ends one believes in, freedom to express one's thoughts, with due regard for the feelings of others are vital both for the advance of knowledge—philosophic and scientific and for the moral progress of man. You are the torch bearers of this freedom and, therefore, eminently qualified to undertake the work of adult education in a truly democratic spirit. It will take a very long time for the tree that you have planted to mature. That however, need not dishearten you. Mighty movements in human history have often had small beginnings. There is room for optimism, provided we retain faith in our ideals.

All-India Institute

The purpose of all education is to satisfy the hunger of men for perfection. "There is no motive in life", says Professor Hadfield, "so persistent as this hunger for fulfilment, whether for the needs of our body or for the deepest satisfaction of our souls". It is this striving, this inarticulate yearning for the perfect life that distinguishes man from the animal kingdom.

For the satisfaction of this spiritual restlessness which exhibits itself in man's quest for "Truth," man needs, not only the sustaining influence of faith which religion, poetry, art, music and literature can supply him but also and not less importantly, scientific & technological knowledge. It is obvious that our future programme of adult education will have to be framed with reference to man's needs, both spiritual and material. It is thus clear that those who are planning programmes for an extension of adult education cannot ignore the problem of giving it a vocational turn; there is, in my opinion, no antithesis between vocational and non-vocational education. Good citizenship requires a society of both efficient producers and consumers of the goods produced. In the circumstances, which exist in this country, the primary need is a rise in the standard of living of its masses and so the vocational aspect of education, needs special emphasis. Indeed, it strikes me that by giving adult education, where possible, a vocational turn, we shall be enlisting for our movement a wider measure of cooperation from those whom we wish to benefit. If we can make by our adult education programmes, our ministerial staffs, our farmers and our workers in our factories, more efficient than they actually are, we shall also have raised the cultural level of the country as a whole. But apart from giving adult education, to the extent it is possible and desirable, a vocational turn, a problem which we shall have to grapple with is that of helping the lower income groups to utilise their leisure in a manner which increases their mental efficiency and physical stamina. It, therefore, strikes me that in order that our plans of adult education may be furthered it is desirable for us to work for the establishment of an All-India Institute of Adult Education to which provincial institutes simultaneously should be affiliated. An All India Institute will be useful both for the purpose of research in the ideals and methods of Adult Education and for the training of the personnel needed for making it a success. It will be a centre which can act as inspiration to all those who are interested in the task of expanding the activities of organisations and institutions which are at the moment engaged in an

uncoordinated manner in this work of the highest benefit to the nation. I would, therefore, suggest, with all the earnestness that I possess, that we should give serious thought to the proposal which I have in all humility, ventured to put before you for your consideration. A State's greatest asset is the human material which gives to it its allegiance. I take it that it is our aim to strive for the establishment of conditions which would make it possible for our men and women to grow to full height of their stature. It goes without saying that the greatest single agency for the promotion of such basic reforms in our society as will make it a fit instrument for discharging its responsibilities in an ethical manner in a competitive world, is Education. It is no exaggeration to say that though our greatest problem today is the liquidation of illiteracy, the levelling up process in our community will remain an idle dream unless the lower income groups in our society are enabled by a provision of adequate educational facilities to throw up men and women capable of undertaking task of responsibility in our governmental, industrial, agricultural, cultural, technological and scientific organisations. An All India Institute, such as I visualise, will not only help to coordinate the various adult education activities in the country but will also supply ideals for future work.

Equal opportunity for women

I have pointed out that the work of presenting knowledge is, to some extent, separable from that of acquiring it. A criticism frequently levelled against our universities is that perhaps due to circumstances over which they had no control they never came into intimate contact with India of the toiling millions. It goes without saying that, in my view, it is essential for them without changing their character as institutions for the imparting of instruction in higher education and the promotion, of research in all branches of knowledge, to develop greater contacts, by an extension of their extra-mural activities, with those sections of our population who have either never passed through their portals or who have had their education interrupted. In such an effort special attention will have to be paid to the problem of increasing facilities for imparting useful knowledge in our provincial languages to our women. In a country which has inherited social evils which thwart life's purpose, the importance of the home as a place which gives a permanent bias to the life style of an individual is apparent. If we want to make equal opportunity synonymous with identity of opportunity, it is to the mothers in our future generations that we must look for the leadership of our homes. Modern psychology teaches us that unhealthy influences in

early life tend to develop unbalanced individuals. We know what vital part a mother plays in the bringing up of a child. Effort spent on improvement of facilities for the education of adult women will, even from the narrow point of view of utility, prove productive. It would be a great mistake on our part to make any differentiation in the rate of progress of adult education between men and women. Fortunately, the women's movement is getting stronger in this country. I have no doubt that in the planning of our adult education programmes they will exert their maximum pressure to ensure that their sex receives equal treatment with men. It may be said that the problem of spreading education among adult women is more difficult because of the paucity of possible women teachers and social workers. I do not deny that this handicap to some extent exists. It must, however, be remembered that under the inspiration of the national-cum-democratic movement, the influences that made for seclusion of women are fast disappearing. In almost all localities in this country, we have today women of *light and culture* who consider social service a sacred duty. Their cooperation is essential for the fruition of our programme. A suggestion that I would, in this connection make is that the All India Institute which I have in view should have a special department for the training of women.

Hopes for the future

I must bring these desultory remarks to a close. The vision that is before us is that of a free and disciplined society cooperating in the task of the glorious unfolding of life's purpose to those whose existence today is often a tragic futility. For the accomplishment of the task that we have set before us, we need to cultivate artistic and spiritual values, faith and moral aspiration. Cooperative effort in the sphere of adult education will help us to achieve the twin goals of freedom and responsibility. Those who are working in the cause of adult education, can neither be defenders and apologists of existing social evils, nor doctrinaire idealists pursuing goals incapable of realisation in any foreseeable future. Their work is to place at the disposal of their less fortunately situated fellow men and women the experience and wisdom that the process of education brings. Their work is to arrest the stunted growths of individuals with potentialities of infinite good to their fellow beings. Our faith in the goodness of human nature and its capacity to respond to a healthy environment is an asset of inestimable value to us. Only by remaining true to our ideals shall we be able to build the edifice of an India from which illiteracy, superstition, poverty and lack of knowledge are banished for ever.

DR. S. R. RANGANATHAN

*Sixth All India Adult Education Conference
30th December, 1948, Mysore*

During the last two hundred years our nation has been in a state of stupor. It is during this time that phenomenal intellectual advance had been made by humanity. During the centuries of stupor we have grown enormously in number and the pressure of population has grown too much for the old methods of deriving our sustenance. If we are to live our freedom with profit and comfort, we must start a chain of actions leading to an intensive cultivation of our material, plant and animal resources. The first link in this chain should be the cultivation of our human resources. The Metropolitan Insurance Company of New York had estimated the value of the human resources as six times greater than that of all other resources put together.

Great Britain

Neglect of the human resources leads to incapacity to benefit by the material resources. It was given to a young scientist to realise this. It was George Birkbeck. He sensed this as early as 1800. He had to make some apparatus. To this end he employed a number of tinmen. One day when he was surrounded by these men in his basement making a model centrifugal pump he was struck by their inefficiency and he traced this to the deep ignorance of the workmen in the scientific fundamentals which formed the basis of their vocation. Then he said to himself, "How much will I not gain if I could teach these fellows the rudiments of science?" And so began modern Adult Education in Great Britain. I call it modern, because oral transmission of culture to adults had all along been in vogue in all lands as a *folk way*. Birkbeck's experiment was soon adopted by many British towns and it culminated in the establishment in 1823 of the London Mechanics Institute which is now known as Birkbeck College. Workers' Educational Associations and University Extension Boards were formed to take charge of this work. This was all for industrial workers. This shows how industrialisation calls for adult education.

Denmark

How national difficulties could stimulate adult education is illustrated by the history of Denmark. About 1870, the Danish farmers lost their market for wheat as a result of American competition and German tariff wall. They were sinking into despair. But the very difficulty stimulated them to educate themselves as adults. Bishop Grundtvig, whose bust I saw in every folk-high school I visited, canalised this spontaneous urge. These schools fuse culture with vocational education. These are all for farmers. This shows how intensive farming calls for adult education.

Sweden

I saw a recent development in Sweden. It is that of study circles. These arose out of national awakening. There are about 100,000 study circles functioning. Unlike the origin of adult education in Great Britain, these study circles were originated by the masses themselves. The State aids them with books and leaders. They meet in houses, schools and libraries. These were mostly confined to industrial workers. But during the last two years this movement is also entering among farm workers.

Disadvantages in India

In these countries and other Western countries, adult education took shape when they were in a state of expansion with plenty of passive nations to be exploited and ample vacant land to be occupied. Its development was, therefore, casual and without either conscious plan or fostering by the State. But awakened India does not have these two advantages. We cannot, therefore, leave adult education to chance. Moreover, the conflict between nationalism in the political set-up of the world and world economics or internationalism in the economic set-up, makes it imperative that our people should be helped to come to world-level in a very short period—say within one generation. This is possible since the renaissance of to-day has brought our people to a state of awareness and eagerness. This awakening has brought them to a state of meta-stability, as it were. A skilful application of activating force will make their energy burst forth into useful channels. That activating force is adult education. This must be done in accordance with a carefully worked-out plan. It is only the State that can do it. Disturbance of the State must go and the State itself should give priority to the education of the people of all ages and put it on a rational basis. Neither of these two conditions were fulfilled in the

recent past. The result has been mushroom attempts at adult education. We should avoid the repetition of what has been wrong in such attempts. I, therefore, propose to devote my address to what is wrong with our adult education.

I feel that there is something wrong about

- (1) our objective in adult education ;
- (2) the means we employ to secure it ;
- (3) the technique of teaching employed ;
- (4) the curriculum used ;
- (5) the teachers we engage in its work ;
- (6) the financial provision we make ; and above all
- (7) the men, we have, to plan and to guide the persistent implementing of the plan with adjustments and variations which become necessary, in compliance with the principle of emergent evolution.

We shall start with a definition of education, bring out some of its implications and examine in the light of them what is wrong in the above-mentioned factors.

Education

Education is the perpetual unfoldment of one's personality in its own way, at its own speed, to its own fullness. Three constituents of it can be recognised and three forces influence its unfoldment and growth.

One basic force is psycho-genetic. It characterises the soul as it marches on from one embodiment to another. There are a few who have self-illumination. In them this force is very pronounced. Even in them it appears to be involuntary. We do not yet know of any organised method of improving it or even invoking it. Many do not even grant its existence. Let us, therefore, leave it alone.

Another basic force is biological. It characterises the living body or vital existence. The dominant carrier of this force is the *gene*. Its essential features are formed in the pre-natal stage. It determines directly the capacity of the unaided primary senses and indirectly the quality of the instinct and the lower emotions which are overwhelmingly egocentric and largely biochemical. Eugenics may improve it, but it has to work through more than one generation. An organisation for the education of an individual has to accept heredity as it is. The most that can be done is to see to it that the development of the body under its action is not checkmated by undernourishment or injuries.

A still another force which influences education is the force of sociological environment. Its effect is greatest on the mind

including memory, intellect and the higher emotions. This force can be manipulated by organisation. It includes as one of its dominant elements, the social organisation set up for helping education. Though the range of its direct action is the mind, it can, by improvement of the mental factors, indirectly help the capacity of the primary senses and the sublimation of the lower emotions. Enrichment of memory, sharpening of intellect and sublimation of emotions thus form the chief objectives of any organisation for education.

Schools, Libraries and Social Centres

These three objectives of the education of a person persist throughout his life—from birth down to the end. The uncontrolled and uncanalised pressure of social environment is all along affecting the education of everybody. It reaches the individual first through the family, then through the immediately surrounding community and later through an ever-expanding range of community-expanding through space as well as time. The last mentioned medium, figures directly in the case of the few who are widely travelled and only indirectly in the case of the rest. The capacity to benefit by so much only of the canalization of the formative sociological forces varies with individuals in the measure of their respective psycho-genetic and hereditary make-up. But organised society seeks to improve or make more pronounced the canalization of the formative forces by the setting up of various organised agencies, formal and informal. These agencies intensify and turn the formative forces on people in a concentrated form, even as a lens concentrates the rays of light on the focus. These agencies seek, in addition, to increase the capacity of individuals to benefit by such an intensified canalization. These are the schools, the libraries and the social centres, arranged in the decreasing order of the formalness of their nature.

Schools

Of the two functions of the organised agencies for education, viz. to intensify canalization of formative forces, and to increase the capacity of individuals to benefit by them, the focus of the School is on the latter. Indeed most of the reforms in educational technique, stimulated since John Dewey's *School and Society* was published in 1896, has been to make schools first to stress the improvement of self-educability of individuals and secondly to secure this by a greater attention to the canalization of formative sociological forces. To this end, the school which is predominantly formal, has begun to provide within itself the less formal library and social centre; it places great emphasis

on literacy and group-activities so that self-educability may be induced as much as possible.

Libraries

Libraries are a specialised agency for intensive canalization of the formative sociological forces in a particular manner viz., working directly on and through the mind, whether it be enrichment of memory or sharpening of intellect or sublimation of emotions. The tools used for the purpose are primarily books and kindred materials, which may be looked upon as packed thought-energy or better as thought-energy transformed into partable materials, which can be retransformed into thought-energy by the exercise of literacy. But, there is no denying that thought-energy stored in books is only a poor substitute for thought-energy in a nascent state, re-inforced by the subtle effect of the presence of the living person, the changes in his facial expression, the modulation of his voice and the gleam of his eyes. To benefit by thought-energy in a nascent state is much easier and is within the capacity of a much larger number of people than to benefit by thought-energy stored in books. Let us define self-educability as capacity to further one's education without the immediate presence and direct help of a teacher. Libraries can be of use, normally only to literates who have high self-educability.

Social Centres

Social Centres provide for informal exchange of information which may enrich memory and for formal discussion which may sharpen intellect. They also provide opportunity for co-operative work and for the fostering of team-spirit which may help the sublimation of certain types of emotions. But their efficiency depends on the presence of a highly organised personality in the group whose influence is arresting. Otherwise, social centres may lead to dissipation rather than to education. They seldom form sources of thought-energy. This is what is witnessed in most of the deserted villages, the exclusive trade union groups and, alas, even in the common rooms of academic institutions and in official and business circles.

Duration of Education

Education, as we defined at the beginning, is a life-long process. As human organisation is today, the education of a person passes through the formal phase in the early years. The informal phase persists through life after the formal phase ends,

Adult Education

Normally adult education should mean the education process which persists after one emerges from childhood and adolescence. Let us consider the frequency distribution of the adults among a people in the decreasing order of self-educability.

At the very top, there are likely to be a few souls who are self-illuminating. No organisation is necessary for the education of such adults.

The first quartile or the top 25 percent can educate themselves through books. If a supply of books is ensured, the further education of such adults is provided for. The library system of a country can ensure a supply of books. This will be both necessary and sufficient for them.

For the second quartile mere supply of books is insufficient. In their case there is the further need for the books being organised—displayed and catalogued—more effectively and for service by reference librarians who can discuss and probe into their intellectual needs with some expertness and find their reading materials for them. A scientifically organised library and provision of reference service are both necessary and sufficient for the further education of such adults. In common parlance, however, the term 'adult education' does not cover the first two quartiles. It is usually restricted to the last two quartiles.

More effort is necessary to ensure the education of the adults of the third quartile. Most of them have usually to leave the formal school before entering adulthood and before attaining sufficient mental maturity to understand and take intelligent interest in the social, cultural and fundamental subjects necessary for the enrichment of life. They are usually slow to mature. Their interest can be built only round actual experiences and these experiences they get only in actual adult life. After a few years of active life, the time becomes opportune for their profitably taking a further spate of formal education so as to increase their self-educability with the aid of a highly organised library giving intensive reference service. This is the exact purpose served by the Folk-High Schools of Denmark, the Reading Circles of Sweden and the University Extension Courses and the adult classes conducted by the Worker's Educational Associations of the English-speaking countries. This was corroborated, for example, by the leader of a Folk-High School of Denmark who told me that their schools attracted only about 25 percent of the adults. There is no need for the help of such adult schools for the first two quartiles, while their curriculum and technique are inadequate for the needs of the last quartile. It may be safely conjectured that the formal adult schools in those countries thus

serve only the third quartile. They have built up some technique for the education of those adults.

The adults of the fourth quartile are still left untouched. Perhaps the bottom ten percent are problem cases and hardly capable of mental stimulation and sustained intellectual effort. The remaining fifteen percent can never attain that degree of self-educability which will enable them to use even the best conducted library with profit for their mental growth. Perhaps they may be helped by reading circles, talks and discussion groups conducted in association with, but not solely by, libraries. The continued co-operative effort of libraries and such quasi-formal organisations will be necessary for education of such adults. Even then economic reasons will prevent many from taking full advantage of even such co-operative efforts. Since the resources of men and money available to promote adult education have not yet become adequate in any country to cover the needs of the entire class of adults, it has become necessary to turn whatever resources we have for adult education (in the restricted sense) on the third quartile. Sufficient experience has not yet been gained in handling the last quartile and the necessary technique too has not yet been evolved.

Illiterates

In India, not even all the adults of the first quartile are literate. Only about half of them are. A similar situation prevailed in Russia some thirty years ago and even in great Britain about a hundred years ago. This fact is mentioned to show that we need not despair. A comparatively short period will be sufficient to cross the present disadvantageous position caused by illiteracy in our country. If India implements universal, compulsory, elementary education till the age of 15, within the next 30 years, the percentage of illiteracy will be gradually diminished and it will be totally eliminated from among the first three quartiles. This period can be shortened if a concerted attempt is made to liquidate illiteracy among fifteen to thirty year age group of today.

OBJECTIVES IN ADULT EDUCATION

A possible mistake is to regard adult education as equivalent to literacy work. This mistake often creeps in consciously or unconsciously. Great vigilance is necessary to keep out the mistake. Acquisition of bare literacy is often taken to mark the end of the responsibility of the agency for adult education. One has to be taken far beyond bare literacy to enable one to use one's literacy for self-education. Further, even taking

one to the stage of self-education through books is insufficient unless a free service of books through a public library is ensured for those belonging to the first quartile, intensive reference service also is ensured for those belonging to the second quartile, a broad-based cultural course is given for a long period, as a preliminary step, to those belonging to the third quartile and quasi-formal education is continuously kept up in association with the public library for the last quartile.

To postpone the further education of adults till literacy is established among them is another possible mistake. Dependence on literacy will delay the education of adults more than what is either necessary, or good for the country. Visual and aural instruction may be imparted in adult schools to step up the adults to a higher level of awareness and capacity to follow books and kindred materials when read out to them. As a transitional measure, the public libraries must institute the system of readers for the benefit of the illiterate adults who have been so prepared. This must be the primary objective and literacy work may follow as a secondary objective.

With whom to Begin

With the very limited resources we have in teachers, money and equipment, we should first turn them on those who can benefit most easily. This means that the recruitment to the adult classes in the earlier years must be severely selective. It is the persons of the upper quartiles that should be preferred. The spotting out of the upper quartiles is not now consciously done. It is not even contemplated. Adults are selected virtually at random and the schools fizzle out. The authorities sponsoring adult education are usually busy people with political objectives. They are impatient to have something begun quickly. Political manoeuvres often take advantage of the shortness of public memory and do not care for anything lasting achieved; nor do they find value in deferred or delayed result or action. The evil effects of this factor can be minimised only by proper procedural directives being given and enforced from the state level. The directive must not only point out the need for selecting adults in the earlier years from the upper quartiles but also suggest methods by which it can be done.

Begin with Literates

The directive must make it clear that each adult education agency must first concentrate on the literate adults who have had left off school before becoming mature enough to be interested in cultural subjects. The policy should be similar to that of the

Folk High School of Denmark. Though the educational advancement of Denmark is such that only the third quartile enter such schools, in the present state of education in our country it is the upper quartiles that will be drawn and our achievement will be even better if this policy is carefully implemented.

Then Pass on to Illiterates

The directive must be to pass on to the illiterates among the upper quartiles after most of the literates have been helped to become competent to further their self-education with the aid of the public libraries. The experience in the reading system in the public libraries should have by now accustomed the illiterates of the upper quartiles to the benefits of books and roused in them a desire to read books by themselves. By the time the financial and teacher resources enable us to reach down to the lower quartiles, the illiterates among them would have ceased to exist by efflux of time in the case of the adults existing today and by the operation of the compulsory Education Act in the case of the future adults.

MEANS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

If the objectives of adult education are corrected along the lines suggested above, the urgency for establishing public libraries would not go unrealised in the way in which it now goes. They will have to bear the brunt of adult education through its system of readers to the illiterates in the immediate future. If compulsory elementary education is introduced, as it must be, in order not to add to the load of illiteracy any longer, the public libraries become quite necessary not only for the use of literacy to promote the further education, but even to retain the very literacy, of the new generation of adults.

Formal Adult School

There is a tendency among some to imitate Great Britain blindly in this matter and urge our Universities to develop an extension side. Extension side is a peculiar English phenomenon. It is found possible to attach it to a University without any danger to obligation of a University to promote research and advanced studies. I spent some time on this question in my recent visit to England. I found that these two activities had no influence on each other and were quite separable in the English Universities. There was nothing in common except that they were *de jure* under the same corporate body. This works very well in England. Will it in India ?

I think not. Our Universities have not yet developed stamina and freedom from extra-academic forces to settle down seriously to advanced teaching and research. When they are still struggling to ascend this higher level of mental effort, the introduction of an Extension side will become an excuse to slacken that struggle. We should really look to the Scandinavian countries for our models. We should develop the agency for adult education quite independently of our universities.

Association with Public Libraries

On the other hand, it will be an advantage to bring about an association—not amalgamation—between agencies for formal adult education and public libraries. They are mutually dependent at all times. The history of Workers' Educational Association in Great Britain and the Labour Institute of Sweden had gone through periods in which these two agencies were not working in union. But they have by now realised the wisdom of their close cooperation and the economy which results therefrom. India will stand to gain by this experience. Moreover, the system of readers advocated earlier will make the public library the most effective arena from which adults can be recruited for removal of illiteracy. This factor made me provide for transitory clauses in the different public library bills drafted by me—one of which has already become the basis of the Madras Library Act—transitory clauses underlining the association of public libraries with agencies for the liquidation of illiteracy.

Creation of Agency

The agency for adult education must be independent of that for formal education—be it school, college or university. It must be independent of that for informal education—the library—though it must co-operate with it. This separate agency should not be left to be set up by philanthropy as hitherto. We have left behind us the age when private philanthropy was possible on the scale required for this purpose. Nor is it wise to have this agency to develop in a casual manner in each locality. Adult education is a vital necessity for the nation to use its independent status for the improvement of the people both at the material level of food, clothing and shelter and at the mental level of enlightened participation in the affairs of the nation, which democracy connotes. The State should, therefore, take up the provision of the agency in its own hand. This does not mean necessarily that it should directly run all adult schools. It is sufficient if it makes provision at

the legislative level. It must pass a well designed Adult Education Act making the setting up of agencies of prescribed standard by the local bodies obligatory.

TECHNIQUE OF TEACHING

The greatest mistake occurs in regard to the technique of teaching. Current and past attempts at teaching adults disclose that they are based on the belief that there is no need for any special technique. It is worth examining how far this mistake is traceable to what our country has been doing in regard to teaching adolescents at college level and in particular in regard to teaching in professional colleges. It is believed that a knowledge of the subject to be taught is sufficient by itself ; we have not yet realised the need for any special technique in teaching at those levels though we have realised the need for it at school level. The reason for this is that the colleges draw students only from the uppermost centiles. These will educate themselves under any condition. Genius will sprout even in a dung-hill, it is said. The fact is that education has been effective in spite of absence of technique or even bad technique. Yet we attribute the success to our teaching and we go a step further and believe that technique is not necessary to teach beyond school level ; adulthood is even later than adolescence ; still more there is technique unnecessary for adult education—we begin to believe unconsciously. But the fact is that the adolescents are at a most advantageous age in regard to intensity of curiosity and range of interest, whereas the adults have already deteriorated in these factors which promote the urge for self-education. Also, the adolescents in colleges are drawn from the uppermost centiles, whereas the adults in adult schools are drawn largely from the lower quartiles. These differentiating factors make a special technique absolutely necessary to teach effectively in adult schools.

Even when it is granted that technique is necessary, it is naively assumed that there can be only one technique whether it is teaching children or adults. This arises out of failure to recognise or remember the differences between child psychology and adult psychology. A good deal of specialised study has been made of child psychology from the point of view of teaching technique. But precious little has been done in adult psychology from the same point of view. The difference is not, therefore, known to the politicians who offer to promote adult education. A more detailed discussion of the teaching technique with some positive suggestions will be found in my recent book *education for Leisure* published by the Indian Adult Education Association.

Here again it is the statesman that should come to rescue adult education from falling a prey to political expediency. They should make the State do the needful. The needful is best done by the giving of broad but proper directives. The sanction for enforcing the directives in this vital matter can only be provided by law. Thus we are led again to the need for an Adult Education Act. We should not be misled here by the fact that Great Britain did not begin its Adult Education with an Act. During the years when a large part of the world was sleeping, Great Britain has had its adult education brought to a high level in a leisurely *laissez-faire* way, inspite of the absence of techniques and directives. But we have the load of adult education extending to 85% of the population. We cannot afford to be leisurely in achieving the education of our adults. We must reach rapidly the world-standard of those who have been awake all these years ; and we have a long way to go. It is, therefore, a national necessity that efficient and specialised technique must be employed in teaching our adults. This is the justification for the state to empower the government by legislation to issue broad directives and to enforce them in regard to the teaching technique to be followed in adult education.

CURRICULUM USED

The bane of blind imitation dogs us in curriculum too. In some of the forward western countries, where compulsory elementary education had been in vogue for about a century and had already stepped up the intellectual urge of the masses considerably and where there are excellent arrangements for initial training and periodical refresher courses for the workers in their respective arts and crafts, adult education is interpreted to mean only education in fundamental sciences, fine arts, literature, civics and other cultural subjects ; and instruction in arts and crafts is excluded. This is alright at the level that has been reached by the masses in those countries. We should not imitate their practice in the present state of our masses. We should go back to the practice of those countries a century ago, for our model.

Neglect of Psychology

Another possible mistake in building the curriculum is closely associated with the use of wrong technique due to neglect of adult psychology. The interest of our masses cannot be either enlisted or kept up unless the course is craft-centred. The centering must be round the craft followed by the student in his daily occupation. The curriculum cannot be rigid and completely predetermined. It must be extremely flexible. Each

day's work and the quantum of extension of the field of interest, which can be attempted at each stage will have to be determined from time to time in the light of the reaction of the adult students. It must be a product of emergent evolution. A fuller discussion of this will be found in my book, *Education for Leisure*.

Needs of Follow-up Work

Another possible mistake is to build up the curriculum in utter neglect of the books available either for current class-room work or for follow-up work. When I was in England recently, I spent some hours observing the assembling of books at the London University Library for adult classes. Nearly a whole flat of the book-tower is devoted to this work. Several copies of the various books needed for an adult class were being packed. Some of these books, which had a direct and intimate bearing on the curriculum followed, would be left with the adult group for nearly a year. There is also the local public library which closely co-operates with the adult school. The curriculum is designed by the teacher in an intimate relation with the books available for use by adults. In our country today, there is a terrible shortage of books for adults. The designing of our curriculum therefore becomes much more arduous and calls for even greater skill on the part of our teachers.

TEACHERS

The designing and the upkeep of a flexible curriculum and the need for a specialised technique of teaching indicate how much the success of an adult school will depend on the teacher. But the greatest mistake that we find in the set-up for our adult education is the neglect of this factor.

The most fantastic opinion that is aired by politicians in the legislatures, deliberative bodies of universities and even in official press communique is that each student should serve as a teacher of adults before he is given his university diploma.

Another proposal commonly trotted out is to shift the sphere of this conscription from the raw youth to the old retired folk. If immaturity is the handicap of the former, rigidity and phlegmatic chill are the handicaps of the latter. In several years when the freshly elected Mayors of Madras used to catch adult education to make a splashy beginning of their Mayoralty, I had protested, in the conferences convened by them ostensibly to design plan of work but primarily as a publicity stunt against the futility of running adult schools with such teachers. Such protests were neither understood nor seriously taken.

Part-time teachers from Schools

One solution suggested has been the employment of teachers of children's schools on a part-time basis. The five or ten rupees promised as an allowance for this part-time work were sufficient to lure the poor-paid teachers. But the miserable failure of all such ways of playing with the problem of teachers for adult schools is well-known. It is all due to impatience to delude oneself as having started something that would catch the public eye and ignorance of the fact that the teaching technique good for children cannot be good for adults.

Training

In certain years, it was agreed to run a rapid one month training course for teachers to be employed. What is needed is that the Union Government must establish a Training College for Teachers in Adult Schools, under the auspices of the University of Delhi. This College must concentrate in the first year on training about a hundred able, resourceful, middle-aged teachers already employed in children's schools as trained teachers, so that they can be distributed at the end of the year to man the training Colleges for teachers in Adult Schools in the constituent States. From the second year onwards, Colleges may be established in the States to take over the training of the ordinary teachers needed for the adult schools in their respective territories and the Union College at Delhi may concentrate on research and advanced training for the leaders and the creative thinkers on adult education and the teacher for the State training colleges.

Finance

All this necessary preparation and the running of the adult schools themselves will require finance and the finance required must be an assured one and not be one contingent on private philanthropy which is rapidly shrinking, or totally dependent on annual vote. It is the former of these sources that is dominantly counted upon now. To some extent it is made to depend on the annual vote of local bodies. A powerful and persistent member may occasionally secure vote for a slab grant, but the chance for this is uncertain and fleeting. The finance of adult education is now dependent solely on these factors. It is therefore, inadequate, irregular and ineffective. The vote of the legislatures should be exercised on this point in another way. It must be exercised to recognise the urgency, the importance and vastness of the problem of the adult education. It must be exercised in the form of an Adult Education Act which

makes a statutory provision for minimum recurring financial provision for adult education at the level of local rates as well as state grants to supplement. Adult education is a recurrent liability and money spent on it by fits and starts is ill spent.

