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THE EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

BY
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INTRODUCTION.

There has not been in living memory a greater man than Mahatma Gandhi, and perhaps no one about whom so much has been written in recent times. Gandhiana, the bibliography of Gandhian literature published in 1948, lists about 2800 volumes¹, and hundreds more have been brought out since then. Books have been issued on every aspect of the man and his philosophy. Gandhi's own works are many. The books and pamphlets he wrote, his articles in the Indian Opinion, the Young India and the Harijan and almost all the speeches he delivered on public platforms are available, mostly as handy volumes. Many of the private letters he sent to his friends, disciples, co-workers and adversaries as well as his conversations, private and public, are also now in print. The recent publication of Gandhi's biography by D.G. Tendulkar in eight volumes, compiled direct from the sources, is a very valuable addition to this literature.

¹ P.G. Deshpande, Gandhiana, N.P.H., 1948. Of the books listed, 1400 are in English. The bibliography includes the works of men like Tolstoy, Ruskin and Thoreau, which have a bearing on Gandhian ideas.
In comparison with the volume of literature on other aspects of Gandhian philosophy, books on Gandhi’s educational ideas are very few. Gandhi never wrote systematically on education. His ideas expressed in the context of particular situations, require collection, analysis and synthesis if an educational theory is to be made out of them. Some of his educational ideas have been brought together in book form by the Navajivan Publishing House quite recently in their publications, To the Students, Basic Education, and Towards New Education. Others also have published selections from Gandhi’s articles and speeches bearing on education. No attempt, however, has been made in these to synthesize his ideas or to draw conclusions from them. Many books have been written on the Wardha Scheme of education, and a few of these incidentally shed some light on his general philosophy. Thus, while The Wardha Scheme of Education by C.J. Varkey and The Wardha Scheme by K.L. Shrimlai deal more with the scheme as such, The Latest Fad by J.B. Kripalani and The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi by M.S. Patel are more philosophical in their approach.

The treatment in these works, however, leaves much scope for further investigation, interpretation and synthesis. An attempt is made in the following pages to relate Mahatma Gandhi's educational ideas to his ideology in a way that has not been done before.

Gandhi's educational ideas are inter-linked with his general philosophy of life, from which it can never be divorced, and except on the basis of which it can never be properly understood or appreciated. The ideology is very simple but has to be gathered from among a welter of statements which seem, often at first sight, irreconcilable and even running counter to one another. An attempt is, therefore, made to show that ideas which may appear as divergent and conflicting, are not so much contradictory as complementary, and that there is a real consistency and coherency about them. This is done by relating all ideas to his personality and showing that they do have a unity. Gandhi's ideas are often quoted, and quoted profusely as it is felt that such a treatment is helpful to clarify the issues raised. Opinions of men and women who lived and moved with Gandhi, or knew him intimately in one context or another, as well as the views of thinkers all over the world, are cited, wherever it is found that they would throw real light on the
man or his ideas. Facts and ideas are first discussed to bring out the unity of Gandhian ideology and the main trends of his thought which converge on education are, later on, separately marshalled and reviewed in order to serve as a direct background to the study of the system he adumbrated.

Gandhi was a seeker after Truth, a Satyagrahi, who believed that if truth and non-violence could be widely established in the world, much of the ills which we see around us to-day will vanish. He, therefore, wished to create a new social order which would be made up of Satyagrahis. The Satyagrahi is one who clings to truth and non-violence. Truth and non-violence, as Gandhi visualized them, are not quite the same as the meanings which the words convey in common parlance— they are dynamic and positive virtues. The nature of truth and non-violence has, therefore, to be elaborately examined. Gandhi had evolved a technique for the training of the Satyagrahis in his ashrams, and the virtues he enjoined on them are, next taken up for discussion. A detailed study of these virtues has become necessary because of the fact that Gandhi attaches definite meanings to each of these virtues, which are not always consistent with the meanings which the
terminology conveys in Hindu religious texts, and because they have a bearing on the aims of education in general. The concept of the Satyagrahi is a peculiarly Hindu concept; his life has a religious basis, without which it becomes meaningless. Naturally we are led to examine what Gandhi's views are on Hindu religion. The preparation of the Satyagrahi in Gandhi's ashrams was originally conceived as a discipline for the soldiers in the fight for Swaraj. By Swaraj, Gandhi meant more than mere independence; he conceived of independence as a mere prelude and a necessary condition for evolving the new social order, which he called Ramaraj. Ramaraj, according to him is heaven on earth; it is a non-violent co-operative community in which the individual realizes his best in and through social service, a conception, which has now become more popular in India under the name of Sarvodaya. What constitutes the nature of Ramaraj is considered in detail as the immediate aim of Gandhian education is the building up of this non-violent social order.

As the Satyagrahi is the 'brick' of the Gandhian social order, it is pointed out that Gandhi's educational scheme has been put forward as a large-scale experiment in the training of a whole mass of
children in the virtues of the Satyagrahi.
The aim of Gandian education is, it is suggested, mainly the development of the Satyagrahi personality who will realize God in serving man. An attempt is made to show that this conception of educational aims is in line with modern educational thought and that the scheme of education he put forward for the education of the child 'for life through life', is well-designed for the realization of both the immediate and the ultimate aims. Gandhi's educational ideas have come to stay in India, but in the hands of the Government, his scheme of education has undergone slight changes, and it is pointed out that it might, to that extent, retard the progress towards the Gandhian social order. The view taken is that the educational policy of the Government of India is a compromise between the Gandhian ideal and the realities of the existing situation in India and the World.

Gandhi's educational ideas were born of his own experience and were designed to meet a real need. He was not a student of educational theory but a student of man and his nature. He wanted to instil the dignity of man in the humblest of India's citizens, and re-vitalize the nation in its social,
political and economic life. His educational scheme is thus in its origin and concept, truly Indian. But it has its roots going deep into educational history. The main idea of education through manual activity is as old as humanity itself. Primitive man learnt all he wanted through active labour, working for his needs and deducing 'principles' through observation and experiment in the course of his work. This process was recapitulated in the old systems of education both in the East and the West, as could be seen in the lives of the pupils who were taken into the Rishi's ashram in India or who served as apprentices under master-craftsmen in Europe. Rousseau had considered it the natural method of education.

"If instead of making a child stick to his books, I employ him in a workshop", said Rousseau, "his hands work for the development of his mind. While he fancies himself a workman he is becoming a philosopher". Pestalozzi had in his school at Yverdun included "some sort of manual work or gardening".

Paul Robin, in his school at Gempius, had introduced all kinds of manual activities and used them as instruments of intellectual education. Froebel's method of education was making the 'occupation' of the hand at the same time the occupation of the mind, and his 'occupations', while generally meaning games and constructional activities, included also for older children, gardening, building boats and the like. John Dewey's educational philosophy makes the school a workshop in which to actively forge the principles of community life, and it has influenced modern educational methodology to a considerable extent.

Acharya Kripalani quotes Marx, Kropoktin and Pinkwitch to show that labour is the governing principle of the Soviet educational system and says "As a matter of fact the Soviet system of education

is the nearest approach to Gandhiji's ideas". Saying that polytechnization of education, as Lenin conceived it, was more than mere technical training, he quotes Beatrice King, the author of Soviet Education, to show that it is intended to prepare children to be skilful and understanding workers of the community. The similarity between the Marxian conception of education and the Gandhian scheme of Basic Education, however, is more misleading than helpful for an understanding of Gandhi's educational ideas. As a method, the 'education integrale' as advocated by Prince Kropotkin has some similarities with the Basic, but the differences outweigh them. The Soviet system does not seek all education to be imparted through manual work, as Gandhi had envisaged it to be done in the Basic schools. Schools in Russia had to be "attached to a productive unit of some sort - a factory or a state or collective farm", and Kripalani cites that

2. Ibid, p.40
3. Ibid, p.36
in a village in Tadjhikistan, finding that there was no farm or factory nearby, the school was attached to a barber's shop as the nearest productive unit. Gandhi's scheme was entirely different. The Soviet scheme was, further, orientated to large-scale mechanized industries and to an idealized State, both of which lead to a depersonalization of man, while Gandhi's scheme was completely rural and was designed to safeguard human dignity first and foremost. In fact the difference between the two systems arises mainly from the ideological background of Gandhian education which is diametrically opposed to that of the Soviet system. Herein is the importance of the need for properly understanding the Gandhian ideology and his philosophy of education, before embarking on a study of the educational scheme which he put forward.

Gandhi's scheme of education is, as he claims, original in many respects. The beginning of Nai Talim is usually traced to a small article in the Harijan on 31.7.37, in which, while

1. Kripalani, op.cit, p. 42.(italics mine)
discussing the economics of prohibition, Gandhi put forward the bold suggestion that education should be self-supporting. Gandhi's idea of self-supporting education through a productive craft was not, however, a new idea which he got as in a dream. It was born of his experience in teaching children at home, teaching at the Phoenix Settlement and at the Tolstoy Farm in South Africa, and the experience he gathered later from the educational activities in his ashrams and in the 'national schools' which, under his inspiration came to be organized in several places in India. These early experiments are not historically treated in this work, but they are widely drawn upon, as and when necessary, to throw light on his educational ideas. His views on education, while he was in South Africa, are clearly enunciated in the Hind Swaraj which he wrote in 1908. Most of the views Gandhi held throughout life concerning education are found, in a general way, expressed in this early work of his. Gandhi's educational theory was the result of his own experiments and not apriori conclusions, and so stood the test of time. The one major change which we find coming later, is with

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regard to the relation of manual work to an all-round education of the child. In the Tolstoy Farm he had given literary training side by side with manual activities. Mr. Kallenbach, one of Gandhi's associates at the Farm, had some knowledge of carpentry and he soon got himself trained in a Trappist Monastery in shoe-making. Gandhi learnt shoe-making from him, and together they gave the children at the Farm vocational training for eight hours a day. "The vocations were digging, cooking, scavenging, sandal making, simple carpentry and messenger work". Along with this vocational training, literary training was also imparted. On his going back to India, he pursued the same method of teaching in the Satyagraha Ashram which he founded on the banks of the Sabarmati at Ahmedabad in 1915. The Gujarat Vidyapith was founded in 1920 as the first major national school, and in 1921 Gandhi clearly set out his views on national education. He said that education to be universal

2. For an account of Gandhi's educational experiments at the Tolstoy Farm, see M.K. Gandhi, Autobiography II, translated from Gujarati by Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal Nair, N.P., 1929, pp. 188-205.
must be free, and so, "our children must be made to pay in labour partly or wholly for all the education they receive". By now, it would seem, he had become convinced that education cannot be universalized in India unless it became self-supporting 'partly or wholly'. But even now his idea of industrial training was, as an activity side by side with literary training. That "the whole of the general education should be imparted through some handicraft or industry" was realized only in 1937, and with this, the Basic scheme of education was born. Theory, again, has flowed from long practice and contemplation on the basis of experience. Gandhi advocated self-supporting, craft-centred education as the "spearhead of a silent social revolution fraught with far-reaching consequences".

1. Y.I. 1.9.21.
2. Ibid.
The new educational ideas of Gandhi were given concrete shape as the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education in a conference of educationists and Education Ministers held at Wardha in 1937. This was primarily a scheme for the education of children of the age-group 7-14. In 1942 Gandhi announced that Basic education should become "literally education for life" and Nai Telim has since then become a programme of education for man from the cradle to the grave.

The curriculum of Basic Education, and the curricula of the Pre-Basic and the Post-Basic stages of education, are all examined in the light of the aims adumbrated and the conclusion is reached that they are all knit together in a coherent philosophy of life, and if they could be worked in the true spirit, they could usher in a non-violent co-operative social order in which all will live in peace, contentment and happiness and service of man will be service of God.
PART I.

GANDHIAN IDEOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE.

I. TRUTH.

The cardinal trait of Gandhi's personality is his search after Truth. At school, he never resorted to copying nor allowed himself to be prompted even by his teacher. The play Harischandra made a deep impression on him and he used to ask constantly "Why should not all be truthful like Harischandra?" Before he sailed to England for studies he had to promise his mother that he would not touch wine, woman and meat, and in London he very nearly starved himself since he would not touch non-vegetarian diet. In South Africa he spoke to the Indian merchants to keep honesty in business and as a barrister, he never

1. D.G. Tendulkar, Mahatma I, V.K. Jhaveri and D.G. Tendulkar, Bombay, 1951, p. 28
2. Ibid, p. 33
3. Ibid
4. Ibid, p. 36
5. Ibid, p. 46
defended a case when he found that it was false. He insisted on a very high standard of impartiality from those who undertook the editorial duties of the Indian Opinion, and he speaks about his own articles thus: "I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation, or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal had become for me a training in self-restraint . . ." His whole active life could be shown to be one great experiment with Truth, and it is significant that he called his own autobiography 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'. In politics, he was "a saint", who "could never bear to countenance injustice". "The laws of truth ruled out secrecy, surprises and anything savouring of conspiratorial methods in Gandhi's political campaigns" says

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.86
2. P.B.P., Mahatma Gandhi, Odhams, London, 1949, p.46
5. Andrews, op.cit, p.221.
H.N. Brailsford. When the 1919 Reforms were announced, for instance, "For Gandhi there were only two tolerable alternatives - either to work the new reforms in a responsive spirit, which was the course he had favoured in 1919, or else total non-co-operation and the boycott of the councils, which he had advocated since 1920. The middle course of making the inadequate reforms unworkable by opposition within the councils was always repugnant to him. Since he realized that the majority of Congress agreed in this matter with Dass and Nehru, he kept aloof from politics and flung himself with all his emotional ardour into a campaign for hand-spinning and the boycott of foreign cloth. During the Second World War, similarly, he did not like the idea of bargaining with the British Government regarding the emancipation of his country, and advocated that whatever support was to be given to the British should be given unconditionally.

1. P.B.P., op.cit, p.106
2. Ibid, p.163
3. Ibid, p.228 f.
Truth, to Gandhi, is the supreme virtue—the only virtue he wanted to claim. Even non-violence gains importance only because it is a necessary condition of realizing Truth. Starting with the assumption in his earlier writings that "God is Truth and Love," he soon came to the conclusion that Truth is God. This, he says, is because "Denial of God we have known. Denial of Truth we have not known. The most ignorant among mankind have some truth in them. We are all sparks of Truth." Truth is the real existent. "The word Satya (Truth) is derived from Sat, which means 'being'. Nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why Sat or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact it is more correct to say that Truth is God than to say that God is Truth... Sat or Satya is the only correct and fully significant name for God." Truth is the Law of the Universe. "I do not regard God as a person". Gandhi wrote,

1. Vide infra, Sec. II
2. V.I. 5.3.25
"Truth to me is God and God’s Law and God are not different things or facts in the sense that an earthly king and his laws are different. Because God is an idea, Law Himself . . . there is no doubt that He rules our action"

Gandhi points out that where there is Truth, there also is knowledge, (Chit) and where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (Ananda). "Hence we know God as Sat-chit-ananda, one who combines in Himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss".

Pursuit of truth according to Gandhi, is the only way to knowledge and true happiness.

To the man who has realized Truth in its fullness, nothing else remains to be known because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. All art and beauty is in Truth. "All true Art is the expression of the soul" said Gandhi. "All true Art must help the soul to realize the inner self . . . there is truly sufficient art in my life though you might not see what you call works of art about me.

1. Harijan, 23.3.46
2. Hindu Dharma, p. 247f
3. Ibid
What conscious art of man can give me the scene that opens before me when I look up to the sky above with all its shining stars? He saw beauty through Truth. "All Truths, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures, truthful songs, are highly beautiful. Whenever man begins to see beauty in Truth, then Art will arise." He did not consider that mere outward form made a thing beautiful. "To a true artist only that face is beautiful, which, quite apart from its exterior, shines with the Truth within the soul. There is, then, as I have said, no Beauty apart from Truth. On the other hand, Truth may manifest itself in forms which may not be outwardly beautiful at all. Socrates, we are told, was the most beautiful man of his time, and yet his features are said to have been the ugliest in Greece. To my mind, he was beautiful because all his life he was striving after Truth; and you may remember that his outward form did not prevent Phidias from appreciating the beauty of the Truth in him. . . ." Gandhi added, "...
The famine-stricken skeletons of men and women in Orissa haunt me in my waking hours and in my dreams. Whatever can be useful to those starving millions is beautiful to my mind.