DIRECTOR OF ADULT EDUCATION

The vastness and the specialised nature of the problem will be too much to make adult education an extra activity of the Director in charge of school education. Moreover, adult education has to begin from a scratch. All its problems have to be thought out and solved with full attention. To make a Deputy of the Director of Education work it out under the restriction that Deputy-ship imposes and put it through the hurdle of necessarily preoccupied Director will cripple development. There is enough scope for an independent Director to take charge of this work. Our constituent States are not tiny units like the Scandinavian countries. Our population is so vast and our educational problem is vast in equal measure. Higher education has been rightly entrusted to an autonomous *ad hoc* body, the University. My plea is that the Minister of Education should administer the rest of education through three Directors of co-ordinate status: (1) one incharge of formal elementary and secondary education (2) another incharge of formal adult education and (3) a still another incharge of library system of the land as an informal agency for education. To mix up these functions under one director under the pressure of past practice will frustrate the development of the two later functions. The director with the first function has been all along having step-motherly charge of a few rickety specimens of the two latter functions. He has inherited many petrified precedents. Even when these encrustations, can be broken, if the latter functions come to be discharged in full swing, the work would be too much in quantity and too varied character to find one all-round man to take charge of them all with equal interest and efficiency. It may be said that three deputy directors can take charge of these severally and do all the necessary thinking and adjustment from time to time. In that case the over-all director will have to be a supernumerary figure-head. The more economical and efficient set up will be to have three Departments and the Minister himself to be the authority to co-ordinate their work.

At the Union level

At the Union level too there must be a department of Adult Education, co-ordinate with Departments of Libraries, Universities and of Secondary and Elementary Education. These four Departments should form the arms of the Union Minister of

Education. The Union Department of Adult Education will have mainly to co-ordinate the efforts of the State departments, encourage research and do liaison service with foreign countries in the matter of adult education.

ORGANISATION

To remedy the prevalent mistakes in our adult education, a proper organisation is necessary. It must be planned on national basis. Any plan on national basis needs to invoke the aid of legislation. Since adult education falls to the share of the constituent States in our constitution, there can be no legislation at the Union level. But this does not mean that the Union Government can play no part in adult education. Failure in adult education will affect the nation as a whole and will result in serious handicap to the discharge of the essential functions of the Union Government, say, in the industrialisation, the defence and the improvement of the public health of the country as a whole.

It is therefore necessary that the Union Government must be very vigilant about the progress of adult education and it must, without official interference but by friendly suggestions, co-ordinate the efforts of the constituent states, pool their several experiences together and be of help in collecting and disseminating of experience in other countries. It can, for example, draft a model Adult Education Act which can be adapted by the constituent States to suit their local conditions and at the same time conform to an All India standard. As it has been already pointed out, the Union Government may maintain a College for Training Teachers' of Adults in the University of Delhi to prepare the leaders in Adult Education for the constituent States. This will incidentally secure a good deal of co-ordination in the efforts of the constituent States. This College can conduct research in teaching technique and curriculum building. There must be a National Director of Adult Education to discharge the responsibilities of the Union Government in the sphere of adult education.

As stated earlier, the main responsibility of a constituent State will be legislative. Adult Education Act should divide the responsibility between the State government and the local bodies which should take responsibility for the primary work of maintaining adult schools. Under the Library Act they will also be taking responsibility for the primary work of maintaining public libraries. The Adult Education Act should make the Minister of Education, the Adult Education Authority and create the post of a Director of Adult Education through whom he will develop and control adult education. The Act should provide for the procedure to be adopted in regard to the Adult Education Deve-

lopment Plan by each Local Body and for their setting up a statutory Adult Education Committee. There should be a financial clause about local rates and state grant to local bodies and to the universities maintaining Training Colleges for Adult Education.

New Outlook

Above all a drastic change in outlook is necessary. Hard thinking, ample finance, with a well-thought out development plan, a broad-based start, beginning with the creation of personnel for teaching, continued research, readiness to adjust the plan to unanticipated difficulties that emerge from time to time, should emerge from the new outlook. Mere pious resolutions, press communique and journalistic voice at the publicity level will not be sufficient. A perpetual fear of and advance capitulation to the imagined turning down of all proposals by the Finance Department, turning the eyes to back, the past and the available precedents without a bold vision of the future, at the secretariat level cannot advance adult education. Indolence, narrow outlook and wooden red-tape at the administrative level will paralyse all growth.

What is wanted is that our Education Minister should spot out some man with full faith in adult education, a proper sense of perspective, vision, drive, undivided loyalty, single-minded devotion to the cause and abundant industry, put him in charge of the work and give him every facility to go ahead with the task of energising the masses with adult education. Enlivening three hundred million people kept ignorant for over a century is a colossal task. We can face it only by the practice of work chastity, industry and vision. May vision, industry and work-chastity descend on those who are in charge of this colossal problem of adult education.

SHRI SHAFIQR REHMAN KIDWAI

Seventh All India Adult Education Conference

30th December 1950, Hyderabad

The Adult Education movement in our country began a long time ago, but in 1937, when the representatives of the people took over the reins of government in the Provinces, this movement gathered momentum. The governments were inspired by patriotic fervour and were imbued with the desire to do their best for the people. In their fervour and enthusiasm they embarked upon many welfare schemes and undertook the work of adult education with great pomp and show. But the people who were to implement the adult education schemes had no experience, no plans and no objectives. Except real enthusiasm they had no qualifications. Naturally no lasting result was achieved. If the national governments had stayed in power for a longer period perhaps one could have taken advantage of the experiments and set the movement on the right path. But in 1939, at the outbreak of the Second World War, they resigned and were replaced by Governor's regime, which not only stopped all social and educational work started by the previous Government, but also tried as far as possible to obliterate all their traces.

Now India has become free. In the Centre and in the States the reins of the administration are in the hands of the representatives of the people who are imbued with the desire to serve the people. They are conscious of the needs of the people and if they are not, they can be made conscious of them. The administration knows and if they do not, they can be made to know that democracy cannot thrive unless the people are educated and made conscious of their rights and duties. Ignorant people are suited for autocracy but not for democracy, for in democracy anti-social elements taking advantage of freedom will exploit the credulity and ignorance of the people and instigate them to create trouble and thus harm the country. Knowledge is said to be the ornament of humanity but it is the life and soul of Democracy. Not only the reform and progress but the very

existence of organised society is dependent upon the masses being educated, conscious of their rights and responsibilities and able to distinguish between what is beneficial for them and what is not. Everybody now understands this. The Central Government, the State governments and the Social Workers understand the importance of adult education and in their own sphere are trying to develop it. But for two reasons the work is not proceeding satisfactorily. First, lack of resources and secondly absence of proper planning and organisation. Both the official and the private agencies are unaware of the technical knowledge required and the experiments necessary and they are carrying on their work just as in 1937, without any set target, without proper knowledge of the needs of the people and without proper assessment of their own resources. It should be the first and foremost duty of this Conference to consider what is the meaning and purpose of adult education, what is its content and scope and how the problems of organising it should be solved.

Answers to these questions can be satisfactorily given by educational experts. But being a field worker I am not attracted by logical definitions and intellectual discussions. I shall, therefore, place before you certain broad outlines of what I have been able to understand in the course of my limited experiments, so that discussion on the entire question may be started, and our attention concentrated on the removal of difficulties and obstacles in our way.

The foremost obstacle which an enthusiastic adult education worker encounters is the definition of adult education and its scope. Some define it as literacy, and seem to think that nothing beyond literacy is included within the scope of adult education, some enlarge the scope to such an extent as to include everything on earth, political and economic changes and improvements, social reforms, religious propaganda, information and advertisement. Now-a-days the tendency to equate adult education with literacy is growing less and the tendency to include in it every thing on earth is growing.

At the moment three terms are being used in connection with the education of the adults—"Mass Education", "Social Education", and "Adult Education". The correct meaning of these terms and their differences from each other are not clear to many people. What I understand from these terms is as follows :—

Mass Education is a wide term. It can be made to include all education imparted to people of all ages and all classes from the stand point of social developments. In my opinion this term cannot be applied to the education of adults.

Social Education denotes that type of education which is given to people under a democratic government with a view to make them conscious of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and to enable them to acquit themselves creditably in Society.

Adult Education in its wider context includes all aspects of the education of the adult but generally it is used for his individual education. To my mind, it means imparting to the adult, education which may help in the development of his personality.

Mass education is an all embracing educational activity, which is being carried on by innumerable agencies according to their own ways. These agencies include Government Departments, private organisations and agencies, newspapers, press and platform, film and radio etc. To organise all these agencies for a set purpose is possible only in a totalitarian state. In a democratic state, it is possible for the Government to keep a watch on their activity and as far as possible to direct them into constructive channels and prevent them from going astray. But with social education, the Government as well as agencies and organisations which are doing the work of educating the people are intimately connected.

So far as Social Education is concerned, our national government paid due attention to it immediately after taking over the reins of administration. The Central Government itself decided to carry on this work on a large scale under its own auspices and gave substantial financial aid to the States to start this work. The objective was not only to make people literate within the shortest possible time, but also to make them conscious of their political and social rights and responsibilities. But the tragedy is that after spending money and time in the first flush of enthusiasm the Government had to stop it because of financial stringency. Even now something is being done, but in the States due to the stoppages of the grant from the Centre this work has been discontinued and there is a danger that the preparatory work done will go waste. We would humbly request that these States should continue to do something or other in the field of social education so that when better times come this work can be enlarged and expanded. To start anew will be difficult as well as expensive. If it is not possible to expand the work because of financial stringency then foresight demands that this period should be utilised for investigation and experiment so that the work of social education may be taken up on a large scale as soon as conditions allow.

So far as the individualistic aspect of educating the adult, which I have termed as adult education, is concerned the problem is more difficult and complicated. It would be better

therefore to understand the meaning of this term before we discuss the curriculum and technique of adult education. There are three or four important qualifications of adult education. (1) An adult educates himself. The adult education worker is not his teacher, he is only a friend, adviser and helper (2) The most important object of the education of adult is to enable him to face the real conditions of life and to solve his practical day to day need. (3) For the adult, education is secondary and his profession is primary, (4) Normally he can spare time for education only during his leisure, which is the only time when he can have recreation and rest.

Now when we consider the problem of adult education in the light of these four considerations, we will realise that it is not possible to draw up a common curriculum and programme of work for all adults. We have to draw up plans and curricula for all sections and classes. We will have to leave some margin for individuals having different temperaments and capacities. Therefore an individual or an organisation cannot draw one definite scheme and curriculum for adult education. There should be different agencies working on different programmes. Our Universities, lectures and students, technical experts and national welfare departments and crafts institutions can help us to draw up all sorts of curricula for all sorts of people. These institutions are manned by experts in art and learning, and if these people desire it, every adult according to his own capacity can achieve higher intellectual and artistic competence under their guidance and advice and thus fulfil his or her ambition.

The scope and content of the scheme, the period for which it should last will be different according to the capacity and the resources available. In this respect it is very difficult to have a definite principle. On the basis of my own experience I can say only this much that courses lasting for long periods and covering a wide range of subjects cannot attract people nor can they be useful, but if courses are short and the range of subjects is not too wide, it would be easily acceptable and the chances of success would be greater.

After the curriculum comes the question of test of examination. There is no doubt that in the initial stages the adult is afraid of examinations, but all the same, each individual wants his labour to be rewarded with some certificate or diploma. Therefore in adult education also the need for examinations or tests and the award of diplomas, cannot be disputed. But these examinations should not be on the existing pattern. The purpose of these examinations should not be to ask questions to baffle the examinee but to enable him to answer correctly after a little effort. It should not be forgotten that there is a difference between educational tests and competitive examinations.

In competitive examination the attempt is to judge the maximum ability of the examinee, while in educational tests, the attempt is to know the progress, however little, he has made, so that he may gain greater confidence. Thus the examination itself becomes a useful medium of education.

I had earlier stated that in adult education, the adult educator is not a teacher but a friend, advisor and companion. This does not mean less work for the adult education worker nor does it mean that the requires no training. There should be no misconception on that score. On the contrary his task is much more difficult than that of a teacher, and demands, in addition to personality, a high degree of technical knowledge, specially of psychology.

The reason why the work in adult education has not succeeded as it should have done is that so far this work has been in the hands of religious, political and social workers who were amateurs from the educational point of view or in the hands of primary school teachers, used to technique and methods followed for teaching children. The volunteers have had enthusiasm and also in some cases natural gifts for social service, but little technical knowledge and training. For adult education we require the following types of workers, who should be given different training for different types of work.

- (a) Propagandists,
- (b) Wardens and organisers.
- (c) Examiners.
- (d) Teachers and lecturers.
- (e) Research Scholars.

Till now only the need for training teachers has been felt and some arrangement has also been made in this respect. But in adult education normal teaching techniques are not so important as in child education because there is not much of normal teaching. What is needed is the training of urban and rural adult education workers, to enable them to organise and develop this work; of authors, to write books for the adults keeping in view the temperament and capacity of adults of various classes and professions; of scholars, to investigate and to research on the correlated problems of adult education. But it is obvious that even after trained personnel are available the work of adult education cannot proceed further unless the necessary educational accessories like books, literature, charts, maps, audio-visual aids, implements for practical training in arts and crafts are available. Therefore preparation of these necessary educational accessories occupies a pivotal position in adult education. These accessories should be such as to take the place of the teachers, so that the self-educated adult should have as little need of the teacher as possible.

The task of preparing and publishing these accessories will, in course of time, be done by educational publishers and manufacturers on a profit basis but in the initial stage, to set up standards and models and to persuade publishers to undertake this business, special encouragement and aid is necessary.

The field for research in adult education and its allied problems is very wide. In order to discover the proper methods of teaching adults, it is necessary to find out the centres of interests of adults of various classes, sections and professions and teaching should be correlated to those centres of interest. It is quite obvious, their interest would lie in their professions, but in some cases they have deep interest in other values also. It is the task of the adult education worker to know these interests, to have an idea of their intensity and duration and also the causes of tiredness and means for its removal. In short the problem of educational psychology, curriculum making and organisation etc. provides a wide field of investigation and research.

An important objective of investigation and organisation of adult education work should be to provide leadership, guidance and coordination of the numerous agencies who are doing this work in one shape or other. These agencies should be fully utilised in the work of adult education.

I mentioned the press, platform, radio, and film as the media for mass education. But these media also influence greatly an individual's education, which we have termed as "Adult Education". In addition to these Government departments, political and social bodies, libraries, reading rooms, temples, mosques, churches, gurdwaras, dharamsalas, discussion groups, clubs, health societies, melas, exhibitions, theatres, cinemas, and innumerable other agencies are doing adult education work. But since there is no coordination, discipline and organisation amongst them, nor any common objective, much energy is wasted and many efforts instead of proving useful, prove harmful. This state of things can be best compared with the habits of those rivers and rivulets which irrigate the land round about them in normal times but destroy the crops when in spate. Just as it is necessary to dig canals to control the unbridled power of the flood water, it is imperative to organise all adult education agencies to achieve definite objectives.

In my opinion, for this purpose, setting up of educational centres in all localities and areas is absolutely necessary. Through these centres, adult education and mass education should be organised. For infusing strength, vitality and continuity in the adult education movement, I consider the importance of "Educational Centres" to be such that I would even suggest the setting up of a centre just in name. I

have full confidence that these centres, in course of time, would develop into active means of fulfilling real educational and social needs of their area. But these would be general and local organisations for adult education. In addition to these, there is need for central organisations which would arrange to supply these "Educational Centres" with various services e.g. library service, films, librarians, trained teachers, useful speakers, cultural missions, publishers, etc. It would be these central bodies which would make the "Educational Centres" in name into *active* Educational Centres.

As the peoples' interest in adult education grows, the need would arise for setting up Janta schools, Janta colleges, Vidyapeeths, Educational Settlements, Polytechnics for imparting technical, and vocational training to adults.

Therefore, in the future plan of adult education, the need and importance of "Educational Centres", of the Central service-supplying agencies, and of Central vocational and technical institute cannot be ignored.

The success of the adult education movement, in the ultimate analysis, lies in the cooperation and coordination of the various forces and agencies working for it. Amongst these are two powerful forces, the Government and the Voluntary agencies. Because of lack of cooperation and coordination between these two, much money, time and energy is being wasted. If we have to make a success of adult education the Government as well as voluntary organisations, the most important of which is the Indian Adult Education Association, must join hands and draw up a plan of action with definite objectives. For drawing of a plan, it is obvious, good deal of thought is required but one thing is clear and that is that a State cannot alone undertake the responsibility of educating the people of a democracy. This responsibility must be shouldered by the people themselves. But at the present moment, we have neither the ability, nor the resources to undertake the task. Therefore it is the duty of a farsighted Government to patronise and encourage and aid enthusiastic social workers and voluntary agencies, and enable them to shoulder this responsibility. The Government should only watch them to the extent required to maintain order and discipline and should not fetter them with rules and regulations, which may kill initiative and damp enthusiasm.

In this connection, I wish to express my gratitude to the Central Ministry of Education and congratulate them for the valuable aid and patronage extended to the Indian Adult Education Association and other voluntary organisations. By doing so, they have given an indication of their policy which has considerably stimulated adult education workers.

The Indian Adult Education Association is a monument to the farsightedness of a few sincere educationists. It continued to exist in very adverse circumstances due to a few sincere and silent workers and today it is a living organisation through which adult education workers of various places continue to maintain relations amongst themselves and know about each other's work. This relation and cooperation between different workers must be enlarged and intensified so that we could take advantage of one another's experiences and experiment. I am confident that the Government will continue to assist and you will continue to trust the Association so that it may be able to become a truly national association worthy of free India.

In the end, I wish to remind you that the time through which we are passing is one of the most difficult and delicate periods in our country's history. Clouds of fear are gathered around us and danger of another world war is looming large on the horizon. But all these dangers are the result of our own doing and can be warded off by our own efforts. The only way to ward them off is to arouse the power for good latent in us as human beings. We, the educational workers of this country, must keep this high ideal before us and face all difficulties and tribulations with faith, patience and confidence. We must continue our work and if sometimes our strength fails us, let us remember the struggle of our Great Mahatma, whose achievements arose out of his failures and who has left us an example that is looked upto by the whole world.

SHRI RANJIT M. CHETSINGH

*Eighth All India Adult Education Conference,
26th October, 1951, Bombay*

It is a matter for thankfulness that the country thinks now in terms not merely of Adult Literacy but of Social Education. If this represents a measure,—as I think in some ways, it does,—of our progress in the appreciation and consciousness of the human values of adult education it is a matter for satisfaction. I fear, however, that the narrower conceptions of adult education and the clap trap connected with the so-called campaigns, some of which proved a snare and delusion, still tends to persist and we have yet a long way to go before we—our administrators and those who guide and mould public policies and we as a people,—come to believe in the true significance of adult education.

Adult Education in the Life of People

I do not propose to inflict on you a very long address. I will not take time, therefore, to discuss at length the content and the wider philosophy of adult education. I must share with you, however a few considerations which we either do not allow to arise in our basic thinking and in our planning or which we tend to neglect and ignore. Yet they are considerations which we cannot afford to ignore except at grave peril to the future of our social and political development as a people. Here is one.

“Finished my Education”

A hard-dying but pernicious heresy seems to underline our thinking about education. It is that education is a matter of the earlier years of life. How often do we hear such remarks as “I finished my education in 1945” (or whatever year it was); “Mr. A. completed his education 7 years ago !” “What people have in mind in that they ceased to be whole-time students in a

given institution at a given time." But life is meant to be little but an age-long pilgrimage of learning. As we grow, our capacities of understanding and discernment become sharper and more comprehensive. Begtrup has pointed out in writing of Denmark :

"Experience proves that the same amount of information which it takes the half-grown youth,—dozing on the school forms—3 to 5 years to learn, can be acquired by adults who are keen on learning and who have done practical work, in the space of 3 to 5 months."

This is not surprising, of course, for we all agree that a person with some familiarity with a subject turns to it with greater interest than a person who has no knowledge of it ; and further that a study of *theory and practice together* gives us lasting knowledge. Prof. Ernest Barker has forcefully reminded us that "Men educate themselves for citizenship by what they do to educate themselves when they have ceased to be educated by others." And this is only one side of an important but alas ! neglected educational truth. There are some studies which can benefit us only in maturer, or shall I say the maturing years of life. Several years ago I read what Aristotle and Newman have taught us about the study of certain subjects being suited to the later stages of life. But then I did not apprehend their import so fully as I do today when in my own life-journey, I have begun to look forward to the half century year-post. I agree more fully with Prof. Ernest Barker to-day than I had the capacity to do when, several years ago, I read the following : "Before you can really study the theory of good and evil in ethics, you must have felt their tussle in your own conscience : You must have realised in your own life the existence of moral problems. Similarly before you can really study the theory of right and wrong in politics, you must have under-gone some sort of political experience : You must have felt what it is like to be confronted with some sort of political issue; you must have wrestled yourself, in some way, with the problems of conduct and organization which arise in human societies."

Citizen's Choice

*Zindagi ki nabz hai betabi-e-amal
Sun kisi zinda ke munh se dastan-e-zindagi.*

The very pulse (essence) of living is the impulse to creative action. To learn the meaning of living you should listen to the life-story of one who is truly alive. This we must know applies to the age long process of education. The educated man continues to be educated every day of his life. It is the dull and

the dead whose education stops. And conversely those who cease to educate themselves become dull and live only as dead men !

Adult Education for the Educated

This brings me to what I wish to emphasize particularly as deserving of our consideration for the next few years. I wish to suggest that while struggling to evolve a programme for the mass of our population we should also give some attention to the problem of the education of the so-called educated.

In the first place we should definitely press for schemes of *Continuation Education* which would provide facilities for the maturing of the talents, both mental and motor, of those millions of our young people who get absorbed in the struggle for making a living while they are still in their middle teens. Evening classes with a vocational bias, as well as more definite provision for imparting a knowledge of economically gainful skills should be made available on a wide scale. Polytechnics, commercial and technical institutes and handicraft centres should be opened *in the evenings* with facilities for recreational corporate activity. These should be organized to give professional or vocational help in a definitely educational atmosphere. Not only large cities but towns of 5 to 10 thousand people should have these *houses of learning* which would never ignore human and cultural values. For education is atmosphere as well as instruction, as Livingstone reminds us, "It is not an assemblage of piecemeal acquisitions and accomplishments but the formation, largely unconscious, of an outlook and an attitude."

Less formal Avenues

Most humans tend to object to being taught or "worked upon." We in this country tend to be extra assertive in this regard for we have an unrecognized awareness of our inferiority in the educational realm. That is why few "educated" people are willing to join any sort of a class in our cities. Educational agencies have also made the mistake of making very stiff and formal provision in their programmes,—provision which is reminiscent of the school room. We need to make wide use of the device of *Forums*. *Forums* are unlike lectures in presenting a subject from various points of view through a series of meetings, and also in providing for active participation by the audience. "The prepared contribution of a speaker, or speakers, with which the majority of forums open, sets them apart from round-tables and other types of discussion. Voluntary attendance, as well as the practice of choosing subjects with the needs and interests of the audience primarily in mind, differentiates forums from courses offered by Schools, Colleges, and

University extension departments, many of which are now adopting the forum method as a golden mean between the too formal lecture and the too informal discussion, especially for the teaching of the social sciences."

M. L. Ely who has given the American Association for Adult Education a special study on this subject tells us that "frequently the audiences that are thus made up are in the beginning mere aggregations of individuals with no apparent connection beyond their immediate interest in the particular speaker whom they have come to hear or the particular subject upon which he is to speak. Sometimes this condition remains unchanged throughout the history of the forum, particularly if that history is brief. But these community forums that come together repeatedly over a long period of time gradually develop a nucleus of members who learn to know one another and so achieve some degree of solidarity."

Of one of the largest City Forums in the U.S.A. it has been said : "The people's *Forum* is beyond question one of the great factors in the civic and social life of New York City. It has more than once been the means of saving the City from ruinous legislation. Many an issue which might have been passed over without protest has become live because the citizens of New York have registered their opinions in no uncertain tones on its platform." The Forum may have a symposium, a debate, a panel discussion or a brains trust. Various and varied devices can be employed to suit different conditions.

Limited-Objective Clubs offer another possibility, particularly in towns and cities. If a State or a District were to take up this channel it could have a chain of clubs, which would, with the help of supplied speakers or leaders, hold weekly or fortnightly meetings. The atmosphere at these meetings should be most informal and those attending should have the opportunity for asking questions and of making comments. Matters, concerning the daily lives of people such as wheat or sugar prices, cloth scarcity, medical aid, road and rail transport could be discussed freely, but after taking into account a presentation of the subject by a competent person.

In such clubs technical educational terms should be avoided as far as possible and the simplest language should be used.

Educational Broadcasting in India

All too often we confuse propaganda with education. Therefore the important agency of the Radio has not been used

educationally to the extent it can be and should be used. The use of the Radio and the loud-speaker is much less restricted in our country by Public Nuisance Act than it is in many other parts of the world. Anywhere you go, almost at any time of the day, in any considerable town you can hear the loud-speaker at work. Conversations, debates of an educational character on the radio (preserved in *Records* to be used when convenient) could be made a means of extending our educational sphere. Such conversations and debates should be couched in simple terms and in a humorous vein.

In educational broadcasting the informing procedure, the teaching procedure and the thinking procedure must be combined. These must be vulcanized by the amusing procedure. "A broadcast is education as it gives information which a society regards as socially desirable, if it discusses items of knowledge and gives clear-cut directions for their practical application, if it gives a step-by-step-explanation of how to do or make a certain thing, if it presents a problem involving the exercise of judgment, of constructive thinking in such a way as to bring out, in an impartial and dispassionate manner, all the various factors involved in the problem so that listeners are stimulated to make an intelligent evaluation and arrive at a logical conclusion."

But we must make it all acceptable by remembering that humour and song are mediums which are more easily accepted than dry education.

Audio-Visual Aids

In writing to this subject I have said elsewhere: "In India one of the basic defects of all learning is the lack of co-ordination between our different faculties and innate powers. The ear and the eye are not trained to work together that is why defects in pronunciation, (particularly in the speaking of English or of any other foreign language), can be noticed among students and other learners who have the opportunity of hearing the language in question spoken correctly almost daily in their lives. Similarly there is very little scope given for *learning by doing* in our educational organisation. Education and learning are often thought of in India as matters of purely of listening and taking in impressions. In fact as one talks to the average person in our country,—particularly among the older generations,—one is impressed by the fact that ability to learn is considered to be a matter of possessing a good memory and little more. However, we also know that in India it has been an old practice for groups, large and small, to collect and sit and listen to some one who is reciting or holding forth in peroration. Literally

multitudes (if we think of the country as a whole) spend their late evenings in this way. Think of the small groups making music and song,—much to the annoyance and inconvenience very often of their neighbours,—into the early hours of the morning! Think of the “*kathas*” and the perorations let loose on our people night after night in village, town and city. And yet it would be idle to imagine that people always learn by going and sitting among the many who congregate for such things. It is possible to sit and listen, just as much as it is possible to sit but *not* listen. It is possible to listen and understand just as much as it is possible to sit and listen but *not* understand. If, however, the total personality can be touched and the organs of the eye and the ear can be affected the educator gives himself a far greater chance. He gives himself and even greater chance when he invites the audience to exercise their vocal powers also. If he can set in motion processes which will “Tickle” them into a desire for expression by his concerted approach to all these faculties he is well on the way to success.

Such is the contribution that the Audio-visual technique can make to the education of our people. This includes the use not only of the slide and the picture but also of dramatization and group motor activity. For a group engaged in motor activity is not merely accomplishing something for itself, it is exercising an audio-visual influence over others. That is why I am firmly convinced that the development of the audio-visual technique should include the training of groups in dramatics and in other individual as well as group activity. The value of stopping the showing of a picture at a convenient stage,—perhaps in a second showing,—and of trying to help the audience to express themselves in some similar way is simply incalculable. But the educator who would attempt this must make sure of his ability to carry through this effort.

Ends and Means

All these avenues that I have mentioned imply opportunities for workers and administrators in this field to meet together and exchange experiences. It also implies the need for training. The Indian Adult Education Association is to be congratulated for arranging two National Seminars, one in Jabalpur and one more recently in Indore. These meet a real need and I hope they can be held in different parts of the country each year. But seminars involve heavy expenditure in time and money and we should not be slow in securing and offering material support for them.

Parent Education among “The Educated”

The two National Seminars that I have mentioned above

dealt with the removal of Illiteracy and with Community Centres. Both these subjects concern the less privileged people. Keeping in mind the needs of the country I hope that the next one may deal with the important subject of Parent Education, particularly among the so-called educated classes. There is a certain vulgar ostentation in many so-called "educated" homes—homes from which our Secondary Schools and our Universities draw their students. I must confess to a frequent feeling of disgust when I meet parents, guardians and relations of students. In the presence of innocent youth they announce with vulgar boastfulness that the youth A, B, or C "is very clever" and go on to quote some of the fads that the clever one may have. We need to help to develop wise love among parents which refuses to surround their offspring with the luxuries and vulgarities of modern life, which sets standards of restraint and frugality, of integrity and of simplicity. Parents, all too often, while doing lip-service to high standards and professing allegiance to moral values, demand "exceptions to the rule" and plead for the ignoring of the claims of equity as a special case. Of exhortation we have enough in India. We need to promote the systematic study of character and personality,—both psychological and social—among the people. To this task we need to turn our attention as soon as we can.

Let us not imagine any more that ignorance and stupidity is the monopoly of the illiterate, and let us put away that air of superiority with which we tend to approach this whole task of adult education. Let us go forward in faith and with zeal which comes of believing in the Right of all Men and Women to have opened to them the door of Opportunity and Light.