God is satyam, shivam, sundaram, truth, goodness and beauty in one. This is why Gandhi says "Truth is the first thing to be sought for, and Beauty and Goodness will then be added unto you". He pointed out, "That is what Christ really taught in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was to my mind a supreme artist because he saw and expressed truth; and so was Muhammad. Scholars say that the Quran is the most perfect composition in all Arabic literature. Because both of them strove first for Truth, therefore the grace of expression naturally came in". Gandhi said "That is the Truth and Beauty I crave for, live for and would die for".

Devotion to Truth, Gandhi considered, as the sole justification for our existence. "All our activities should be centred on Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life". This means that "There should be Truth in thought, Truth in speech and Truth in action", and there should be complete

1. Y.I., 13.11.24.
2. Ibid.
3. Hindu Dharma, p. 248
harmony between a man's thoughts, words and actions. There is no sense in saying that one would observe Truth "as far as possible", for it is to succumb to the very first temptation\textsuperscript{1}. When once this stage is reached, all other rules of correct living will come without effort, and obedience to them will be instinctive. But without Truth it would be impossible to observe any principles or rules in life\textsuperscript{2}.

In spite of the best devotion, what may appear as truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another person. "But that need not worry the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realized that what appear to be different truths are like countless and apparently different leaves of the same tree ... Hence there is nothing wrong in every man following Truth according to his lights. Indeed it is his duty to do so"\textsuperscript{3}.

\begin{itemize}
  \item 1. Hindu Dharma, p. 246.
  \item 2. Ibid, p. 247.
  \item 3. Ibid, p. 248.
\end{itemize}
The way to absolute truth, Gandhi realized, lay through relative truth. In his Introduction to his Autobiography, he says, "... as long as I have not realized this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold by relative truth as I have conceived it. That relative truth must, meanwhile, be my beacon, my shield and buckler". What Gandhi meant by Truth was not thus anything static but something which was constantly open to examination and revision. Broadly speaking, "it is what the voice within tells you". But no one can claim truly to hear the voice unless he has gone through a severe discipline in the vows, at least of truth, brahmacharya, non-violence, poverty and non-possession. Truth can be realized only by simple-minded devotion (abhyaasa) and indifference to all other interests in life (vairamya), says the Bhagavad Gita. The quest of truth involves Tapas - self-suffering, sometimes even unto death.

4. Ibid.
5. Hindu Dharma, p.248.
6. Ibid.
There is no place in it for cowardice, no place for defeat. "Truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth you must reduce yourself to zero." The seeker after Truth - the Satyagrahi - has therefore to undergo a rigorous preliminary training "just as for conducting scientific experiments there is an indispensable scientific course of instruction." To the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashrams, therefore, Gandhi had prescribed the vows of Truth, Non-violence, Chastity, Non-possession, Control of the palate, Non-Stealing, Fearlessness, Removal of Untouchability, Bread labour, Equality of Religions and Swadeshi. And, in his own life, he strove to embody these ideals.

Gandhi never claimed to have realized Truth; his was a constant search after the ideal. "I am but a seeker after Truth" he wrote, "I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it." Nirmal Kumar Bose

3. Hindu Dharma, p.68.
says that "he made it clear that his speeches and writings contained a picture of not what he actually was, but he wanted to be; it was a record of ideas and aspirations, but not of their realization"¹. This was because he realized his limitations as a mortal being. "I lay no claim", he said, "to superhuman powers. I want none. I wear the same corrupt flesh that the weakest of my fellow-beings wears, and I am therefore as liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has up to now blessed them in spite of my imperfections"². "To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections and therein lies all the strength I possess; because it is a rare thing for a man to know his limitations"³. He was always prepared to own mistakes and invariably he corrected himself by self-imposed penance on such occasions. "For, confession of error", he held, "is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. I feel stronger for my confession. And the cause must prosper for the retracing. Never

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¹ Nirmal Kumar Bose, *op.cit*, p.23
² Andrews, *op.cit*, p.289
has man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path". "We should repent and do penance for our sins. So long as we do not repent and do not realize our errors and make an open confession of them, we shall not truly change our course".

As Radhakrishnan has put it, the inspiration of Gandhi's life "has been what is called religion, religion not in the sense of subscription to dogmas or conformity to ritual, but religion in the sense of an abiding faith in the absolute values of truth, love and justice and a persistent endeavour to realize them on earth". This religion of Truth is what made his life a long give. "The bearing of this religion on social life" says Gandhi, "is or has to be, seen in one's daily social contact. To be true to such religion one has to lose oneself in continuous and continuing service of all life. Realization of Truth is impossible without a complete merging of oneself in and identification with this limitless ocean of life".

The active life of service

1. Tendulkar, op. cit., p. 310
into which Gandhi plunged, is thus the consequence of his belief that therein lay the path to the realization of Truth.

Gandhi's concept of Truth as reality and his belief that the only way to realize it is to live by relative truth, are very significant from the point of explaining his educational philosophy.

II. NON-VIOLENCE.

Truth and non-violence were to Gandhi like the two sides of a coin; the one had no existence without the other. "They are two terms not disjointed but united, used to indicate different aspects of the same reality." It is bound up absolutely in his mind with Truth. He holds that the Truth of all life

1. Vide infra, Ch V, Sec II-1
on this planet and of God himself is to be found in this principle of the sacredness of life and refusal to use violence.\(^1\) Far from being mere philosophical concepts, these became the ruling passion of his life. "For me, said Gandhi, "non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breath of my life"\(^2\). He not merely practised them in his own life, but applied them to all human problems and wanted society to be fashioned according to these principles.

Ahimsa or non-violence has been declared ages ago by the Hindu religion as 'supreme duty'\(^3\). In its negative aspect as 'non-killing', this doctrine

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1. Andrews, op. cit, p.131
2. Ibid, p.143
3. 'Ahimsa Paramo Dharma', Mahabharata.
prohibited meat-eating for orthodox Hindus. It was the central doctrine of both Buddhism and Jainism, and Jainism was a powerful force in Gujarat where Gandhi was born. Still he did not know much about the principle of ahimsa before ever he went to England. He had read about winning the enemy with love in a Gujarati poem earlier, but the full significance of the principle of ahimsa was not clear to him until he read the Bhagavad Gita. His first acquaintance with the Gita was through Sir Edwin Arnold's English translation, The Song Celestial, and he was 'entranced' by it. The central teaching of the Gita, anashakti, - 'renunciation of the fruits of action' or 'selfless action' - led him to a real understanding of the principle of Ahimsa. The Sermon

1. Y.I., 12.11.25
2. Says H.N. Brailsford, "It was reflection, his experience of life, and in some degree, the influence of Tolstoy that brought him to his fundamental doctrine of Ahimsa. He then went to the Hindu scriptures and to the folk poetry of Gujerat and rediscovered it there". Mr. Brailsford discounts the influence of the Gita as a formative factor in Gandhi's conception of Ahimsa; and thinks that "his reading of this doctrine into the Bhagwad Gita distorted its plain meaning". Indeed, he is very sceptical about the influence of Hinduism itself in shaping this principle - he says, "Gandhi trusted, in the last resort, in his own private judgement" (PBP, op.cit, p.112). For Gandhi's own views on this much disputed question, see Hindu Dharma, pp.150-182.
on the Mount and the teaching of Tolstoy had great influence on him. It soon came to mean not so much 'non-violence', as "action based on refusal to do harm". "It was not merely a negative virtue but involved the positive doing of good as much as the negative refusal to do harm". In other words, it proclaimed the message of love, which, to people in the West, is "reminiscent of the Cross".

Gandhi preached his gospel of love basing it but on religion as well as on his theory of human nature. "Our religion" he said, "is based on Ahimsa, which in its active form, is nothing but love, love not only

1. Gandhi once told the Revd. J.J. Doke that it was the New Testament, especially the Sermon on the Mount that awakened in him the rightness and the value of Satyagraha. (J.J. Doke, M.K. Gandhi, an Indian patriot in South Africa, The London Indian Chronicle, London, 1909, p. 84). He did not see much difference between the Sermon and the Gita. "What the Sermon describes in a graphic manner", he wrote in Young India (22.12.27), "the Bhagavad Gita reduces to a scientific formula .... Today, supposing I was deprived of the Gita and forgot all its contents but had a copy of the Sermon, I should derive the same joy from it as I do from the Gita". The core of Christ's teaching is, according to Tolstoy, love; and Tolstoy's philosophy is really the application of the Sermon to modern problems. Gandhi read Tolstoy's The Kingdom of God is within You in South Africa, at a time when he was passing through a crisis of scepticism and was 'overwhelmed' by it. Cf: Autobiography, I, op. cit, p. 322.


to our neighbours, not only to our friends, but love even to those who may be our enemies. He considered human nature as essentially peaceful and love as a natural condition of all life, and pointed out that the long story of mankind is punctuated more with periods of peace than with the commas of conflict. "The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world" he wrote in the Hind Swaraj, "shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love... Little quarrels of millions of families in their daily lives disappear before the exercise of this force. Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take note of this fact... History, then, is a record of an interruption of the course of Nature; soul-force, being natural, is not noted in history. Mankind, as Sophia Wadia puts it, is not a superior pack of wolves, and therefore its law is not the law of the jungle. "We

1. Tendulkar, op.cit. p.204.
have a higher law to fulfil, the Law wrought within our soul nature, the law of Love and of Brotherhood". This is a paraphrase of the famous statement on human nature by Gandhi himself: "Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law - to the strength of the spirit".

Gandhi's conviction that there is in all men, a noble element which could be touched by love, made him advocate replacement of violence by self-sacrifice, and brute-force by love-force. Any man could conquer his worst enemy by loving him and by defying injustice even at the risk of death. "The hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering without anger and without malice". Non-violence in its dynamic condition, means conscious suffering. It does not mean weak submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's

2. Y.I., 11.8.20
3. Y.I., 19.2.25
whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire’s fall or for its regeneration. Gandhi thus evolved a new technique of non-violent resistance of evil, whether it be individual or collective authority, social or political oppression. He called it, first, Passive Resistance, but soon gave it the name of 'Soul Force' because the former did not fully express all that it meant and was interpreted to mean 'a weapon of the weak'. "I do not like the term 'Passive Resistance' he said, "It fails to convey all I mean. It describes a method but gives no hint of the system of which it is only a part. Real beauty - that is my aim - is doing good against evil."

The successful use of soul force depended on "a recognition of the soul as apart from the body and its permanent and superior nature", and Gandhi stressed that this recognition must amount to a living faith and not to a mere intellectual grasp. Fully

1. Y.I., 12.5.20
2. Ibid.
3. Andrews, op.cit. p.192
realizing that violence is an inherent necessity for life in the body and that none, while in the flesh can be entirely free from violence, Gandhi said that a seeker after truth has to make a ceaseless endeavour to get rid of his slavish subordination to the will-to-live. He will thus have to accept poverty, and be indifferent to food and clothes. The sages of ancient India had mortified the flesh only because they wanted their bodies to be proof against any injury inflicted on them by tyrants seeking to impose their will on them. Socrates and Jesus Christ, had similarly counted their bodies as nothing in comparison with their souls. Tolstoy equated soul-force with love-force and lived according to it. In a letter to Gandhi, he referred to it as "in reality nothing else than the teaching of love uncorrupted by false interpretations" and pointed out that "this law was most clearly expressed by Christ, who plainly said 'In love alone is all the law and the Prophets'".

K.G. Mashruwala points out that though the ideal of conquering hatred by non-hatred is not

entirely new in Indian ideology, the stories of Jain and Buddhist princes practising non-violent resistance against rival kings can only be imaginary and are significant only as showing that such an ideal has been conceived in India from very ancient times. He doubts "whether there ever was a demonstration in history of this ideal". Louis Renou points out that even Emperor Asoka does not stand the test. That certainly was left for Gandhi to do. His programme of non-violent resistance is unique and has no parallel in the history of mankind. "Gandhi did what had never been done before. Up to his time the practice of these non-resistant principles had been limited to single individuals or to little groups of individuals. Gandhi worked out the discipline and the programme for the practising of this particular kind of principle by unnumbered masses of human beings. He worked out a programme, in other words, not merely for an individual, or a small group of individuals, but for a whole nation, and that is something new in the experience of man". Gandhi demonstrated the

1. K.G. Mashruwala, Satyagraha against War, V.B.Q, p.125 f.
3. John Haynes Holmes, Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest man since Jesus Christ, V.B.Q, p.253.
superiority of Soul-Force in gaining our ends and taught the world that it could be usefully employed by individuals and communities in matters private and public.

In his letter to Lord Chelmsford, during the Great War, Gandhi wrote: "If I could popularise the use of soul force, which is but another name for love force in place of brute force, I know that I could present you with an India that could defy the whole world to its worst". In Indian terminology, for soul-force, Gandi coined the word Satyagraha - its true translation being 'Truth-force'. "For Gandhi Satyagraha meant something active and dynamic. It was the power of Truth that must prevail. Personal suffering on the part of Satyagrahis endured in a spirit of non-violence and even of positive love, involving, it may be, the martyrdom of individuals, must in the end, appeal to the better conscience of the opponent and result in the removal of the disability". It should be considered a religious movement, a process of purification and penance.

"A departure from truth by a hair's breadth, or violence committed against anybody, whether Englishman

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.279.
or Indian", Gandhi pointed out "will surely damn the great cause the Satyagrahis are handling". Before the Hunter Committee, when on 9.1.20, Gandhi, as the author of the movement, was asked to define Satyagraha, he said "It is a movement intended to replace methods of violence and a movement based entirely upon truth. It is as I have conceived it, an extension of the domestic law in the political field, and my experience has led me to the conclusion that the movement and that alone can rid India of the possibility of violence spreading throughout the length and breadth of the land for the redress of grievances". Thus Gandhi wanted to rid India of the violence that was spreading, by forging new weapons of fight suited to the genius of the Indian people. The new armoury contained "weapons of unimaginable power, weapons that guaranteed eventual victory, and in Gandhi's own time, praise be to God, won the victory that he could see". Gandhi compared Satyagraha to a baniyan tree with satya and ahimsa making the parent trunk from which innumerable branches shoot out. Non-violent

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.305.  
4. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.322
non-co-operation was one such. Gandhi put forward non-co-operation as a "duty when co-operation means degradation or humiliation or an injury to one's cherished religious sentiment". He considered it a protest against an unwitting and unwilling participation in evil, and intended to pave the way to real honourable and voluntary co-operation based upon mutual respect and trust. Gandhi made it clear that it was not intended to paralyse the Government as much as compel justice from it, though he knew that if it is carried to the extreme point, it can surely bring the Government to a stand-still. It rendered government impossible by the active withdrawal of the consent of the governed. More dangerous was the weapon of 'Civil Disobedience'. Polak points out that Thoreau's essay on the duty of 'Civil Disobedience' by a citizen who felt bound to become a conscientious objector, had much influence on Gandhi. Gandhi showed that the strength of

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.345.
2. Y.I., 13.10.21.
3. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.364.
4. PB P, op.cit, p.308
5. Ibid, p.98.
Satyagraha lay in the law of love which required one not to return hatred for hatred, violence for violence, but to return good for evil. "You achieve reform" he says "not by imposing suffering on those who resist it but by taking the suffering upon yourselves, and so in this movement, we hope, by the intensity of our sufferings to affect and alter the Government's resolution.... My experience of Satyagraha leads me to believe that it is such a potent force that once set in motion it ever spreads, till at last it becomes a dominant factor in the community in which it is brought into play; if it so spreads, no government can neglect it". Gandhi believed that there is no such thing as failure in Satyagraha. As Rabindranath Tagore points out "We must know that moral conquest does not consist in success, that failure does not deprive it of its dignity and worth. Those who believe in spiritual life know that to stand against wrong which has overwhelming material power behind it is victory itself - it is victory of active faith in the ideal in the teeth of evident defeat". Says Gandhi, "We

1. Tendulkar, op.cit. p.300
2. Ibid, p.316.
must refuse to wait for the wrong to be righted till the wrong-doer has been roused to a sense of his inequity. We must not for fear of ourselves or others having to suffer remain participators in it. But we must combat the wrong by ceasing to assist the wrong-doer directly or indirectly. Success is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer. "The purer the suffering, the greater the progress. Hence did the sacrifice of Jesus suffice to free a sorrowing world... Thus did the sufferings of a Harischandra suffice to re-establish the kingdom of Truth."