SHRI G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAU

*Ninth All India Adult Education Conference,
28th December 1952, Nagpur*

I consider it a privilege to preside over a conference which has been called to draw attention to the first constructive need of the country and to work out a solution of the problems that face us in solving that need. A worker all my life, I have felt that there is no greater necessity to-day than an army of men devoted to the constructive side of our existence in this country. In fact, I consider that the world has arrived at the top of a precipice by its continued attachment to competitive life, where political power has counted as the supreme aspiration for holding down the exploited, be it economically, socially or even intellectually and is to-day threatened with an abysmal fall into a gaping chasm. Whatever the groping world may be doing for the moment, it is certain that the heart of the world is sound and is indicating the path of love, co-operation and peace as the invisible slope that will take humanity to a safe haven. To build up a society based on love, co-operation and peace—i.e. on Truth and Ahimsa—every one of us should employ ourselves in such constructive activities as will help each other. Politics, in the sense in which the term is understood to-day, does not exist for us who are the makers of a new world of love.

Adult Education

Adult Education is, as has been truly described, the Education of the adult for life. As life expands the education of the adult must expand. This expanding process of education is all within the sphere of the adult educationist—rather this whole expanding process of education has to be provided for whosoever may be in a position to make that provision. Extreme individualist as Gandhiji was, he said that when once an adult educationist is in a village no other constructive worker need go there. He dreamt of men of too high an order for the present world and of too simple a life that does not appear to be in sight.

Gandhiji expected the ideal adult educationist to come out of the Congressmen who had grown up under his discipline but what has happened you all know. When I thought of organising adult education on behalf of the Government of Madras as its Honorary Adviser, I did not really want to put the burden of adult education on the shoulders of the ill-equipped, ill paid, hard-worked elementary school teacher, but events have proved that he is, in main, the available stuff in villages and you may not dispense with him on pain of closing down all initial effort. My experience in Madras appears to be the experience of other States in India like Bombay, Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar, who have made very fair progress in the adult education endeavour. We have struggled hard, and are struggling still to equip the elementary school teacher for the great job of initiating adult education. We are struggling to make him realise that he, by himself, will be unable to achieve the objective in view, but that he should do his best to associate with his work not only his co-teachers in the school but also every educated individual of his place and officers of all departments on circuit and non-official intelligentsia that may visit the place. We are struggling to use the large force of the student population to do their part in adult education. The best experiments have been carried on with this force in Mysore and Madhya Pradesh. We are struggling to interest the villager to take share in building up his own unit. In fact, in the adult education movement, it is man-power that is the most urgent problem—man power fairly trained and equipped for the task.

Educated Men

It is true in the ultimate analysis we desire to utilise every educated man to carry the torch of knowledge to the homes of our illiterate and ignorant masses. May I, in this connection appeal to mature men and women who have reached the age of *Vanaprasta* to rise to the occasion and, instead of retiring to ignominious existence in *Samsara*, take an active part to organise all educated men to this task of spreading knowledge far and wide.

Consciousness for better life

We desire to develop the Adult Education movement into a mass movement, at any rate the first stage of it, the purposeful literacy part of it. We know now by experience that mere literacy will fail in its purpose. From the very start, we so arrange our programme now as to make it perfectly clear that we treat the adult as a social unit competent to shape himself politically, economically and socially and through that effort.

take the country along the path of progress. In fact, one of the hardest tasks before the adult educationist is the arousing of the consciousness in the individual adult that he has a future before him which he, by his moral and intelligent effort, can build up inch by inch and attain, through degrees, to a plane of happy and healthy living. Our common humanity feels so hopelessly depressed that it cannot think of doing anything else but welter in the quagmire of ignorance and poverty in the name of fate which has per-determined conditions of life for every individual. To take the ordinary adult out of quagmire and make him realise that he cannot have one morsel more of food or one yard more of cloth without becoming literate and educated is to begin the adult education effort. I am glad that the very adverse conditions of life that have developed as a consequence of our long slavery have had their effect and the oppressed and exploited keenly feel that they should rise. To canalise this feeling into an effort for self education and self exertion for the redemption of both the individual and the community is the primary duty of the adult educationist.

Plan needed

To commence from such beginnings and carry the adult through successive stages of purposeful literacy, social education development of craft and professional equipment, profitable use of the written and printed matter and exercise of the higher nature in the development of the community life of which he is a part, requires a thorough going plan, not put down on paper in a stereotyped manner by the exercise of some centralised intellect, but by a proper forecast of the future made by actual assessment of field work as it evolves all around through the toil of men and women engaged in the great task. I am sure that you will all agree with me that annual conferences like this on an All India basis should draw for their sustenance on very many gatherings all over the country throughout the year. I wish, however, we could organise these in a thorough manner at the bottom level to give our annual national gatherings much greater reality. I do hope all language areas will convene their own gatherings and send representatives to All India conferences who will represent different aspects of adult education. This is, however, by the way, though this also is a part of the plan we should keep in mind.

Tradition of Literacy

The presumption that India in days gone by developed her huge culture only through an appeal to the ear is absolutely unfounded. Asoka should have been a fool if he had written

down his edicts on stones for popular appeal if there was not a very appreciable reading public. Our alphabets themselves bear evidence to literacy activities in the country. For instance, our traditional Telugu alphabet begins with letters which clearly indicate that the Saivas and the Jains worked at literacy to propogate their faiths amongst the population of the country. The widespread practice of writing of stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata on the ceiling floors of temples in South India is a further indication that reading was expected of the Bhaktas as a whole. Of course when printing was unknown and duplication was difficult, you may not claim that you had universal literacy. The advent of British rule effaced indigenous institutions out of existence and if literacy did not spread, it was our slavery that was the root cause. Even as much you will find that in the nineties of the nineteenth century, Swami Vivekananda raised his voice in his usual energetic tenor and said :

So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them.....
Our great national sin is the neglect of the masses and that is the cause of our down fall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for”.

When the nationalist movement started at the beginning of this century you will find poet Bharati declaring that teaching one poor illiterate to read is of much greater merit than thousands of wells sunk or other traditional acts of cmeity, and his co-workers like the President of this conference starrting the first Adult Class in 1907. It is also equally true that the foreign missionary who walked into India with the Imperial flag of England raised aloft, brought into India his own endeavour of proselatization and literacy for his fold. Thus it will be seen that India has an encouraging tradition of Literacy. It has no need to be spoon-fed by outside agencies for the very concept, though the developing knowledge of the world should always be absorbed and utilised. Therefore, let leaders of men in this country, big and small, not repeat the myth that knowledge in India has come down by word of mouth and men do not require literacy to be cultured, the more so in the twentieth century of advanved scientific developments that are applied for meeting every need of life.

This tradition of literacy did continue in certain parts of the country, more especially in areas like Travancore, Mysore, Baroda and Cochin. That some of these areas show a literacy of 50% and over is a tribute to the people and the rulers of such areas. But, it cannot be said that the British Government

encouraged literacy and adult education. The struggle that Gokhale put up for compulsory education beginning right at the beginning in 1911 has not still borne fruit, though compulsory education has nominally been in existence for two decades. The Education Ministers in Madras have had to confess that not fifty percent of the children of school going age are now at schools. Adult literacy and education did not make any appeal to the British administrator. Still for purposes of religious propaganda Mission bodies from the western world did do, among their fold, very commendable literacy work. For instance the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church, Guntur, founded in 1842, has had the one great aim of teaching all the members of the church to read. Other Christian establishments all over the country have done similar work. Developed urban areas like Bombay necessarily cultivated a social consciousness which gave birth to a number of institutions of various types carrying on ameliorative services for labourers, women, and the depressed classes in general which have engaged themselves in philanthropic activities including literacy. The Mogaveera Vyasthapak Mandal, the Bombay Presidency Adult Education Association, the Maharatta Bhangi Samaj, the Nagpada Neighbourhood House, the Naigam Social Service Society and many, others may be mentioned. To come very much nearer home the Hislop College City Night School in this city is an institution worth mentioning as an example of work done by the social impulse in our urban areas. This institution was founded in 1925. It is the one institution, in the province, with a strength of 500 or more adults. It is managed by College students without any remuneration. Besides such work in the urbanised areas, all India organisations like the Ramakrishna Mission, the Servants of India Society, the Y.M.C.A., the All India Women's Conference, Sri Niketan and different social service leagues did have as part of their work literacy and adult education. In fact, the liberalising movements of Brahmoism, Aryasamaj and Theosophy, the widespread social reform activities that resulted in consequence of such liberalising movements did contribute to the spread of adult education. I remember that, before the Vandemataram movement shook our part of the country, and produced strong currents of thought and brought into existence the rural library and Andhra movements, the urge for social justice generated by the activity of Sri Veeresalingam has resulted in starting institutions for the education of the depressed and oppressed.

Streaks of Dawn of Freedom

After all this has been said, it must still be admitted that until the streaks of dawn of freedom appeared on the horizon literacy did not become a passion. When the British Government

announced the literacy vote in 1934 patriotic souls dreamt of achieving adult franchise by making all adults literate. Gandhiji himself advised the ruler of the State of Aundh to concede the vote to the literate and achieve cent per cent literacy for the whole population of the State in a measurable time. It was not, however, till Congress Ministries took shape in 1937, that States took up literacy as a policy. The first great drive was inaugurated in Bihar in 1938-1939, by Dr. Syed Mahmud, Education Minister of the State. It was about that time that the Indian Adult Education Association was started.

United Provinces launched its scheme of Adult Education—creation of literacy and its maintenance—on January 15th, 1939. In Bombay, the Congress Government took over work from the Bombay Literacy Campaign Committee which had started whirlwind propaganda for awakening the public consciousness on the urgency of the problem and had started literacy classes in different parts of the city in the previous year and a special Bombay Adult Education Committee came into existence with Mr. B. G. Kher, the then Chief Minister of Bombay as President. About the same time the South Indian Adult Education Association was formed and was very vigorously carrying on propaganda work, starting training classes and opening literacy centres. The Madras Government did not initiate any scheme of adult education though the Chief Minister, C. Rajagopalachari wrote and published his first book for adults and two books later for follow-up study. The Jammu and Kashmir State had already an Adult Education Officer. Bengal records, on the authority of the draft report prepared by the Committee on Adult Education appointed in 1938 by the Government of Bengal, that in the subdivision of Serajganj alone there were as many as 2,000 Adult Education centres with over a lakh of pupils during 1937-38 and in the whole of Bengal there were 8,000 Literacy classes with 150,000 pupils and these were all private enterprises. Necessarily the whole structure collapsed by what followed in Bengal later. A remnant of 412 privately managed night schools was left in West Bengal. Punjab had its own big drive which suffered badly later for the same reasons as in Bengal.

Scarcely had Congress ministers started in certain provinces, as detailed above, *on the adventure of Adult Education*, they had to resign in the first week of November 1939 because of differences with the British Government.

Influenced by events all over India during the first Congress ministries, Assam and Mysore started work in 1940 and 1941. All this was a reflection of the earlier work in favour of literacy for the adults. Congress Governments did not come back to power till May 1946. Between November 1939 and May 1946

what happened to the Adult Education schemes launched by the Congress Governments is not very clear.

In States where Congress Governments had launched on schemes of Adult Education, the departments of Education seem to have generally shelved them. Only in Bombay and Mysore where there were state blessed quasi-governmental organisations in existence fair progress was made. Another noteworthy endeavour also flourished. When the Congress Ministries came into power the Idara Talim-O-Taraqqi started work in 1938. It had concentrated mainly on the production of post literacy booklets. It had the Vice-Chancellor of the Jamia-Millia as its President. For long, in-fact till yesterday, my friend Janab Shafiq-ur-Rahaman Kidwai, the present Education Minister of the Delhi State, was its Secretary. Assisted by the Jamia-Millia he well managed his enterprise and all credit must be given to him for pioneering the work in Delhi, the capital of India. To-day, it stands first in the field of publication of follow-up literature and modernised approach to adult education through its fleet of vans.

In States, like Madras where the Congress Government had not taken responsibility we had actual suppression of the Adult Education movement. In 1941 our work was actually impeded. The Government of the day issued orders banning training centres for adult teaching or actual adult education classes run without the permission of the Police or the magistracy. We set up an agitation against the order no doubt. I presided over the conference at Tenali. You certainly do not expect me to tell you that the Government changed its mind. After the Congress Government came into power, in the wake of our Independence, the Adult Education Movement began its onward march once again as State enterprise in many areas. For purposes of this address I have tried to get as much information as I may. In August 1952, I addressed all State Governments in India to give me assistance by furnishing information and a large number of them have been good enough to oblige me. I thank them all for the great courtesy they have shown me. Probably due to the defective nature of my own questionnaire I have not been able to understand clearly certain matters. The history of Adult Education in India has yet to be written. That is by itself a great task, and with the very little study I have made, I have, no right to claim that I have understood the problem in all its bearings. Still with the information I have been able to get I have essayed to discuss the trends in our country so that we may all have a picture of the present situation for guidance in our own work. You will please pardon me, therefore, if I miss a point here or a point there. I shall certainly be the better when I have had the collective wisdom of this house at the end of our labours.

In 1948-49 and 1950, work re-started or started in several States. Madras, Orissa, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Hyderabad, Jammu-Kashmir, Madhya Bharat, Pepsu, Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Travancore-Cochin, Ajmer and Delhi were actively at work. Other states like Bhopal, Coorg and Himachal Pradesh started later or are still at the stage of starting. What was hitherto wanting in general for Adult Education, namely State planning, support and patronage, has now been available for a fair initial advance.

What Politics Means

However, with the advent of political Independence and the assumption of Government by political leaders, notions of education, necessarily changed and as a part thereof notions of Adult Education also. To serve the purposes of a free nation building up a democratic tradition, the Govt. directed that with literacy must go a modicum of social culture essential to civic consciousness, health existence and a proper appreciation of the value of our main stay of life—agriculture. To me it appears that for successful Social Education of the type contemplated by the Central Government, our adult centres must run for one year, if we have to avoid waste of energy and finance. Villages must be humming with adult activity, year in and year out, though sets of learners at the centre may differ from year to year. Welfare States, as ours are, cannot escape initiating, fostering and encouraging other types of extension work for adults. The State of Travancore-Cochin which has already a high percentage of literacy, about fifty, has, in addition to Literacy work undertaken to give craft instruction through the Social Education centres. Spinning, sewing, kitchen gardening, compost making, poultry, bee-keeping, coir work, mat-weaving are now being taught. Community centre developments have also taken place. Full time workers are employed and permanent institutions have sprung up. The stupendous task of adult education which we have undertaken to solve has so many facets as to preclude discussion of them all in a Presidential address like this. It certainly requires trained men of different types to handle it. We may not discuss all the types of training required but training for the first stage that is now on must receive attention.

All the States in India are utilising elementary school teachers, sometimes called primary school teachers, practically as the largest force to work the initial stages of adult education. Every where there is a definite feeling that these teachers have to be transformed into something much better, be it for educating the child or educating the adult. In the first place they have to be appraised of the Guru-hood

in them. They should be trained to appreciate their own position as the basic makers of a new society of cooperative life. Next to the outlook on life, their equipment has to be such as to answer the needs of an expanding vision of a world co-operative community. Though their work may be elementary it is really basic. The elementary school teacher to-day requires to be trained in the outlook ; and in addition, his equipment has to be bettered by every means. I have therefore felt that for giving training in Adult Education work to elementary school teachers, as a rule, short courses will not do as a standard. The least is a month or six weeks followed by refresher courses. The revolutionary change we require in the outlook and equipments of the bulk of our elementary school teachers is impossible of achievement if we do not attempt new and radical developments in the system now adopted.

The second major army of workers in the cause of Education is the senior student population guided by their teachers. In fact, the Bihar State, in the enunciation of its new policy for intensive organisation of work, restricts its Adult Education agency to Educational Institutions. This it does, not only in the interests of the illiterate and unlearnt adult, but in the interests of the youth of the country. I reproduce below the actual wording adopted by that State :

“Keeping in view the effective role of schools and colleges in shaping the life of the community or the nation, the new scheme of Social Education makes an institutional approach to the task of educating the masses and offers an opportunity to the young students and their teachers to participate in building up the social life of the State. It gives a purpose and ambition to the youth of Bihar and offers a solution to the problem created by the wide and yawning gulf between the *classes* and the *masses*.”

This is a very proper attitude to take from the point of view of the revolutionary development that should take place in our social life. Students should be encouraged to undertake adult education work all through. Social service leagues in colleges and schools may plan out their educational programmes.

Methods of Teaching

Next to the training of the Adult Teacher, the subject that must deserve our attention is the Methods of Teaching. India is a country with hoary traditions. The ordinary illiterate in the street is not an uncultured man. He has a sense of values beyond the reach of the present mechanised man. Another

factor that is not grasped is that his languages are rich in expression. While it is true that for a long time the classical scholar, the great supporter of authority and imperialism has dominated society, literature, and learning, still what is now commonly known as folklore has existed side by side without being recognised. This lore began to assert itself as ideas of freedom moved us actively and today, we can present the hitherto patronising West with fine specimens of people's song and poetry. Therefore, it is best that no attempt is made, in the name of general literacy all over the world, to weave literacy with the spiritual culture of our race or its folk song and verse folk sayings. When an European lady co-worker of ours, in her anxiety to teach Tamil through the Roman Script, unknowingly introduced a sentence "nan oru nai", "I am a dog" we felt shocked and the more emotional amongst us almost drew the conclusion that the lady was trying to label us a nation of curs. Our adult is fairly well advanced in culture content, though he may not possess scientific knowledge so essential for modern living or the international outlook we are anxious he should possess. He can actually discover ordinary factual absurdities and he may not relish trivialities even as you start him on his literacy work. What is fit for children is not fit for grown up men of understanding. Any centralised attempt by the Indian Government to impose methods that foreign experts manufacture in their work-shops is bound to be repugnant. It will not be the fault of the experts ; for, they have no experience of advanced men being illiterate. Themselves well off, they consider poorer nations backward in all directions and are convinced that but for them the backward nations may not exist.

Educationists in different parts of India have been giving immense thought to make methods, easy, more easy and more easy for the adult learner and they are prepared to receive light from whatever source it may come but they should not be deprived of their freedom to carry on their own people's development in true relationship to the high idealism placed before them by Gandhiji. If India has to save the world, it must save itself from the aberrations of the world. I shall not much further dilate on this subject except to say that interested men from every language area should often meet and review from time to time their own work and proceed to make improvements. I should also suggest that the Central Government, even for its Community Projects, should not rule from the Centre in matters of cultural and educational character but should adopt what the local Governments are adopting. That would be safe in the interest of natural homogeneity and it is the only right way when Education is accepted as the portfolio

of the States. If new experiments have to be made, they should be made on a limited scale and should be thought of for adoption only when the value of the experiment has been ascertained. It should always be remembered that method alone is not sufficient to obtain success. The personality of the teacher is more important. Attendance is probably a much more important factor. Also the equipment at the adult centre for making it socially agreeable is essential. The hard-worked adult must have sufficient recreation. The Literacy lesson has to be preceded and followed by song, play, story, news, sports and games. The adult club in urban areas or the Adult Mandir in the rural areas, meaning, in essence, a community centre, is the type that has to be worked up. Lastly, Adult Education can no longer be a movement for mere literacy or for one department of Government or for Government by itself. The Government of India may render some assistance and give general advice. The State Governments should bring into unison the other departments with the Education Department and at every stage the non-official should be associated with the work.

SHRI ANATH NATH BASU

*Tenth All India Adult Education Conference,
28th December 1953, Calcutta*

The movement for adult education has been going on in our country now for a number of years. In fact, as far as this State is concerned, it has been in existence for more than seventy-five years. I recall in this connection the efforts among others of the late Keshap Chandra Sen, the great social reformer and religious leader, in the field of adult education, specially his "*Sulava Samachara*," a cheap newspaper written in very simple language, for the education of people who had little education, people whom we would nowadays call the neo-literate. It was a unique venture even in those days, which still remains unparalleled after three-quarters of a century.

At first sponsored by voluntary efforts, the movement for adult education received State recognition, comparatively speaking, only in recent years. With the attainment of Independence it received added impetus both from the people and the Government. The Government of India gave a special slant to the movement when it decided to use the term 'social education' for it. The need for social education for a young democracy like ours can hardly be over emphasized. In recognition of its importance, both the Central and the State Governments are now spending large sums of money over it. Adult or social education also figures in our FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN and in the programme of activities of the community projects which have been started in all the States. Voluntary agencies are also at work in different parts of the country. Among these the *Indian Adult Education Association* must receive an honourable mention. It has organized a number of national seminars, the last of which was devoted to the study of the methods and techniques of adult education. Attempts are also being made to produce suitable materials for purpose of adult education. New types of primers and readers specially suitable for teaching the illiterate adult have been prepared in different languages. Some amount of follow-up literature is also being produced. The Central Government have

undertaken the publication of a popular cyclopaedia which is intended for the neo-literate. This cyclopaedia will be produced in different languages of the country. Most of the State governments have drawn up programmes of social education and have appointed officers for this purpose. Work has already begun according to these programmes in different States and adult education campaigns have been started all over the country. This is, in brief, the position of adult education in India today. Considering the fact that the movement received a due measure of recognition only after Independence, we may certainly congratulate ourselves for the progress that has already been achieved.

When all this is said, to one surveying the field of adult education in India the picture that presents itself appears to be somewhat confused and hazy. There are points in it which are not quite clear, points which need some clarification.

To judge by the majority of endeavours that are being made in this field, it would appear that even now in most cases adult education consists mainly of imparting literacy to adults. Teaching the elements of the three R's along with a little bit of instruction in general knowledge and civics would, in very many cases, seem to be all the education that is being given in the name of such education. Of social education also there appears to be very little besides what I have just mentioned.

About social education I shall speak presently. Let me examine for a moment the position of literacy in the existing schemes. Literacy undoubtedly is an important element in adult education. But it is necessary to see, specially when we are dealing with the adults, that the teaching of literacy is properly motivated, that is, the adult learners clearly know why they are trying to learn the letters and with what end in view, and above all how is it going to be worthwhile for them to do so. (For it is only when they do that, that they put their soul into the effort.) Is the attainment of literacy an end in itself? Certainly attainment of literacy gives confidence to the adult learner and has an importance of its own in his eyes. But apart from trying to obtain self-confidence through that limited means is the adult learner consciously working towards any other objective? Is it for personal embellishment, or for obtaining an entry in the rich heritage of his own literature and culture? Is it for increasing his social efficiency, or is it intended to help him in increasing his vocational efficiency as a worker? Is the purpose of learning the letters motivated by the consideration that the knowledge of letters will enable him to use the ballot paper more intelligently and cast his vote more effectively? All these are possible objectives of attaining literacy. Some offer more powerful motivation, others less; some can be easily

apprehended and brought into play, others cannot be. For example, it is difficult, indeed, to impress upon a grown up person that there is need for him to learn the letters in order to be able to read his ballot paper and cast his vote intelligently. He may not realize the importance of exercising his franchise and even if he so realizes, the occasions of using the franchise come only at long intervals. If the purpose is to enjoy his rich literary and cultural heritage, mere literacy will not help much. The few books produced specially for the neo-literates would hardly give them access to that heritage. Only a consciously planned education stretching over a number of years can open that storehouse to them.

If the object be to enrich the social life of the individual adult, we must admit that such enrichment can come through various channels other than literacy—through fuller participation in the rich community life outside the individual, in fairs and festivals, in folk music and drama, and other similar activities where the importance of literacy is indeed not very great, where one may almost do without being literate. Social education comes only through deliberate and active participation in the social life encompassing the individual. Imparting a few items of general knowledge and civics does not, by any chance, imply social education. In our adult education centre how much scope is there for such participation and how much of such participation is consciously undertaken with a purpose?

There is one purpose, however, which easily and effectively motivates attainment of literacy. That is of increasing the vocational efficiency of the individual. When by attaining literacy a person sees clearly how it directly affects his efficiency as a worker, then only, I am speaking generally, is the person keen to undertake the drudgery of learning the letters with zest. Motivation is indeed strongest when education is directly concerned with vocation. Unfortunately however, it would appear that this aspect of adult education has so far been very much neglected in our country. And yet it is this aspect which will bring out active and wholehearted cooperation of the adult learners. If our adult education activities could be directed to this end we would not only receive the willing cooperation of those whom we are trying to teach but there will be less of wastage and relapse into illiteracy. So we can never over-emphasize the importance of this type of adult education. I hope it will receive the attention it deserves from all those who are concerned with adult education in our country.

If this shift of emphasis in the type of adult education is accepted our entire programme will have to be reviewed and changed. It would also involve a complete overhaul of the

existing curriculum and methods of adult education. With this change in the character of adult education, it would also be necessary to revise our ideas of the worker for adult education.

The much harassed and poorly paid primary or secondary school teachers are still supposed to be the only available source for providing workers for adult education. A few fortunate states have also another cadre of paid workers for this purpose though their number is not great. If a large number of workers are to be employed and they are to be easily available, then we would naturally think of the school masters. But it is not always clearly seen that their employment for this, automatically narrows down the scope and purposes of adult education. The educated young teacher has obvious superiority in speech and writing and so he may be good for imparting literacy and also some amount of bookish knowledge, but he is hardly equipped for the larger purposes of adult education as we conceive it. He can hardly be of use if the vocational aspect of adult education is to be emphasised. As our main aim is the all-round improvement of the villagers' life including their occupations, we will do well to select and train for our purpose bright young village farmers or craftsmen with some educational background and possessing some qualities of leadership. Such people properly trained can not only help the village people to improve their occupational efficiency through their own examples, but they can also enrich their life in various other ways, one of which would be the teaching of three R's and imparting of book-knowledge. They will also make a substantial contribution to the organic growth of the new village community.

In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to the excellent experiment that is being conducted in the Vidyapith in Nanjangud in Mysore under the auspices of the Mysore State Adult Education Council. There they are bringing in young villagers who have had rudiments of education and are themselves engaged in different village occupations and so are familiar with the needs and requirements of the countryside. These workers are kept in the Vidyapith for a few months and are trained to improve their own skill as craftsmen. They are also taught how to teach adult villagers improved methods of production as well as other things such as literacy and civic education.

If this suggestion is accepted it will necessarily restrict the supply of adult education workers. But at least the workers so trained would be much better equipped and in the long run much more effective than the already over-burdened village school teacher or the itinerant adult education worker whether employed by the government or coming as a volunteer.

Such paid workers generally do not belong to the village where they work and so they often fail to establish that *rapport* with the villagers which must precede all adult education effort. They come almost as foreigners, like other government officials. They are respected from a distance listened to with deference, but save in exceptional cases they fail to leave any mark on the life and mind of the people. The same is largely true with regard to the itinerant volunteers. In the course of the last thirty years we have seen the failure of such workers in the cause of village reconstruction. Real constructive work cannot be done by them. They may be and they are good for propaganda purposes ; but they cannot achieve any permanent effect. But when we get local workers who belong to the villages, who are of them and from them, we can confidently hope of a more favourable outcome once the initial obstacle due to familiarity is over. Such workers are vitally interested in all efforts at improvement, for they themselves constitute the public of the locality. Only when workers of this type take the field, we can be sure about the quality and standard of adult education in the countryside. Hurricane literacy campaigns conducted through students under the leadership of people who come once in a while to the village may create temporary effects and catch our imagination for a moment, but they will not exercise any abiding influence on the social and cultural life of the people.

From what I have said here, it would be clear that adult education workers must be recruited from the villages themselves. Only when we have such workers we can impart social education in any effective manner. As I have already stated, social education will not come as a result of mere lectures or talks, it can come effectively through active participation. As I visualise it, the adult education worker whom I have described above, will organize all types of cooperative activities in the village. Games, dances, dramas, building and repairing the village roads, cleaning the village well, all these and others will offer opportunities for group-work and community action. It is only in and through participation in such activities that one learns how to be a co-operative member of a community and thus acquire social education in the true sense of the term.

The future of democracy in India will depend upon how far we succeed in re-building the community life in this manner through an effective system of adult education. It is an arduous task which will extend over years. It will require an army of workers working patiently and silently, overcoming the resistance, fighting against dead habits of centuries and against forces of social disintegration, against stupidity and selfishness and against intellectual and spiritual poverty of centuries. It will not be done in a year or two or even in a decade or a score of years.

It will demand infinite patience and indomitable persistence and above all united and concerted effort. Building a new social order, for the aim of adult education is nothing short of that, is a stupendous task of almost terrifying magnitude. Only unshakable faith and infinite courage can accomplish it.

Before I close, I would like to touch on another aspect of the problem of adult education to which I want to invite your attention. Adult education is, in the ultimate analysis, self-education. Adults as soon as they see the point in learning would make willing efforts to educate themselves. They then must have the means at their disposal to do so. This presupposes the existence of a rich literature available to them. Such literature should, on one hand, be able to feed and feast the mature adult mind and on the other hand should be simple enough for the comprehension of adult learners who had only a short period of initiation into learning. But today where is such literature? A few hundreds of books of followup literature or a few cyclopaedias will be utterly inadequate for this purpose. A new type of literature is needed. Do we realize that a major part of the literature that has been produced in the last hundred years reflecting the experience, knowledge and wisdom gathered during this period, is out of reach for the neo-literate? The difficulty arises because of the fact that the educated people who have produced that wealth of literature though speaking the same language as the majority of their people yet use an idiom which is almost unintelligible to that majority. Their idiom and style are so different as to almost make it a different language. I am not here thinking of the usual type of literature. I have in view the newspapers which are supposed to be the most common and the most powerful medium of mass communication and mass education. It is unfortunate that even these are mostly written in a language and style which would ordinarily be comprehensible only to those who have had a fairly high standard of education. I have occasionally made experiments of getting villagers to read our newspapers and often I have found that while they could read the words they could hardly get the meaning. This is true not only with regard to languages like Bengali which unfortunately has two distinct forms, one for the commoner and the other for the *elite*, but it is equally true with a more democratic type of language like Hindi. How I wish that every newspaper in this country would remember this and keep at least one column a day written in a language which will be understood by the common men who have had very little education.

If this be the position with regard to the newspapers it is much worse when we come to the literature of the usual type—our belles lettres, our poetry, drama, novels, short stories and

others. Their language appears to be more foreign to the common man. It would appear as if they were written for readers who have had a fairly high type of education. But what about the rest of the millions of our countrymen? Who would satisfy their hunger, who would write for them? Who would give them their literature? Who will give them their songs and dramas?

A fallacy is current among the writers of our country that if the subject matter relates to the village life or the masses of people the book will be understood by the common man. But as I have already stated, in the past our defective system of education was responsible for producing an intellectual *elite* in the country who lived in a world different from that of the common people. They thought differently, they spoke differently, though it was in a sense the same language they were using. That position has not changed to any great extent even now. Even today intellectually and spiritually we stand divided. A right type of adult education can, to a large measure, help to bridge the gulf and unite us into one people. But adult education, as I have already pointed out, needs as its medium a new type of literature. It is not that learned works cannot be produced in simple languages. Nor is easy and understandable literature, cheap literature. Who would say that the songs of the *Bauls* (itinerant singers of Bengal) in the language of the people are cheap things? Who would say that Tulsidasa, Kabir and Mira produced cheap literature? No, it is not the style which makes for the richness of a particular piece of literature or gives it a universal character. The world's sublimest thoughts can luckily be clothed in the simplest of language.

May I request the literateurs of our country to pause and think for a while of the immense possibilities that adult education opens for them, and in doing so brings upon a tremendous burden on their shoulders? If only they can produce a type of literature which would be in the language of the common man, which would appeal to him, which the common man would welcome as being his own, think of the immense *clientele* our literateurs will have, to read, influence and appreciate and honour them? Pen is mightier than the sword. But where are the people who would wield the pen for the common man with strength and vision, so that they may be instrumental in creating a new and true democratic order in the beloved motherland of ours?

SHRI R. V. PARULEKER

*Eleventh All India Adult Education Conference,
28th December 1954, Patna.*

The most outstanding event that has happened in India, in the field of Adult Education, since the attainment of Independence, is giving a new orientation to Adult Education by naming it 'Social Education'. **The Progress of Education in India, 1947-52**, a Central Government Publication, observes in this connection (p. 8) : "At one time programmes of adult education aimed only at teaching to read and write, but this led to a reaction which at times denied the value of literacy itself. The new conception of Social Education formulated by Government of India recognises the importance of literacy, but places even greater stress on the need to sustain the interest of the adult. A new five-pointed programme of Social Education has been formulated which seeks to place appropriate emphasis on (a) literacy, (b) measures of health and hygiene, (c) improvement of economic conditions, (d) civic education and training in citizenship and (e) recreational aspects of education."

While thoroughly appreciating this new approach to adult education, I must point out that this has tended to relegate the "Literacy" part of the five-pointed programme into the background, by placing greater stress on the other four items of the programme. The reasons are obvious.

Firstly, the acquisition of literacy by an illiterate adult is a process which involves mental exertion on the part of the adult learner as well as of his instructor. On the other hand, the programmes meant to instruct the adults in other aspects of Social Education mentioned above, can be carried out by the instructor and attended to by the adults without any mental strain. It is no wonder, therefore, that the literacy part of the social education programme should receive less attention.

Secondly, the programmes for instruction of the adults—both literate and illiterate—in the subjects other than literacy, involve no assessment of instruction. So many gatherings were held, so many lectures or entertainment programmes were

arranged and so many adults attended—these usually form the substance of the account or report of such programmes. In such a kind of work, workers are much relieved of the onerous duty of keeping all watch over the daily routine of a literacy class for adults and of submitting their work for assessment at stated intervals. There is, therefore, a general tendency to give greater prominence to the non-literacy part of Social Education programmes by the workers themselves. Literacy programmes are dull, strainful and unobtrusive. Other programmes are lively and spectacular. Human nature being what it is, it is no wonder that the latter kind of work has come into the forefront, pushing aside the former.

It must be admitted that barring some exceptions, the older scheme of Adult Education devoted its sole attention to the promotion of adult literacy. The new scheme has, no doubt, done well in bringing in the other aspects of adult instruction by giving it the new name of 'Social Education.' It has thrown out excellent ideas and objectives. In practice, however, it is feared that the new approach will not be able to achieve substantial results without sacrificing the good that the old scheme—Adult Education—was doing in the field of adult literacy.

In India, it is usually assumed that for the attainment of elementary literacy, an adult ought to attend a class for an hour a day for a period of four months. Methods and means were evolved in different States on the basis of a four months' basic course of literacy. So far as I know that period of four months' attendance in a literacy class for adults, is not proportionately extended. Attempt is being made to impart all kinds of instruction including literacy within a four-month session which was formerly considered adequate for the acquisition of literacy only. Not that the organisers of Social Education have not realised the inadequacy of the time now devoted by an adult to what is called Social Education, but the limitations of finances do not allow them to raise the period of time. Time and resources are inadequate for the successful completion of all that is implied in the new approach to Adult Education.

It may be argued by some who do not think well of 'literacy', that no harm will be done to the movement of Social Education as it is now envisaged, if the literacy aspect of the programme is subordinated or even eliminated. The civic training contemplated in the Social Education programme will more than compensate for the neglect of literacy training. 'Literacy is no education', they argue. 'Why should we then make a fuss about it? What we want now is to turn the present generation of illiterate adults into better citizens of our country and this objective can be better achieved by concentrating on civic training and not on literacy training.'

Those who argue on these lines seem to have failed to realise the supreme need of promoting literacy in a nation of 36 crores, more than 80% of whom are altogether illiterate. Should we not do all we can to raise the percentage of literacy of our masses and thus place Bharat on a comparable standard in the comity of nations? It is unthinkable to visualise Bharat rising to its full height without raising the educational standard of its masses. I have purposely used the words 'educational standard'; for I want to clear here the relation of 'literacy, to what is called 'education' and thus to answer those who want 'education' but not 'literacy', assuming that 'literacy is no education'.

According to the advocates of this school of thought, education is quite different from literacy i.e. acquisition of the ability to read and write. No one, not even the greatest advocates of literacy, will contend that the acquisition of literacy is identical with the acquisition of education. But even the most zealous advocates of education must admit that acquisition of literacy is the first essential step in the acquisition of education. It is, therefore, difficult to understand why the advocates of education should belittle the importance of literacy. They will certainly not deny that whatever be our ideas about education, the ability to read and write is its very root. Education in its modern sense is organically connected with the ability to read and write and no amount of wordy warfare can dislodge literacy from its high pedestal in the acquisition of education. In fact, broadly speaking, literacy is the foundation on which the structure of education is to be built. The advocates of literacy do not want to deny the right of a citizen to have more than what is implied in the term "literacy"; for, they also believe that literacy is not an end but it is only a means of further education. Therefore, what they demand is to have first things first.

Granting that raising of literacy percentage in our country as quickly as possible is a great need, why should it be necessary to impart literacy to illiterate adults for that purpose? Why not make the young children literate as quickly as possible and leave the illiterate adults to be subjected to "civic training" contemplated in the programme now chalked out for Social Education? This argument seems to be sound on its face. Many friends of literacy feel that concentrating on youngsters for the spread of literacy and leaving adult illiterates to themselves will be an effective method of solving the problem of the spread of literacy in our country. History of Education of educationally advanced countries like England or Japan shows that these countries, *in one supreme effort*, brought all young children under instruction and did not bother themselves much about the illiterate adults that escaped school instruction and

thus remained illiterate. Why should not India follow this method in tackling the problem of illiteracy or rather of removing the blot of illiteracy ?

But realising the inability of the States to introduce a comprehensive programme of primary education and thus substantially increase the percentage of literacy through the schools in the near future, one is obliged to look to other sources by which the literacy percentage may be substantially increased within lesser financial resources. And this brings us to a position where the adult literacy programme becomes of utmost national importance. Promotion of literacy through adult instruction is much more quicker and cheaper than through school instruction of children. In a country like ours where money is not available in the near future for a very wide network of schools and where the literacy percentage is very low, promotion of literacy through adult instruction is the only method that is possible to be resorted to. It is, therefore, that a plea is being made here to give a prominent place to literacy programmes in the Social Education programmes now followed throughout the country at the behest of the Central Government.

During recent times, the only country in the world which is reported to have succeeded in wiping out illiteracy in the period of a decade or two, mainly through adult instruction, is the U.S.S.R. They succeeded in doing so, because they were able to create an atmosphere where illiteracy came to be looked upon as a great national evil. Writing about Russia and its campaign against illiteracy Mr. Cousins of the Columbia University, wrote in 1935 : "A psychological ferment has been started that already has profoundly disturbed and transformed the mentality of a population of one hundred and six millions. People have been taught to read ; men and women have been told to hope ; ideas have been disseminated on an unprecedented scale ; forces have been released that can never be controlled". (Modern Review, April 1935, p. 494.)

It is true that the U.S.S.R. methods cannot be followed in India, for reasons which are too well known to be mentioned. The need for introducing 'a psychological ferment' in the mentality of the illiterate and ignorant masses of our country is the great thing that is needed at this juncture. This can only be done by our great leaders holding up before the masses the ideal of a literate India and asking every one whom they can persuade to do the same. There are a hundred and one ways of doing this and if our leaders do seriously believe in a literate India, they can do a lot to remove the apathy of the masses and make them literacy-minded. Once the psychological ferment is started, it will spread to the entire population.

I may state here that acquisition of literacy has a special significance in the cultural, social and political advancement of a nation where the great majority of the people are absolutely illiterate. Lectures, cinema shows, exhibitions, radio and entertainment programmes have, no doubt, a value in a society where the written word is a mystery to the many. But in the end such programmes do not leave a lasting effect. The word is heard, the picture is seen and enjoyed. Both have some effect on the mind of those who heard the word or saw the picture. It is to be left to imagination as to what permanent effect these things will leave behind. Moreover, if a hundred are given the opportunity to listen to or to see, a lakh have to be kept untouched. On the other hand with the help of the written word, millions may be taught to realise the good things that we wish them to pick up. Besides, they will have the written word at their command, any time they may be inclined to make use of it. The ignorant millions of India—the land of villages—will remain inaccessible, in most parts to itinerant agencies of culture. Written word alone will have the chance to cover the entire field. I, therefore, feel that in the entire field of social education, literacy must be given its due place which, to me, is second to none. Other programme must be made to move round the pivot of the literacy programme.

Among the several needs of the Social Education Movement, the most important one is the setting up of a Research Organisation. I am conscious that Government of India is taking steps in this direction. I am referring to it here because I feel that, in the interest of the movement itself, no time should be lost in setting up the Research Organisation. Among other investigations that might be taken up, I would plead for immediate selection of the following problems for investigation.

- (1) What is the minimum time required for acquisition of literacy by an adult illiterate, particularly in the new set up of social education programme ?
- (2) What particular method or methods of imparting literacy to illiterate adults are most effective ?
- (3) What age-group among the adults is most responsive to instruction in literacy ?
- (4) What methods are best fruitful in checking the general irregularity of adults attending adult classes ?
- (5) What should be the average number of adults to be assembled in one class for adult literacy ?

There are only a few points suggested for immediate investigation. There are many more that can be taken up for investigation with a view to securing efficiency and minimising wastage in the programmes for adult literacy. Care must, however, be

taken to correlate the investigations carried out at several places. Otherwise, the findings at one place may not be useful at some other place. In this matter, therefore, it is the Central Ministry of Education that must take up the responsibility aided by Investigation Boards set up by the States.

Another field in which we have made little progress is the winning over our school and college population to lend a helping hand in the movement of adult literacy in the general programme of Social Education. If properly approached, this young section of our population can do immense service to the cause of social education in its broadest sense. I am conscious that this section of our population is on the move to help the cause of Community Service which has now come into the forefront. But the field must be considerably widened. I am sure if our great leaders take interest in this question, the young people will not fail to respond. How to achieve this object is a great question? But where there is a will, there is a way.

You are aware that there is a feeling which is gathering strength in our country that some sort of compulsion should be brought in to press the services of our young scholars for the cause of Social Education including, of course, the adult literacy programme. I feel that before compulsion is applied, it is necessary to rouse the young people to take part in social service. I have no doubt that the young people will respond. I do not think that serious efforts are made in this direction on a nation-wide scale. The efforts made so far are sporadic. And yet the experience gained clearly points out to the possibility that this section of our population will come forward to do what we expect of them, if the problem is properly handled and financed by liberal help from the Central and State Governments. Compulsion can come later on. If it is suddenly ushered in, there will be a reaction which will lead to frustration and disappointment.

Should the adults be compelled by legislation to acquire literacy? This question is sometimes discussed as an academic proposition. In a land where compulsion for school-going children has not succeeded, the proposal to introduce general compulsion for the illiterate adults for literacy is out of question. It is too premature even to think about it.

There is, however, a corner in which it is possible to think of compulsion in the field of adult education. Our country is now being rapidly industrialised. The centres of industrial concerns are not only increasing in number, but growing in strength of labour population. It may be fairly estimated that more than 90 percent of the labour population in these industrial centres is absolutely illiterate. Could we not introduce some

sort of compulsion both on the employers and the employees so that a wide net-work of adult literacy classes may be spread throughout these industrial centres? I am fully conscious that this question is fraught with many difficulties. Considering, however, the vast potentialities of such a measure, I appeal to those in authority to get this question investigated on an All-India basis, as early as possible.

Even here persuasion can be tried before compulsion, with some success. I do not know whether the employers of large-scale labour have anywhere in this country come forward to help the movement of adult literacy. But I know one place where persuasion has succeeded in inducing the employers to help materially in the Adult Literacy Movement. In the City of Bombay, the Bombay City Social Education Committee has succeeded in maintaining a fairly large number of classes for adult literacy in the premises of some of the textile mills and other industrial concerns in the City. The employers meet the entire expenses of these classes. The adult classes are held outside the time of the attendance hours which a labourer in a mill has to put in daily. The best results will, however, follow if the employers could be persuaded to allow the adult worker to attend a literacy class within the prescribed time of attendance. As I have already said this question is fraught with many difficulties, mostly of an economic nature. I may, however, mention here that sometime ago, an American Industrial concern in Bombay—the Corn Products Ltd.,—allowed its illiterate adults to attend literacy classes arranged in the premises of the concern and the time of attendance at such classes was counted in the prescribed time of attendance in the factory. This is, no doubt, a solitary instance. But I think if our employers of labour are made to realise that instructed labour will, in the long run, put in more efficient work, some employers may come forward to try the experiment carried on by the Corn Products concern. The recent introduction of the Industrial Labour Health Insurance Schemes, is a sign which points out to the fact that the employers of Industrial labour in this country will not be impervious to overtures made in right spirit and by right persons to lend a helping hand in the national need of removing illiteracy from our Motherland.

Before I close, I wish to bring to your notice a new scheme introduced by the Bombay City Social Education Committee (of which I am happy to be a Vice-President) for the purpose of training illiterate adults to read. The name given to the scheme is "The Bombay Scheme of Self-Study Reading Cards". The Bombay Committee, since its inception in 1939, has been following the system of class-room instruction for the purpose of imparting literacy to illiterate adults. It has, however, been

found by experience spread over a long period, that the system has to face several difficulties. The adults learning in the classes of different ages are of different cultural levels and hence they differ in their capacity to learn. The adults are almost all earners and hence they do not find it always convenient to come together to the class daily at the time fixed for the class. On account of this almost habitual irregularity of attendance, the teacher is unable to follow successfully the class method of teaching. He is obliged, very often, to resort to individual teaching on account of the unequal progress of the adults. This leads to a waste of time, energy and money. It was, therefore, felt that the principle of self-learning if introduced has a very important place in the field of adult literacy work, provided a suitable means of learning through self-study is made available to the literate adults. The Committee has, therefore, evolved the Scheme of Self-Study Reading Cards. The Committee has also noted that a similar type of scheme is being followed for the last two or three years in Indonesia in teaching the illiterate adults to read.

The method adopted in these cards is the association of pictures and words. Suitable pictures are associated with easy words. Most of our Indian languages being phonetic, are quite suitable for the adoption of this method. The pictures selected are of objects commonly known to the adults and hence they can easily 'read' the pictures and so can automatically read the words placed below the pictures. This leads the adults to recognise letters of the word used to show the picture. One card contains four pictures and four words, each word having two new letters. There are also other letters and words for practice on each card. The adult can master the words and through them the letters by repetition. The usual letters—consonants and vowels and their combinations and also some conjunct consonants—are covered in 20 cards. The Committee has, a short time back, launched the scheme in two centres by way of experiment. These cards are printed and distributed to begin with.

These Reading Cards are based on the principle of self-learning which demands individual attention and diligence. No class room is required, nor any formal class teaching. The Scheme eliminates the need of a regular instructor. The adult can learn to read almost intuitively, or if some guidance is required, it can be had from any one who can read—be he a literate adult or a school child. The adult can learn to read anywhere and at any time. As the cards are small enough to be carried by the adult in his pocket, he can choose his own time of study. He can devote as much time as he can spare, for the task. The Self Study Cards are expected to be of special

help to adult women who, as a rule, are unable to attend classes. They will open a fruitful field of special work for those who may be able to spare occasionally some time for such work. With the help to these cards School and College students may particularly be able to do useful service in the cause of adult education.

It is not the intention of the Committee to leave the adult after he has mastered these cards. His real adult education will begin when he has proved by his own exertion, that he is eager for learning and means business. The adults so instructed by their own study will attend classes which the Committee will start from their further instruction. This in short is the "Bombay Scheme of Self-Study Reading Cards." We are not in a position to say anything definitely about the result of the Scheme which was introduced on a very limited scale a short time ago. But I may say that the indications are that the Scheme will prove beneficial and will yield good results, eliminating many difficulties that are met with today with class room methods of instructing the illiterate adult in the first step of literacy instruction which is to acquire the ability to read the written word.

SHRI T. MADIAH GOWDA

*Twelfth All India Adult Education Conference
29th December 1955, Delhi*

Adult Education or Social Education, as it is called by the Central Government, implies a comprehensive programme of public health, recreation and home life of the adults in addition to literacy. I am happy to note that our educational planners have brought economic life of the adult and training for citizenship as well within the orbit of social education, for these are indispensable to build a new and self-reliant nation. Considering that 80 per cent of the population is illiterate, it has been rightly stated that democracy cannot take root and flourish unless a proper progressive and widespread educational programme trains up people in the art of democracy. For only then they can bear the burden and discharge the responsibilities of citizenship. As things stand, therefore, mere primary education by itself cannot meet the situation without a suitable programme for the education of adults.

It should be admitted that the task of approaching this problem of educating the immense population of illiterate and semi-literate people of this great country to an appreciable standard is not an easy one. It is estimated that an average annual expenditure of Rs. 27 crores for ten years and a very large number of well-trained personnel will be required to make every illiterate, a literate and give him in addition the veneer, at least, of Social Education in the larger sense of that term. It has been recognised and stressed that for the survival of democracy—and more for the successful implementation of development—provision of a certain minimum of education to all citizens within a reasonably short period of time is an essential pre-requisite, next only to food. It is also admitted that the social education approach must permeate all programmes of State aid to the people. That is to say before any programme of aid is launched, people should be so educated in regard to it that their instinct to help themselves is fully aroused and they feel anxious to receive the programmes and offer their fullest co-operation in their execution. Thus have they rightly laid

emphasis on the importance and urgency of social education. For the purpose of implementation of the programme, accordingly, it is seen that social education has been combined with other tasks, such as organisation of co-operatives, organisation of agencies of village development, organisation of agricultural extension work etc. In other words, the social education work in India has been tagged on to Community Projects and National Extension Work. I agree that the two must be co-ordinated. I must, however, say a word or two on the process or procedure adopted to achieve the result. Instead of assigning the work either of the community project or extension work to either a Revenue or an Agricultural Officer, I would much rather have the same entrusted to an expert in Social Education. The Revenue or Agricultural Officer has very often little or no experience in educational matters and besides, his hands are tied up with all sorts of other responsibilities. It is too much to expect of such an officer to arrange for and push through development programmes, having Social or Adult education as the pivot. There may be certain advantages in having a revenue or an agricultural officer as the head of the project or a block. but it will be principally against the main policy laid down by the Planning Commission that Social Education must permeate all development programmes and that extension is an educational process.

At the basic level of blocks and projects are the Gram Sevaks, who strangely enough are mostly drawn from urban areas. They are multi-purpose agents of action. With the qualifications and experience such as they have and with their urban outlook, it is rather too much to expect that they will be capable of giving all educational bias to the development programmes, with which they are entrusted. It cannot be said that the selection of these gram sevaks and their training are always satisfactory. The active co-operation expected of the village Panchayats and other local bodies with these development projects do not seem to be still forthcoming to any appreciable extent. The so-called social education organisers are not entrusted with any important or definite role and the general feeling seems to be that they are only a fifth wheel in the coach. In one or two States only an attempt is made to get the social education officers to work in close collaboration with the rest of the development staff, but in other places they are treated only as odd jobsmen. Practically no where are their superior technical guidance and their special skill to educate the public harnessed with a view to acquaint the people with all the various measures launched by the Government for their welfare and progress and invite their co-operation in the great national enterprise. Unless the respective roles of gram sevaks and social education workers merge into one and they are fully equipped with requisite rural experience and training, it is rather too

optimistic to expect that the objective of the rural development will be realised. In short, for want of this educative outlook in the staff of the projects and the blocks, the work of social education and particularly adult literacy can hardly progress satisfactorily.

I have dealt with the Community Projects and National Extension Service Blocks at some length because they are widespread all over the country for undertaking the work of social or adult education and they are expending large sums of money. The total expenditure in these Projects and Blocks incurred up to the 30th of June of this year is about Rs. 25½ crores. Adult Education Centres started number 25,000 and adults trained, 4,70,000. The expenditure on social education alone is Rs. 77 lakhs. The strength of staff employed for social education work is about 1500.

The Central Government through its Ministry of Education does not directly carry on the work of adult education, as such, to any extent. But it has come forward to help financially if the State Governments agree to and also share a portion of the finances. The Central Government also supports Social Education institutions in compact selected areas, the publication of adult literature, the preparation and supply of audio-visual-aids, organisation of national and regional seminars, starting of Janta Colleges, starting of libraries, preparation of a popular encyclopaedia (Gyan Ganga) for the use of neo-literates and adults, and for such other schemes. A large amount is spent by the Central Government for these schemes. As regards adult literacy the Centre has chosen to give grant-in-aid to the State Governments for the purpose on a matching basis.

But many State Government is rendering adult education service directly through their education departments. The pattern of organisation, the nature, quality and standard of staff, the training of the workers, the duration of the course, however, are not uniform. The extent and the quality of work in each State varies, depending on the attitude of its Education Minister and of its Director of Public Instruction. It is a regrettable feature that in some States, authorities have not taken kindly to Adult Education as such, and betray a feeling of apathy towards it. For this stupendous task of adult education, the amounts allotted in those States are so meagre that they do not even touch a fringe of the problem. I would not be wrong in saying that it is only an eye-wash. I am sorry to say that the interest evinced by many of the legislators and the public is not much, but there are on the other hand, some who constituting themselves as spokesmen of the ignorant and the illiterate indulge in most irresponsible and scathing remarks. For these and other reasons, adult education has not taken yet a sufficiently deep root in the soil.

Justly speaking, it is one of the primary duties of the Local Self-Government institutions to educate the people who come under their purview, so that these people may fully realise their civic responsibilities and acquire the full stature of citizenship. These can play a vital part in the field of Adult Education. If the general direction of policy had been to encourage them and assist them in assuming responsibility for rendering important service within their areas much ground would have been covered and immense progress could have been registered. The most noteworthy examples set by some of these bodies like the Delhi Municipality and the Bombay Corporation are worthy of emulation.

There is yet another type of agency, doing adult education work in the country. These are the voluntary agencies. There are hundreds of such organised agencies, big and small both active and indifferent. The Indian Adult Education Association has registered nearly a hundred of such agencies, and prepared a directory with full information. Some of these agencies are State-supported and others are not. Each one of them serves a particular area. The programmes followed, the methods employed and enthusiasm exhibited vary from organisation to organisation. Of such organisations mention may be made of the South Indian Adult Education Association, the Bombay City Social Education Committee, Jamia Millia, Delhi the Mysore State Adult Education Council. The achievements of these institutions have generally earned the approbation of various Governments and the general public. Though their programmes differ in content and method, their aim is the same and that is to train the illiterate and the ignorant to become better and useful citizens. Many of these organisations have to their credit a substantial record of work.

In 1937, when popular ministries assumed office in the provinces, and started adult education work, the need for a central organisation was felt to help in evolving suitable methods and techniques, by experiments and researches to act as a clearing house of ideas, information and experience, to coordinate adult education activities carried on in different parts of the country and above all to direct a uniform progressive policy for the proper development of the adult education movement in India. It was then that Indian Adult Education Association came into existence. It is a non-political, non-sectarian, national organisation. Ever since its inception it has deeply concerned itself with making the adult education movement popular in the country through its various activities. As you are aware, it has organised conferences at different place and this is its twelfth conference. These conferences have provided a common platform for the adult education workers all over the country,

to come together and to share their views and experiences on various aspects of adult education work. They have served to make known the aims and objectives of the adult education movement, and to arouse interest of the people and the Governments alike. The Association has also organised national seminars at various centres. These seminars have helped to bring the workers together much closer, to live for several days a community life and discuss particular aspects of adult education threadbare. These seminars, bringing together field workers and administrators from different parts of the country, apart from helping in focussing attention on important problems and a close study of the same, stimulate in them a spirit of comradeship and enterprise. The results achieved in these seminars are of far-reaching importance to the movement. The reports which are published by the Association are a valuable asset to the adult educationists. The Association has also published much other very useful and popular literature on adult education. The Indian Journal of Adult Education and the Social Education News Bulletin are serving as very valuable instruments for the education of field workers. Besides, the Association acts as a clearing house of information, helps as a co-operative link between various adult education organizations, takes up training of adult educationists, maintains close relationship with the Unesco with a view to further adult education activities in India and to bring about a closer contact with the workers in other countries.

Thus you will see that the achievement of this national voluntary organization is of no mean order. It has also been recognised by the Planning Commission and by the Ministry of Education, as an organisation which creates a common national platform, wherein various agencies meet at intervals for mutual discussion—so necessary for evolving a common outlook and securing coordination of different agencies.

The Indian Adult Education Association has been organised, nurtured and maintained by enlightened, experienced and patriotic individuals with enthusiasm and zeal, now for nearly twenty years. It has continued to live till today on its very meagre resources drawn from its membership subscription, donations and periodical and, I may say, irregular grants from the Central and a few State Governments. It has been said quite often and has been decided in a number of conferences and seminars that a work of the nature of adult education is best done by the voluntary non-official organisations. It is also admitted by the Planning Commission that a major responsibility for organising activities in different fields of social welfare, such as social education should naturally fall on private voluntary agencies. There are private agencies that have been for long working in their

own humble way, and without adequate state aid, with their own leadership, organisation and resources. Any plan for the social regeneration of the country should take into account the services these private agencies can render and the Centre and the States should extend to them the maximum of co-operation in strengthening their efforts.

May I humbly venture to state that it is unfortunate that though the First Five Year Plan period is coming to a close, Central and many State governments have still to understand and appreciate fully the working of these agencies, let alone, the question of giving them sufficient help and cooperation to strengthen their efforts. If these private efforts are canalised for the promotion of adult education, it can be said without any reserve that it will yield tremendous, lasting and valuable results. So it is high time that Governments realised the value and importance and tremendous potentiality of private agencies to carry on the work of adult education. The significant advantage of private organizations carrying on this kind of work is that it is free from red-tapism, a major bottle-neck in its smooth functioning. The other advantage is that it will be more effective when this people's movement for the people is carried on by the people themselves.

It is my personal experience that the people particularly of the rural area have responded fully when their own men with whom they are familiar have approached them and appealed to them for cooperation in this social welfare work. Of late many a State Government have formed committees or Boards with non-official majorities to advise the Government in the matter of adult education work. This by itself cannot go very far, unless and until the non-officials with patriotic and philanthropic motives are encouraged to take the initiative, organise and carry on the work, with the full and active co-operation of Governments with its finance and personnel. There is a living example in Mysore where such an experiment has proved a great success. It is also good that members of Congress party and such other socio-political parties interested in constructive work come forward to take up more seriously and organize the adult education work in all parts of the country and at various levels. It must be remembered that this is an important item of constructive work laid down by Gandhiji. I must sound a note of caution here that it must be entrusted only to such men as would keep the organisation above party politics.

It private agencies doing adult education work have to depend for their finances on the undependable and rapidly shrinking private philanthropy, they naturally more often end in failure. If the grant is not an assured one, but has to depend each time on uncertain sanctions and/or is in hands of legislature

where not all members take the trouble to fully understand the magnitude, the importance, the urgency and vastness of the adult education movement, it is certain that the movement will not make headway and may even be smothered down. Adult education is to be considered as a recurrent demand and if the money is spent on it only by fits and starts, it gets lost. When the grant is made by the State Governments, suitable safeguards are necessary by way of supervision and inspection to see that proper standard of efficiency is maintained and that money is put to the right use. A periodical audit of accounts is helpful to check any waste or unnecessary expenditure. Even general directions for improving the content of the programmes, and their administration may be laid down by the governments.

In spite of all these clearly laid down and widely declared principles, I find that neither the Planning Commission nor the Central or State Governments have come forward to create non-official organisations for adult education or to adequately help the existing ones. The Central Government's grants to Indian Adult Education Association has not gone so far beyond four digits. The grants of some of the State Governments to the local private institutions are not improving, but on the other hand are sadly shrinking. I hope and fervently pray that atleast hereafter the Government and legislatures will seriously consider the question of educating the millions of their brothers and thereby discharge the primary and fundamental duty cast on them. I appeal to the general public also with all the emphasis that I can command to foster these institutions by contributing their best, for it is obvious that our country's salvation lies only in the right education of the people.