"My life" said Gandi, "is dedicated to the service of India through the religion of non-violence". His campaigns in South Africa and India were all characterized by non-violent, non-malicious resistance. Problems of conflict between Hindus and Mussalmans, between English rulers and Indian subjects, between native farmers and foreign planters, between mill-owners and labourers, between Indian princes and their people were all handled by Gandhi in this non-violent way, often with success. Where he failed he never blamed the technique but blamed himself as the imperfect instrument through

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.257
2. Y.I., 16.6.20.
3. Y.I., 11.8.20.
which non-violence had operated. The first *Satyagraha* campaign of 1921 and 1922 actually baffled the British Empire. "Britain, like the Roman Empire of yesterday, knew exactly what to do with a man who came armed against her .... But when a man, or rather an array of men, comes against an empire barehanded and bare-footed, armed not even with stones or staves, practising non-violence, loving their enemies and seeking to serve them even as they love and serve their friends, the Empire doesn't know what to do."¹ The same was the experience of General Smuts earlier in South Africa. When Gandhi led the second struggle for India's independence, "his faith in non-violence and in victory through suffering grew only firmer, if that were possible, as he grew older."² The description of the raid on Dharsana under Manilal Gandhi, by eye-witness, Webb Miller, American journalist, quoted in Roy Walker's *Sword of Gold*³ shows how far the people of India had advanced in non-violence under Gandhi's lead. Gandhi won independence for India by persuasion through love. He had declared emphatically that

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2. P.B.P. *op. cit*, p.172.
3. Cf: P.B.P., p.177
"if we have to wade through violence to obtain swaraj and if a redress of grievances were to be only possible by means of ill-will for and slaughter of Englishmen", he would do without that swaraj and without a redress of those grievances. Non-violence to him was 'a creed not a policy'; and at last he succeeded in his ambition to provide an instance in history of a country attaining its freedom through non-violent rebellion. But the greatest experiment in non-violence, as Holmes points out, came after the winning of Indian independence. As violence and massacre swept the provinces in the north and east, following the partition of India, the frail figure of the Mahatma moved alone amongst the people in the throes of madness, and effectively quelled the fire of anger and bloodshed that had swept through like a whirlwind. And when the conflagration spread to Delhi, "Gandhi came to Delhi, thus stricken and bleeding, and as Jesus calmed the storm on the sea of Galilee, so Gandhi calmed and ended this storm of hate and madness". And his death at the hands of a fanatical assassin with the peaceful words 'He Ram'

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.310
2. Y.I., 12.11.31
3. J.H.Holmes, op.cit. p.254 f
has made him a martyr on the altar of the principles of Truth and Non-violence, to which he had been devoted throughout his long life.

It is well known that, during the long struggle for freedom from British domination, "never even the remotest trace of bitterness against Englishmen as such ever entered his mind". He made a distinction between men and their actions. In the article 'Do I hate the Englishmen', Gandhi wrote thus: "By a long course of prayerful discipline I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know this is a big claim. Nevertheless I make it in all humility. But I can and I do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible. But I do not hate the domineering Englishmen, as I refuse to hate the domineering Hindus. I seek to reform them in all the loving ways that are open

1. Andrews, op.cit. 221.
to us. My non-co-operation has its root not in hatred but in love. My personal religion peremptorily forbids me to hate anybody". That he had no racial bitterness is evidenced similarly by his statement to Takaoka who sought to promote Indo-Japanese friendship: "I do not subscribe to the doctrine of Asia for the Asiatics, if it is meant as an anti-European combination".

The fact is that his was not an exclusive love. He says "I cannot love Mussalmans or Hindus and hate Englishmen. For if I merely love Hindus and Mussalmans because their ways are on the whole pleasing to me, I shall soon begin to hate them when their ways displease me, as they may well do at any moment. A love that is based on the goodness of those you love is a mercenary affair, whereas true love is self-effacing and demands no consideration".

C.F. Andrews points out that there is "an amazing sweetness and childlike innocence" about Gandhi, which, when seen in action, makes St. Francis of Assisi the only illuminating parallel. "I could

easily imagine" he says, "Gandhi preaching to
the birds, embracing the leper, wearing the coarse
dress of the half-naked poor, courting a rude
beating in the snow by some churlish janitor as
'perfect joy'. Whenever I read the 'Little Flowers
of St. Francis', with its mediaeval setting, I say
to myself, 'what a strange thing this is! Why, I
have been witnessing this very life of love in
Gandhi himself and in many of his followers also' \(^1\).

Gandhi believed that "It is possible to
introduce uncompromising truth and honesty in the
political life of the country" and said "I would
strain every nerve to make truth and non-violence
accepted in all our national activities" \(^2\). He held
that he was far from being a visionary in asserting
that the religion of non-violence is meant not
merely for the rishis and saints but for the
common people as well. He wanted to replace
intolerance and violence by methods of toleration
and persuasion in all conflicts among men, not merely
in India, but in all parts of the world. Thus after
the catastrophe of Munich, we find him writing an open

\(^1\) Andrews, \textit{op.cit}, p. 344
\(^2\) Tendulkar, \textit{op.cit}, 350.
letter to the Czechs asking them to resist the Nazi conquest with organized non-violent disobedience. To the Jews too, he offered the same message: "If I were a Jew I would claim Germany as my home even as the tallest gentile German may... I would refuse to be expelled or submit to discriminating treatment.... I am convinced that if some one with courage and vision can arise among them to lead them in non-violent action, the winter of their despair can, in the twinkling of an eye, be turned into the summer of hope. And what has to-day become a degrading man-hunt can be turned into a calm and determined stand offered by unarmed men and women, possessing the strength given to them by Jehova. It will then be a truly religious resistance offered against the Godless fury of dehumanized man". H.N. Brailsford, in quoting the above, remarks, "So Gandhi stood, unshaking in his faith, confident that to him had been given the teaching which avert the orgy of wickedness that threatened humanity. He never doubted the sovereign truth of the message he had to deliver". The examples of the Doukhobors, the Finns in the first

1. P.B.P, op.cit, p.224
decade of this century\(^1\) and of the Norwegians during the Quisling Regime and the German occupation during the years 1940-45,\(^2\) show that non-violent resistance could be usefully employed anywhere in the world. But this meant education of the people in the principles of truth and non-violence.

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CHAPTER II

THE DETERMINANTS OF TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE.

I. FEARLESSNESS.

The Satyagrahi had to be educated to be free from fear of kings, people, caste, ferocious animals and even death for he cannot follow truth or ahimsa as long as he has not overcome fear. Only a truly fearless man, Gandhi held, will defend himself against others by truth-force or soul-force.

No one could be wholly devoted to Truth and non-violence unless he has shed the fear of death. "Fear of death", Gandhi points out, "makes us devoid of valour and religion". The valour of the Satyagrahi springs from his conviction that he stands for a right cause, which he should defend with his life, against all odds. It is the courage to suffer, the courage to say 'no' when it should be 'no' regardless of consequences. There is only one whom he should fear and that is God; and God, being synonymous with his own conscience, he is obeying God when doing what his conscience dictates, even when it is in conflict with established customs.

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2. Ibid, p.310
accredited authority or majority opinion. This is easy for one who knows that birth and death are but different aspects of the same thing and that death is not something to shrink from.

Freedom from fear of man and death is a pre-requisite for a life of service. Gandhi realized this very early, and by the time he set himself to serve his fellow-men he had cast off all fear. He wrote from South Africa to his brother: "I am engaged in my present activities - as I look upon them as essential to life. If I have to face death while thus engaged, I shall face it with equanimity. I am now a stranger to fear". Instances of his having defied authority and death in the pursuit of truth, in sticking to his own conviction, while in South Africa, are too numerous to mention. Had he not refused to take off his turban as ordered by the Durban Court, to leave the first class compartment in which he travelled, and to stay behind in the ship when faced by an angry mob who threatened to tear him to pieces if he ever landed? Addressing the Conference of leaders whom he had summoned to take the pledge to agitate

1. Tendulkar, op.cit., p.92.
against the Black Ordinance, he said, "There is only one course open to me, namely to die but not to submit to the law, even if every one else were to hold back, leaving me alone". Each one of his civil resistance campaigns whether in South Africa or India, was a defiance of death in the pursuit of truth. He found, on arrival in India, a people seized with paralyzing fear, who may not open their lips in public and may only talk about their opinions secretly, and he suggested to them that "there is only One whom we have to fear, that is God. When we fear God, then we shall fear no man, however high-placed he may be; and if you want to follow the vow of Truth, then fearlessness is absolutely necessary. Before we can aspire to guide the destinies of India we shall have to adopt this habit of fearlessness".

In an address at the Madras Y.M.C.A., he said, "I think that if we are to practise truth, to practise Ahimsa, we must immediately see that we also practise fearlessness. If our rulers are doing what, in our opinion is wrong, and if we feel it our duty, to let them hear our advice, even though it may be considered

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.21.
2. Andrews, op.cit, p.108
sedition, I urge you to speak sedition - but at your peril; you must be prepared to suffer the consequences. And when you are ready to suffer the consequences and not hit below the belt, then I think you will have made good your right to have your advice heard even by the Government". Soon under his guidance, the erstwhile fear-stricken peasants of Kheda, whose prayer for suspension of land revenue at a time of famine was turned down by the Government, came forward and declared "... We shall let the Government take whatever legal steps it may think fit and suffer the consequences of our non-payment. We shall rather let our lands be forfeited than that by voluntary payments we should allow our case to be considered false or should compromise our self-respect". Each resistance movement served as a training in the practice of the non-violence of the brave and made the nation fit for further suffering for just causes. During the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1921, he asked the Satyagrahis who came forward to distribute proscribed literature to write their names and addresses as sellers so that they may be traced

2. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.271
easily when wanted by the Government for prosecution\(^1\). When, after returning from the Round Table Conference in London, he launched *Satyagraha* again, he knew that his followers would only "dance with joy when the bullets are flying round them like so many crackers\(^2\), and he asked them to embrace death "as we embrace a friend". "But", he added, "we must see to it that not even a hair of an Englishman is hurt" \(^3\).

"It was under the influence of the Mahatma that the Indians raised themselves from out the dust, dared for the first time to stand erect and look at an Englishman straight in the face\(^4\). When this stage came, when he knew that the nation had shed its fear, half the battle was won. For Gandhi knew and said, "The English are a great nation but the weaker will go to the wall if they come in contact with them. When they are themselves courageous - they have borne sufferings and they respond to courage and sufferings - partnership with them, is only possible after we have developed

\(^{1}\) Tendulkar, *op.cit*, p. 303.  
\(^{2}\) P.B.P, *op.cit*, p. 195  
\(^{3}\) Ibid, p. 197  
\(^{4}\) J.H. Holms, *op.cit*, p. 250
an indomitable courage and a faculty for unlimited suffering". The Indians who overcame fear, demanded their birth right of freedom instead of meekly waiting for favours that might condescend on them; and the non-violence of the brave was, in the long run, vindicated.

II. PRISTINE SIMPLICITY OF LIFE.

Gandhi believed, as did Jesus, that none could serve both God and Mammon. His passion for simple life started in his student-days in London when, living in rented rooms, he cooked his food, usually cocoa and oatmeal porridge, and travelled mostly on foot. In Africa he carried it farther. Even as he started his public life, he began washing his clothes, clipping his own hair, cleaning his pots and even nursing his babies. His adherence to vegetarianism had created in him an interest in diatetics, and made him gave up taking sweets and condiments, starchy foods and tea and coffee even while he was in England; and now, he began experiments

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p. 305
2. Ibid, p. 36
3. Ibid, p. 63
4. Ibid, p. 36
with the Kunhe system with its fresh-fruit-and-nut diet and the earth treatment. With his belief in nature-cure, came a dislike of artificial medicines which he scathingly condemned in the Hind Swaraj, along with much of what goes by the name of modern civilization. The ideas he had imbibed from Tolstoy and Rajchandra had already begun to work in his mind; and a study of the Gita, served to complete his spiritual metamorphosis. A perusal of Ruskin's Unto This Last deepened his convictions as he found some of his own favourite ideas clearly stated in the book. The points that gripped him were

(1) that the good of the individual is contained in the good of all;

(2) that a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's in as much as all have the same right of

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.83
2. Rajchandra Ravjibhai was a Jain, jeweller-poet whom Gandhi met at Bombay. Of him he says, "Indeed, I put him much higher than Tolstoy in religious perception. Both Rajchandra and Tolstoy have lived as they have preached". (Tendulkar, op.cit, p.40). For a brief account of his work and views, see Dr. J.N. Farquhar, Modern Religious Movements in India, (Macmillan 1915, pp.327-28).
3. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.83.
earning their livelihood from their work; and

(3) that a life of labour, that is, the life of the tiller of the soil and of the handicraftsman, is the life worth living.

Gandhi put the Ruskinian ideas into practice in the Phoenix settlement, which he founded in 1904. The settlers, who were mainly engaged in producing the *Indian Opinion*, a weekly newspaper, for the conduct of which Gandhi had made himself responsible, were each given three acres round the Press, and it was decided that everyone should labour in the farm irrespective of status and attend to the press work during spare time. Life in the Colony was to be very simple and more or less self-supporting. Gandhi lived in a small house in the farm and did manual labour, including scavenging, as any other settler; he helped in the Printing Press, in grinding corn and in teaching children, and walked to his office six miles every day. Gradually he realized all the implications of a truly simple life of service. He held that if he were to devote himself to service, he must lead a life of celibacy and accept voluntary poverty. He conveyed his resolve to Kasturba, his wife, and with her consent took the brahmacharya vow in 1906; and he wrote to his brother in India, "I claim nothing there."
I do not claim anything as mine; all that I have is being utilized for public purposes." ¹

The vows of celibacy and poverty which Gandhi thus took while in South Africa were deliberately taken in the midst of 'worldly prosperity and outward success, in a determined effort to practice "ascetic self-control and entire non-violence in all his actions" ², and were scrupulously adhered to till the very end of his life. Through all the vicissitudes of life in India, Gandhi remained the Mahabangi ³ that he was in South Africa. He identified himself with the poorest of the poor and the ashram in which he lived resembled a poor man's hut. Believing in a rural civilization as the one ideal for mankind, he rejected city life with its mechanical contrivances and artificial ways of living as essentially immoral, and enjoined upon all the obligation of sticking closely to the soil and labouring to earn their daily bread; and when compelled to state his own profession,

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.92
2. Andrews, op.cit, p.17
3. Means 'great scavenger'. Polak says one of Gandhi's English colleagues had conferred on him this title while in South Africa. P.B.P, op.cit, p.32.
preferred to call himself 'a farmer and a weaver'. When he visited England for the Round Table Conference, he chose to live in the East End of London with Muriel Lester at Kingsley Hall, simply because he could share the life of the poor; and at Delhi, after Indian independence, the accredited Father of the Nation as he was, he still stayed only in the bhangi colony. He had stripped himself practically of every possession in the world . . . "When he died, as through all these years gone by", says J.H. Holmes, "Gandhi owned only two or three loin cloths and a shawl or two, a pair of spectacles, a one-dollar Ingersoll watch, a fountain pen and a few sheets of paper. That's all the property he owned or wanted to own . . . "2. And he was not very much attached even to these either. 

Addressing a meeting in London in 1931, he said that he wore the loin cloth because he had to wrap up the body in something and smugly added, "but if anyone wanted to take it off from me, he can have it. I shan't call in the police". Gandhi's

detachment to things worldly was equal to Christ's. Indeed Maud Royden Shaw expresses only the opinion of the world when she says that Gandhi is more like Jesus Christ than anyone else she has ever met. "The best Christian in the world", she continues, "and the man most like Christ was a Hindu. He was Mahatma Gandhi".

Gandhian simplicity of life, which he wants every Satyagrahi to emulate, implies the vows of voluntary poverty, non-possession, non-stealing, bread labour, celibacy and control of the palate; and each of these, as conceived by the Mahatma, is much wider in scope than what the term, in ordinary usage implies.