Let me now deal with a few of the most important and urgent problems that confront us. One is the training of adult education workers. The workers for adult education will have to be specially trained. They will need to be thoroughly conversant with their subject and their bearings on life. It is essential that they should possess a good knowledge of human psychology. In their organizational work and in the training of teachers, they will come across all sorts of men and women, some times more developed mentally than themselves and highly critical and sometimes very eager to know more of their subject as it related to life. Hence these workers should be equipped fully to meet the intelligent demand of the trainees on a higher plane as well.

In the present circumstance in India, these workers have to organise and establish innumerable training centres, with short courses to men of specialised professions, regular school teachers, students, etc. Men in professions, such as law, medicine engineering, agriculture, animal husbandry etc., come in contact

with the people in large numbers and they are in a position to give guidance to the lay public in their profession and at the same time on subjects which will be of interest and use to them in their daily life. Likewise, the regular school teachers can handle adults as well. Students, particularly high school and college students who are now-a-days coming forward with an undreamt of enthusiasm and keen desire for social uplift work can cover a wide area especially in the rural part. All these elements have to be harnessed to the great enterprise of educating the illiterate masses and so it becomes necessary to give them short courses in Social Education. Thus, can we create and mobilise a great army to fight ignorance and the concomitant evils. The workers will have to divert energies of the masses into healthy channels. I would especially mention that the youth of land should be drawn into this service more and more. Their services can be availed of to great advantage during holidays, not only for the benefit of the towns and cities where they study but in far off rural areas as well. I may add that the gain is not all on one side. Practical experience and close contact with the realities of life will make them worthy citizens of an enlightened state. It is twice blessed, it blesseth him that teaches and him that is taught. The hours of work being fewer and the work of teaching adults pleasanter and beneficial, there is no doubt that a large number of our various types of teachers, professionals and students will respond to the call of the nation provided it is properly organised by our Governments and by our adult education leaders.

Research into the various aspects of Adult Education is as much important and necessary as it is in the case of any other aspect of social or economic life. Adequate research studies, both of an extensive and intensive character are required for the purpose of obtaining comprehensive knowledge, both basic and fundamental, of this most important aspect of education; direction, personnel, literature and equipment are the most important prerequisites for research. Some of the advanced nations have carried out a good deal of research in the matter of adult education. But the results of those researches may not be directly applicable to our country, as our traditions, customs and manners, are not quite the same as theirs. But all the same, we may examine those results in our research centres, to see how far any of them can be made applicable to our way of life and with what modification if any. Aspects suited specially to our country may also be tackled. I am sure that the Indian Adult Education Association can conduct a Central Research Institute pertaining to adult education, if Central Government can come forward to give it full financial support. I urge upon the Central Government to favourably consider this most urgent and legitimate demand.

A high level of Adult Education is fostered by the Danish Folk High School system which is a legacy to that great nation, from the great poet Bishop Grundtvig. This system is an experiment that has promoted rural happiness in skilled work, mutual trust and a large measure of both economic and intellectual liberty. Many other nations have copied this system to their great advantage. Why not we in India do the same? Some experiments have already been conducted in Vidyapeeths in Mysore and in Janta Colleges at Alipur and other places. Encouraged by the appreciation shown from all sides, Mysore State Adult Education Council is extending its Vidyapeeths at the rate of one Vidyapeeth for each district in the course of three years.

Since our movement of Adult Education is chiefly for liquidating illiteracy and engendering a taste for knowledge and venture among our people, we have to support our movement by placing at their disposal cheap and useful literature through libraries. If we are not to repeat the tremendous waste caused by a large number of people forgetting what they have learnt after leaving school owing to lack of facilities within their reach, and to keep up and progress further in their knowledge of simple reading and writing, we have to start a net work of libraries stocked with graded series of suitable books.

The importance of audio-visual aids to facilitate mass education has been realised and good progress has been made by the Government in this respect. A national audio-visual Board has been constituted. A separate section has been opened in the Education Ministry. They are consolidating and distributing films and film strips to various centres in the country. Let us hope that the Government will speed up their activities in this direction to a great extent.

Another matter is about recreation and cultural activities. It requires no argument to impress the importance of these activities, as an adjunct to adult education work. They serve as a means of motivation, mass and group contacts and of educating through informal and easy methods. They provide healthy entertainment and relaxation. Dramas, kirtanas, bhajans, mushairas and kavi sammelans, folk dancing, folk games, puppet shows, radios etc., serve as a good means for recreation and cultural activities.

One more important point and I have done. It is about the formation of a National Council for Social Education. It is high time that the Government of India formed a Council with majority of non-officials interested in the Adult Education movement. I urge upon Government to implement this long expected demand.

It appears to me that the measure of one's own patriotism is really the place he accords to questions of mass education and mass progress. Any other kind of planning may be good enough from the point of view of individual sections of the people but not of the whole of the people. It is possible to increase, for instance, production in a country without increasing the standard of living of the masses. We had Governments in the past where for instance, the few exploited the many. Happily now the objective is changed to the attainment of a socialistic pattern of society. India has suffered grievously in the past because of the deep ignorance of the many and the intelligence of the few. Let not the mistake be repeated. Almost every new nation took to mass education on its attainment of freedom. It is only in India there is still vascillation and hesitancy. There can be no greater privilege, no finer adventure for the new India than the undertaking of the task of removing the nation-wide blindness of the people, who have eyes but cannot read, who have hands, but cannot write. Let us go about our work in a spirit of fervour and humility alike and feel satisfied that we on our part have done our duty.

DR. V.S. JHA

*Thirteenth All India Adult Education Conference,
10th December 1956, Udaipur*

The traditions of Adult or Social Education are rooted in the cultural heritage of the country. Even in the earliest days when the concept of universal literacy was not fully developed the need of educating the masses and bringing home to them their moral and social responsibilities was keenly felt and attended to with no small care. In the days when it was not possible to make all people literate and when the printing of books was unknown, it was realised that education could be given without the medium of literacy through various means which have since acquired historic significance. Today we talk of persons who are learned and well-read. In the days of old when learning was confined to a few, the educated people were described not as well-read people but as बहुश्रुत that is, people who had heard a lot. Education was conveyed through the spoken word and knowledge as well as principles of life and conduct were conveyed through discourses by the learned and through public discussions. Some educators of the past were mostly men who had little attachment to worldly affairs and who found much happiness in devoting their lives to teaching the masses the principles of good conduct in life. Through discourses and discussions, stories and allegories, songs and kirtans and above all through the example of their own unimpeachable ways of life, they inspired, the people with superior moral and social values. The messages of some of these saints still constitute the most dearly cherished aspects of our cultural heritage. Some of the edicts of Asoka were intended to awaken the masses to their moral and social responsibilities. In our own life time, we have living experience of how the message of national self-awareness was conveyed to the vast illiterate masses of people in our country by the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, who aroused them from their complacency and made them fight the great battle of freedom with full faith in the principles of truth and non-violence. Our history and traditions furnish us with a variety

of institutions and techniques which are essential to the education of those less fortunate men who have had no opportunity of acquiring literacy and formal education in schools. The schemes of Adult and Social Education that have been adopted by the various organisations in the country have shown abundant appreciation of these methods and techniques which have been developed in ways which have proved most profitable.

Education at any time must serve two main purposes. On the one hand, it must endeavour to strengthen and change, and revision in the sense of values in the minds of town dwellers are bound to have a far reaching effect on the rural population. For a long time to come, the city dwellers will continue to set the pattern of thought and values which will largely guide those residing in rural areas. The best educational efforts made in the rural areas will be considerably diluted if the population in the town gives the wrong lead. It is necessary to realise that group pressures are less intense in villages than in towns. In the towns the social force is ineffective and bonds that provide for social cohesion are weakest. The result is that the individual in the urban society is apt to be an easier victim of anti-social pressures. The town life exposes citizens to some bitter experiences. The glaring contrasts in the social and economic life of the town-people arouse distrust in the social order and lead the individual to activities which are not always of the responsible type. It was thus no more coincidence that disorders connected with the reorganisation of the States originated in and were more or less confined to cities and towns and only the neighbouring villages were contaminated by the spread of the poison from the town. It needs also to be realised that the economic pressures are far more severe and operate far more ruthlessly in the towns than in the villages and that they are responsible for a greater number of shattered lives. There is a greater degree of frustration and consequent lack of loyalties to ideals in the towns than in the villages. The miseries which most of the people experience in city life are so very complex in their origin that mere Social Education, however well-conceived it may be, will provide small remedy. Yet, a properly conceived programme of Social Education may go a long way towards relief of suffering and towards restoration of mental and moral health of the town population. If the city and town population is brought under the influence of Social Education and if social and moral values are properly inculcated in the people in these areas, it may be expected that this good influence will flow into the villages and that the work that is being carried on in them will be greatly supported and strengthened. The dangers that are likely to follow the neglect of the town and cities are too obvious to bear detailed description.

It is not my intention to suggest that no work is being done in the field of Social Education in the town and city areas. I am conscious of the magnificent work that is being done in Bombay City by a band of indefatigable workers. The Bombay City Social Education Committee has succeeded in securing the cooperation of the wealth and talent in the town for doing a great task in the field of advancement of literacy. No praise of its work will be sufficient. Yet, considering the vastness of the problem which the Committee has to face, its efforts will have to be multiplied several times to be really effective. It is significant that Bombay experienced some of the worst disturbances in connection with the linguistic reorganisation of the country. This circumstance is not without import. It should occasion investigation into our methods of work and into our techniques of approach to the problem of Social Education. Perhaps more important than the advance of literacy is the need of endeavouring to realise social harmony and understanding between various social groups. The incidents in Bombay alone provide the need for a redefinition of our objectives and aims of Social Education. The Social Education work done in the cities of Ahmedabad, Poona and Sholapur is conducted more or less on the same pattern as in Bombay and while the activities launched by the agencies working in these towns have been successful and bring much credit to the organisers, the need of a change of attitude towards Adult or Social Education is undoubtedly imperative.

Delhi is another centre where important work is being done in the field of Adult or Social Education. The beneficial activities undertaken by the Delhi Public Library and Delhi Municipal Committee are too well known to bear mention. The Delhi Public Library has organised an efficient library service which has benefitted a large population in the old city of Delhi. The Delhi Municipal Committee has taken considerable initiative in the field of adult education by setting up a large number of community centres for men and women. These centres are growing in popularity and provide various activities largely of recreational character. It may be hoped that in the course of time the advantages gained by the Municipal Committee through these centres will be furthered and new techniques of Social Education adopted for the removal of social tensions and development of a truly democratic attitude in the minds of people. The labour welfare organisation in the industrial areas in the country are also carrying on valuable social welfare work. Their attitude, however, is more to attend to the social amenities of the industrial population than to educate it in the responsibilities of social life in the wider sense. It is true that the best social work is done by actually attending to social needs ; yet this in

itself is hardly sufficient to inculcate the ideals and outlook which would be adequate to the needs of the country.

A study of the work done in the various urban organisations of the country would reveal that most of the activities in the sphere of adult education are more or less confined to liquidation of illiteracy, development of library service, organisation of community centres and promotion of recreation activities. In some places, the work of literacy is the main concern of the committees and in some other places, recreational work dominates the community centres. While all the activities that are being undertaken by the city social education societies are necessary elements in the scheme of proper social education work, the urgency of adopting measures which are necessary for the realisation of the real objectives of Social Education is being keenly felt. The scope of social education activities in the urban areas need to be redefined and replanned with due regard to the recent experiences and to the imperative need of building up responsible social attitudes.

The techniques of social education work in the towns and cities are bound to differ from those which have been successfully tried in the rural areas. The study of town life would invariably reveal certain pathological conditions which will need to be analysed, understood and remedied. A conscious effort in this direction is essential to give social education activities the right direction. The town people experience certain stresses which are peculiar to their conditions of life. Some of them may bear passing mention. Employment in town life is not easy to secure. The ambitions of many a youth are shattered on the rock of unemployment or of ill-employment. There is little that Social Education alone can do to solve this problem which belongs to sphere of economics. Social education workers, however, can do much to lessen the suffering by creating opportunities, however limited they may be, for those who wish to work in the field of Social Welfare and Social Education. In the youth clubs and in the libraries, in the community centres and recreational work, there is ample scope for canalising the activities of the youth pending their proper employment in the life. The cooperative activities of various types are not beyond the scope of social education work and with proper initiative and organisation much can be done to provide helpful channels of activity for those who are waiting for suitable employment. And it may turn out that in these cooperative endeavours the youth may discover its cherished vocation,

I am convinced that the need of cultivating social consciousness is nowhere more urgent than in the towns and cities. The atomised urban society must be regrouped according to the varying patterns of interests and tastes and in a manner

that would be most conducive to national solidarity, social well-being and cultural progress.

A word may be said about women in the towns. In urban areas, besides women who are engaged in gainful employment, the lives of the rest as a rule tend to be empty. The time which a large population of this type spends in doing nothing useful is alarming. It is necessary that this energy should be developed and harnessed for something good. If women could be organised and taught to work in the field of Social Education, a great power will be created. If the right attitude towards social life is inculcated in the minds of the women in the town, social cohesion and understanding will be ensured to a considerable degree. Women are susceptible to appeals which inspire higher values and high ideals. If tackled properly, they can create ideal conditions for the work of Social Education.

The experience of organising literacy classes in the towns is not without its lessons. In some of the towns ad-hoc literacy classes have gained a strong footing; but speaking generally, they have not proved to be very satisfying. The urban worker is normally inclined to turn his educational advantages to immediate economic gain. His ambitions demand that he should gradually acquire the same qualifications as those for which training is provided in schools and colleges. He would like to continue his education to be a matriculate or even a graduate. The technical worker would like to attend evening classes for improving his qualifications in the sphere of his vocational activity. It will be thus necessary to provide every group of citizens with the type and quality of education which it would require.

Social education work in the urban areas will require setting up of several community centres and other social organisations. Each group will have special interests and special field of work. It is necessary to ensure that while varied social groups are formed, group consciousness is not encouraged and the possibility of group rivalries is avoided. Care will have to be taken to see that these organisations are not mutually exclusive and that they are not bedevilled with conditions which will lead to group conflicts. Some agency will be necessary to ensure communication between groups and even inter-group participation in social education work. Considerable imagination and initiative will be required for organising various institutions of the type necessary for social education work. Perhaps in every town it may be necessary to have a council for the co-ordination of activities undertaken by various groups and it is heartening to note that the proposal for the institution of such councils has already met with the approval of thinkers in the field of Social Education.

BILAS CHANDRA MUKERJI

*Fourteenth All India Adult Education Conference,
28th December 1957, Calcutta*

Bengal has been for many years a "problem province". The war-horse rode rough-shod over us, then came the famous "Bengal Famine" and to consummate our suffering came the Partition of our Province which has not only left us badly wounded but it would take many years before the wound is healed. We, in West Bengal, more than any of you from other States, are faced with a colossal problem—the problem of Refugee rehabilitation. A social worker when he visits some of the refugee concentrations in and near Calcutta or railway platforms and watch the mass of humanity living under sub-human conditions, is filled with despair specially when he watches them in the light of human values". Many of us have grown used to these sights and our hearts don't melt any more when we see, as we often do the mother weeping over the dead child on the railway platform, Perhaps, an unloving thought crosses our mind, tinged with a touch of cruel consolation : the child would suffer no more !

With this back-ground, we shall discuss the vital subject of "human values" in West Bengal. But, I hope, the vision of those from other States may not be so blurred or confused and they will be able to view it from a broader and larger perspective.

It may be said that our ideas and concepts of "Adult Education" are crystallising after our experience in the field these last two decades. While fully conscious of the fact that "Literacy" is indispensable in the whole plan of our work as the first step towards education, we have come to realise that our objective implies a comprehensive programme of public health, recreation and the home-life of the adults in addition to literacy. The economic life of adults and training of citizenship are indispensable in building up a new and self-reliant nation. But whatever may be said, we cannot lose sight of the fact that six crores of people in India, out of thirty-six crores are only literate and that in literacy we have not yet reached

the 20th mile-post ! The tragedy becomes all the more poignant when we learn that on the women's side the figure of illiteracy is very much larger than on men's side. We are also conscious of the fact that when we make a man literate, we make an **individual** literate but when we make a woman literate, we make a **family** literate.

We are all aware of the fact that powerful agencies are at work in this field, promoting social education. Four of these could be mentioned below :—

- (i) The Education Directorate—Government
- (ii) The Development Projects and National Extension Service Schemes
- (iii) The State Social Welfare Boards
- (iv) Voluntary organisations.

These are trying to tackle the work with a definite Social Education programme and it will not be fair to say that they have not been able to make much head way. There is good deal of criticism on Governmental planning, the most important being that all their organisational work tend to be too top-heavy and top-controlled. They may have many short-comings and limitations, particularly in the choice of recruiting the right type of workers (and officers) but my close association with their work these last seven years have convinced me that there are men and women among them who have sufficient idealism and faith in human values. I am sure, we all are also aware of the apathy of the villagers and their inertia in all matters of progress. The Royal Agricultural Commission, thirty years ago, characterised them in one sentence: "The problem in the villages of India is the Villager himself."

Regarding organisations, promoting the cause of social education in the country, there is one point which we cannot lose sight of. There is considerable lack of co-ordination among departments and private organisations and there are not many avenues of contact. We feel that frequent meetings and seminars should be called for exchanging plans and ideas and authorities concerned should be asked to arrange these contacts.

Further, there is another instance of failure to which attention need be drawn. There are departments of the Government which feel they have no concern with any educational program and no responsibility for advancing the cause of social education in the State. Unless and until all departments of the Government, as also all private bodies, join hands in making a total effort to remove ignorance, superstition, evil practices and illiteracy, the future does not offer too bright a picture. In this respect at least we may take a lesson from the Soviet Five-year contracts.

Family Planning

Here in India, to-day, we are facing many problems but it seems that the problem of all problems is the rapid growth of India's population. We do not know in what a state we would be landed in another ten or fifteen years! The problem appears to be baffling and we are all conscious of the fact that all our "national planning" will end in smoke if there is no effective "family planning"! The Social Education workers, all over the country, is facing this problem and our Government is not idle in this respect. In this matter, all our provincial bodies should fully co-operate with the Government and disseminate among the people with whom they are working, whatever knowledge they can acquire.

Our Association in West Bengal has been in touch with the Government in this matter and we are anxious to prepare such literature as may be a help to our workers in the field.

All of us are soldiers here, fighting the battle! And our battle are on three fronts :—

Firstly, the *Village front* : India still lives in villages and though the industrialisation of the country is growing quite rapidly and the villagers are becoming city-minded, social workers still have and will have for some years to come, the great task of village reconstruction. New roads are being laid and buses are penetrating into remote villages, and there is constant inflow of new ideas but the villagers are often imperious to these changes and their conservative mind is hardly stirred by the impact. The result often is that they remain where they were—victims of ignorance and poverty. Within about 15 miles of this great city, one could visit a village on the gate of which is written, what was written on the gate of Dante's *Inferno* "*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate*" (Abandon hope, all ye enter here)! For one would still see the faces of men and women, who exist but do not live, being easy victims of exploitation by interested parties. The task of social education is an arduous task and unless the worker is inspired with a sense of vocation and have the loving conception of human values, it is not easy to achieve anything abiding.

Inidentally it may be mentioned that very often a worker faces the need for a suitable place in the village which he could make the centre of his activities to scatter love and light. The construction of a "Social Life Centre" in every village where we wish to work is essential and a careful adjustment of our budget would help the villagers to build the "Centre" according to a given plan. This place should also have the Village Library and the social worker should be given entire charge of supervision

and management of the Centre. The old "Chandi-mandaps" have nearly all disappeared and nothing new in the shape of such houses are being put up which could be used by all villagers rich and poor alike.

The second front is *Labour Front*. While writing this I have no knowledge of the trend of discussion or decision in the Seminar held this week to tackle Workers' Education—with special reference to Industrial Labour. We are all aware that this is an important subject which is drawing the attention of many. With the rapid growth of industry, labour should receive more attention. We frequently hear of labour unrest. Illiteracy, lack of proper adjustment and frequent unemployment are responsible for the unrest. As long as labour continues to be illiterate and as long as their living conditions and wages are not improved, the trouble will continue. Here is a challenge to the management!

The Labour, in many cases rightly, looks upon the management, in majority of our factories, as capitalistic concerns with considerable distrust. In an atmosphere of suspicion the appointment of the "Labour Welfare Officer" by the management defeats the purpose for which they are employed. The idea of their being appointed by Labour Union Organisations cannot be entertained but surely a solution could be found if arrangement could be made to shift the responsibility of appointment to a Central Board or "Chamber" to which the Labour Officer would be responsible and before which Board would place their plans and ideas for an all-round "welfare" including workers' education or "further education" and that also of their children.

Twenty-five years ago, I had the opportunity of visiting Cadbury's in Bournville. The concern is managed by "Friends" or as they are popularly known—"Quakers". As early as 1930, this management set an example before the world which the world, however, is slow to emulate. I was struck to see and to feel, while there, how happy the employees were! Every one there has not a word to say against the management as they themselves were the "management"—even the man at the wheel-barrow, each having vested interest as members of one co-operative family. I felt for the first time that the spiritual out-look of "Friends" on life had made that possible.

Labour in the industrial area in the suburb of all big cities presents a real challenge to the social workers. The labour, however, everywhere, are eager to be led and guided. It will be a happy time when the social worker can start work in these areas in co-operation with the management, backed by a Labour Officer who is not altogether a "creature" of the management. Our Association has been called to organise work among these

people on several occasions and our experience, so far, has been happy.

While tackling "Workers' Education", the enthusiasts should also take account of a section of undesirable urban population who are termed as "riff-raffs" or "Gundas" or anti-social elements. Their number is increasing in every city in India, creating a very difficult problem for those in charge of law and order. Most of them eke out a mere living by begging or by fraud and they are becoming quite a menace to the society.

Finally, I come to the *Student Front* and here I can speak with considerable authority because of my intimate connection with the student population, stretching over 40 years.

There are over two lakhs of students in various colleges in West Bengal. Seventy-five thousand students registered their names for the School Final Examination this year! These College students are the fortunate few who are better placed than many to devote their time and thought to the unfortunate many in this land. Are they or our Universities sufficiently alive to this challenge?

I am reminded of an incident which happened many years ago. Some of you may have seen the Niagra Falls—one of the wonders of the world. As the train slowly moves towards it, you could hear the rumbling noise of the waterfall from a long distance...or if you visit when the sky darkens in the evening, you could see a thousand electric lights which illumine the whole region.

Many years ago a Poet visited the place and he stood below on the brink of the Fall on the flat ground from where he could get an entire view. He looked with admiration and was wrapt with a sense of beauty as the mighty river suddenly slopes down 160 feet below, dashing against the low ground of solid rocks, bursting into froth and foam, presenting a wonderful phenomenon. The Poet lost himself in wonder and admiration and shouted out "*How Beautiful!*"! A few years later, another man came and watched the phenomenon from the same vantage ground. He was a Philosopher. The grandeur of the sight, the vast volume of water rolling down the high precipice, the rumbling noise of many waters, bewitched him and in extreme ecstasy he shouted "*How Grand!*"! Lastly came an Engineer with his scientific out-look and watched the scene with much interest. He saw in the Fall tremendous natural power and absorbed in thought, suddenly shouted "*What a colossal waste!*"! It dawned upon him that the water-power could be utilised to serve great purpose if properly harnessed and it was through this thought that the whole region near Niagra Falls is now lighted up with thousand lights!

I have often thought of this story in connection with our students and when I realise that this vast man-power is not harnessed for the great and noble work of national reconstruction, I say with the Engineer : "What a colossal waste" ! May I appeal through our Conference to-day to all those in authority in our Universities, to turn their thoughts in this direction ? Efforts are being made in one or two places to train students to spend useful vacations and the response has always been encouraging. The wise Vice-Chancellors of our Universities do not always realise that higher education to a chosen few will not save the country but may land them some day in disaster if the illiterate millions begin to think (as they are beginning to think !) that crores of rupees are being spent at their cost when they themselves are deprived of the privilege of entering even the very precinct of the sanctuary of knowledge.

PROF. M. MUJEEB

Fifteenth All India Adult Education Conference

13th December, 1958, Lucknow

I speak with great diffidence. But I feel that a sufficient number among us do not realise the extent of the responsibility we have taken upon ourselves in achieving our freedom. We are not just politically sovereign and independent. We are not just a democracy. We are not just a people planning our development within the framework of independence and democracy. Mahatma Gandhi insisted, and we willingly agreed that our freedom should not be the freedom of a class, that our idea of the spiritual and material good should not be a fixed, traditional idea. We have written into our constitution fundamental principles and directives that make us into a classless society, that make it incumbent on us to promote the highest development of the individual citizen. Our state has undertaken to eliminate all distinction and discrimination, to allow free play for talent within an administrative and social structure that provides for all equal right and opportunity. We have gone far beyond other nations in imposing on ourselves the moral obligation to foster international peace and cooperation. Our freedom, far more than freedom elsewhere, is a professed constitutional obligation to work for the highest social ends.

These ends cannot be realised in a day. It would be unfair if others, or we ourselves, took a too strict account of the eleven years for which we have been free. The legal fact of our independence has been considerably modified by circumstances, by the occurrence of events which forced us to divert our attention and energies to issues that arose unexpectedly. Nature has also put us on trial, and we have had to spend on foodgrains resources that should have been utilised elsewhere. But we cannot be complacent. We should not too easily excuse ourselves if we lack the feeling of urgency, if we think that the time at our disposal is not to be measured by the length of our own lives but in centuries and even millennia. Nor should we excuse ourselves if we mistake an experiment undertaken for a task accomplished, a performance that on critical appraisal

appears to be of dubious or small value for an obligation fulfilled in part.

In the field of adult education, we did begin with a proper sense of urgency in 1937. It did seem to us that a democracy of the illiterate would be no democracy at all and that it was the primary duty of the educated to remove the blemish of illiteracy. But we were hasty in deciding that quick results were essential, and we fixed the target too low. Of one state, at least, I know that the first wave of enthusiasm was spent in teaching the illiterate to sign their names. But institutions and organisations were also set up which gave literacy a more ambitious interpretation, social education centres of a permanent character were established, literature was prepared to enable the new literate to acquire elementary knowledge of any subject that happened to interest him. Immediately after independence, work on both these lines was expanded and intensified. In addition, the idea of people's colleges was taken up, following some experiments that appeared to be useful. The planning and execution of social education projects became a somewhat specialised task, the social education worker began to look upon his job as one of constant organised repetition. The states added a department of social education to their education departments, and gave it the status of routine work.

Are we satisfied with what has been done, or what seems likely to be accomplished, if we continue on the lines we have followed so far? I do not think there would be many who would say 'Yes' with a convincing degree of confidence. A recent, survey, based on random sampling, of five Hindi-speaking states shows that the actually literate are only a fraction, and not a large fraction of those listed as literate. We may dispute the findings. The fraction that is actually literate may be somewhat larger. But so may be the number of those found to be illiterate or almost illiterate. The question is not one of arithmetic, of small or large percentages. We use glasses to acquire normal sight, not for relatively better sight. Our effort is not well used, or well directed if the main result is to convert absolute into relative illiteracy. The people's colleges are an idea we have borrowed but not been able to adapt. We have not succeeded in making them centres of general education, and it was not intended that they should be training centres for agriculture or crafts set up by voluntary agencies to compete with those set up by governments. But for the scheme of adult schools, we are almost where we were, so far as methods are concerned.

In the matter of means also no definite progress seems to have been made. We began with mass effort. We felt, perhaps that if we organised and disciplined this mass, used it as a general uses his army, we would be overstepping the limits imposed

by democracy. In other countries, specially the Soviet Union, mass effort has been applied. The mass may have been collected and organised by force, and fear of the consequences may have prevented it from disintegrating. But masses cannot be kept together and made to apply their energies to specific purposes on a purely voluntary basis. When mass action is at the same time the action of competent individuals, training and discipline and relentless persistence are also required. We did not or could not fulfil any of the conditions. Our mass action remained indistinguishable from mass enthusiasm, and as enthusiasm, evaporated, the mass disintegrated. I would say even now that mass action would be the swiftest means of eradicating illiteracy, but we must train and discipline this mass of the educated as if it were an army sent to battle with ignorance and illiteracy. We must set out with the determination to win the battle, and we must have the courage to give swift and sure punishment to defaulters and deserters and those who spread discontent or undermine morale. But I know that we shall not be able to do it, because we shall not be able to bring ourselves to fulfilling the conditions on which alone mass action can succeed.

Another means, now generally in use, is the social education worker. A discussion of his fate raises many inconvenient issues. We can have a social education department administered like the education department if we also have a syllabus, classes, examinations, that is if the social education worker knows precisely what he has to teach, whom he has to teach, and why he has to teach. But if we are dissatisfied with this conception of social education, if we desire to make it a means of stimulating the impulse for self-improvement, of imparting the skill to practice a craft in order to earn a livelihood or to supplement other means of earning it, if our aim is to produce competent, public-spirited citizens, then the social education department has to be differently organised and administered, the social education worker to be differently recruited and differently treated. He must be educated enough to understand his function, confident enough to exercise his initiative and he must be given the freedom to adapt his means to his ends. This freedom must be ensured by responsiveness on the part of the administration, by sharing in the sense of urgency and willingness to shoulder an equal degree of responsibility. I have no authority for saying that we have not found the social education worker we wanted, or not known how to treat him when we found him. But I believe social education in India would have had a different aspect if such workers had been found in sufficient large numbers.