1. Voluntary Poverty. Brailsford rightly assesses the vow of poverty when he says that it meant that one should keep only what is strictly necessary for one's bodily wants and think constantly of simplifying life. This is the poverty of the ascetic, the man who delights in having as few needs as possible, not of the man in want. Voluntary poverty means renunciation, realized as the way to the realm of

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2. P.B.P. op.cit. p.109
Truth. Gandhi was devoted to God as Daridevanarayan, "God of the poor, God appearing in the hearts of the poor". Poverty, Gandhi held, had a dignity of its own when the poor man, though poor in material goods, was not poor in spirit. He realized that true happiness lay in contentment. "Such a man had God as his companion and friend and felt richer than any King or Emperor". On the contrary, "God was not the friend of those who inwardly coveted others' riches". The man who suffers poverty, not because he has taken it on himself but because it is forced upon him, always yearns for riches and has no peace; he is out for exploitation and evil. This is the man who says "Since we cannot all become rich and own palaces let us at least pull down the palaces of the rich and bring them down to our level". To Gandhi, this is violence. "That could bring no happiness or peace", he says, "either to the poor or to anyone else".

2. Non-possession. Implicit in the idea of voluntary poverty are the concepts of non-possession and non-thieving. The idea of

1. Y.I., 4.4.29.
2. Harijan, 21.7.46.
non-possession as conveyed by the term 'aparigraha' occurring in the Gita, taken along with 'Samabhava' or equability, Gandhi interpreted as meaning that "those who desired salvation should act like the trustee, who though having control over great possessions, regards not an iota of it as his own". Love and exclusive possession can ill go together. "Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after Truth, a follower of the law of Love, cannot hold anything against tomorrow," for God "never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment". A perfect fulfilment of the ideal of non-possession would be almost impossible, as it would mean that man would, like the birds, have to live a hand-to-mouth life, "with no roof over his head, no clothing no stock of food for the morrow". But Gandhi would like us all "to keep the ideal constantly in view, and in the light thereof, critically examine our possessions and try to reduce them". Thus the ideal of non-possession decrees that it is not enough merely not to hoard stock but it is essential that we do not take anything which is

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.83.
4. Ibid.
not absolutely necessary for our bodily wants. He holds that civilization in the real sense of the term consists not in the multiplication but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants, and that only this is conducive to real happiness and contentment and to an increase in the capacity for service.

Gandhi points out that "Our ignorance or negligence of the Divine Law, which gives to man from day to day his daily bread and no more, has given rise to inequalities with all the miseries attendant upon them. The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted; while millions are starved to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want and all would live in contentment! The sovereign cure to this malady which he suggests as a true satyagrahi is that the rich should take the initiative in dispossession with a view to a universal diffusion of the spirit of contentment. If only they keep their own property within moderate limits, the starving will be easily fed and will learn the lesson of contentment along with the rich".

1. Hindu Dharma, p. 254 f.
3. Non-Stealing. To be non-stealing, in the Gandhian sense, it is not enough to desist from taking other men's property. "It is theft if we use anything which we do not really need; ... acquisitiveness divorced from need is theft". "I suggest", says Gandhi, "that we are all thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use and keep it, I thieve it from somebody else. It is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day; and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation". This view of non-thieving, as H.N. Brailsford points out, sounds delusively simple, until one realizes that it involves a revolutionary attitude to property. Gandhi came near to saying with Proudhon that 'property is theft'. Having, in a way, endorsed the Socialist maxim, "To each according to his

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1. Dhawan, op.cit, p.92
2. Andrews, op.cit, p.106
capacity", Gandhi said he was no Socialist, if it meant expropriation by force: "I am no Socialist, as I do not want to dispossess those who have got possessions"1. Expropriation, even of 'expropriators' was violence, a departure from the golden rule of ahimsa. All he would do was, therefore, to call on the rich to give away all they had to the poor; or to administer their wealth as trustees of the poor. To his co-workers he once gave the following message: "In India, we have got millions of people who have to be satisfied with one meal a day.... You and I have no right to anything that we really have until these many millions are clothed and fed. You and I, who ought to know better, must adjust our wants, and even undergo voluntary privation, in order that they may be nursed, fed and clothed"2.

4. Bread-labour. "Bread-labour is a corollary of the principle of non-stealing and a means of realizing non-possesion"3. Starting with the assumption that "God created man to work for his

2. Ibid, p. 106 f.
3. Dhawan, op. cit, p 99f.
food"¹, and that 'the need of the body must be supplied by the body"², Gandhi expected everyone, be he a bard or a Brahmin, to do body labour³, to earn his bread. He set an example by scrupulously spinning an allotted quantity of yarn every day. "Why must I spin," he raised the question in his open letter to Tagore, and answered it himself: "Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoilation of my countrymen. Trace the source of every coin that finds its way into your pockets and you will realize the truth of what I write. Everyone must spin. Let Tagore spin like the others"⁴. Gandhi wanted the poet to do bread-labour because of the sense of guilt we must feel in our having to live upon the exploitation of the poor. He condemned the idea, current among the educated men of the time, that manual labour had to be done only by those who are illiterate. "We have to realize" he said, "the dignity of labour. If a barber or a shoe-maker is attending a college, he ought not to abandon his

¹ Y.I., 13.10.21  
² Harijan, 20.6.35.  
³ Gandhi did not consider Varnashramadharma as absolving the brahmin from body-labour. Cf: Andrews, op. cit., p.36  
⁴ Y.I., 13.10.21.
profession. I consider that such professions are just as good as the profession of medicine" 1. He called on the men of his ashram to look upon body labour as a duty imposed by nature upon mankind. "We may therefore resort to bodily labour alone for our sustenance and use our mental and spiritual powers for the common good only" 2. Occupations and industries based on body labour are alone suitable for the Satyagrahi since these involve the least exploitation or violence 3. The ideal form of body-labour, Gandhi held, should be related to agriculture, since food is the most essential thing for life. If agriculture is not possible, any other productive manual work, related to some primary need like spinning, weaving or carpentry could be taken up. Gandhi considered spinning suitable for all. "There is no easier and better productive work" he said, "for millions than spinning" 4.

Body labour for bread was termed bread-labour by the Russian writer Bondarif, and the idea

1. Andrews, op.cit, p.109.f
2. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.210
3. Harijan, 8.9.40
was given wide publicity by Tolstoy and Ruskin. Gandhi read the idea into the Gita. According to him the third chapter of the Gita "seems to show that sacrifice chiefly means body labour for service".

Intellectual labour is not considered bread-labour. "Mere mental, that is, intellectual labour", he says, "is for the soul. It is its own satisfaction. It should never demand payment". Intellectual labour should, like all physical labour done over and above what is necessary for earning one's bread, be a labour of love, done solely for the benefit of society; and if there is any wealth accruing from it, the bulk of it should be spent for the good of the community. Not that Gandhi does not recognize that intellectual work has a real place in the scheme of life, but his insistence is altogether on the necessity of physical labour for all. "No man ought to be free from that obligation. It would serve to improve even the quality of his

1. Dhawan, op.cit, p.99.f.n.
2. Harijan, 20.6.35.
3. Ibid, 1.6.35
4. V.I., 26.11.31.
intellectual output". No wonder Gandhiji made body-labour the main feature of the educational system he evolved.

Body labour for bread should be a voluntary effort and not the result of compulsion. And so done, it is the highest form of social service. It is difficult to practise the ideal in its entirety; but even if without entering the spirit of it, people perform physical labour enough for their daily bread, society should go a long way towards the ideal.

"If generally accepted," says Dhawan, "The law will simplify life, facilitate the observance of non-violent values and co-ordinate the vision of the inward eye with the work of the hands... It will eliminate large-scale production and profit-motive and bring about virtual self-sufficiency of the village and the country. It will be at once a levelling up and a levelling down, a remedy for the exploitation of the poor and the swelled head of the

1. Harijan, 23.2.47
2. Vide Infra, Part II, Ch.II, Sec.II, 3
3. Harijan, 1.6.39.
4. Ibid, 29.6.35.
rich. Everybody will be his own master and class distinctions will disappear".

5. Celibacy. It is not possible to tread the path of truth and non-violence unless the vow of celibacy is observed. "The fulfilment of ahimsa is impossible without utter selflessness. Ahimsa means Universal Love. If a man gives his love to one woman or a woman to one man, what is there left for all the world besides"? asks Gandhi. "Such persons cannot rise to the height of Universal Love, or look upon all mankind as kith and kin. For they have created a boundary wall round their love . . . . Hence one who would obey the law of ahimsa cannot marry, not to speak of gratification outside the marital bond". Further, he points out, that a man "whose activities are wholly consecrated to the realization of Truth, which requires utter selflessness, can have no time for the selfish purpose of begetting children and running a household". "Those who want to perform national service, or to have a gleam of real religious life", he asserts categorically, "must lead a celibate life,

2. Hindu Dharma, p.252.
whether married or unmarried. He did not believe, as some people contend, that "Hinduism regarded the married state as by any means essential for salvation." Holding the view that the aim of human life is deliverance, he considered marriage as a 'fall', even as birth is a 'fall'. "As a Hindu," he says, "I believe that Moksha or deliverance is freedom from birth, by breaking the bonds of the flesh, by becoming one with God. Now, marriage is a hindrance in the attainment of this supreme object, inasmuch as it only tightens the bonds of the flesh. Celibacy is a great help, in as much as it enables one to lead a life of full surrender to God." C.F. Andrews classifies him as "one with the mediaeval saints in a passionate belief in celibacy as practically the only way to realize the beatific vision of God." 

2. Andrews, op.cit, p.37. Says H.N. Brailsford: "I doubt whether this rule of chastity was in accord with the Hindu tradition... The begetting of an heir to carry on the ritual for one's ancestors was an obligation imposed on every householder" PBP, op.cit, p. 108.  
The Hindu concept of brahmacharya was a wider conception, however, than mere celibate life, as ordinarily understood. It meant control in thought, word and action of animal passion, and meant much more than this control of the carnal desire. The root meaning of brahmacharya, being course of conduct adapted to the search of Brahma, i.e. Truth, he considered "the full and proper meaning of 'brahmacharya' to be "control in thought, word and action, of all the senses at all times and all places". "A man or woman completely practising brahmacharya is absolutely free from passion. Such a one therefore lives nigh unto God, is Godlike. It is "the correct way of life".

Naturally, a brahmachari "will be healthy and will easily live long. He will not even suffer so much as a headache. Mental and physical work will not cause fatigue. He is ever bright, never slothful". That continence coupled with pure thoughts, is the key to mental and physical vigour needs no proof.

Sublimation of passions strengthens the whole being

2. Y.I., 5.6.24 (italics mine)
3. Ibid.
4. Harijan, 22.6.47.
5. Ibid. 8.6.47.
of the individual and gives him unique power. This is why Gandhi wants every student to be a true brahmachari.

Gandhi had no doubt as to the possibility of practising such brahmacharya in thought, word and deed. Though he himself did not claim to have completely achieved it in his life, we know he had been trying to follow such brahmacharya consciously and deliberately since 1899, and that throughout the latter part of this long life, he had succeeded in almost perfectly extirpating sex in him "for the kingdom of Heaven's sake". Ever since he took the brahmacharya vow in 1906, he considered Kasturba as his life-long friend and established a relationship of perfect purity with her. He thus set an example

1. Says H.N. Brailsford about Gandhi's own personality, "He suppressed and sublimated sex in himself, as other saints have done before him, until it gave him a magnetism that won the millions of his fellow countrymen. He converted what he would have called his 'lusts' into a universal love that shone from him and embraced a nation" Cf: PBP, op.cit, p.115
2. Vida infra, p.260 f
4. He speaks of two minor lapses (in the wider sense of desire) Cf: Harijan, 29.2. 36
5. PBP, op.cit, p.217. C.F. Andrews mentions Gandhi as having said at the end of a prayer-meeting, "I do not want a kingdom, salvation or heaven; what I want is to remove the troubles of the oppressed and the poor" - Andrews, op.cit, p. 116:
to married couples to think of each other as brother and sister and thus free themselves for universal service. "Marriage only brings a woman closer to man, and they become friends in a special sense, never to be parted either in this life or in the lives to come. But I do not think that in our conception of marriage, our lusts should enter". Like Tolstoy, he held that sexual union was meant for the express purpose of procreating children and condemned it as "a crime when the desire for progeny is absent". No wonder he strongly opposed any method of birth control save self-control, considering it as putting a premium upon vice.

6. Control of the Palate. Of the many aids to brahmacharya, the control of the palate was considered of supreme importance by Gandhi and so he ranked it as an independent observance. He pointed out that the "mastery of the palate means automatic mastery of the other senses", and that to have no control over the senses is "like sailing in a rudderless ship, bound to break to pieces on coming in contact with the very first rock".

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1. Andrews, op. cit., p. 105
2. Y. I., 12.3.25
3. ibid.
5. Harijan, 3.10.36.
One of the rules for controlling the palate is to give up completely or as much as possible, all stimulating, heating and exciting condiments. "If we do not do that we are likely to abuse the sacred trust of our bodies that has been given us, and to become less than animals and brutes, eating, drinking and indulging in passion which we share with animals". But mere giving up of condiments is not enough. It is necessary to cultivate the feeling that the food that we eat is to sustain the body and not to satisfy the palate. This is a more difficult thing to do; but one who is desirous of serving mankind will systematically regulate and purify his diet until he is able to leave off all food which is either stimulating or unnecessary. This was indeed what Gandhi himself did. He gave up tea and coffee, condiments, onions, and even cow's milk, and was constantly experimenting on diatetics till the very end of his life. He was a confirmed vegetarian who was prepared to give up even goat's milk if he could find an effective vegetable substitute for it. He considered vegetarianism as "one of the priceless gifts of Hinduism"; and challenged the belief.

generally current, that vegetarianism made us weak in mind or body, or passive or inert in action. He did not regard meat as necessary for man at any stage and under any clime. "I hold flesh food to be unsuited to our species.... Experience teaches us that animal food is unsuited to those who would curb their passions." Like all Hindu saints, he recognized diet as a powerful factor in the formation of character, in spiritual evolution.

He also held that no one would be capable of moral effort necessary for the Satyagrahi, as long as he is in the grip of intoxicants. So he pleaded against the use of alcoholic drinks and smoking of cigars and cigarettes. On many occasions when he addressed the students he raised his voice against the drink and smoke evil. "Cigarette smoking", he said, "is like an opiate, and the cigars that you smoke have a touch of opium about them. They get to your nerves and you cannot leave them afterwards." And, "if cigarette is Beelzebub, then drink is Satan." Tolstoy was

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1. "It is necessary therefore to correct the error that vegetarianism has made us weak in mind or body, or passive or inert in action. The greatest Hindu reformers have been the actiest(sic) in their generation and they have invariably been vegetarians. Who could do greater activity than Shankara or Dayananda in their times"? -Y.I., 7.10.26.


4. Ibid.
much more against tobacco-smoking than drink, but Gandhi regarded drinking as "more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution", and advocated prohibition of all alcoholic drinks considering it the greatest moral movement of the century".  

Says C.F. Andrews, "... the vow of control of the palate follows upon the vows of truthfulness and non-stealing and non-possession as a simple means to reach the greatest ends. He would regard it as practically impossible for a man to indulge the appetite and yet remain for a long time strictly truthful, fearless, honest and single-minded".

III. **THE SWADESHI PRINCIPLE.**

Swadeshi is one of the key concepts of

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1. PBP, *op.cit.*, 216
Gandhian ethics. He looked upon it as a "rule of life", a "religious principle to be followed by all", "a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to the individual". In following it we only follow "one of the sacred laws of our being", engrained in the basic nature of man. A swadeshist will learn to live without hundreds of things which we consider necessary, but it needs persistent effort to reach that stage. If the spirit of Swadeshi spreads, Gandhi hopes, it will usher in a new millennium.

1. Says Andrews: "some of the vows with which Mahatma Gandhi concludes the series are clearly rather of a local nature than of permanent and perpetual value. 'Education through the Vernacular', 'The removal of Untouchability', 'the use of politics', are obviously in their present setting directed rather to the immediate needs of India than to any universal human situation. "In respect of the other two vows which have a direct external aspect - namely the vow of Swadeshi and the vow of Khaddar - Mahatma Gandhi would by no means regard these as either local or temporary. They go down very deep indeed into his whole conception of human progress".

Andrews, op. cit., 112

2. Tendulkar, op.cit., p.228 f.

3. Andrews, op.cit, p.107
Gandhi defined *Swadeshi* as "that spirit within us which restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote". The relation to the village barber, which he gave to illustrate this point has since become classic. Each man serves humanity best by serving his immediate neighbourhood, and holding fast to what is best in his indigenous ideals and institutions. By serving his next-door neighbour, he serves humanity, when the neighbour thus served, in his turn, serves his neighbour. As service, in the true spirit is neither selfish nor exclusive, and runs counter to all exploitation, the logical conclusion of

1. This was the definition he gave in his speech before the Missionary Conference, Madras, 1916. Says Andrews: "When I asked him what was the final word (italics mine) he had written on the subject, he gave me the following speech addressed to the Missionaries at Madras" - Andrews, *op. cit*, p.120

2. "In your village you are bound to support your village barber to the exclusion of the finished barber who may come to you from Madras. If you find it necessary that your village barber should reach the attainments of the barber from Madras, you may train him to that. Send him to Madras by all means, if you wish in order that he may learn his calling. Until you do that, you are not justified in going to another barber. That is *Swadeshi*". Andrews, *op. cit*, p.107

3. *Harijan*, 23.3.47
self-sacrifice would be that the individual sacrificed himself for the community, the community, for the nation and the nation for the world.

As against those who consider it a most selfish doctrine without any warrant in the civilized code of morality, and as reverting to barbarism, Gandhi held that Swadeshi was "the acme of universal sacrifice". The principle is based on a recognition of "the scientific limitation of human capability of service". Our capacity for service is limited by our knowledge of the world, and as we understand our immediate neighbourhood better than remote places, we may be able to serve our neighbours better, and in trying to serve those at a distance, we may commit the double mistake of neglecting those whom we could have otherwise served effectively, and unintentionally, out of ignorance, doing a disservice to the latter. The doctrine of Swadeshi is thus the outcome of the law of humility and love. "It is arrogance to

2. Harijan, 23.3.47.
think of launching out to serve the whole of India when I am hardly able to serve even my own family. It were better to concentrate my effort upon the family and consider that through them I was serving the whole nation and, if you will, the whole of humanity" says Gandhi. He further elucidates it as follows: "... in seeking to serve India to the exclusion of every other country I do not harm any other country. My patriotism is both exclusive and inclusive. It is exclusive in the sense that in all humility I confine my attention to the land of my birth; but it is inclusive in the sense that my service is not of a competitive nature. 'Use your own property in such a way that you hurt no one else's' is not merely a good legal maxim, but a good doctrine of life. It is the key to a proper practice of Ahimsa, of Love. It is for us who are the custodians of a great Faith, to show that patriotism based on hatred 'killeth' but that patriotism based on love 'giveth' life'¹.

Gandhi has very clearly explained the implications of this doctrine of swadeshi on every aspect of the life of a Satyagrahi: "(1) in the matter of Religion I must restrict myself to my

¹. Andrews, op.cit. p.127
ancestral religion - that is, the use of my immediate surroundings in religion. If I find my religion defective I should serve it by purging it of its defects. (2) In the domain of politics I should make use of the indigenous institutions and save them by curbing them of their proved defects. (3) In the field of economics I should use only those things that are produced by my immediate neighbours, and serve those industries by making them efficient and complete where they might be found wanting.¹ And he points out how, in India, we had suffered terribly because of neglecting the swadeshi spirit. The educated classes, who had received their education through a foreign medium, had not reacted on the masses, and there was a lack of correspondence between the representatives and the represented. "Had instruction in all branches of learning been given through the vernaculars, I make hold to say that they would have been enriched wonderfully. The question of village sanitation would have been solved long ago. The village panchayats would now be a living force in a special way and India would almost be enjoying

¹ Andrews, op.cit, p.120
self-government suited to its requirements". Much of the poverty of the masses is likewise due to the ruinous departure from swadeshi in economic and industrial life. "If not an article of commerce had been brought from outside India", he said in his Madras speech, "she would be today a land flowing with milk and honey .... India cannot live for Lancashire or any other country before she is able to live for herself. And she can live for herself only if she produces and is helped to produce everything for her requirements within her own borders".

1. Tendulkar, op.cit. p.228
2. Ibid, p.228. This attitude of economic self-sufficiency did not mean complete economic isolation from the rest of the world. He is not against international trade. He says, "To reject foreign manufactures merely because they are foreign, and to go on wasting national time and money in the promotion in one's country of manufactures for which it is not suited would be criminal folly and a negation of the swadeshi spirit. (Vervada Mandir, pp.96 f.). His broad definition of swadeshi which he later on gave, 'is the use of all home-made articles to the exclusion of foreign things, in so far as such use is necessary for the protection of home industries, more especially those industries without which India will become pauperized'—(Y.I. 17.6.26). Thus, he did not want to shut out English lever watches or Japanese lacquer work. (See his article, The Great Sentinel, Andrews, op.cit, p.272). The swadeshi principle in its original form had as its background, the idealised tradition of the Indian village community, each village leading its secluded life in peace. "In the simplicity of its economic life it was almost entirely self-sufficient. Each had its village servants, craftsman .... a smith, a carpenter, a potter, a barber and a sweeper .... To this ideal Gandhi wished to return gradually and as nearly as he could. Swadeshi meant for him first of all this conception of self-sufficiency" - PBP, op. cit, p.110.
One has to see his movement for the boycott of foreign cloth in this context of swadeshi if it is not to be misunderstood as a policy of revenge.

Gandhi considered Khadi, or handspun, handwoven cloth, as a "necessary and the most important corollary of the principle of Swadeshi"\(^1\); as "the centre of swadeshi"\(^2\); and contended that if Khadi goes, "there is no swadeshi."\(^3\) He did not consider the manufacture of Indian mills as swadeshi. "It is inconsistent with truth to use articles about which or about whose makers there is a possibility of deception. Therefore, for instance, a votary of truth will not use articles manufactured in the mills of Manchester, Germany or India, for he does not know that there is no deception about them."\(^4\) The vow of swadeshi envisaged the use of simple, handmade clothing. "The economic issue of khaddar (or home-spun cloth)" says Andrews, "has shared with the Swadeshi principle and the doctrine of Ahimsa his moral allegiance. Indeed, in a singular way the three principles of swadeshi, khaddar and Ahimsa combine in one..."

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1. Y.I. 18.6.31
2. Harijan, 29.6.47
3. Ibid.
4. Tendulkar, op. cit, p.209
as offering the practical remedy for the suffering millions of village people who live in India on the borderline of famine and starvation. So in the Swadeshi programme, Gandhi's stress was on the "music of the spinning wheel" in every home; he pointed out that in it and not on the clatter of arms depended the revival of India's prosperity and true independence. "I swear by this form of swadeshi" he said, "because through it I can provide work to the semi-starved, semi-employed women of India." Khaddar supports today those who are starving. Khadar therefore has a soul about it. "A hundred and fifty years ago", he pointed out, "we manufactured all our cloth. Our women spun fine yarn in their own cottages.... The village weavers wove that yarn. It was an indispensable part of national economy in a vast agricultural country like ours. It enabled us in a most natural manner to utilize our leisure. Today our women have lost the cunning of their hands and the enforced idleness of millions has impoverished the land."

1. Andrews, op. cit, p.147f.
2. Y.I. 21-7-20.
3. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.215
4. Ibid, p.354
It is because imported foreign cloth meant starvation for the millions of India that Gandhi devised boycott of foreign cloth, in a religious spirit. He considered it was our love of foreign cloth that ousted the wheel from its position of dignity. Hence he said that in burning foreign cloth, he was burning his shame. He felt convinced that the revival of hand spinning and hand-weaving will make the largest contribution to the economic and moral regeneration of India, as it would give the millions a simple industry to supplement agriculture. He pointed out how in 1918, sixty crores of Rupees had been sent out of India for buying cloth and said, "If we continue to purchase foreign cloth at that rate, we deprive the Indian weaver and spinner of that amount from year to year without giving him any other work in exchange. No wonder a tenth at least of the population is cruelly half-starved and the majority of the rest underfed". And he declared that no reform scheme from Whitehall could solve the problem as effectively as swadeshi. The way to Swaraj lay in Swadeshi.

The principle of Swadeshi has a direct bearing on Gandhi's educational ideas.  

1. Y.I. 13.10.21  
2. Ibid, 10.12.19  
3. Vide Infra, Part II, Ch. IV, Sec. III and IV.
CHAPTER III.

IMPACT OF TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE ON RELIGION.

I. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF RELIGION.

Gandhi believed that "no man can live without religion". Whether by instinct or by superstition or by reason, all men acknowledge some kind of relationship with the divine. Even a rank agnostic like Bradlaugh, he points out, did acknowledge the need of a moral principle. One may disown religion, but this does not mean that he lives without religion; his case is similar to that of a man who says "that he breathes but has no nose". By religion Gandhi does not mean the teaching of the scriptures, but something evolved out of oneself, consciously or unconsciously. It is a "heart-grasp", not what is conceived in the brain. It changes one's very nature and purifies it, and binds one indissolubly to the truth within. "It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker, and appreciated the true correspondence between

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1. Y.I., 23.1.30  2. Ibid.  3. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.101.
the Maker and itself. We have to wake up to it, whether by inward growth or outside assistance, if we want to do anything that will persist.

S.K. George points out that Gandhi, living intensely in the presence of naked reality and stripping himself mentally and physically of all obstructing wrappings, was able to sense 'basic' truths, and present them to the world. "Gandhi's religion", he proceeds, "is basic in three aspects. First the breadth and depth of its definition of ultimate Reality as Truth. Second, in its insistence that religion is all-pervasive and not a compartmental concern. And third, in its unreserved acceptance of the validity of all religions. An examination of these basic facts of Gandhi's concept of religion reveals how intensely practical and dynamic it is; how rising beyond all creeds and denominations he pitches on the universal aspects of religion, which if adopted generally, would ensure perfect religious

1. Y.I., 12.5.20.
4. Gandhi does not want to be considered the founder of a new religion. Cf: "There is no such thing as 'Gandhism'; and I do not want to leave any sect after me" - Hindu Dharma, p.3.
liberty for all individuals and groups on the basis of a common faith, and thus open up a new way to peace and true religious life in the world. As a masterly synthesis of all that is best in revealed religions and which conflicts least with any of them, it stands to offer the only possible solution for religious tensions. It reduces religion to a way of living, devoid of ritual and dogma.

1. God and the Way to God. Gandhi declared emphatically that God "is, was and ever shall be"\(^1\), and "God alone is" while we are not - everything except God being Maya or illusion.\(^2\) He defined God as "an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything"; one may feel but may not see it. He is the "law ... which governs all life", and just as ignorance or denial of a temporal law does not free us from its hold, so a denial of God and His Law does not liberate us from its operation. And Gandhi sees God as "purely benevolent"; for he says, "I can see that in the midst of death, life persists". He thus holds that "God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is Supreme Good"\(^3\). "He is Conscience"\(^4\). "God is Truth, above all"\(^5\).

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1. Y.I., 21.2.26
2. Ibid, 5.3.25
3. Ibid, 10.11.28
4. Ibid, 5.3.25
5. Ibid, 31.12.31
Faith in the supremacy of the moral law, the Law of Truth and Love, is therefore a pre-condition for realizing God. Faith, not reason is the key to God. "Reason is powerless to know Him. He is beyond the reach of grasp or reason." He is one and yet many; we call the same God differently as Paramatma, Ishwara, Shiva, Vishnu, Rama, Allah, Khuda or Jehovah - they show not His individuality but his attributes. "All worship the same Spirit, but as all foods do not agree with all, all names do not appeal to all." Belief in this doctrine of the 'manyness of Reality' is in accord with satya and ahimsa, and helps one to judge a Mussalman from his standpoint and a Christian from his. God, again, is personal to those who need

1. Y.I. 10.11.28
2. Ibid, 21.2.26
3. Ibid
4. Ibid, 24.9.25
5. Ibid, 21.1.26. Gandhi speaks of himself several times as a believer in advaita, but all he means by it is that he believes, in a general way, in monistic philosophy. For, he certainly does not regard the world as mere appearance as the Shankarites do. In his conception of the relation of man to God too he does not adhere to the Shankarite doctrine. On this occasion he says, "I am an advaitist, and yet I can support dyaityam (dualism). The world is changing every moment, and is therefore unreal, it has no permanent existence. But though it is constantly changing, it has something about it which persists, and it is to that extent real. I have therefore no objection to calling it real and unreal, and thus being called an anekantavadi or a syadvadi. But my syadvada is not the syadvada of the learned, it is peculiarly my own." - Ibid. In this, as in everything else, he follows his own interpretation of truth and does not fit into any clear-cut, pre-conceived theory. He follows only the spirit of advaita.
his personal presence, and embodied to those who need his touch. He simply is to those who have faith.1

God is the 'greatest democrat the world knows'; for he leaves us 'unfettered' to make our choice between good and evil; and he metes out the same measure to us as we mete out to our neighbours - men and brutes.2

And as "God expresses himself in every act of His votary"3, he who has realized God shows it in his transformed conduct and character. "Man's highest endeavour lay in trying to 'find God'"4. But how could he find Him? Only through love, not earthly but divine. Worship or prayer is to be performed not by the lips but with the heart. He who would pray to God must therefore cleanse his heart, and Gandhi suggests the Religion of service as the best means of doing it. "God of Himself seeks for His seat the heart of him who serves his fellowmen. That is why Narasinha Mehta who 'saw and knew' sang 'He is a true Vaishnava, who knows to melt

1. Y.I., 5.3.25
2. Ibid
3. Ibid, 10.11.28
4. Harijan, 23.11.47
5. Ibid
at other's woe. Such was Abu Ben Adhem. He served his fellowmen, and therefore his name topped the list of those who served God. He is a true bhakta, who therefore serves by body, soul and mind, the suppressed and the poverty-stricken, "the humble, the lowliest and the lost". "A prayerful heart is the vehicle and service makes the heart prayerful. Those Hindus who in this age serve the untouchables from a full heart truly pray; the Hindus and those others who spin prayerfully for the poor and the indigent truly pray". Gandhi considers that in prayer, it is the attitude that matters, not the words uttered or muttered. And "nothing can be grander than to ask God to make us act justly towards everything that lives". The life of a man who labours for the poor is, therefore, one continuous act of worship.

C.F. Andrews notes "how Mahatma Gandhi himself in his own person prefers the active to the contemplative life; how he is able to find the greatest satisfaction in prayer to God through service to mankind". He made

1. Y.I. 24.9.25
2. Ibid (italics mine)
3. Ibid
4. Ibid, 10.6.26
5. Andrews, op. cit, p.48
no distinction between religion and life, and held that religion should pervade the whole of man's activities and transform it. Any such distinction or departmentalization, he held, would only lead to a 'double life' which is not consistent with truth and non-violence. As God is omnipresent, all-pervasive, to serve God, he held, is to serve all living things in every sphere of activity. Believing that for him, salvation lay through service to humanity, he called upon all men and women to transform, by selfless service, this world into one where Justice, Kindness and Love will reign supreme. His religion is thus one of Service and Brotherhood. If Gandhi took part in politics, it is only because he looked upon politics as a branch of ethics and religion, an inevitable sphere of human service. "My motive has been purely religious", said he. "I could not be leading a religious life unless I identify myself with the whole of mankind, and this I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, political and purely religious work into water-tight compartments. I do not know of
any religion apart from human activity". This is a revolutionary concept of religion. Considering not merely the whole of mankind but even the dumb animal creation as of the same brotherhood, all being His children, Gandhi's religion of service extended to the lowest living creature.

But, for those who are not so exalted as to perform all their acts in such a spirit of dedication, Gandhi considers devotional prayer as necessary. Hence it is that prayer is considered a vital part of every religion. "There is an eternal struggle raging in man's breast between the powers of darkness and of light, and he who has not the sheet-anchor of prayer to rely upon will be a victim to the powers of darkness. The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and the whole world .... Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily acts .... " Every prayer is a heart-search, an aid to self-purification. Bhajans keep the remembrance of God fresh in the heart of the

1. Y.B.Q., p.258
2. Y.I., 10.6.26
3. Ibid, 23.1.30
4. Harijan, 8.6.35
devotee. This is why even the biggest Karmayogi never gave up devotional songs or worship.

Gandhi's final statement that Truth is God seems to suggest that he would have nothing to do with God if He was anything but Truth. His whole educational concept is permeated by this concept of religion as truth to be lived, as finding God through service of man.