You and I know, however, that we have gone to the other

extreme of making, by and large, social education a part-time employment, of paying the local primary school teacher an allowance for looking after the local social education centre. A part-time worker costs much less than full time one, and if we have to deal in thousands of workers the saving can amount to lakhs of rupees. But if saving is our objective, we could save the part-time worker's allowance also. If we have other ends in view, if social education means literacy plus social sense, plus participation in all forms of development work, plus understanding, plus earnestness and zeal than we just do not deserve any return for what we spend on part-time workers. Primary school teachers have not in any part of the country, generally been found to be sufficiently competent or devoted. Those who are competent and devoted will be too occupied with and too exhausted by their substantive work to undertake any more. We may be breaking their back by adding to their responsibility. The other kind will be just selling their incompetence and indifference to us, and what we give them in return and the manner in which we give it, is not sufficient to awaken their conscience. Social education, or any education, cannot be the result of such traffic. But somehow the idea of saving money sticks to our mind. The plan of employing part-time social education workers is known to have failed. But the Ministry of Community Development are trying it again

A very serious problem, when we are discussing the means of social education, is whether this is the proper function of the government or of voluntary agencies. I do not hold any brief for voluntary agencies. Too often the voluntary agency provides an outlet for the ambitious or a stepping stone to an essentially different career. But voluntary agencies are the eyes and the hands and the mind of the public. They may become the tools, but they are also the only correctives, of the political party. They are the only form in which citizens interested in various activities of social and cultural value can organise themselves for cooperating with the government. They are the symptoms and the symbols of public initiative. They force the government as well as the people to think and act. Because they need help, their work can be examined and assessed. Even their mistakes have a significance, as they provide experience at a comparatively low cost. On the other hand, the initiative of the government is in reality the initiative of a few officers. Except where small pilot projects are taken up, the government tends inevitably to work on a large scale and in an impersonal way. It takes greater risks, and all its undertakings, inspite of the lavish use of the word 'temporary' in making appointments, become vested interests. The disappointments and frustrations of voluntary agencies become visible

and audible, they often see the butcher's knife in their dreams. Government officials cannot speak out their minds except to other officials, their career depends very largely on the exercise of tact. Government departments have a forehead on which the hallmark of eternity appears as a bio-chemical reaction to the very fact of their coming into existence. There are risks in any case, and the greatest risk is that the desire for work will degenerate into planning for survival. But all things considered, the voluntary agency seems to be the more suitable for actual execution, the government for financial aid, scrutiny and evaluation of all kinds of projects of social education.

I do not know if you will think a pessimist like me the proper person to discuss policy. But I am not alone in having learnt from experience, and policy does need to be discussed, even if it involves some waste of time.

I believe, first, that we must concentrate instead of diffusing our efforts. Secondly, we must concentrate where success is most likely, where it is most easily measurable. We must concentrate on the adult school, on workers' education, on the philosophy, in the widest sense, of adult and social education.

I wish I could talk about concentration of effort without committing myself further. It is most embarrassing to discuss the value of a heritage, specially when this heritage is a policy that finds the most honourable mention on the most solemn occasions. All our sense of duty, all our allegiance to the ideas of democracy, all our love for our native earth seems to call us to the village. Going back to the village spiritually is like the intoxication of love, to which sobriety must be brought as the most cherished sacrifice. But have we succeeded in making our love acceptable? I dare not say 'No.' We have Mahatma Gandhi, the supreme example of statesmanship, of dedication to moral values telling us that if we cannot make ourselves and our love acceptable to rural India, we might as well write off anything else that we have achieved. We may be condemning ourselves too strongly for our failures in the past and laying ourselves open to the charge of an inconsistency that amounts almost to a moral offence if we say that, for purposes of social education, we must begin with the town, and wait for a happy coincidence of desires before we advance into the village. But I believe we have no choice.

Since I have said this much, let me say the rest. No one in his senses will deny that the rural population of India has the greatest claim on the state, and is entitled first and foremost to all forms of welfare service. But is the problem of rural India a problem of social education? Let us postulate that it

is. Then we must persuade villagers to learn to read and write, to desire a clearer, healthier life, to learn how to cooperate, how to use their intelligence and energy for promoting projects of common benefit, and for getting higher returns for the labour they put in by using the best methods in agriculture and animal husbandry. While we are persuading villagers to follow particular lines of self-improvement, we must—or rather the social education service must—have on hand the rewards to be given as soon as they are deserved: books and opportunities for stimulating the mind, an income from which more clothes and better food can be purchased, a medical service for the prevention and treatment of the most common diseases, proper conservancy and sanitation arrangements, opportunities for exercising the ability to cooperate and for deriving substantial benefit from cooperative enterprises, markets and marketing facilities. The Ministry of Community Development is doing all that can be done to improve economic and living conditions in the rural areas under its charge. But it is not, and I do not think it should be, an agency following the principles of social education, waiting till needs become felt needs, making development a result of education, thinking primarily in terms of personality, of civic virtue of social fulfilment. I do not think there is a middle path between helping the people by providing what they need and teaching them to help themselves. If we have established a Community Development Ministry for helping the people, we must give an entirely different form to what we have been calling social education.

What this form is to be, I shall discuss later. For the present, let me say that this form will depend entirely on the measure and the nature of the success achieved by the Community Development Ministry. For other agencies, adult education should mean the setting up of adult school in urban areas and social education centres for the educated and employed.

The Adult School will be a school, and will be conducted like a school. It will be based on the assumption that men are selfish, they are so deficient in their sense of values that they would at care for literacy if all they get in return for their labour is the dubious ability to read books and newspapers, to understand national and international problems, and to perform such civic duties as voting intelligently. The adult school will not be an institution for making people literate. It will depend on its ability to attract those who wish to become literate so that they might study further. Of course, there may be those who would be satisfied with literacy. For such people literacy would mean the study of all subjects up to the standard of the fifth primary class. But the purpose of the school will

be to induce further study. And now that we have begun an experiment in adult school, the aim of the Indian Adult Education Association should be to see that this experiment succeeds, that the establishment of adult schools becomes a part of national planning and that proper opportunities are provided for those who pass out of the adult school.

This further education will consist in opportunities of studying up to the higher secondary standard, and in obtaining professional training of the kind each adult needs or is suited for. I hope and pray that trade schools and institutions for professional training will have become a part of our programme of educational development by the time adult schools have begun to teach up to the higher secondary level, and organisers of adult education will only have to see how they can make use of existing training facilities. Of course, if these are not available, the adult with higher secondary certificate will want to join the university, and we shall have to see what the universities can do. In any case, the adult school is meant to provide not literacy but education, and to lead on to a career.

If we adopt the policy of establishing adult schools in urban areas, we shall have to review our conception of social education. So far we have imposed an idealistic approach on ourselves and on the adult we wished to educate. Now we must look to material interest. The well-to-do villager already consults his material interest by sending his son to school. The poor villager wants to earn more, and adult or social education of the type we have been giving has not evidently helped to increase his income. The agencies whose assistance he can benefit from are the Ministry of Community Development, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the local government officials. It should be the function of these agencies to make social education a part of their programmes. In the urban areas, the adult school ought to offer a material inducement, and we ought to make sure that the inducement is material enough.

But if the scope of adult education is restricted to this extent, do we not eliminate social education altogether? It would appear that we do, because the present social education centre will be converted in to an adult school. We do that, however, for the reason that the people whom we have been trying to draw to the social education centre really need adult schools. It is the educated, the employed, who need social education centres, and it is their need that we must try to fulfil.

The basic need is to think, to think, intelligently, consequently, seriously. The duty to think is one that we all evade. We

have personal reasons for this evasion, and the reasons differ. The manner of evading it is also different with each one of us. Some of us stop thinking because they have their work marked out. The teacher has his syllabus prescribed, his periods assigned; he knows what registers he has to fill; he knows the rules about salary and D. A. and leave; he knows when to expect a promotion and when to fear or hope for a transfer. His life is an example of continuity without change. He has now, because of the exertions of forward-looking educationists, to sit through lectures or to attend workshops or seminars. He has sometimes to formulate in words what is called his 'experience', to repeat substantially what he knows. My arithmetic has always been bad, and I cannot give in figures how many times the same thing would be repeated if we had twenty seminars, each attended by fifty persons. But you can guess the figures. Social education workers at all levels are no less guilty of confusing thought with repetition, or with the passing around of clichés and technical terms from mouth to mouth, seminar to seminar, conference to conference. Earnest and enthusiastic government officers add official slang to the technical terms and clichés appropriate to the subject they are dealing with, and mistake precise correspondence between scheme and budget, idea and expenditure, for serious thought. All of us seem to have arrived at a tacit understanding to avoid, first, discussion of fundamentals, and secondly analysis of the terms we use.

Let, me give a few examples. We all talk of urban and rural education. Does it mean that there are two kinds of human beings that have to be distinguished from each other, if we wish to give them their proper education? Does the same educative process have one effect in the country and another in the town? If human beings and the process of educating them are the same, why do we suggest that there is a difference? Further, when we talk of urban and rural, do we imply that a difference of circumstances exists or that this difference has to be maintained? Will the economic development that we are planning now reinforce and perpetuate, or will it undermine and destroy the present social and economic structure of the village? If the village is to be maintained as it is, are we adapting education and development to this objective? If we think the village as it is, cannot, or does not deserve to survive, should we not plan education with this in mind? I have myself been rather indiscreet in expressing my inability to admire the village or the villager, and have desired for both the best that the town can give. I would advise you to be more tactful, but I do think it a matter of national concern that this issue should be frankly discussed.

Another example of evasion is our fear of discussion all that comes under belief. I realise the danger of raising religious controversies. But the acceptance of all that exists sets limits to education which may ultimately strangle education itself. If you examine the religious thought and practice among the Muslims during the last 150 years, you will find that all movements have found their grave in a greater emphasis on praying five times a day, greater attention to meaningless details, a more meticulous elimination of all habits and customs borrowed from the Hindus and a more irrational admiration for everything Islamic or Muslim. I cannot think of a better method of injecting frustration and decay into any society than the reduction of all its spiritual and moral idealism to external forms. On the other hand, I see Hinduism being reduced to festivals and the repetition of myths. If you think, I am exaggerating please study the items we include in the cultural programmes of our social education centres. You will find it is the Ramayana and the Mahabharata over and over again. You will say these are part of the people's life. I agree. But are they the whole of the people's life? Is there nothing else, nothing beyond?

Ours is a secular state. Does this mean that we leave all religious beliefs alone, or does it mean that the state has thrown a challenge to all religions to find a new expression, a new life? Does secularism teach us to stop thinking about religion, to make it a private affair of no social significance, or to keep it as an ornament for the mantelpiece? Does the 'Farz' the absolute obligation of the Muslim, consist only in certain observances, and the repetition of certain formulas? Has the Hindu concept of the *dharma* no value except as prescription of ritualistic duties for castes and sub-castes? These questions have to be considered by all of us, but specially by those whose main interest or concern is social education. Otherwise such concepts as civic duty, tolerance, goodness will remain just abstract terms, we shall never be able to understand or explain what we mean by 'personality', the fully developed human person, the reading of text-books and tracts and evaluation reports on special experiments will be the sum total of our intellectual effort and technical discussions will be the kitchen from which we serve out our spiritual food.

I was thinking of all this when I suggested just now that we need social education centres for the educated and the employed. It is they whom we should induce to think along with us, for it is they who are at the moment lost in democracy as in a wilderness. They have no compelling beliefs, no guiding principles, no standards for the judgement of right and wrong, no taste, no culture. It is true that justice requires us to give

of what we have first to those who have nothing. But perhaps we shall have more to give, and more people willing and able to give, if we spend a good part of what we have in the first place among those who are better able to understand and more likely to be responsive. A mentally active and morally responsible lower middle class can make a great difference in a democracy as young as ours, with the masses still steeped in the darkness of ignorance,

Social Education is not a one-way movement of thoughtfulness and knowledge. But it is relatively a few, and these also when they have had some training, who can take the illiterate through the various stages of literacy. It is not generally possible or useful to recruit the services of the highly educated, the teachers of Higher Secondary Schools, Colleges and Universities, for they are not accustomed to give elementary form to their knowledge. But for social education centres with an educated audience, it will be possible to plan lectures and courses where even specialists would not have to step down from their pedestal. We could have lectures on constitutional problems, on administrative and legislative procedure, on all the ailments of government from the ordinary headache to creeping paralysis, we could discuss social questions, economic difficulties, topics of scientific research, painting, sculpture, architecture. And if we could use for social purposes, knowledge which is now stacked like lumber in idle and fretful minds, we would even wake up our intelligentsia, between whom and the people we are taught to believe there is a yawning gulf. Social education would then be education in the widest social sense, comprehending the most varied forms of knowledge for all who wish to cultivate a particular interest or to maintain the curiosity, which is the only sure indication of mental alertness and the only hope of progress.

RESOLUTIONS

CHANGING CONCEPT OF ADULT EDUCATION

This conference regards the whole sphere of human life in India, both in town and country as providing scope for Adult Education, whose aim is to promote in all possible ways the fullest personal development of men and women of India, so that they may attain to the fullness of their physical, mental and spiritual stature, and more especially those who have not had opportunities of education during their early life; and that it regards literacy, arts, crafts, literature, science, technology, vocational training and all other forms of instruction as not in themselves educational, but only means of developing the latent talents and potentialities of our nature. (1938)

* * *

Resolved that local adult education bodies should be free to adapt and consider curricula and methods and techniques of adult education according to the local conditions, needs and facilities and also to carry on experiment on this behalf. This conference further recommends that the results of local experiments and projects should be made available to the All India Conference for purposes of study and discussion. (1938)

* * *

That in order to give a powerful impetus to the cause of Adult Education and to facilitate the growth of civic consciousness in the country and in order to enable the millions still unenfranchised to qualify for the exercise of the vote through education, this conference appeals to all Governments,—Central, Provincial and in the several Indian States,—to all Districts, Tehsil and Local Boards and Municipalities throughout India; to private individuals as well as to private corporations, commercial magnates and captains of industry and others employing and controlling labour, and more especially to the Universities, school boards and all educational institutions in India, as well as to private citizens to throw open the doors of their institutions and their dwelling houses for conducting adult education classes, not only by contributions in money and the loan of premises but also by voluntary services to help those adults who have been denied either in whole or in part such chances in their lives. (1939)

This conference stresses that literacy is only a means to an end and adult education should explore and utilise all other means to a higher civic, social, cultural and economic level and recommends the adoption of the following or other means for the achievement of the end in view :—

- (1) Health culture clubs. (2) Sanitation programmes.
- (3) Discussion and debates. (4) Study groups.
- (5) Amusement and recreation programmes.
- (6) Dramatic and magic lantern shows.
- (7) Talks by specialists. (8) Thrift societies.
- (9) Social Reform Leagues. (10) Organisation for the promotion of communal understanding.
- (11) Economic uplift schemes. (12) Artistic and cultural activities.

This conference suggests that special emphasis be laid on the study of history, literature and civics as a necessary foundation for a cultured life and further suggests the appointment of small committees to work out the details of the programme set forth above. (1939)

* * *

In view of the democratic constitution that is being evolved for India, and the immediate need for educating the illiterate masses in the full content of citizenship and the imperative need to develop in them the ability to think, appraise and judge for themselves, educational authorities in India should discharge their primary responsibility in this matter by immediately formulating comprehensive schemes of adult education and working them out with devotion so that the prevalent illiteracy and ignorance may be liquidated in as short a time as possible. (1946)

* * *

The conference recommends to all agencies, engaged or interested in adult education, to pay due regard to the following points while formulating their policies and programmes:

1. Adult Education is larger than literacy and literacy should not be regarded as the best or the inevitable starting point of Adult Education in the prevailing circumstances of the country.
2. Adult Education must aim at enabling the common man to live a richer life in all its aspects—social, economic, cultural and moral. For this purpose adult education must definitely envisage all adult centres, as social centres, interested primarily

in providing social, recreation and cultural facilities for the people and must endeavour to develop their powers of initiative, judgement and integrity as citizens.

While a great deal of emphasis will naturally be placed on the education of the illiterate, Adult Education should not merely confine its attention to this class but should cover various forms of "further" or "continuation" education in particular through lectures, seminars, discussion groups, arts, crafts and music clubs, People's Colleges and other agencies which need to be developed in India in the light of her special needs.

(1947)

* * *

This conference welcomes the new scheme of social education which aims at giving a wider and deeper connotation to Adult Education and to include social and civic training in it. It wishes, however, to place on record its considered opinion that all workers and authorities promoting social education should take scrupulous care to see that their civic education does not degenerate into party propaganda on behalf of any political group.

(1947)

* * *

This conference notes with satisfaction that the broader aspects of adult education activity are being appreciated increasingly by a number of State Governments and non-official agencies. The conference wishes to emphasise the wide and varied nature of adult education activity. Education is a life-long process, its aim being to make possible for the individual to develop himself to the fullest stature. In addition to literacy and cultural education, adequate attention should be paid to vocational training. The standard of national efficiency and of economic production can only be raised, when the persons working in the farms and factories enjoy the work in which they are engaged and know how to do it more efficiently.

(1951)

* * *

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

Expressing its regret that the plans to bring about changes in social attitudes and to associate people and their institutions in implementation of the Schemes have met only with limited success and believing that this is partly the result of the unspecified role assigned to social education, the conference recommends that the social education programme should devote itself exclusively to the task of creating social efficiency, in the community by furthering the creation of the new social values and attitudes consistent with the ethos of the community development scheme. (1957)

* * *

PROGRAMMES AND METHODS OF ADULT EDUCATION*

Literacy and Adult Schools

This conference is of the opinion that adult literacy in India should aim at imparting a fairly effective knowledge of the instruments of learning and should, therefore, be planned to satisfy the minimum standard set forth here under :—

- a) Reading and understanding of the meaning of a simple passage corresponding to the standard in the Second Reader used in that area.
- b) Writing of simple passage to dictation or a simple letter.
- c) Filling in of the common postal forms.
- d) Manipulating the first four compound rules for small sums of money and the common measures of weight in use in the locality. (1939)

* * *

That the Provincial and State Governments and Local Bodies be requested to give the free use of Government buildings to conduct literacy and adult education work. (1942)

* * *

This conference recognises the possibility of relapse into illiteracy of the adults who fulfil the requirements of the first stage unless they are provided with opportunities for pursuing and improving by means of continuation readers, village libraries

* The resolutions have been arranged, according to subject and not year-wise.

and suitable news sheets and with this end in view strongly recommends the adoption of suitable measures through the organisation of post-literacy courses and study groups and the supply of easy interesting literature or otherwise for making literacy an effective tool in developing the individuality of the adults.

The conference recommends that this post-literacy course should lead the adults under instruction to a stage corresponding to the 5th standard and literacy should be considered to be effective only when this stage has been reached. It is suggested that the completion of each-course should entitle the adults to Junior and Senior certificates. (1939)

* * *

This conference is of the opinion that the time has come when literacy campaigns should be supplemented by regular adult schools, which will give adults who have missed their schooling an opportunity to obtain elementary and post-elementary education of similar pattern as is available for the school-going age. This conference, therefore, welcomes the scheme initiated by the Ministry of Education to set up adult schools on an experimental basis and recommends to the Government of India and the state governments to include the setting up of such adult schools in the Third Five Year Plan. (1958)

* * *

This conference recommends that January the 27th be set apart for celebrating a Mass Education Day in the whole country when all villagers would take a pledge to obtain literacy as far as possible within a year and would demand that a large percentage of revenue realised from them be spent on their education. (1947)

* * *

That in order to accelerate the spread of Adult Education in the country this conference is emphatically of the opinion that :—

(a) All Universities, Colleges, and High, Secondary, Primary and Technical Schools, throughout the country should open evening classes for adults, who being engaged in various avocations for earning their living are unable to attend the day classes and that (b) they should delete the clauses in their statutes and bye-laws which at present confine the eligibility for examinations to recognised public institutions and to certain

privileged exceptions viz., women and teachers, and frame instead new statutes laying down specific conditions for the recognition of classes conducted for adults either by themselves or other duly constituted Adult Education societies and granting the right of those who have taken a full course in such institutions to appear for recognised public examinations, on the same terms as are offered to those who appear from ordinary schools and colleges; and lastly that (c) extra-mural classes and Extension lectures on a wide variety of useful subjects that make for general enlightenment be organised and conducted for the benefit of all concerned. (1939)

* * *

Resolved that the Central Advisory Board of Education and the Inter-University Board be requested to consider at their next meetings the appointment of Special Sub-Committees to make suggestions to the various University Bodies in India whereby they can strengthen the adult education movement, particularly through assessing various teaching methods which have been evolved during the last few years by literacy workers in different parts of the country.

That an Adult Education corps may be organised in all colleges, schools and factories registered under the Indian Factories Act. Further, this conference strongly recommends that the factory owners will be well advised to keep Adult Education in the fore-front of all welfare programmes which they may provide for their workmen.

That the authorities controlling High School and Intermediate education be requested to encourage the institution of evening and night classes for imparting High School and Intermediate education to adults employed during the day and to frame rules for their recognition.

This conference appeals to all University authorities in India to examine the possibility of strengthening or initiating systematic adult education work under their aegis. It further requests the Indian Adult Education Association to move the various bodies to take steps to implement this resolution.

(1942)

* * *

This conference emphasises the importance of providing facilities for "Continuation Education" for the maturing of talents, both mental and motor, of those millions of our young people who are obliged to be engaged in the struggle of making a living in their early life.

The conference recommends the organisation of evening classes for equipping people for various vocations as well as providing training in handicrafts and cottage industries in a definitely educational atmosphere.

It further recommends that literacy of different aboriginal tribes should be imparted in the mother tongue of the tribe but in the Devnagri script or the regional script. (1951)

* * *

Adult Education Literature

This conference recognises the need for the production of suitable literature and recommends the establishment of a Bureau which will advise organisations producing such literature and provide them with necessary information for the purpose. This Bureau will also collect and communicate information in this connection to persons and organisations interested in the work through the official organ of the Association.

This conference is of the opinion that valuable service to the cause of adult education can be rendered by educated people by helping to produce suitable literature. The staff and students of colleges, should undertake this work as they have necessary facilities for this kind of work and live in an atmosphere conducive to cultural and intellectual development. (1939)

* * *

This conference urges publishers to undertake the publication of suitable adult education literature to cover all phases of adult education from literacy and handicrafts to university extension courses. (1946)

* * *

Area (Field) of Adult Education

This conference stresses that literacy is only a means to an end and adult education should explore and utilise all other means to a higher civic, social, cultural and economic level and recommends the adoption of the following or other means for the achievement of the end in view :—

- (1) Health culture clubs.
- (2) Sanitation programmes.
- (3) Discussion and debates.
- (4) Study groups.
- (5) Amusement and Recreation programmes.
- (6) Dramatic and magic lantern shows.
- (7) Talks by specialists.
- (8) Thrift societies.

- (9) Social Reform Leagues.
- (10) Organisations for the promotion of communal understanding.
- (11) Economic uplift schemes.
- (12) Artistic and cultural activities.

This conference suggests that special emphasis be laid on the study of history, literature and civics as a necessary foundation for a cultured life and further suggests the appointment of small committees to work out the details of the programme set forth above. (1939)

* * *

This conference views with great concern the fact that inspite of efforts made by various individuals and bodies, untouchability persists in a very large measure, subjecting a large section of the society known as the Depressed Classes to social tyranny and ostracism and resolves;—

(a) That the Adult Education movement should lay special emphasis on the removal of untouchability and should include it in official programmes of adult education.

(b) And further directs the movement to extend the work of adult education among the Depressed Classes with special emphasis on vocational training so as to raise their economic and social status. (1942)

Methods :

* * *

This conference is firmly of the opinion that the adult education movement in India should not be cramped or handicapped in any way by any partial or narrow view of its nature and scope, by its being identified with any one or other single aspect such as literacy work or handicrafts, but that it should take a broad and comprehensive view of the curricula of studies and methods of training to be provided for meeting the varied needs of men and women of India.

Resolved that local adult education bodies shall be free to adapt and consider curricula and other means and methods of adult education, and otherwise experiment in this field according to their local conditions, needs and facilities. This conference further recommends that the results of local experiments and projects should be made available to the All India Conference for purposes of study and discussion. (1938)

* * *

While a great deal of emphasis will naturally be placed on the education of the illiterate, adult education should not

merely confine its attention to this class but should cover various forms of "further" or "Continuation" education in particular through lectures, seminars, discussion groups, arts, crafts and music clubs, People's Colleges and other agencies which need to be developed in India in the light of her special needs.

In order to expedite the process of Adult Education to reinforce the appeal of the printed and the spoken word, it is essential to make the fullest use as far as is practicable of the modern media of mass communication like the radio, the cinema, the press, the theatre, folk-lore or art etc. (1947)

* * *

This conference generally approves of the recommendations made by the Second National Seminar held at Indore from October 11th to 20th, 1951, on the organisation of Community Centres. The conference conscious of the place of community centres in the scheme of national reconstruction, recommends that the social education centres in the country should progressively become real community centres equipping the regional community with initiative, with leadership and local organisation for the solution of its problem and infusing real community spirit without distinction of caste, colour or creed.

(1951)

* * *

The conference conscious of the great value of recreation as a means of education in any programme of adult education wishes to emphasise its place in the scheme of social education and community centres in the country. While there is general acceptance of its value in principle there is considerable reluctance and hesitance in actual practice. This conference recommends to adult education agencies in the country, both official and non-official to give healthy recreation and wholesome entertainment their due place in their scheme of work.

(1953)

* * *

The conference feels that for effective coordination of work it is essential to make village schools the instrument of development. The schools should increasingly develop and function as the community centres of the locality with responsibilities of meeting the needs and requirements of the community, including the education of the children. This will not only prevent duplication of effort but also give the schools and the teachers their rightful place in the reconstruction and development of the country. (1954)

Adult Education Among Women

This conference, while recognising with regret that adult education among women is lagging behind than among men, owing to the difficulty of gathering pupils into teaching centres and to the wide-spread lack of trained leadership, would stress the fact that women must be given an educational and cultural opportunity equivalent to that of men if the ideals of enriched living are to be achieved. It is self-evident that a different curriculum and different methods must be developed for this work. This conference urges that experiments be made in a triple approach to courses of study:

- (1) Courses designed to equip women for their primary task of home making i.e child welfare and child psychology, hygiene and first-aid, nutrition, needle-craft etc.
- (2) Courses for developing cultural life, such as literature, music, civics, history, courses which make literacy pre-requisite and
- (3) Training in the various cottage industries whereby a woman in the home may help to raise her economic level.

(1939)

* * *

Having regard to the deplorable state of education among women in this country and giving due consideration to the fact that intrinsically, social and cultural progress of a country depends on the progress of women's education, this conference appeals to all social service organisations, Governments sponsored as well as voluntary, to apply themselves to the task of spreading education among women with such earnestness and vigour as the exigency of the situation demands.

The conference recognises the potentialities inherent in educated womanhood and firmly believes that by educating our women, we can very substantially solve the problem of our national education.

This conference therefore, recommends to Government and other social welfare organisations to take up the programme of adult education for women as a matter of priority and to stimulate the movement by employing their human and material resources to the utmost possible extent, and give special facilities for the training of women workers taking into consideration their needs and requirements. (1953)

Civic Education

That in order to give an effective impetus to the cause of

adult education, and in order to make our people ready and fit for the exercise of political responsibility conferred on them by the recent grant of the vote, and in order to enable many more millions still un-enfranchised to be prepared for the effective use of the vote through education, this conference appeals to all Governments, Central, Provincial and in the several sovereign Indian States, to all districts and local boards and Municipalities throughout the country, as well as to private corporations and individuals employing and controlling labour, and most especially to the Universities, School boards and all educational institutions in India, as well as to individuals, to provide all possible facilities for the opening and conducting of adult education activities, (1) by contributions of money, (2) by the loan of premises, (3) by voluntary offers of services in order to bring opportunities of light and learning to all adults who have been denied the chance of developing fully the best in human personality. (1938)

* * *

With the attainment of political freedom in India, the passing of the "Gaon Hakumat Bill" in many provinces and the contemplated system of adult suffrage, the question of adult education for more than 300 million villagers living in the millions of villages of India has assumed a new importance and it is necessary to make every man and woman conscious of its urgent significance, and resolve to take active part in his/her education. (1947)

Research and Experiment

This conference notes the efforts made in different places in India to conduct research and experiments in the methods and techniques of adult education and emphasises the need for extending these research institutions which have the necessary facilities in order to minimize the wastages in efforts involved in the adoption of wrong methods, sometimes employed by workers at present. (1939)

* * *

The conference is of the opinion that adequate provision should be made in the Second Five Year Plan for social education in the areas which are not so far covered by Community Projects, or National Extension Service Blocks. Adequate finances should be made available for research, production of social education material like teaching aids, literature, audio-visual equipment, library facilities, Janta Colleges and the

like to feed programmes going on in the country. (1955)

* * *

TRAINING

This conference urges upon the Universities and Departments of Education the great necessity of recognizing adult education as one of the essential functions by establishing and encouraging institutions designed for this type of education.

(1938)

* * *

The conference feels that steps should be taken to train an adequate number of educated women to run centres and, where necessary, to undertake house to house teaching in both rural and urban areas. Further experimentation with special training institutes is desirable. Meanwhile it is noted that successful efforts to promote literacy work among women could be carried on through the organisation of school-boys and girls. (1939)

* * *

This conference is of the opinion that Universities and similar other organisations should consider the introduction of welfare education as a compulsory subject including a practical course in adult education for the degree course in all Universities.

The conference is of opinion that the importance, vastness and urgency of the problem of adult education in India demands that any comprehensive scheme of adult education in all its aspects can be effectively worked only by a sufficient number of trained and devoted full-time workers in the different linguistic areas under the direction and guidance of a Central Institute of Adult Education. Therefore, this conference, urges upon Government of all provinces, states, and the Centrally administered areas to institute an Adult Education Section as an important part of their Education Departments.