2. Equality of Religions. Gandhi held that all religions are not only true but equal. He also said that "They are equally true and equally imperfect".

"All religions sprang from the same source and the fundamentals are common to them all" - the rock bottom of ethical principles constituting each of the religions offers a striking resemblance to that of the others. "None is superior, none is inferior." As "all great religions are fundamentally equal", he held that we must have innate respect for other religions as we have for our own - "not mutual toleration, but".

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1. Harijan, 13.10.46
4. Harijan, 13.3.37. Gandhi considered all religions imperfect "because they were interpreted with our poor intellects, sometimes with our poor hearts, and more often misinterpreted". - see his Address to Christian Missionaries at Calcutta, Andrews, op. cit, p. 74.
5. Harijan, 7.9.47
6. Harijan, 13.3.37
7. Harijan, 28.11.36
equal respect" 1.

"The essence of true religious teaching is that one should serve and befriend all" 2. Indeed it was against the spirit of religion to claim any superiority for any religion. When Gandhi claimed to be a Sanatani Hindu, he also claimed to be a good Muslim and a good Christian. "There is in Hinduism room enough for Jesus, as there is for Mohammad, Zoroaster and Moses. For me the different religions are beautiful flowers from the same garden, or they are branches of the same majestic tree" 3. But though the tree of religion is the same, it may be that there is no physical equality between the branches, and a person who adheres to a branch which has grown more than others must not gloat over it and say that his is the superior one 4. Religion is a personal matter, and just as one's mother is best for oneself, so is every one's religion the best each for himself" 5. Gandhi

1. Harijan, 28.11.36. Toleration is the minimum Gandhi expects. He says, "It is not necessary for toleration that I must approve of what I tolerate. I heartily dislike liquor-drinking, meat-eating and smoking; but I tolerate all these in Hindus, Mohammadans and Christians even as I expect them to tolerate my total abstinence from all these, although they may dislike it. All our quarrels have arisen from each wanting to force the other to his view". Quoting this, C.F. Andrews adds, "His extraordinary tolerance of and sympathy with other faiths colours his whole outlook on human life, and makes him at times, seem nearer to the acceptance of an intermediate position than he really is" - Andrews.
2. Harijan, 11.5.47
3. Harijan, 30.1.37, op.cit. p.60
4. Harijan, 13.3.37
5. Harijan, 20.3.37 (italics mine)
points out that "behind the desire to convert is the belief that one's religion is superior to that of the one whom one seeks to convert"¹, and fears that "proselytisation will mean no peace in this world"². Proselytisation is against truth and non-violence, as Gandhi conceived them. We should respect other's religions as we should have them to respect our own, and only a friendly study of the world's religions will have this liberalizing effect. "I hold that it is the duty of every cultured man or woman to read sympathetically the scriptures of the world"³, said Gandhi, and in his ashrams and in his prayer-meetings, he used to have verses from the Gita, the Quran and the Bible, reverentially recited one after the other. Speaking of his own experience he said, "A respectful study of other religions has not abated my reverence for or my faith in the Hindu scriptures. They have broadened my view of life. They have enabled me to understand more clearly many an obscure passage in the Hindu scriptures"⁴. Thus

¹. Harijan, 20.3.37
². Ibid., 28.11.36
³. Y.I., 2.9.26
⁴. Ibid
Gandhi challenged men to a respect for all religions. When we think of the blood that has been spilt in the name of religion in the past, we might perhaps be able to gauge the deep significance of this broad outlook on religion.

II. HINDU DHARMA RE-DEFINED.

Gandhi has been described as one of the great prophets, similar to the Buddha, Mohammad or Christ, by many people, both in the East and the West, today. Like the great prophets of old he condemned uncompromisingly the evils that crept into true religion and sought to remove them. He threw the scriptures overboard wherever they seemed to stifle men's conscience, and re-defined Hinduism in the light of truth as he held it. "Gandhiji's Hinduism is the Hinduism of old in all its pristine purity, re-born and practised under modern conditions .... In him Hinduism speaks to modern man in his own language".

1. Cf: "Gandhiji was one of the outstanding religious pioneers of all times. Several Christian leaders have spoken of him as the greatest since the time of Jesus. I do not think comparisons help in such cases. For every religious leader is unique" - R.R. Keithahn, Mahatma Gandhi's Revolutionary Religion, VBQ. 86.

2. Hindu Dharma, Editor's Note, p. IX.
Gandhi imbibed his intense religious outlook from his mother Putli Bai. As a boy, Mohandas listened every day to the great Hindu epic, the Ramayana, which was read out daily to his father Karamchand Gandhi, and to this he traced his taste for religious books of all faiths. He read more about Hinduism and quite a good deal of other faiths while he was a student in England. He was introduced by theosophic friends to Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant. Dr. Josiah Oldfield introduced him to the Bible, and he liked the New Testament, especially the Sermon on the Mount. He attended services in Churches and listened to famous preachers like Spurgeon, Farrer and Dr. Parker. His contact with Christianity grew more when he went to South Africa and among his best friends were Christian missionaries like Spencer Walter and the Rev. Joseph Doke.

Tolstoy's writings helped him to see the full meaning of the Sermon, and he so much appreciated it that he said, once later, "If, then, I had to face

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.28
2. The full name of Gandhi is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.
3. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.33
only the Sermon on the Mount and my own interpretation of it, I should not hesitate to say, "Oh, yes, I am a Christian" 1. Indeed, he had fixed on the wall in his office at Johannesburg a picture of the beautiful head of Christ, so that whenever he raised his head from his desk, his eyes would fall on it. He had made a reverent study of Islam and Zoroastrianism from his early South African days. C.F. Andrews speaks 'from intimate personal experience' of the influence of Islam on Gandhi. "... his profound admiration for the character of Prophet Mohammad as a man of faith and action, and also for his son-in-law, Ali, as a man of tender love and suffering, had deeply affected him" 2. Andrews traces the influence of the Prophet in Mahatma Gandhi's ideal of dealing directly with the social evils which stood before his eyes, never for a moment separating the political from the spiritual, and also testifies to the fact that, later in India, Gandhi always turned to seek the counsel of the Imam who had accompanied him from South Africa in times of stress 3.

1. Andrews, op. cit, p.93
2. Ibid, p.62
3. Ibid, p.63
At one time there were many attempts to convert him to Christianity, and he himself was wavering in his faith in the religion of his birth, but the ultimate effect of this comparative study of religions was to make him a confirmed believer in Hinduism. "When I recovered the balance of my mind" says Gandhi, "I felt that to me salvation was possible only through the Hindu religion, and my faith in Hinduism grew deeper and more enlightened". When he had rejected all that offended against his moral sense, he still found the Hindu scriptures to satisfy the needs of the soul. In his address to the Christian Missionaries at Calcutta he put it thus: "Today my position is that, though I admire much in Christianity, I am unable to identify myself with orthodox Christianity. I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being, and I find a solace in the Bhagawad Gita and Upanishads that I miss even in the Sermon on the mount. .... when doubt haunts me, when disappointments stare me in

1. Y.I., 27.4.21
2. Ibid, 2.9.26
the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagawad Gita and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow". His reply to an American friend who asked him why he was a Hindu is a masterly summary of the reasons for his choice. "Believing as I do in the influence of heredity, being born in a Hindu family, I have remained a Hindu. I should reject it, if I found it inconsistent with my moral sense or my spiritual growth. On examination I have found it to be the most tolerant of all religions known to me. Its freedom from dogma makes a forcible appeal to me inasmuch as it gives the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion, it enables the followers of that faith not merely to respect all the other religions, but it also enables them to admire and assimilate whatever may be good in the other faiths. Non-violence is common to all religions,

but it has found the highest expression and application in Hinduism

Gandhi always described himself as a Sanatani Hindu. He said, "I call myself a Sanatani Hindu" because "I believe in the Vedas ... and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures and therefore in avatars (divine incarnations) and rebirth"; "in varnashrama dharma" and "in the protection of the cow"; "do not disbelieve in idol-worship"; "believe implicitly in the Hindu aphorism that no one truly knows the shashtas who has not attained perfection in Innocence (ahimsa), Truth (satya) and self-control (brahmacharya) and who has not renounced all acquisition or possession of wealth"; "in God and His oneness" and in "rebirth and salvation". Following the Hindu ideal of advaita, he regarded all men as one brotherhood, and extended this fellow-feeling to the animal world as symbolized in the Hindu concept of the protection of the cow. While believing in the divinity of the Vedas, he did not believe in their exclusive divinity. "I believe in the Bible, the Quran and the Zend Avesta"

1. Y.I., 20.10.27
2. Ibid, 6.10.21
to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas\textsuperscript{1}, said Gandhi. Nor did his belief in the Hindu scriptures require him to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired. "I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense"\textsuperscript{2}. It is this stand he took that explains why it was possible for him to consider many practices like animal sacrifices in temples, \textit{devadasi}\textsuperscript{3} system and untouchability which had for ages been considered sacrosanct by the Hindus, as taboo. He was "a reformer through and through"\textsuperscript{4} and he exhorted the Hindus to live up to the best teachings of their religion, not blindly following the scriptural texts where the coded morals were in conflict with truth and non-violence, and always guided by the still small voice within. His Hinduism was thus "one of freedom and growth, not of stagnation and decay"\textsuperscript{5}. He appealed to his co-religionists to live a true Hindu life, while he himself set an example to them of a life of renunciation and self-control.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Y.I., 6.10.21
\item \textsuperscript{2} Ibid
\item \textsuperscript{3} \textit{Vide Infra}, p. 120
\item \textsuperscript{4} Y.I., 6.10.21
\item \textsuperscript{5} Hindu Dharma, Ed. note, p. VIII.
\end{itemize}
1. Varnashrama Dharma. Gandhi implicitly believed in the doctrine of varnashrama dharma which he held to be "the law of our being". It means that for the purpose of earning our livelihood, we follow the hereditary and traditional calling of our forefathers, when this calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics. "Varna is the pre-determination of the choice of man's profession. The law of varna is that a man shall follow the profession of his ancestors for earning his livelihood. Every child naturally follows the 'colour' of his father or chooses his father's profession. Varna therefore is in a way the law of heredity". Gandhi declared time and oft that all men are born equal, but this does not mean that qualities are not inherited; he said, "on the contrary, I believe that just as every one inherits a particular form so does he inherit the particular characteristics and qualities of his progenitors". To act up to it, is to put a curb on our material ambitions and free ourselves for the only pursuit in life.

1. Y.I., 20.10.27
2. Ibid, 24.11.27
3. Ibid, 29.9.27
for which we are born. "Of all the animal creation of God, man is the only animal who has been created in order that he may know his Maker. Man's aim in life is not therefore to add from day to day to his material possessions but his predominant calling is from day to day to come nearer his own Maker .... if all of us follow this law of varna we would limit our material ambition and our energy would be set free for exploring those vast fields whereby and wherethrough we can know God". In other words, adherence to the law of varnashrama helps us to conserve our energy for use in the field of spiritual evolution. Gandhi explains how this conservation takes place when he says, "When I follow my father's profession, I need not even go to a school to learn it, and my mental energy is set free for spiritual pursuits because my money or livelihood is ensured. Varna is the best form of insurance for happiness and for real religious pursuit. When I concentrate my energy on other pursuits, I sell away my soul for a mess of pottage". In short, it ensures the necessary leisure for spiritual pursuit,

1. Y.I., 20.10.27
2. Ibid, 24.11.27
the only way to self-realization.

Gandhi points out that *varna* is an immutable law of nature, a tendency at work like Newton's law of gravitation; and it was discovered by the *rishis* of old, the trustees for the welfare of the Hindus. He points out that "By their discovery and application of certain laws of nature, the peoples of the West have easily increased their material possessions. Similarly Hindus by their discovery of this *irresistible social tendency* have been able to achieve in the spiritual field what no other nation in the world has achieved"\(^1\). Indeed, Gandhi considers that "it is difficult to imagine a better harmonious human adjustment"\(^2\). "Man being a social being has to devise some method of social organization. We in India have evolved caste; they in Europe have recognized class .... If class helps to conserve certain social virtues, caste does the same in equal, if not greater degree .... Caste is but an extension of the principle of the family. Both are governed by blood and heredity .... it is the classification of different systems of self-culture. It is the best possible adjustment of social stability"\(^3\).

1. Y.I., 24.11.27 (italics mine)
2. Ibid, 29.12.20
3. Ibid.
When Gandhi talks of caste, he means \textit{varna dharma} in its purest form wherein the four divisions of society are each complementary of the other and necessary for the proper functioning of the whole body of Hinduism. There is no question of high or low, superiority or inferiority, appertaining to any one caste. "Caste does not connote superiority or inferiority. It simply recognizes different outlooks and corresponding modes of life"\textsuperscript{1}. The rishis had grouped all the different professions which they envisaged into four varnas - the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra: the teaching, the defending, the wealth producing and the manual-service communities - and they considered any one who did not practice the profession of his birth as a patita, i.e. one who has fallen from his estate. This, however, did not, in any way, impose a bar on the highest mental development of any member, but it checked ambitious encroachment on other's professions for amassing wealth. It is only one who

\textsuperscript{1} Y.I. 29.12.20 Cf: "I do not believe that inter-dining or even inter-marriage, necessarily deprives a man of his status that birth has given him. The four divisions define a man's calling; they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse" - Y.I., 6.10.21.
changes his profession for the sake of gaining wealth that degraded himself; keeping to the ancestral occupation for earning one's livelihood, one had all freedom to devote himself to any pursuit whatever for the love of service. The law of varna thus ruled out all unhealthy and ruinous competition, which is today robbing life of all its joy and beauty. Caste, as it is practised in India at the present, is a monstrous travesty of varna, thus conceived. Says Gandhi, "If we talk in terms of varna, there is only one varna today for all, whether men or women; we are all Shudras." "Down with the monster of caste that masquerades in the guise of varna," he proclaimed, but still, he did not consider caste a sin as untouchability is.

Here is the masterly case Gandhi makes for varnashrama dharma: "Varnashrama dharma, as I interpret it, satisfies the religious, social and economic needs of a community. It satisfies the religious needs because a whole community, accepting the law, is free to devote ample time to spiritual perfection. Observance

1. Harijan, 29.7.33
2. Ibid, 6.3.37
3. Y.I., 24.11.27
4. Harijan, 11.2.33
of the law obviates social evils and entirely prevents the killing economic competition. And if it is regarded as a law laying down not the rights or the privileges of the community governed by it, but their duties, it ensures the fairest possible distribution of wealth, though it may not be an ideal, i.e. strictly equal, distribution. Therefore, when people, in disregard of the law, mistake duties for privileges and try to pick and choose occupations for self-advancement, it leads to confusion of varna and ultimate disruption of society. In this law, there is no question of compelling any person to follow the parental occupation against his or her aptitude; that is to say, there can be no compulsion from without, as there was none for, perhaps several thousand years, during which the law of varnashrama worked without interruption. By training the people had recognized the duty and the justice of the law, and they voluntarily lived under it. Today, nations are living in ignorance and breach of that law and they are suffering for it. The so-called civilized nations have by no means reached a state which they can at all regard with equanimity
Another statement of his comes in as a proper supplementary to this. "Fulfilment of the law would make life livable, would spread peace and contentment, end all clashes and conflicts, put an end to starvation and pauperisation, solve the problem of population and even end disease and suffering".

2. **Cow-Protection.** Gandhi considers cow-protection as "the central fact of Hinduism". But in doing so, he gives it a wider interpretation than is commonly assumed. "The cow to me means the entire sub-human world. Man, through the cow, is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives .... Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God ...." Thus the cow is only a symbol for the protection of all living creatures. "The philosophy of cow-protection, therefore is, in my opinion", says Gandhi, "sublime. It immediately puts the animal creation on the same level with men, so far as the right to live is concerned". Even this interpretation is not sufficiently comprehensive when he takes into consideration the statement of the rishis that cow protection is the way to Moksha or the

1. Harijan, 4.3.33
2. Ibid, 28.9.34
3. Y.J.I., 6.10.21
4. Ibid
5. Ibid, 11.11.26
realization of God. "For moksha one must completely get rid of one's lower feelings like attachment, hatred, anger, jealousy etc. ... The cow-protection which can bring one moksha must, from its very nature include the protection of everything that feels. Therefore, in my opinion, every little breach of the ahimsa principle, like causing hurt by harsh speech to any one, man, woman or child, to cause pain to the weakest and the most insignificant creature on earth, would be a breach of the principle of cow-protection". Thus conceived it becomes synonymous with truth and non-violence.

3. Idol-Worship. An idol never excited any feeling of veneration in Gandhi, but he was not prepared, on that score, to condemn idol-worship. He held it was no sin to worship idols, nay, it was part of human nature to do so. "We hanker after symbolism. Images are an aid to worship". No Hindu considered the image to be God, as is usually presumed, to be by fault-finders; he saw God in the image, God who is there, as He is everywhere. If it is wrong to see God in a stone, Gandhi wondered how it was right to see him in a book called the Gita or the Quran, or feel

1: Y.I., 29.1.25
2: Ibid., 5.10.21
His presence when in a Church\(^1\). This was the reason why, reformer as he was, he said he believed in idol-worship.

4. **Untouchability.** Gandhi could never reconcile himself to untouchability. Throughout his life he carried on a ceaseless crusade against it, and he lived to see Hinduism redeemed of the curse, at least in principle. His achievement in this field is in no way less important than his achievement of political freedom for India, and indeed he prized it greater than the winning of *Swaraj*. In fact he thought that the winning of freedom was impossible as long as this blot marred the religion of India. "Hindus", said he, "will never deserve freedom nor get it if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability"\(^2\). He considered it "the sin of the Hindus"\(^3\) and declared that they must suffer for it. "Their is the shame and theirs must be the glory when they have purged themselves of

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1. *Harijan*, 25.1.48
2. *Y.I.*, 6.10.21
3. *Y.I.*, 1.5.24
the black sin". And, indeed, he felt that "if this untouchability is not removed root and branch from Hinduism, Hinduism is bound to perish".

Even when Gandhi was a child he believed that untouchability was no part of Hinduism, and that "if it was, such Hinduism is not for me". He could hardly believe that a religion which enjoined the worship of the cow could countenance or warrant a cruel and inhuman boycott of a large section of human beings. Therefore he regarded it as an excrescence, an ugly growth on the body of varna-dharma. His theory was that "when cow-protection became an article of faith with our ancestors, those who persisted in eating meat, were ex-communicated ... their sins were visited upon their children also. The practice which had probably its origin in good intentions hardened into usage and verses crept into our sacred books giving the practice a permanence wholly undeserved and still less justified".

"The out-casteness, in the sense we understand it, has therefore, to be destroyed altogether. It is an excess to be removed, if the whole system is not to perish".

1. Y.I., 1.5.24
2. Harijan, 26.1.34
3. Y.I., 27.4.21
4. Y.I., 6.10.21
5. Harijan, 11.2.33
Untouchability is thus not an inherent part of \textit{varna dharma}, but a product of the distinction of high and low that gradually crept into Hinduism and is corroding it, and, Gandhi explained his attack on untouchability, therefore, as only an attempt to wipe out this later accretion of the 'high-and-low-ness' in Hinduism. He stirred the Caste Hindus to shame by pointing out that untouchability was not merely repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity or love, but that there was no nobility in treating 'the great and uncomplaining scavengers of the nation as worse than dogs to be despised and spat upon'. As a believer in vicarious suffering Gandhi declared that if ever he should be born again he would like to be born as an untouchable so that he might have an opportunity to suffer with them and perhaps redeem them out of their misery; and in his present life, he would rather be torn to pieces than disown them. He proclaimed at the top of his voice, "Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing."  

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Harijan}, 11.2.33
\item \textit{Y.I.}, 19.1.21.
\item \textit{Y.I.}, 19.10.21.
\end{itemize}
By equality, Gandhi did not mean inter-dining or inter-marriage, which he did not consider "as essential to the removal of untouchability"¹, nor a levelling down of the respectability of the persons of others. Regarding a brahmana and a bhangi as equals does not mean that we will not accord to a true brahmana the reverence that is due to him, but that the brahmana and the bhangi are equally entitled to our service, that we accord to the bhangi the same rights of sending his children to public schools, of visiting public temples, of the use of public wells, etc. on the same basis as these rights are enjoyed by any other Hindu"². It was

1. Y.I. 22.1.25. In the context of Hindu-Muslim unity, Gandhi says, "In my opinion, the idea that inter-dining and inter-marrying are necessary for national growth is a superstition borrowed from the west .... if mankind had not, much to its harm, made of eating a fetish and indulgence, we should have performed the operation of eating in private even as one performs the other necessary functions of life in private. Indeed, the highest culture in Hinduism regards eating in that light ..... I can recall the names of several cultured men and women who always eat their food in entire privacy, but who have never had any ill-will against anybody and live on the friendliest terms with all .... "The greater the restraint we exercise with regard to our appetites, whether about eating or marrying, the better we become from a religious standpoint. I should despair of ever cultivating amicable relations with the world if I had to recognise the right or propriety of any young man offering his hand in marriage to my daughter, or to regard it as necessary for me to dine with anybody and everybody"- Cf: Andrews, op.cit., p.58
This did not, however, mean that Gandhi objected to anyone marrying outside his caste. He had advised young men to do so- Cf. Y.I., 11.4.29 and 21.6.28 - and permitted his own son to marry outside his caste - the "daughter" referred to above being a mere supposition.

2. Y.I. 7.2.27.
thus a charter of social and political equality as between man and man as children of the same Father, a recognition of the sacredness of human personality, that the sage envisaged. But this was not so easy to accomplish; it was a social revolution of great magnitude, and meant the breaking of a long tradition. Gandhi did not want it to be done under any compulsion; he wished that it should come about by "a change of heart, perfect purification on the part of millions of Hindus"¹, and looked to proper education as the only way to achieve it. He called upon the Savarna Hindus who were considering themselves superior to those whom they called untouchables, unapproachables, invisibles or avarna Hindus, to realize that this arrogation of superiority was based on false assumptions and that it had no real sanction in the Shashtras. He suggested that if the change of heart is complete, the Savarna Hindus might themselves adorn the appellation of Harijans - the name that Gandhi had given to the untouchables. When all in Hinduism thus truly become 'God's children' - that is the meaning of the term Harijan - we would have forged a new casteless,

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¹ Harijan, 26.1.34
classless Hindu society\(^1\).

Says H.N. Brailsford, "The campaign of this mystic who cleansed latrines one day and opened temples the next, is one of the strangest chapters in history and one of the noblest. Has any saint in human memory done more to lighten the misery of the oppressed and restore their self-respect? He has broken a cruel institution that dated from the night of time, based on superstition, buttressed by religion, sanctioned by many conquests and maintained not merely by prejudice but by physical shrinking. India honours Gandhiji today chiefly because he led the fight for independence. Humanity owes him an even heavier debt because he opened the road of the untouchables to freedom\(^2\).

5. **Status of Women.** Gandhiji was uncompromising in the matter of woman’s rights. "In my opinion she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man. I should treat the daughters

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1. Harijan, 11.3.33
2. P.B.P., op.cit, p.208
and sons on a footing of perfect equality\textsuperscript{1}. He "never swerved for a moment in any direction with regard to this fundamental principle of equality between the sexes"\textsuperscript{2}. Andrews points out how in his own ashram Gandhi practised in every way what he preached. "Women at Sabarmati have equal rights in every respect with men. There is no observance of any Purdah. There is no child marriage ...."\textsuperscript{3}

Considering women as the embodiment of patience and sacrifice, Gandhi referred to them as "the female sex - not the weaker sex, for it is the nobler of the two"\textsuperscript{4}.

No wonder, Gandhi refused to hold sacrosanct the saying attributed to Manu that "For women there can be no freedom". He points out that in Indian literature, the wife is constantly referred to as "ardhangane (the better half) or as Sahadharmini (the help-mate) and that the usual way of address, even by her husband, is Devi (Goddess). All this shows that she is the queen of the household, not the slave. As a rule, however, Gandhi did not envisage the wife following an avocation independent of her

\begin{enumerate}
\item Y.I., 17.10.29
\item Andrews, \textit{op. cit}, p.320
\item \textit{Ibid}, p.322
\item \textit{Ibid}, p.327
\end{enumerate}
husband. "The care of children and the upkeep of the household are quite enough to fully engage her energy". This is no disparagement of her equality of status with men or her abilities for service of mankind in other ways. We have already seen that he did not consider marriage, by any means, essential for a woman to attain salvation according to Hinduism, and he himself invited them to take active part in his Satyagraha movements. Sex was no bar in his eyes to the pursuit of any form of social service.

He found that several crimes were perpetrated in the name of religion against women and he raised his cudgel against all of them. He condemned child-marriage as an unmitigated evil, both moral and physical. "By countenancing such customs", he said, "we recede from God as well as Swaraj". His view was, "If marriage is, as it ought to be, a sacrament, an entrance into a new life, the girls to be married should be fully developed, should have some hand in the choice of companions for life, and should know the consequences of their acts. It is a crime against God and man to call the union of children a married state". Naturally he refused to consider the

1. Harijan, 12.10.34
2. Y.I., 26.8.26
3. Y.I., 19.8.26
child-widow as a widow at all. "To force widowhood upon little girls is a brutal crime for which we Hindus are paying dearly .... Widowhood imposed by religion or custom is an unbearable yoke and defiles the home by secret vice and degrades religion ... If we would be pure, if we would save Hinduism, we must rid ourselves of this poison of enforced widowhood".\(^1\) Gandhi, the practical moralist is at his best in tackling this as well as other problems of women. He called upon parents of child-widows to marry them - not 'remarry', as he did not recognize the child marriage - to proper husbands when the girls came of age, and called upon young men to take a vow that they would marry only such widowed girls.\(^2\) He also set his face against the dowry system, which had age-long custom to back it in many places\(^3\). He

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1. Y.I., 5.8.26
2. Andrews, op. cit, p.329
3. Addressing Sindhi students, Gandhi said, "Promise that you will wipe off the stain of deti-leti, that you will die to restore your sisters and wives to their full dignity and freedom. Then I shall understand that you are ready for the freedom of your country" - Y.I., 14.2.29

Gandhi also called upon the girls to remain spinsters rather than be party to the degrading terms. "The only honourable terms in marriage" he held, "are mutual love and mutual consent" - Y.I., 27.12.28.
looked upon the purdah as a barbarous institution with no religious sanction or usefulness behind it, doing incalculable harm to the country. He pointed out how ridiculous it was if any one thought that chastity could be protected by the surrounding wall of the purdah. "What we are doing today to our women and what we are doing to the 'untouchables' recoils upon our heads with a force thousand times multiplied", said Gandhi, and he gave the call, "Let us tear down the purdah with one mighty effort". Similarly, he was ashamed to think of the practice of dedication of girls to virtual prostitution, done in the name of religion, in some parts of South India. "Calling them devadasis, we insult God Himself in the name of religion" and he considered it a "blot upon those who countenanced it". Gandhi wanted to educate people to fight against such social evils, and in his own day, succeeded much in creating public opinion against them. He boldly re-interpreted Hinduism again for the protection of women during the troubled days preceding and immediately

1. Y.I., 3.2.27
2. Y.I., 22.9.27
3. Y.I., 29.8.29
following the emergence of independent India. When thousands of Hindu girls were abducted by Muslims and many of them wished to die or certainly not to return for fear of social ostracism, Gandhi stepped forward with the message that they had not erred and so no shame attached to them. "To castigate these girls, for having fallen a victim to the lust of some monster, was less than human"¹, he declared, in conformity with his doctrine of truth and non-violence, and thereby helped parents and others to welcome them back home into the Hindu fold without even a purification ceremony.

¹. *Harijan, 4.1.48*
CHAPTER IV.

TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE APPLIED TO POLITICS.

To Gandhi, who believed that the core of religion was service, politics naturally was part of religion. He declared, "... for me, there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul." He entered politics only so far as it developed the religious faculty in him. And, because "politics encircles us like the coil of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one likes," Gandhi devoted himself with zest to the spiritualization of politics. "The politician in me", he says, "has never dominated a single decision of mine"; for his politics flowed from religion, and were valid by the test of religion. As Roy Walker points out, "The criticism of Gandhi as 'an astute politician' - implying not the relevance of goodness to large-scale human problems but a Jekyll and Hyde combination of saint and party-boss - is absolutely false; indeed, many of Gandhi's major decisions from the starting of the Non-Cooperation..."

1. Y.I., 3.4.24
2. Y.I., 12.5.20
3. Ibid.
Campaign as it moved forward with Civil Disobedience to his deliberate absence from Delhi on village work in Bengal while the fate of India was being settled with the Cabinet Mission, are flatly incomprehensible as judgements of political expediency.\(^1\)

Gandhi knew that to build a happy India, what was needed was not so much a political change, in the sense of a change of rulers, as a social revolution; but he was shrewed enough to foresee that no social or economic emancipation is possible in the absence of political freedom. The 'revolution' which Gandhi envisaged was not, however, a break with the past, but a return to the best in the ancient social order. "We shall move to our goal in the manner of the east, not in the manner of the west; for we are of the east. We shall grow up in the beautiful manners and customs of India, and true to her spirit make friends with nations having different ideals."\(^2\) Politically this meant decentralization of power to such an extent as to restore the ancient village communities; economically, the re-vitalization of the farmer by the revival of cottage industries; and socially the abandonment of modern civilization. All this constituted but different phases

1. V.B.Q., p. 56
of the one thing which Gandhi aimed at doing - the purification of public and private life which he conceived to be essential for the establishment of Heaven on Earth, the Ramaraj of his conception. "By Ramaraj", said Gandhi, "I do not mean Hinduraj. I mean by Ramaraj Divine raj, the Kingdom of God .... the ancient ideal of Ramaraj is undoubtedly one of true democracy ...."\(^1\) Ramaraj, in other words is "the Kingdom of Righteousness\(^2\).

I. THE ABANDONMENT OF MODERN CIVILIZATION.

In a letter to a friend in India, in which Gandhi summarized his ideas developed earlier in The Hind Swaraj, we find how much he detested all that goes by the name of civilization today. "Increase of material comforts", he says, "it may generally be laid down, does not in any way whatsoever conduce to moral growth\(^3\). "There was true wisdom in the sages of old having so regulated society as to limit the material conditions of the people\(^4\), as people, under such conditions would live long in comparative peace and happiness. He therefore held that "India's salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past 50 years or so. The railways, telegraphs,

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1. Y.I., 19.9.29.
2. Ibid, 28.5.31.
3. Tendulkar, op. cit, p. 135.
4. Ibid.
hospitals, lawyers, doctors and such like have all to go, and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live consciously and religiously and deliberately the simple life of a peasant, knowing it to be a life giving true happiness". He considered even hospitals as "the instruments that the Devil has been using for his purpose in order to keep his hold on his kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery and degradation, and real slavery"; and backed up the argument thus: "If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives, we should have less consumption and less sexual vice amongst us". Gandhi had always held that the cities like Bombay and Calcutta are the abode of vice and exploitation, a matter of sorrow rather than congratulation. In his letter to Tagore he had written: "Our cities are not India. India lives in her seven hundred and fifty thousand villages. The cities live upon the villages. They do not bring wealth from other

1. Tendulkar, op.cit, p.135
2. Ibid.
countries. The city people are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America and Japan. The cities have co-operated with the latter in the bleeding process that has gone on for the past two hundred years". Swaraj was therefore not mere freedom from British rule, but freedom from the clutches of this civilization. "It is not the British people", he said, "who are ruling India but it is modern civilization, through its railways, telegraphs, telephone, and almost every invention which has been claimed to be a triumph of civilization". This philosophy of 'doing without' many of the artifices of modern civilization has baffled the understanding of many in the West. For example, "We can 'do without' pipes and taps and drains; but why should we, at the cost of inflicting needless toil on our fellows?" asks H.N. Brailsford. Gandhi's answer to this is contained in the reply he gave to

1. Y.I., 13.10.21
2. Tendulkar, op. cit, p.135
3. P.B.r., op. cit, p.117
Shri Ramachandran's question why he did not consider the motor-car as a useful invention: "because it does not satisfy any of the primary wants of man; for it is not the primary need of man to traverse distances with the rapidity of a motor-car. The needle, on the contrary, happens to be an essential thing in life - a primary need". Indeed it is doubtful whether Gandhi would have ruled out pipes and drains where healthy living would otherwise be impossible and where dependence on it will not reduce all life to slavery to mechanical contrivances. His position in regard to machinery has been clearly stated more than once. Ideally he would rule out all machinery, just as he would reject his very body - which he considers the purest piece of mechanism - as it is a hindrance to the highest flights of the soul. But "machines will remain because they are inevitable". All that Gandhi wanted was, therefore, a limitation of machinery, not its eradication. "The machine should not be allowed to cripple the limbs of man"; so he ruled out all machinery "just where they cease to help the individual and encroach upon his individuality".