It further recommends to the Provincial Government of Madras the suggestion made by the Andhradesa Library Association that the Government do give training in Adult Literacy and Library work to the staff actually employed in carrying on intensive-rural-reconstruction, khadi and cottage industries, in the twenty-five firkas selected for the purpose and remove illiteracy in those firkas, root and branch through organising work for this purpose intensively along with other programmes. (1946)

* * *

In order to attempt adequately the programme of comprehensive adult education, the problem of selecting and training effective personnel for administration, supervision and field work should be recognised as an urgent problem. This need can best be met by the setting up of Central Institute of Adult Education for the Indian Dominion. Such a body should be able to guide and assist the Provincial and State Governments, local authorities and voluntary agencies in providing training facilities for their respective areas. (1947)

* * *

While appreciating the steps already taken by some Provinces and States to start training centres for field workers in adult education, this conference requests the Government of India to start a central training institute for training superior staff for organizing adult education and conducting researches and experiments in the principles and techniques of adult education. (1948)

* * *

This conference recommends to the State Governments that more energetic steps should be taken to equip the elementary teacher with better general knowledge and to help him to equip himself sufficiently in the field of adult and child education. This conference further recommends to the State Governments to take steps to provide a decent standard of living to the school teacher to enable him to discharge his increasing responsibilities in the present times. (1952)

* * *

SOCIAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

This conference generally approves the recommendations made by the Second National Seminar held at Indore from October 11th to 20th 1951, on the Organisation of Community Centres. The conference conscious of the place of community centres in the scheme of national reconstruction, recommends that the social education centres in the country should progressively become real community centres equipping the regional community with initiative, with leadership and local organisation for the solution of its problems and infusing real community spirit without distinction of caste, colour or creed. (1951)

This conference notes with satisfaction the place that is being given to adult education work in the scheme for reconstruction and development of the country. The conference is also happy that the conclusions arrived at by the Indian Adult Education Association at its various Conferences and National Seminars have generally found favour with the agencies in the field, both official and voluntary. This conference particularly notes with approval the emphasis being placed by various Governments in their Community Project work on the local initiative and coordination of the activities of various welfare departments of the Governments.

The conference is however conscious that the popular response to community projects and co-ordination of activities of the welfare departments have not been appreciable and need the serious attention of the authorities. (1954)

* * *

This conference is of the opinion that adequate provision should be made in the Second Five Year Plan for Social Education in the areas which are not so far covered by Community Projects, or National Extension Service Blocks. Adequate finances should be made available for research, production of social education material like teaching aids, literature, audio-visual equipment, library facilities, Janta Colleges and the like, to feed the programmes going on in the country. (1955)

* * *

This conference notes with satisfaction the place given to Social Education in the Community Development Programme. But it is doubtful whether the importance and vital role of Social Education is properly understood by many of the Development Officers. Therefore, this conference suggests that greater effort should be made to develop in them an understanding of this vital role. As development activities are essentially educational process, persons with a broad educational outlook as well as training and experience should preferably be appointed as Development Officers. (1956)

* * *

Having taken note of the Fourth Report of the Programme Evaluation Board and the observations of the Study Team on Plan Projects appointed by the National Development Council and

Considering that the essential purpose of the Community Development Scheme is to create those conditions which will

stimulate in a community the initiative necessary to make itself efficient in all directions.

Expressing its regret that the plan to bring about changes in social attitudes and to associate people and their institutions in implementation of the Schemes have met only with limited success and believing that this is partly the result of the unspecified role assigned to social education, the conference recommends that the social education programme should devote itself exclusively to the task of creating social efficiency in the community by furthering the creation of new social values and attitudes consistent with the ethos of the community development scheme. (1957)

* * *

The conference welcomes the recommendations of the Study Team of Plan Projects that responsibility for development should rest on local authorities and that power should be decentralised for realising this objective.

The conference draws attention to the significant and vital role that social education has in making local bodies efficient and capable of shouldering this important responsibility and urges upon the Government to initiate such policies as would encourage the growth or the creation of the non-official institutions which will prove efficient agents to promote activities for the voluntary and intelligent participation of masses in the programmes of community development undertaken by the local bodies. (1957)

* * *

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

In order to expedite the process of Adult Education to reinforce the appeal of the printed and spoken word, it is essential to make the fullest use as far as is practicable of the modern media of mass communication like the radio, the cinema, the press, the theatre, folk-lore of art, etc.

A Special Sub-Committee should be entrusted with the task of commissioning, cataloguing and distributing suitable educational films and other visual aid material. This committee should undertake to secure production of specially selected films suitable for their areas, and work in continuous and close collaboration with the agency commissioned to produce films etc.

Another Special Sub-committee should be charged with the responsibility of taking effective steps to take full advantage of recorded programmes made available through the radio or

the gramophones. The technique for using such recorded programmes as a basis for discussion in rural communities should receive immediate attention. (1947)

* * *

This conference recognises the need for adequate use of audio-visual aids in adult education and in view of the technical nature of work and the costs involved suggests that the governments in Provinces and States should set up properly inter-coordinated agencies for the preparation of films, slides and pictorial charts for supply 'at cost price' to associations or institutions engaged in adult education. (1948)

* * *

This conference appreciates the efforts made by the All India Radio during all these years to spread adult education among the masses by organising rural and industrial programmes. This conference requests the Executive Committee of the Indian Adult Education Association to stimulate Social Education agencies in the country, to organise a net work of listening groups in order to fully exploit the medium of broadcasting for the spread of Adult Education. This conference also requests the All India Radio authorities to consult the Association while determining the general outline of the programme of rural and industrial broadcasts. (1958)

VOLUNTARY EFFORT AND GOVERNMENT AID

In order to realise the high purpose of Adult Education in India it is vital that a strenuous effort be made to discover the actual educational needs of all sections and peoples in each local area, to explore all points of contact and possible avenues of effectively meeting those needs; and to study critically the course of Adult Education in other countries for the purpose of adapting wherever possible their methods and plans to suit the needs of India. It is resolved that instead of this conference, here and now, laying down a rigid, steel frame-work and cut-and-dried programme to be imposed from the centre on all parts of the country, the precisely opposite course be followed of appealing to all public-spirited and patriotic citizens throughout the length and breadth of his land, to gather together kindred spirits, and a realistic survey of the actual educational needs of their respective immediate surroundings and of organising themselves into autonomous local Adult Education Bodies for their respective localities, which shall undertake full responsibility to experiment and report on Adult Education work suited to their conditions and needs.

Resolved (a) that it is eminently desirable that as Local Adult Education activities spring up in several places within the same district, or in different districts within any one province, they should get into touch with one another and arrange to meet together periodically as may be convenient, and confer on matters of common interest and on ways and means of strengthening and extending adult education work in their respective areas, and (b) further resolved that the number of representatives forming the district and provincial executives and other details be left to be decided at the discretion of those concerned ; and that it will suffice for this conference to lay down only the broad principles and the unity of aim that each Adult Education Centre should be an autonomous unit free to experiment and develop on its own lines without being dictated to from above or forced into rigid uniformity with others ; and that the District or Provincial Union should aim at being truly representative of such centre within its territorial area, so as to ensure that the experience of each may be available for all. (1938)

* * *

This conference places on record its deep appreciation of the efforts promoted by some of the Provincial Governments and Indian States in the cause of Adult Education and urges other Governments, States and Local Bodies to take their due share in this vital task of national regeneration. It trusts that the Centre will soon play a leading role in furthering the cause by financial aid and guidance in the bulding up of a healthy, independent nation-wide movement in the land.

Upon the public, the conference would impress the need for greater and more practical recognition of the central place of voluntary effort in this task. (1939)

* * *

This conference recommends the setting up of Provincial and State Boards of Adult Education with wide powers. These Boards should formally have a non-official as Chairman and invariably a suitable Senior Educational Officer with requisite gifts and experience as Secretary ; the latter should have the responsibility of directing the work of adult education in the Province or State. (1947)

* * *

In view of the importance of adult education in the present condition of India and with a view to help and encourage non-

official agencies to take up this work in an adequate measure, this conference is of the opinion that expenditure incurred on it by private bodies or institutions should be recognised by the Government of Provinces and States as approved expenditure entitling them to grant-in-aid in the same way as is at present allowed for secondary education.

This conference earnestly request Provincial and State Governments to make suitable grants to Provincial Adult Education Associations to assist them in their work.

This conference requests the Provincial and State Adult Education organisations to liberally assist the central Association with funds so that it may function more effectively both as the National organisation and also as a liasion body for the purposes of international work. (1948)

* * *

This conference wishes to emphasis the place of voluntary agencies in any scheme of adult education. Adult Education activities by their very nature have to satisfy diverse and varied interests. No single organisation can hope to satisfy such interests. People should be enabled to start projects for their own education. The advantage of co-oprative self-directed efforts in any kind of educational work are too obvious to need emphasis. Such efforts awaken faith among the people in themselves and help recover a sense of personal and social significance.

Voluntary agencies are more free to use their resources with a minimum of restrictions and to select personnel with greater freedom. Such agencies, however, cannot flourish without the liberal and generous support of the State. Through giving aid to such agencies Governments can make available funds go much further than otherwise. This conference urges the State Governments as well as the Government of India to adopt a definite policy to progressively help and promote voluntary agencies and give them a recognised place in their scheme of Adult Education. (1950)

* * *

The conference notes with satisfaction that some state Governments have taken measures to associate non-official agencies in their plans for adult education work. It urges upon other states to harness non-official enthusiasm and experience in an effective manner in systematic work, without any delay.

Failure to do this is likely to defeat the purpose of the campaigns which are sponsored by official agencies from time to time. (1951)

* * *

This conference wishes to emphasize the need of maximum results on the strength of unified efforts in the field of social education and suggests the constitution of autonomous and statutory boards in place of the existing state departments of Social Education. These Boards should be composed of eminent educationists and workers in the field of adult education and should be assured of adequate finances by the State. While the voluntary agencies have the great advantage of using their resources with greater freedom and are more easily able to take advantage of honorary services of individuals interested in Social Education, they usually suffer from inadequate and sometimes, precarious finances, which seriously hamper their work. The official agencies, though having the advantage of assured finances, have to work under serious limitations as their right to use the resources at their disposal is usually hedged in by intricate rules of procedure which makes it difficult for them to make the best use of such resources. These Boards, however, would have the advantages of both the voluntary bodies as well as governmental organizations, but would be free from the disabilities of both.

The conference is of the view that these Boards should not only take up the work now being done by the State Departments of Social Education, but should also co-ordinate as well as give help to voluntary agencies. In case of States, which have more than one linguistic area, they may consider the desirability of setting up separate statutory boards for each linguistic region in the State for more efficient and economical organization of social education work in the state. (1952)

* * *

This conference reiterates the resolution passed by the Ninth All India Adult Education Conference held in 1952 in Nagpur, on the formation of Boards with adequate representation of non-official adult education workers and agencies. One of the main functions of such Boards should be to promote and act as feeding centre to the education centers started by the local communities. The conference is of the opinion that such Boards would enable the official agencies to take swift decisions and undertake speedy and effective action. Their close co-operation, help and encouragement to the centres organised by the locality would not only give the desirable place to voluntary agencies in the programme for social education but also secure for official efforts proper response from the community which is so essential for their success. (1953)

* * *

This conference would like to reiterate the emphasis it has been placing on the encouragement and development of voluntary agencies in any scheme of education and developmental work. Educational institutions and voluntary agencies should, whenever possible, be entrusted with the development of specialised areas. (1954)

* * *

This conference wishes to emphasise the importance of fully utilising the voluntary agencies for social education work. While in principle, the role of voluntary agencies in this field is being recognised increasingly, in practice, many State Departments of Education conduct most of the activities themselves, independently of the voluntary agencies existing in the field.

The conference is conscious that the number of voluntary agencies is not sufficient to meet the full requirements of social education work in the country. The conference, however, is of the opinion that Government should set up autonomous boards wherever necessary which will function as central agencies to foster the development of local non-official organizations for the purpose. These Boards may provide local organization with the necessary facilities required for their effective working such as films, posters, books, lecture etc. The general approach of the Government should be to assist people to start organizations for their own education with financial and other assistance from the State for carrying on their work. (1955)

* * *

The conference draws attention to the significant and vital role that social education has in making local bodies efficient and capable of shouldering this important responsibility and urges upon the Government to initiate such policies as would encourage the growth or the creation of the non-official institutions which will prove efficient agents to promote activities for the voluntary and intelligent participation of masses in the programmes of community development undertaken by the local bodies. (1957)

* * *

While appreciating the work done by the Indian Adult Education Association in the last 20 years, in the growth and development of the Adult Education movement, this session of the All India Adult Education Conference is of the opinion that the Association should expand its field of activities to help

build up a network of voluntary organisations, at various levels, to intensify, strengthen and consolidate the adult education movement so that the foundations of a real democracy are truly laid. Therefore, this conference requests the Executive Committee to take suitable steps for this purpose, and appoints a Committee consisting of Sarvashri Saligram Pathik (Convenor), Barkat Ali Firaq ; T.A. Koshy, D.L. Ananda Rao, A.N. Rama Rao and S.C. Dutta to indicate practical lines of action to achieve this purpose.

PLANNING AND LEGISLATION

The conference thinks that in order to give a powerful impetus to the cause of adult education and to facilitate the growth of civic consciousness in the country and in order to enable the millions still unenfranchised to qualify for the exercise of the vote through education this Conference appeals to all Governments, Central, Provincial and in the several Indian States, to all Districts, Tehsils and Local Boards and Municipalities, throughout India ; to private individuals as well as to private corporations, commercial magnates and captains of industry and all others employing and controlling labour, and more especially to the Universities, School Boards and all Educational Institution in India, as well as to private citizens to throw open the doors of their institutions and their dwelling houses for conducting adult education classes, not only by contributions in money and the loan of premises but also by voluntary service to help those adults who have been denied either in whole or in part such chances in their lives. (1939)

* * *

The conference recommends the establishment of an Adult Education Department in the office of the Educational Adviser to the Government of India and requests the Central Advisory Board of Education and the Inter-University Board to, appoint a special sub-committee to make suggestions to the various University Bodies to strengthen the adult education movement through assessing the various teaching methods evolved during the last few years by literacy workers in different parts of the country.

That an Adult Education corps may be organised in all colleges, schools, and factories registered under the Indian Factories Act. Further, this conference strongly recommends that the Factory owners may be well-advised to keep Adult Education in the forefront of all welfare programmes which they may provide for their workmen.

That this conference presses Universities, their Vice-Chancellors and Senates, and all Directors of Public Instruction to put forward, give proper stimulus to, and organise a five year plan by which student force could be harnessed to do the constructive social work of adult education. (1942)

* * *

This conference notes with satisfaction that compulsion is being introduced in the primary stage of education by many states and provinces in India. But it is the considered opinion of this conference that, immense and difficult as this task may be, no government can or should, imagine that this step will ensure universal literacy and good citizenship unless at the same time it puts into effect an efficient plan of literacy and training in citizenship for the illiterates and post-primary literates among its adult population.

This conference recommends the enactment of legislation to make all regular employers of more than 10 persons to provide facilities for adult education at or near the place of employment.

This conference is of opinion that the importance, vastness and urgency of the problem of Adult Education in India demand that any comprehensive scheme of adult education in all its aspects can be effectively worked only by a sufficient number of trained and devoted full-time workers in the different linguistic areas under the direction and guidance of a Central Institute of Adult Education. Therefore, this conference, urges upon Governments of all Provinces, States and the Centrally-Administered areas to institute an Adult Education Section as an important part of their Education Departments.

In view of the essential part that library plays in Adult Education and in the maintenance of continued literacy, this conference requests the Governments of all provinces and states in India to start and maintain rural library service in their areas so as to cover the whole area in an adequate manner. (1946)

* * *

In order to attempt adequately the programme of adult education the problem of selecting and training effective personnel for administration, supervision and field work should be recognised as an urgent problem. This need can best be met by the setting up of a Central Institute of Adult Education for the Indian Dominion. Such a body should be able to guide

and assist the Provincial and State Governments, local authorities and voluntary agencies in providing training facilities for their respective areas.

This Institute can render unique service by providing basic material for the entire country which regional and provincial workers can use as a model and can draw upon in meeting special needs of their own constituencies (1947)

* * *

This conference is emphatically of the opinion that it will be prejudicial to the best interests of the country to hold up the schemes for expansion of education on the plea of financial stringency. While education should, as a whole, be given priority amongst the nation-building activities of the governments in Provinces and States, adult education should in the present set up of the Indian Union, receive high priority in all schemes of educational expansion.

In view of the importance of adult education in the present condition of India and with a view to help and encourage non-official agencies to take up this work in an adequate measure, this conference is of the opinion that expenditure incurred on it by private bodies or institutions should be recognised by the governments of Provinces and States as approved expenditure entitling them to grant-in-aid in the same way as is at present allowed for secondary education. (1948)

* * *

This conference while welcoming the growing interest of the Central as well as State Governments in Adult Education wishes to emphasise the desirability of adopting definite plans, both long-term and short term, for this work and making adequate budget provision for a sufficiently long period on a progressive scale. Adult Education work by its very nature is slow in its result. Varying allotments overlooking the necessities of continuation and further progress of the endeavour result in great wastage of national resources—both human, as well as financial. Such changes also shake the confidence of adults for whom education is sought to be provided, as well as, of the workers and agencies in the field. This conference, therefore, urges the Government to plan out their budgets for adult education on a long term basis. (1950)

* * *

It is the considered view of the conference that if complete literacy among the adult population of the country is to be achieved in the shortest possible time, with a view to place democracy on a sound foundation, compulsion on the employers of labour to make their employees literate within five years is necessary. The conference recommends to Government that they should immediately introduce suitable legislation to make it obligatory on all employers of labour to make their respective employees literate within a prescribed period, not exceeding five years, at their (employers) cost and during the working hours.

With a view to speed up the achievement of the goal of an informed and effective citizenship befitting democratic India, this conference recommends to the State and the Union Governments and the Universities that the educational course should be amended so as to prescribe immediately a course for a diploma in Social Education. (1951)

* * *

Whereas it has been the experience of the social education workers and organisations that one of the handicaps which hampers the progress of the social education programme is the dearth of funds, and whereas it has been represented by a number of responsible bodies that the philanthropic rich men would contribute liberally if such amounts are exempted for income tax purposes, this conference recommends that the Central Government do take immediate steps to extend the exemption of income tax to the donations made to the institutions recognised by Government for the spread of adult education or social education. (1951)

* * *

This conference wishes to emphasize the need of maximum results on the strength of unified efforts in the field of social education and suggests the constitution of autonomous and statutory Boards in place of the existing State Departments of Social Education. Those Boards should be composed of eminent educationists and workers in the field of adult education and should be assured of adequate finances by the State. While the voluntary agencies have the great advantage of using their resources with greater freedom and are more easily able to take advantage of honorary services of individuals interested in Social Education, they usually suffer from inadequate and sometime, precarious finances, which seriously hamper their work. These governmental agencies, though having the advantage of assured finances have to work under serious limitations as their right to use the resources at their disposal is usually hedged in by intricate rules of proce-

ture, which make it difficult for them to make the best use of such resources. These Boards, however, would have the advantages of both the voluntary bodies as well as governmental organisations, but would be free from the disabilities of both.

This conference is aware of the numerous activities being undertaken by the State Governments in the fields of health, education, economic betterment and in other fields of social welfare, which all contribute to social education of the masses. These activities are very welcome and need to be enlarged and developed. The conference, however, feels that such efforts would immeasurably increase in utility to the people and achieve much better results if there is greater co-operation and co-ordination between the activities of the various government departments. Such co-ordination can also lead to more intensive efforts in a particular region. This conference suggests that the State Governments should take such steps as would assure this co-ordination. (1952)

* * *

This conference reiterates the resolution passed by the Ninth All India Adult Education Conference held in 1952 in Nagpur on the formation of Boards with adequate representation of non-official adult education workers and agencies. One of the main functions of such Boards should be to promote and act as feeding centre to the adult education centres started by the local communities. The conference is of the opinion that such Boards would enable the official agencies to take swift decisions and undertake speedy and effective action. Their close co-operation, help and encouragement to the centres organised by the locality would not only give the desirable place to voluntary agencies in the programme for social education but also secure for official efforts proper response from the community which is so essential for their success. (1953)

* * *

This conference notes with satisfaction the place that is being given to Adult Education in the scheme for reconstruction and development of the country. The conference is also happy that the conclusions arrived at by the Indian Adult Education Association at its various Conferences and National Seminars have generally found favour with the agencies in the fields, both official and voluntary. This conference particularly notes with approval the emphasis being placed by various Governments in their Community Project work on the local

initiative and co-ordination on the activities of various welfare departments of the Governments.

The conference feels that for effective co-ordination of work it is essential to make village Schools the instruments of development. The schools should increasingly develop and function as the community centres of the locality with responsibilities of meeting the needs and requirements of the community, including the education of the children. This will not only prevent duplication of effort but also give the schools and the teachers their rightful place in the reconstruction and development of the country. (1954)

* * *

The conference is conscious that the number of voluntary agencies is not sufficient to meet the full requirements of social education work in the country. The conference, however, is of the opinion that Government should stimulate the growth of such agencies. To do so, State Governments should set up autonomous Boards wherever necessary which will function as central agencies to foster the development of local non-official organisations for the purpose. These Boards may provide local organisation with the necessary facilities required for their effective working such as films, posters, books, lecture etc. The general approach of the governments should be to assist people to start organisations for their own education with financial and other assistance from the State for carrying on their work. (1955)

* * *

This conference is of the opinion that adequate provision should be made in the Second Five Year Plan of Social Education in the areas which are not so far covered by Community Projects, or National Extension Service Blocks. Adequate finances should be made available for research, production of social education material like teaching aids, literature, audio-visual equipment, library facilities, Janta Colleges and the like, to feed the programmes going on in the country. (1955)

* * *

The conference recommends to the State Governments to set up Adult schools, or encourage non-official agencies to start schools by giving them adequate grants-in-aid, to enable the adults to complete their education and the Universities to open evening colleges, particularly in cities and centres of industrial population for the benefit of those who wished to pursue higher education. (1956)

* * *

This conference is of the opinion that the time has come when literacy campaigns should be supplemented by regular adult schools, which will give adults who have missed their schooling an opportunity to obtain elementary and post-elementary education of similar pattern as is available for the school going age. This conference, therefore, welcomes the scheme initiated by the Ministry of Education to set up adult schools on an experimental basis and recommends to the Government of India and the State Government to include the setting up of the such adult schools in the Third Five Year Plan. (1958)

* * *

The conference welcomes the recommendation of the Team on Plan Projects that responsibility for development should rest on local authorities and powers should be decentralised for realising this objective. The conference draws attention to the significant and vital role that social education has in making local bodies efficient and capable of shouldering this important responsibility and urges upon the Government to initiate such policies as would encourage the growth or the creation of the non-official institutions which will prove efficient agents to promote activities for the voluntary and intelligent participation of masses in the programmes of community development undertaken by the local bodies. (1957)

* * *

ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP FOR ADULT (SOCIAL) EDUCATION

In order to realize the high purpose of Adult Education it is vital that a strenuous effort be made in India to discover the actual educational needs of all sections and people's in each local area, to explore all Points of contact and possible avenues of effectively meeting those needs ; and to study critically the course of Adult Education in other countries for the purpose of adapting wherever possible their methods and plans to suit the needs of India, it is resolved that instead of this conference, here and now, laying down a rigid, steel frame-work and cut-and-dried programme to be imposed from the centre on all parts of the country, the precisely opposite course be followed of appealing to all public-spirited and patriotic citizens throughout the length and breadth of this land, to gather together kindred spirits, and a realistic survey

of the actual educational needs of their respective immediate surroundings ; and of organizing themselves into autonomous local Adult Education Bodies for their respective localities, which shall undertake full responsibility to experiment and report on Adult Education work suited to their conditions and needs.

It is eminently desirable that as Local Adult Education activities spring up in several places within the same district, or in different district within one province, they should get into touch with one another and arrange to meet together periodically as may be convenient, and confer on matters of common interest and on ways and means of strengthening and expanding adult education work in these respective areas, and the number of representatives forming the district and provincial executives and other details be left to be decided at the discretion of those concerned ; and that it will suffice for this conference to lay down only the broad principles and the unity of aim ; that each Adult Education Centre should be an autonomous unit free to experiment and develop on its own lines without being dictated to from above or forced into rigid uniformity with others ; and that the District or Provincial Union should aim at being truly representative of such centre within its territorial areas, so as to ensure that the experience of each may be available for all. (1938)

The conference places on record its conviction that the time has come for the Government of India to take further active steps to discharge its obligation towards the interest in Adult Education which India has evinced during the last 5 years or more. It recommends the establishment of an Adult Education Department in the Office of the Educational Adviser to the Government of India without delay.

In order to make better known the point of view of the Depressed Classes, and more especially to make clear their difficulties in the matter of education, it is resolved that wherever possible and necessary a representative of this community be appointed or co-opted on adult education associations and their governing bodies. (1942)

In order to attempt adequately the programme of Social education, the problem of selecting and training effective personnel for administration, supervision and field work should be recognised as an urgent problem. This need can best be met by the setting up of a Central Institute of Adult Education for the Indian Dominion. Such a body should be able to guide and assist the Provincial and State Governments, Local Authorities and voluntary agencies in providing training

facilities for their respective areas.

This conference further recommends the setting up of Provincial and State Boards of Adult Education with wide powers. These Boards should formally have a non-official as Chairman and invariably a suitable Senior Education Officer with requisite gifts and experience as Secretary; the latter should have the responsibility for directing the work of adult Education in the Province or State.

* * *

This conference wishes to emphasize the need of maximum results on the strength of unified efforts in the field of social education and suggests the constitution of autonomous and statutory Boards in place of the existing state department of Social Education. These Boards should be composed of eminent educationists and workers in the field of adult education and should be assured of adequate finances by the State. While the voluntary agencies have the great advantage of using their resources with greater freedom and are more easily able to take advantage of honorary services of individuals interested in Social Education, they usually suffer from inadequate and sometimes, precarious finances, which seriously hamper their work. The Governmental agencies, though having the advantage of assured finances have to work under serious limitations as their right to use the resources at their disposal is usually hedged in by intricate rules of procedure which makes it difficult for them to make the best use of such resources. These Boards, however, would have the advantages of both the voluntary bodies as well as governmental organizations, but would be free from the defects of each of them.

The conference is of the view that these Boards should not only take up the work now being done by the state departments of Social Education, but should also co-ordinate as well as give help to voluntary agencies. In case of state which have more than one linguistic area, they may consider the desirability of setting up separate Statutory Boards for each linguistic region in the State for more efficient and economical organization of social education work in the state. (1952)

This conference reiterates the resolution passed by the Ninth All India Adult Education Conference held in 1952 in Nagpur on the formation of Boards with adequate representation of non-official adult education workers and agencies. One of the main functions of such Boards should be to promote and act as feeding centre to the education centres started by the local communities. The conference is of the opinion that such

Board would enable the official agencies to take swift decisions and undertake speedy and effective action. Their close co-operation, help and encouragement to the centres organised by the locality would not only give the desirable place to voluntary agencies in the programme for social education but also secure for official efforts proper response from the community which is also essential for their success. (1953)

The conference is conscious that the number of voluntary agencies is not sufficient to meet the full requirements of social education work in the country. The conference, however, is of the opinion that Government should stimulate the growth of such agencies. To do so, State Governments should set up autonomous Boards wherever necessary which will function as central agencies to foster the development of local non-official organizations for the purpose. These Boards may provide local organization with the necessary facilities required for their effective working such as films, posters, books, lecture etc. The general approach of the Government should be to assist people to start organizations for their own education with financial and other assistance from the state for carrying on their work. (1955)

FACILITIES TO FIELD WORKERS

This conference recommends to the State Governments that more energetic steps should be taken to equip the elementary teachers with better general knowledge and to help him to equip himself sufficiently in the field of adult and child education. This conference further recommends to the State Governments to take steps to provide a decent standard of living to the school teacher to enable him to discharge his increasing responsibilities in the present times. (1952)

The conference calls upon the State Governments as well as the Universities to extend the same facilities for further education to full time social education workers belonging to recognised agencies as are normally available to the teachers of recognised primary or secondary schools. (1956)

ASSOCIATIONS' INTERNAL POLICIES

In order to take steps to bring into being a union of all Adult Education activities throughout the country for the purpose of study, coordination and mutual exchange of ideas and experience, a provincial organising committee and correspondents from different parts of the country, be appointed, and that

they be entrusted with the responsibility of drawing up a detailed constitution embodying the basic principles of local autonomy and free coordination of activities already laid down in the case of district and provincial organisations, and circulate the same to elicit opinion and criticism, and bring up the whole matter for final decision at the next Adult Education Conference, to be held not later than approximately one year after this conference.

This conference instructs the Executive Committee to consider the publishing of a periodic news sheet.

Resolved that this conference set up a small standing committee, with powers to co-opt, to study the problem of providing literature, text books and other materials required for the effective promotion and prosecution of adult education in India and to suggest and implement, as opportunity arises, plans of meeting this need. (1938)

Women's Problems

That in order to emphasize and encourage adult education among women, the conference recommends that the following procedure be adopted:—

1. That there be at least one representative on the Council of the Indian Adult Education Association with portfolio for Women's work;

2. That a section of the Indian Journal of Adult Education be devoted to the problems and progress of efforts among women;

3. That women's institutes and clubs be approached to undertake experiment in this regard;

4. That an appeal be made to all those in touch with educated girls and young women to enlist their services in solving the problems of women's education. (1939)

This conference recommends the Indian Adult Education Association to appeal to Charitable Trusts and other Endowments, philanthropists, Provincial, State and Local Government Bodies, as well to the Educational Commissioner with the Government of India and the Central Advisory Board for Education to aid financially and in other ways the work of the Association. (1939)

This conference resolves that its Executive should negotiate with the World Association for Adult Education, the National Adult School Unions, the Workers' Education Asso-

ciations, the British Institute of Adult Education and other Adult Education bodies abroad in order to secure permission to publish in India cheap editions of valuable literature produced by them for Adult Education purposes, and to attain affiliation with such of them as is possible and is deemed desirable. (1939)

Special organisation or individuals who have done meritorious work for the cause of adult education should be recognised appreciatively by the Indian Adult Education Association by the award of medals and certificates.

That the railway administration in India be requested to give all facilities of travel to adult education workers on the same footing as they give to Red Cross and Scout members on production of a letter from an authorised official of the Indian Adult Education Association or the South India Adult Education Association or other such organisations affiliated to the Association.

That the Postal Department of the Government of India be requested to consider the grant of concession rates in postage for publications of the Indian Adult Education Association and its constituent bodies in British India and the States.

That the Government of India and Local Government be requested to supply free to the Member-Institutions of the Indian Adult Education Association one copy each of their publications relevant to Adult Education. (1942)

While thanking the Central Government for sanctioning this year a token non-recurring grant of Rs. 5,000/- to the I.A.E.A. this conference expects that, in order to help the Association to extend and develop its sphere of activities as a Clearing House of information and an All India co-ordinating body, the Government will sanction a suitable recurring grant-in-aid for the Association.

This conference requests the Provincial and State Adult Education organisations to liberally assist the Central Association with Funds so that it may function more effectively both as the National Organisation of India and also as a liaison body for the purposes of international work. (1948)

This conference approves of the recommendations in general made by the "National Seminar on Organisation and Techniques for the Liquidation of Illiteracy" held in Jabalpur from

December 15th to 26th, 1950, under the auspices of the Indian Adult Education Association. The conference places on record its thanks to the Indian Adult Education Association for organising the Seminar and the Government of Madhya Pradesh who gave generous facilities and provided amenities for the holding of the Seminar.

This conference feels that such Seminars have great value as they help to bring together active educational workers from all parts of the country to study and compare the organisation and techniques followed in their respective areas for adult education work.

This conference recommends that the Association should organise every year a National Seminar on some aspects of Adult Education work as well as encourage and arrange for Regional Seminars in different parts of the country.

This conference thanks the Government of the India for the grant of Rs. 20,000/- made to the Indian Adult Education Association during the last financial year. The Association is the Central Body co ordinating official and non-official endeavour in adult education. It acts as the Clearing House of information and experience for Adult Education workers in the country. This conference requests that the grant be renewed and increased to enable the Association to discharge its functions properly.

This conference also urges upon the State Governments to help the Association as well as Regional organisations for Adult Education affiliated to it, in their areas in a similar manner for the effective use of non-official agencies in Adult Education.

(1950)

The conference appoints a committee consisting of the following to formulate a definite plan for the development of Social Education under the Second Five Year Plan.

Dr. Amaranatha Jha	Shri T. Madiah Gowda, M.P.
Shri R.V. Parulekar	Shri J.C. Mathur, I.C.S.
Shri K.G. Saiyidain	Shri V.S. Mathur, and
Shri S.C. Dutta	

(1954)

This conference resolves that the Indian Adult Education Association should appoint a committee to study the working of social education programmes in the selected areas and submit a report to the next conference and that the Executive Committee should constitute a sub-committee for the purpose and formulate its terms of reference. It further requests the Planning Commission to give all necessary facilities to the Committee in its work.

(1955)

The conference requests the Indian Adult Education Association to undertake a programme of organising lectures for the elevation of mental and moral standards of the people through affiliated agencies or through agencies specially created for the purpose. (1956)

The conference directs the Executive Committee of the Indian Adult Education Association to institute a Reserve Fund to ensure the stability of the organization. (1956)

While appreciating the work done by the Indian Adult Education Association in the last 20 years, in the growth and development of the Adult Education Movement, this session of the All India Adult Education Conference is of the opinion that the Association should expand its field of activities to help build up a network of voluntary organisations, at various levels, to intensify, strengthen and consolidate the adult education movement so that the foundation of a real democracy are truly laid. Therefore, this conference requests the Executive Committee to take suitable steps for this purpose, and appoints a Committee consisting of Sarvashri Saligram Pathik (Convenor), Barkat Ali Fiaq, T.A. Koshy, D.L. Ananda Rao, A.N. Rama Rao and S.C. Dutta to indicate practical lines of action to achieve this purpose. (1958)

This conference appreciates the efforts made by the All India Radio during all these years to spread Adult Education among the masses by organising rural and industrial programmes. This conference requests the Executive Committee of the Indian Adult Education Association to stimulate social education agencies in the country, to organise a network of listening groups in order to fully exploit the medium of broadcasting for the spread of adult education. This conference also requests the All India Radio authorities to consult the Association while determining the general outline of the programme of rural and industrial broadcasts. (1958)

APPENDICES

*** OFFICE-BEARERS**

*** NATIONAL SEMINARS**

*** REGIONAL SEMINARS**

*** MEMORANDA**

OFFICE-BEARERS 1938 - 1958

- 1938 Provisional Committee for promotion of interest in the field of Adult Education and to make preparations for a more representative Conference to be held in 1939.
- President Shri Shah Mohamed Suleiman
- General Secretary Shri H.B. Richardson
- Members Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Shri N.G. Ranga, Shri J.B. Raju, Shri N.M. Joshi, Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh, Princess of Berar.
- 1939 President Dr. R.P. Masani
- Vice-Presidents Princess of Berar, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Shri A.N. Basu Smt. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Shri C.J. Varkey, Shri N.G. Ranga.
- General Secretary Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh
(Shri S.M. Bharucha took over in 1941)
- Honorary Treasurer Shri H.B. Richardson
- Associate Secretaries Shri P.M. Gopalkrishanan, Shri N.L. Kitroo, Miss G. Gokhale, Shri B.C. Mukerji, Shri B. Suryanarayan Rao
- 1942 President Dr. Amaranatha Jha
- Vice-Presidents Princess Savitri Bai of Indore, Maharaja of Cooch Behar, Dr. Syed Mahmud, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Shri J.L.P. Roche Victoria, Sir Maurice Gwyer, Shri A. N. Basu
- General Secretary Shri N.K. Mukherji
Shri R.M. Chetsingh (elected in April 1944 in place of the late Shri N.K. Mukherji)
- Treasurer Shri H.B. Richardson.
- Associate Secretaries Smt. Savithri Rajan, Shri P.M. Gopalkrishanan, Shri Mumtaz ud-din, Shri B.C. Mukerji, Smt. Kulsum Sayani, Shri R.M. Chetsingh.

	<i>Members</i>	Kumari Ruth Ure, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri B.M. Srikanta, Shri T.P. Fernandez, Shri J.B. Raju, Shri T.J.R. Gopal, Shri R.D. Choksi
1946	President	Dr. Amaranatha Jha
	Vice-Presidents	Shri A.N. Basu, Shri J.L.P. Roche Victoria, Shri Sajjad Mirza, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Shri B.G. Kher, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Sardar Sampuran Singh.
	General Secretary	Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh.
	Treasurer	Shri H.B. Richardson (resigned) Shri Raghunandan Saran (took over in 1948)
	Executive Secretary	Shri R.K. Balbir (upto Sept 47)
	Associate Secretaries	Kumari M.N. Seethamma, Shri R.K. Balbir (joined in 1948.) Shri B.C. Mukerji, Shri I. Venkataramayya Garu, Shri K.T. Mantri
	Assistant Secretary	Shri S.C. Dutta (from June 48)
	<i>Members</i>	Smt. Kulsum Sayani, Shri P.M. Gopalkrishanan, Shri Krishna Murthy, Shri J.W. Rasalam, Shri Hansraj Gupta, Shri Mumtazud-Din (left) and Shri V.S. Mathur (joined in 1948) Shri Rajinder Narain, Smt. Savitri Rajan, Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao, Shri S.R. Kidwai, Shri A.G. Sharma, Shri G. Ramaswamy Naidu.
1948	President	Dr. Amaranatha Jha
	Vice-Presidents	Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh, Shri Uma Charan Patnaik, Dr. Zakir Husain, Shri J.L.P. Roche Victoria, Shri A.N. Basu, Shri T. Madiah Gowda.
	General Secretary	Dr. S.R. Ranganathan.
	Treasurer	Shri Raghunandan Saran (resigned) Shri V.S. Mathur (elected in June 1949)
	Secy. at Headquarters	Shri S.C. Dutta
	Associate Secretaries	Shri B.M. Kapadia, Shri A.G. Vilva Roy, Shri M.G. Dravid, Shri N.L. Kitroo, Shri M.J. Kenetkar

	<i>Members</i>	Shri S.R. Kidwai, Shri V.S. Mathur, Shri A.G. Sharma, Miss S. Mathews, Shri R.D. Choksi, Shri R.K. Balbir, Shri K.P. Tripathi, Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao, Shri J.W. Rasalam, Shri P.M. Gopal-krishanan, Shri W.G. Eagleton, Shri Rajinder Narain, Shri S.C. Dutta.
1950	President	Dr. Amaranatha Jha,
	Vice-Presidents	Dr. Zakir Husain, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh, Shri J.L.P. Roche Victoria, Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao, Shri T. Madiah Gowda, Dr. V.S. Jha
	General Secretary	Dr. S.R. Ranganathan
	Treasurer	Shri Onkar Nath
	Organising Secretary	Shri V.S. Mathur (from May 1950 upto Dec. 1951)
	Associate Secretaries	Shri A.R. Deshpande, Shri Shaligram Pathik, Shri B.M. Kapadia, Shri S.C. Dutta, Shri S.C. Mahaptra
	<i>Members</i>	Shri Shafiq-ur-Rehman Kidwai, Shri A.N. Basu, Shri V.S. Mathur, Shri S.V. Srinivas Rao, Shri J.W. Rasalam, Shri S.C. Barat, Shri B. C. Mukerji, Shri G.P. Bryce
1952	President	Dr. Amaranatha Jha
	Vice-Presidents	Dr. Zakir Husain, Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri T. Madiah Gowda, Shri R.M. Chetsingh, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, Dr. V.S. Jha
	General Secretary	Shri V.S. Mathur
	Treasurer	Shri Onkar Nath
	Associate Secretaries	Shri S. Raghavan, Dr. D.B. Shastri Shri V.B. Karnik, Shri D.L. Anand Rao, Shri S.C. Dutta
	<i>Members</i>	Shri S.R. Kidwai, Shrimati Kulsum Sayani, Shri N. Roy, Shri T.J.R. Gopal, Shri K.T. Mantri, Shri B. M Kapadia, Shri S.R. Pathik, Shri J.C. Mathur

1954	President	Dr. Amaranatha Jha (due to sad demise of Dr. Jha, Shri K.G. Saiyidain was elected President in 1955)
	Vice-Presidents	Dr. Zakir Husain, Acharya Badri Nath Verma, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, Shri T. Madiyah Gowda, Dr. R.V. Parule- kar, Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao
	General Secretary	Shri V.S. Mathur
	Treasurer	Shri Onkar Nath
	Associate Secretaries	Dr. D.B. Shastri, Shri S. Raghavan Shri V.B. Karnik, Shri T.V. Thimme Gowda, Shri S.C. Dutta
	<i>Members</i>	Prof. M. Mujeeb, Shri J.L.P. Roche Victoria, Shri J.C. Mathur, Shri M S. Gore, Shri A.R. Deshpande. Shri N.R. Roy, Shri B.C. Mukerji Shri D.L. Ananda Rao, Shri S.R. Pathik, Shri N.R. Gupta, Shri B.L. Gour, Shri B.M. Kapadia, Shri T.J.R. Gopal
1956	President	Dr. V.S. Jha
	Vice-Presidents	Dr. Zakir Husain, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri T. Madiyah Gowda, Shri R.M. Chetsingh, Shri Bilas Mukherjee, Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao, Shri N. Badriah
	General Secretary	Shri S.C. Dutta
	Treasurer	Shri M. Mujeeb
	Associate Secretaries	Shri V.B. Karnik, Shri S. Raghavan Shri B.N. Madhav, Shri Janardan Rai Nagar, Shri T.J.R. Gopal
	<i>Members</i>	Shri V.S. Mathur, Shri Onkar Nath Shri M.S. Gore, Shri J.C. Mathur, Shri S.R. Pathik. Dr. T.A. Koshy Shri U.S. Gaur, Shri Sohan Singh, Shri Mustaq Ahmed, Smt. Kulsum Sayani, Shri B.M. Kapadia, Shri Maganbhai Desai, Shri Gore Lal Shukla.

1958	President	Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta
	Vice-Presidents	Dr. Zakir Husain, Shri K.G. Saiyidain, Shri Maganbhai Desai, Shri R.M. Chetsingh, Shri A.R. Deshpande, Shri N. Badriah
	General Secretary	Shri S.C. Dutta
	Treasurer	Shri M. Mujeeb
	Associate Secretaries	Shri V.B. Karnik, Shri D.L. Ananda Rao, Dr. T.A. Koshy, Shri N. Roy, Shri Mustaq Ahmed
	Members	Shri J.C. Mathur, Shri V.S. Mathur, Shri D. Sarma, Shri M.S. Gore, Shri S.R. Pathik, Shri J.R. Nagar, Shri U.S. Gaur, Shri Sohan Singh, Shri J.P. Sah, Smt. Kulsum Sayani, Shri B.M. Kapadia, Shri M.C. Nanavatty, Shri Gore Lal Shukla, Shri Shyam Chandra

* * *

NATIONAL SEMINARS

- 1950—15th to 26th—“The Organisation and Techniques for the
December Liquidation of Illiteracy,” at Jabalpur.
Director : Dr. V.S. Jha
Associate Director : Shri Shafiq-ur-Rehman
Kidwai
Secretary General : Shri A.R. Deshpande
- 1951—12th to 20th—“The Organisation of Community Centres”
October at Indore
Director : Dr. Bool Chand
Associate Director : Shri A.R. Deshpande,
Secretary General : Shri Matadin Trivedi
- 1952—20th to 26th—“Literature for Neo-Literates” at Jamia
December Millia, Okhla
Director : Shri T. Madiah Gowda
Associate Director : Shri V.B. Karnik
Secretary General : Shri Jagdish Singh
- (Inaugurated by the Prime Minister Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru)
- 1953—22nd to 30th—“Training of Social Education Workers”
October at Bikram, Bihar.
Director : Shri G. Harisarvottama Rao
Associate Director : Shri S.R. Upadhyay
Secretary General : Dr. D.B. Shastri
- 1954—11th to 20th—“Recreational and Cultural Activities in
October Social Education” at Paschimavahini,
Mysore.
Director : Shri A.R. Deshpande
Associate Director : Shri T. Vasudevaiya
Secretary General : Shri T.V. Thimme
Gowda
- 1955—26th Sept. to —“Libraries in Social Education”
5th Oct. at Chiragh Delhi
Director : Shri Sohan Singh
Associate Directors : Shri N.R. Roy (Sept.
26 to Oct. 1st, 1955)
Shri T. Wanknis (Oct. 2
to Oct. 5, 1955)
Secretary General : Shri N.R. Gupta

- 1956—2nd to 9th—“Development Work Among Rural Women”
 September at Alipore, Delhi
 Director : Dr. Sushila Nayyar
 Secretary General : Shri N.R. Gupta
 (Inaugurated by the President Dr. Rajendra Prasad)
- 1956—12th to 18th—“Social Education in Rural Reconstruction”
 December at Dabok, Udaipur
 Director : Shri Janardan Rai Nagar
 Secretary General : Shri Kalyan Mal
 Jaisani
- 1957—21st to 27th—“Workers Education”
 December at Habra, Calcutta
 Director : Shri V.S. Mathur
 Associate Director : Shri Shyam Chandra
 Secretary. General—Shri S C. Dutta
- 1958—15th to 21st—“Social Education in Urban Areas”
 December at Lucknow
 Director : Shri Ranjit M. Chetsingh
 Secretary-General : Dr. T.A. Koshy

REGIONAL SEMINARS

- 1951—23rd April—The First Adult Education Regional Seminar organised by the South Indian Adult Education Association at Madras
- 1952—20th to 26th—“Rural Adult Education” Under the joint
Sept. auspices of the Indian Adult Education Association & the Bihar State Government Education Department at Patna.
- 1953—22nd to 30th—“Production of Continuation Literature”
April Organised under the auspices of South Indian Adult Education Association at Eranakulam, Travancore-Cochin.
Director : Shri M. Pylee, M.L.A.
Associate Director : Shri G. Harisarvothama Rao
Secretary General : Shri T.J.R. Gopal
- 1954— 8th to 15th—“Social Education in Relation to Rural
May Development Programmes” at Sevadham Malaon, Distt. Gonda (Organised jointly by All India Mass Education Society and I.A.E.A.)
Director : Baba Raghva Das
Secretary General : Shri Baijanath Singh
- 1954—21st to 26th—“Problems of Social Education Workers
Sept. and their Solutions” (Regional Seminar organised by Indian Adult Education Association) at Delhi
Director : Shri A.N. Banerjee
Secretary General : Lala Kedar Nath
- 1955—5th to 1st—“Organisation & Function of the Janta
April College” Alipore, Delhi
Director : Dr. P.D. Shukla
Associate Director : Shri Barkat Ali Firaq
Secretary General : Shri N.R. Gupta
- 1956—20th to 22nd—“Problems & Future Role of Voluntary
April Agencies in the Field of Rural Development” at Delhi.
(The Indian Co-operative Union in collaboration with the Delhi School of

Social Work, Jamia Millia, Co-operative League of U.S.A., Indian Adult Education Association, & American Friends Service Committee organised the seminar)

- 1957— 9th to 14th—“Problems of Social Education Workers”
September Rishikesh (organised jointly by All India Mass Education Society and I.A.E.A.)
Director : Shrimati Lakshmi Kanta
- 1958— 9th to 15th—“Role of Rural Teachers in Social Education” Rishikesh (organised jointly by All India Mass Education Society and I.A. E.A.)
June Director : Shri R.N. Saxena.

MEMORANDUM
TO
The Hon'ble Minister for Education

The 1948 Conference concentrated its time on internal organisational problems and decided that a note be submitted to the Government of India on the question of general approach to the problem of adult education and the attitude of the Government and on the Association's role and future in that context.

A deputation of the Indian Adult Education Association, consisting of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, Sarvshri S.R. Kidwai, V.S. Mathur, N.L. Kitroo, S.C. Dutta, waited on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Minister for Education, at the Central Secretariat at 12-30 p.m. on 3rd October, 1949. The note submitted to the Minister says:

The Indian Adult Education Association is glad to learn of the intention of the Indian Union Government and the Governments of the constituent States to pay greater attention to Adult Education or Social Education. It is a matter for thankfulness that a sum of money is to be made available for its promotion. But there appears to be an element of impatience and an inclination to under-estimate the complexities involved in the enterprise of adult education. In a colossal venture of this nature, any hasty action without adequate preparation is sure to lead to avoidable waste of money and to abuse. It is also likely to limit achievement unnecessarily and thus bring the movement into disrepute. This has happened repeatedly in the past when some of the Local Bodies and Provincial Governments have indulged in sporadic activity in the field of Adult Education even though generally it was (mercifully) on a scale all too small.

This Association aims at the promotion of Adult Education of which Social Education is an integral part. Its Executive desires to emphasise that the failure of past attempts has been due largely to:

- (1) a lack of attention to the adequacy of teaching personnel in quality and quantity;
- (2) absence of provision for follow-up work at the self-educational level; and
- (3) the entrusting of the directing, and fostering work to

an agency overburdened with work of its own and characterized by an outlook born out of work in a department of long-established tradition determined by the immaturity of the children and youth to be taught.

In elementary and secondary education in India narrow family ambition has been the dominant force which has sent children to school. It is a statistical fact that the families of the lower strata devoid of such ambition have not been influenced in any appreciable degree by the Department of Education to send their children to school. When intellectually abler children come to school voluntarily there is little incentive to pay special attention to the teaching technique. Indeed there has been hardly any experiment in education worth mentioning apart from stray private projects and the rather half-hearted undertakings in education on the part of the State. When most of the products of the school were absorbed in mainly routine administrative positions—the need for providing follow-up self-educational agencies which would direct creative energy was not felt by the Education Department so given to routine.

In social education, there is no involuntary gravitation of the adults towards its centres and sphere of influence. There is need for a Department of Social Education to persuade people to come and to continue to come. The gift of rousing interest and sustaining it is of the very essence of social education. This technique can never be forged properly by a Department which has a tradition of authoritarian exclusiveness. To retain at social education centres a clientele drawn largely from the lower intellectual strata of society, a technique of teaching and an atmosphere totally different from that of elementary and secondary schools is needed. These cannot be developed either by immature students just emerging from schools and colleges set to work at such centres, much less by teachers in elementary and secondary schools who are induced to divert an extra hour of their free time to social education for a small monetary consideration. As the occupation of most of the customers in social education centres will be manual, vocational and industrial, a free library service for follow-up self-education is essential. Failure to make adequate provision for this will lead to a colossal waste of the formal effort made at adult schools and social education centres.

How are these difficulties to be solved? Statesmanship demands that the organisation for the spread of social education if it is to become self-propagative should set out definitely to overcome them. The make-up of adult education is like a chameleon. Now it appears as all-round social education, a little later it suddenly changes into mere liquidation of illiteracy. Again in response to the demands of political exigencies it takes

on a different complexion. All this has been causing considerable confusion not only to the average citizens but also to those who engage in the enterprize of self-education.

In these circumstances, this Association urges on the Hon'ble Minister for Education the following procedure for consideration and adoption :—

That an Indian Union Board for Adult Education (which includes Social Education be constituted to draw up a Development Plan) which would suggest practicable ways of meeting :

- (a) the exigencies of finance
- (b) the training and building up of competent teachers, organizers and other grades of workers needed.

It should pay particular attention to :—

- (1) The production and use of necessary reading and kindred materials to make the work of social education enduring.
- (2) Making concrete suggestions applicable to both town and rural conditions for the use of audio-visual materials as educational means;
- (3) The promotion of State Board of Social Education in the Constituent States to implement the development plan during the first 5 to 7 years;
- (4) The Indian Union Board should co-ordinate and (where mutually agreeable) supplement the work of the various State Boards; and
- (5) Directing the Board of the Indian Union to so develop the whole organisation as to create well-seasoned Departments of Social Education, (independent of and co-ordinate with the Universities engaged in higher education on the one side and the Departments of public instruction engaged in elementary, continuation and secondary education on the other).

In the early formative years, the Boards of Social Education must be allowed greater initiative than the older Departments of the Governments and should not be rigidly subjected to red-tape. The Association suggests that the Indian Union Board may consist of the Hon'ble Minister for Education of the Union Government as its President and 15 members to be nominated by him from among the names put up by the Governments of the constituent States and from among the Adult Education interests of an All India status. The Minister should also make adequate provision for an effective Secretariat for the Indian Union Board.

There are three points which the Association desires to emphasize in conclusion :—

- (1) The existing organisations for adult education should be given greater help till such time as the development plan is put into operation;
- (2) The enormous amount of additional work involved in the promotion of social education on a vast scale cannot be taken up by the Departments of Public Instruction as an appendix as it were, to the work already on hand by the Departments of Education, nor should it be entrusted to bodies involved in or allied with political works;
- (3) When additional staff is necessary, it will be an advantage to set up an independent organisation with a fresh outlook of own instead of expanding the existing organisation designed for other purposes, and which perhaps tends to become unwieldy, thus jeopardising the development of a living tradition in regard to Social Education. One of the duties of the Indian Union Board should be to form and foster such an organisation.

MEMORANDUM

on

Social Education under the Second Plan

The programme of social education was given an important place in the First Five Year Plan. Nearly 3.02 crores of rupees annually i.e. 15.10 crores for the Plan period were ear-marked for social education. The First Plan defines social education as a comprehensive programme of community uplift through community action. It included, in addition to literacy, health, recreation and home life of the adults, their economic life and citizenship training. The Plan suggested community approach for developing social education activities. Maximum stress was laid on "self-help" and "self-support". In short, the basis of social education, in the Plan was the setting up of community centres. But we find that much has not been done in this respect.

If setting up community centres throughout the country was the basis of our First Plan, it is our humble suggestion that we should see that such centres are actually established in the Second Plan period. With the resources that the Government and the Community have, it will take long years to achieve the objective of having a community centre in each of India's

village, but perhaps we might plan to have a community centre in a village or in a group of villages having a population of 5,000 within the next five years. This would mean having nearly 20,00 community centres each year. But the resources that we have are not sufficient for this purpose.

Therefore, we suggest a little adjustment and that adjustment is that we should look at our entire educational system as an integrated whole. The schools should not only guide and direct physical, mental, social and emotional growth of boys and girls but also improve the quality of community life. They should concern themselves with the happiness and welfare of the people, their recreation and amusement, their health and success. The First Five Year Plan stated that the educational institutions should become centres for spreading ideas for improving our social and economic life. *Our suggestion is that the educational institutions should not merely be centres for spreading ideas but should become positive agents of social progress.* For this we must overhaul thoroughly our educational system. The attempt to have a national system with fixed text books and examination standards will have to be scrapped. The schools will have to adjust their programme and procedure to the needs of the pupil and to the culture of the community they serve. The curriculum will have to be rooted in the community culture. The schools will have to seek situations within the realities of community living. They must say good-bye to the concept of classes, periods and subjects. Instead the life activities of communities must furnish the basis of educational programmes in the schools.

This concept of schools becoming centres of community living and community development presupposes properly trained teachers as community workers. The teachers must be provided with many and varied opportunities in the pre-service and in-service training to have vital and significant experience about the needs and capacity of children as well as community problems, issues and re-sources and the broad areas of community living. Thus instead of finding money to set up community centres we should reorientate the entire school system and make the schools centres for serving the needs of the community. If this concept is accepted we will not have to incur much extra expenditure on setting up separate community centres. We will have only to spend money on giving the right type of training to the teachers to become community workers or as the First Five Year Plan suggest first class social education workers.

There are many basic and social education training centres in the county ; a little adjustment in their curriculum can help

these training centres to serve the new need. Some of the Schools of Social Work and Training Institutes can also adjust their curriculum to suit our purpose. A few model training centres should be set up by the Centre in co-operation with the Indian Adult Education Association.

Along with the training of community workers, efforts should be made to train local leaders. For this, leadership training courses should be organised. Vidyapeeths on the pattern of the Nanjungud Vidyapeeth should be set up in each of the districts.

The second most important work that we must do under the Second Five Year Plan is to set up a properly constituted clearing house. This is necessary to rationalise and further improve the work of social education in the country by collecting and making use of past experiences. It will help us to avoid mistakes and duplication of efforts, and lead to the development of a scientific approach to adult education. Moreover a clearing house is necessary because of the wide range of social education activities and the innumerable agencies which are doing this work. The need for co-ordinating such agencies cannot be over-emphasised. The First Five Year Plan very rightly recognised the role that the Indian Adult Education Association has been playing to provide a common national platform for co-ordinating different agencies. It is imperative that the Association should be helped to perform its task properly and funds should be placed at its disposal to set up a properly equipped clearing house.

The First Five Year Plan advocated the setting up of co-ordination councils in urban areas for the development of social education. It would be desirable if this proposal of the First Plan is implemented during the Second Plan period. This would encourage citizens' contribution to the planning and execution of the programme of social education. This may also help in the development of self-help and community action rightly emphasised in the First Plan. The services of the Indian Adult Education Association and its affiliated non-official organisations in the States should be made use of in the setting up of such co-ordination councils.

We should reiterate in the Second Plan the approach that was suggested in the First Plan. In Section 54 of the First Plan it is stated : "Within the broad framework of national priorities the actual programme in a locality should be determined by local needs. Planning at the local level is equally essential if the danger of frittering away our meagre resources in a number of unco-ordinated activities is to be avoided. The principles which should govern our approach in this regard

may be stated as follows. Our resources should be used in the first instance, as far as possible, for that programme which not only meets some immediately felt needs of the local community in whose midst the programme is conducted, but also build up resources for developing the programme with the expanding awareness of the community of its own needs. That is the only way by which, with our limited resources, we can make any impression on the problem. Secondly, the social education approach must permeate all programmes of State aid to the people. That is to say that before any programme of State aid is launched the people should be so educated in regard to it that their instinct to help themselves is fully aroused and they are anxious to receive the programme and to do their utmost in the execution of it. Thirdly, there should be the closest integration of the various activities conducted in a locality so that the forces of friendship and goodwill released by one activity, immediately recognised by the villagers as good or pleasant, can be utilised for winning the co-operation for activities requiring more strenuous effort or the usefulness of which is not so immediately apparent to them. Fourthly, it should be our endeavour to increase the effectiveness of private agencies doing social education work in an area by giving them proper help."

It should be clear from the above paragraph that in any social education programme it should be our endeavour to develop self-help and organise activities on the basis of self-support or self-financing basis. If that be our objective, it would be much better if the Government instead of taking up actual field work leaves it to non-official agencies, co-operative societies, local recreational organisations and to the schools run on the principles of democratic community living.

At the present moment emphasis is on expansion and field activities. This is as it should be but due attention should be given to the evaluation of the various activities undertaken in the field of social education. It is necessary therefore to institute various research programmes for evaluating the effectiveness and usefulness of social education activities. These projects should be undertaken by voluntary agencies like the Indian Adult Education Association or the Schools of Social Work and the Teachers' Training Institutes with grants from the Centre.

SUMMARY

Under the Second Five Year Plan it is our suggestion that we should have an integrated programme of social education that will increase economic efficiency and provide training in citizenship. To make such a programme possible it is necessary

to adopt a community development approach with community centres as the centres of all activities. For this the entire educational policy will have to be changed and the schools should be developed as centres of community living.

To achieve that we must have training centres entirely different from what we have at the present moment.

We should also set up centres for training local leaders. For this Vidyapeeths in Mysore can serve as models.

We must also have a well developed clearing house of ideas and information. For this it is suggested that the Indian Adult Education Association should be provided with funds to be able to develop as such.

Co-ordination councils should be set up in each large city to plan and execute social education work. This would give social education roots in the community. At the present moment social education work is mainly done under government auspices. This has neither encouraged self-help nor developed self-support. Many a time the governmental red-tape has dampened the feeling of self-development and self-help among the people. Programmes of social education for community development having their roots in the community life are hardly in existence today. Perhaps with the non-officialisation of the administrative set up of social education it should be possible to achieve the desired result.

We should have research projects and take the help of non-official agencies or the higher educational institutions to properly assess and evaluate the various activities carried on under social education.