1. Y.I., 13.11.24.
2. Ibid.
The key to the problem is his famous statement that "The individual is the one supreme consideration"\(^1\). He considered the Spinning Wheel and the Singer Sewing Machine as useful pieces of machinery since they saved the labour of everyone who could purchase them and he said he would any day welcome the invention of a machine to straighten crooked spindles provided "every spinner will have a machine of his own to get it straight"\(^2\). Thus, what Gandhi objected to was not machinery as such but its abuse. Today the machine has become an instrument of greed. The impetus behind the craze for labour-saving machinery is not philanthropy to save labour but greed. It has led, in a country like India, to unemployment and starvation for the many labourers thrown out in the streets and concentration of wealth in the hands of a few.

"I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind but for all. I want the concentration

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1. Y.I., 13.11.24
2. Ibid.
of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery helps a few to ride on the backs of millions". Gandhi wished to put an end to this state of affairs. Where big power-driven factories are inevitable, he had necessarily to envisage the socialistic conception of nationalization. Here he would have work planned not for profit but for human benefit, "love taking the place of greed as the motive power"; and labour would be assured "not only living wage, but of a daily task that is not a mere drudgery". In all other cases he would rule out the giant factories and think only of village and cottage industries. Power-driven machinery, owned by private capitalists, gave them limitless control over the lives of the workers, and this 'privilege and monopoly' Gandhi wanted to avoid under all circumstances. This was why, when he favoured machinery in cottage industries run by electric power, he insisted that the generating stations should be owned by the villages or by the State. Not that he preferred State ownership to

1. Z.I., 13.11.24
2. Ibid, 13.5.24
3. Ibid
private ownership of capital if the latter would be administered as under trusteeship.

Gandhi detested modern industrialization, further, on the count that it propagated immorality. Of the overgrown industrial town he had the greatest aversion. In a speech at Allahabad, he says, "This land of ours was once, we are told, the abode of the Gods. It is not possible to conceive Gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and the din of mill-chimneys and whose roadways are traversed by screeching and puffing engines, dragging numerous cars loaded with men mostly who know not what they are after, who are often absent-minded and whose tempers do not improve by being comfortably packed like sardines in boxes and finding themselves in the midst of utter strangers, who would oust them if they could and whom they would in their turn oust similarly". Gandhi quoted Wallace to show how the material advancement of England has been accompanied by increasing immorality - factories rose on the corpses of men, women and children; and

1. Tendulkar, op. cit, p.242
adulteration, bribery, gambling and prostitution became a regular feature. There is an "almost total absence of morality as a guiding principle" amidst the civilized nations\footnote{1}

Real progress, Gandhi considers as consisting not in material advancement but in moral progress, the progress of the permanent element in us. Indeed he shows that material progress impedes moral progress instead of aiding it. It is true that grinding pauperism can only lead to moral degradation, and Gandhi recognized this; otherwise, he would not have worked, as he did, for improving the lot of the half-starved millions of India. "Every human being has a right to live", he says, "and therefore, to find the wherewithal to feed himself and, where necessary, to clothe and house himself"\footnote{2}; but when this right is exceeded and a pursuit of riches begins, it marks the beginning of a moral fall. Gandhi points out, that, generally the greater the possession of one's riches, the greater is one's moral turpitude. Did not Jesus teach us two thousand

\footnote{1}{Tendulkar, \textit{op. cit,} p.242}
\footnote{2}{Ibid.}
years ago how hard it is for a man who has riches to enter the Kingdom of God? The craze for riches often blinds one to moral values; hence the ancient ideal 'limiting' activities for promoting wealth. It was his view that the West having gone the materialist way, had fallen a prey to its vices; hence, India's salvation lay not in imitating the West but in going the Eastern way.

"We need not be afraid of ideals or of reducing them to practice even to the uttermost. Ours will only then be a truly spiritual nation when we shall show more truth than gold, greater fearlessness than pomp of power and wealth, greater charity than love of self. If we will but clean our houses, our palaces and temples, of the attributes of wealth, and show in them the attributes of morality, we can offer battle to any combination of hostile forces, without having to carry the burden of a heavy militia. Let us seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, and the irrevocable promise is that everything will be added unto us."\(^2\)

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1. Tendulkar, *op. cit.*, p. 242
II. DECENTRALIZATION OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER.

Gandhi advocated the application to social and economic life and to political organization, in India and elsewhere, of the principle of decentralization. "Men," said Gandhi, "should do their actual living and working in communities of a size commensurate with their bodily and mental stature, communities small enough to permit genuine self-government and the assumption of personal responsibilities, federated into large units in such a way that the temptation to abuse great power should not arise." In saying this he had the example of the ancient village communities of India in mind. These Indian village communities had made socio-political

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1. Aldous Huxley, A Note on Gandhi, V.B.Q., p.186
2. Of these village communities, Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote in his Minute of 1830: "The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything they want within themselves .... They seem to last where nothing else lasts ... Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down, revolution succeeds revolution ... but the village communities remain the same .... " - cited by Narayan Agarwal, Gandhi and Decentralization of Power, V.B.Q., p.181
life human and real, negativing to a great extent the conflicting interests of individuals, and of individuals and the State. Gandhi dreamed of restoring this direct, decentralized democracy. It was his view that an ideal social organization in India or elsewhere ought to be based on well-knit and co-ordinated village communities with their "positive and direct democracy, non-violent cottage economy and human contacts". The larger a democracy grows, the less real becomes the rule of the people and the smaller the say of the individual in deciding their destinies. Decentralization is the only way to escape the evils of modern democracy, as generally practised today. Gandhi calls it 'mobocracy', and it needs no Gandhi to expose how the capitalist class who pay the pipers call the tune, how elections are manipulated, public opinion controlled and discussions in legislature made unreal, every important debate being almost a foregone conclusion dictated by the ruling party.

1. Huxley, op. cit, p. 180
2. Agarwal quotes Joad, Cole, Huxley, Adams, Laski and Lewis Mumford in support of the view that true democracy can be had only through decentralization — see V.B.Q., p. 180 f.
Moreover, love and affection are essentially personal relationships, possible only in small communities. Says Huxley, "... it is only in small groups that charity in the Pauline sense of the word can manifest itself .... Charity is at once the means and the end of spirituality. A social organization so contrived that over a large field of human activity it makes the manifestation of charity impossible, is obviously a bad organization." Centralization is the enemy of democracy as it leads to depersonalization and insensibility to moral considerations. As a system it is inconsistent with the non-violent structure of society; for it cannot be sustained and defended without adequate force.

Gandhi conceived of the State as a federation of decentralized rural communities, and seems to have been pleased with a plan which envisaged the constitution of India based on numerous village republics as units, coordinated

1. Huxley, op. cit, p.187
2. Harijan, 18.1.42
3. Ibid, 30.12.39
into taluqa, district and provincial village panchayats. Huxley recalls that Jefferson, the great apostle of modern democracies, had in his time, similarly advocated the organization of a hierarchy of self-governing republics, rising from the Ward through the State to the Federation so that the rights and responsibilities of each individual could be most effectively exercised, and points out that it is impossible to think of any other approach to social organization by a politician whose philosophy is ethical and religious and who is in earnest about preserving the equality of human beings. "Gandhi, like Jefferson, thought of politics in moral and religious terms. That is why the proposed solution bears so close a resemblance to those proposed by the great American. That he went further than Jefferson - for example, in recommending economic as well as political decentralization, and in advocating the use of satyagraha in place of the Ward's 'elementary exercises of militia' - is...

1. Agarwal, op. cit, p.178
2. Vide infra, §c.111. 2
due to the fact that his ethics was more radical and his religion more profoundly realistic than Jefferson's. Jefferson's plan was not adopted, nor was Gandhi's. So much the worse for us and our descendants.  

Decentralization in economics, Gandhi considered was as vital for spiritual realization as decentralization in political organization. He therefore advocated village and cottage industries in the place of factory system and large-scale production. He visualized an economic order in which individuals and small social groups owned land and implements and produced all that was necessary for their use and perhaps for the local market. He knew that the re-introduction of cottage industries would re-vitalize the Indian farmer and serve to re-build a virile Indian nation, for India lived in its villages and the Indian was chiefly the peasant. Gandhi suggested spinning, which any one can easily do, to put a little more money into the pockets of the Indian peasant who had plenty of time after work.

1. Huxley, op. cit, p.189
attending to agriculture which is mainly a seasonal occupation. But spinning was only symbolic. It meant that everywhere people should take up whatever industry was within their reach and produce wealth.¹

Gandhi advocated cottage industries not merely because that was the only way of helping the peasant but because of his dislike of modern centralized production. His intense love of freedom and initiative for the worker made him think only of a decentralized economy where production will be in the hands of individuals, plying each his or her trade without detriment to human personality. Factory production stifles human abilities as it is largely mechanical; and by reducing all work to dull repetition of a set task, makes work a drudgery. Thus it ceases to be educative; and the education or the development of the individual is, to Gandhi, too vital to be relegated to the background in the economic process. Work can be educative, i.e., develop body, mind and character, only if we have an economic organization which would give the worker the fullest scope for the

¹. Bharatan Kumarappa, *Gandhian Symbols*, V.B.Q., p.34
exercise of his powers. Only village and cottage industries can do this. Large-scale machinery and centralized production have, under capitalism led to the exploitation of the worker, and Gandhi rules out, therefore, all machinery which stifles individuality. This does not mean, as it is sometimes supposed, that Gandhi subscribed only to the use of hand-tools. We have already seen how he was not against the use of power-driven machinery which can be owned and manipulated by individuals or small co-operative groups, and thus not against combining decentralization with a fair amount of mechanical efficiency. "Too much mechanical efficiency" says Huxley, "is the enemy of liberty because it leads to regimentation and the loss of spontaneity. Too little efficiency is also the enemy of liberty, because it results in chronic poverty and anarchy. Between the two extremes there is a happy mean, a point at which we can enjoy the most important

1. Huxley says, "Among these necessary instruments of production Gandhi wished to include only handtools - op. cit, p. 187
2. Vide supra, pp. 127-130.
advantages of modern technology at a social and psychological price which is not excessive". And this, exactly was what Gandhi envisaged.

The only way to purge the economic order of untruth and violence is to adopt village and cottage industries as envisaged by Gandhi. If we use only goods manufactured within the range of our knowledge and by methods easily understood by us, we will not become parties to the violence and untruth that take place in the factories of far off lands, where the labourer may be exploited or human dignity violated. Similarly a decentralized economy based on cottage industries is the surest way of putting an end to violence in the form of imperialism and wars between nations. "We know to our cost that highly industrialized nations seek to control colonial countries in order to obtain raw materials from them and to dump finished goods on them. Large-scale production is impossible without a steady supply of raw materials on the one hand and sure markets on the other. Hence industrialized countries seek to build up empires

and hold weaker nations in subjection; and as no nation voluntarily submits to domination by another, the process is effected by force and violence. Nor is this all. As nations advance in industrialization they look upon each other with envy. Each covets for himself (sic) the possessions of the other, or wishes to strengthen itself by bringing under its sphere of influence whatever colonial country it can. This at once provokes war, each bloodier and more destructive than the previous ones, and threatens mankind with complete annihilation. If this is what centralized production has led to, is it not far better to turn away from large-scale manufacture?"¹ Bharatan Kumarappa sums up his able analysis thus: "Gandhi ji's contribution lies in his clear perception that the cause of wars is primarily economic, viz. large-scale production irrespective of markets. He was convinced that the only way to end war was to end such production and to substitute it by cottage production wherever possible. The decentralized economy symbolized by the spinning wheel is then Gandhi's original solution to the problem of war"².

2. Ibid.
The philosophy behind the doctrine of decentralization has been thus put by Aldous Huxley: "The pressure of fact is painful, and we may hope, finally irresistible. Sooner or later, it will be realized that this dreamer had his feet firmly planted on the ground, that this idealist was the most practical of men. For Gandhi's social and economic ideas are based upon a realistic appraisal of man's nature and the nature of his position in the Universe. He knew, on the one hand, that the cumulative triumphs of advancing organization and progressive technology cannot alter the basic fact that man is an animal of no great size, and in most cases, of very modest abilities. And on the other hand, he knew that these physical and intellectual limitations are compatible with a practically infinite capacity for spiritual progress. The mistake of most of Gandhi's contemporaries was to suppose that technology and organization could turn the petty human animal into a superhuman being and could provide a substitute for the infinities of a spiritual realization, whose very existence it
had become very orthodox to deny". The virtual impossibility of having any relationship compatible with morality in any but a small state did not go unrecognized in the past even in the Western polity. The Greek City States were truly democratic because they were small. Rousseau's ideal of democracy was the Swiss Canton and the City Republic where all the citizens could meet and directly express their views regarding the conduct of their administration. Tolstoy's ideal of a social unit within which men can practise morality was also the village. "One must know one's neighbours and talk to them face to face; then only is it possible to honour the commandment to 'love thy neighbour as thyself'" says H.N. Brailsford. He adds, "Our modern answer is not yet convincing. We are trying to create a vast world-wide mechanism, yesterday the League of Nations, today the United Nations, with its international conventions, regulating the conditions of the worker. It works as yet very ill. It is an after thought, a tardy concession to our social conscience. Always the exploiter goes first,

1. Huxley, op. cit, p. 186
and humanity, on lame feet limps in his wake. The fatality of history drives the Westerner forward in search of a solution so complicated that it may prove beyond human capacity to make it work. Gandhi tried to go back .... " There is a bright prospect for the world if it is to be made up of self-governing villages, wedded to rural industries, and knit in an intimate network of cordial neighbourly co-operation.

III. GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF STATE AND SOCIETY.
1. Ramaraj, or the ideal State. Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist who, from an ethical point of view, repudiated the State as rooted in violence. "The State represents violence in a concentrated and organized form .... the State is a soul-less machine, it can never be weaned from the violence to which it owes its very

1. P.B.P., op.cit, p.117. This does not mean that Gandhi did not envisage a World government. According to him the only condition on which the world can live is being united under one central governing body composed of representatives of the component parts - Cf: Harijan, 8. 6.47. Arthur Moore says that when he discussed his ideas of a World Federation, Gandhi accepted it at once as the true ideal" - Cf: Arthur Moore, World Government, V.B.Q., p.201.
existence"¹. The compulsive nature of State authority damages the moral value of the individual's action, for, "no action which is not voluntary can be called moral"². The State did the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality. Gandhi's ideal, therefore, was a Stateless democracy, a state of enlightened anarchy. "In such a State every one is his ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal State, therefore, there is no political power because there is no State"³. It will be a voluntary federation of more or less self-governing village communities, each made up voluntarily by individuals who have reached the stage of Satyagrahis in the level of non-violence and self-control, and being aware of Spiritual Reality, would live a life of simplicity, renunciation and social service. "Society based on non-violence can only consist of groups settled in villages," says Gandi, "in

³. Y.I., 2.3.21
which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence". Each village will be a republic or *panchayat* having full powers, self-sustained and capable of managing its own affairs, even to the extent of defence. Every activity will be conducted on co-operative basis. Equality will pervade every sphere of life and there will be ample scope for individual freedom, with the least danger of freedom ever degenerating into licence or anarchy. Life in the village will not, however, be one of splendid isolation, ruling out all outside help but interlinked in happy mutual co-operation. "In this structure composed of innumerable villages ... life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals .... The outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it".

1. Harijan, 13.1.40
2. Harijan, 28.7.46
The brick, of which this Ramaraj could be raised, is the Satyagrahi individual. This was why Gandhi always said that for him ahimsa came before swaraj. The way to the non-violent social order lay in the adoption of non-violence as a creed, not policy, since the law of Ramaraj is non-violence. The Satyagrahi knows what he or she wants, and would not demand anything which others cannot have with equal labour. Disciplined in the non-violent values of non-possession and bread-labour, each Satyagrahi gains the moral strength to resist injustice and, coupled with the swadeshi spirit, is ushered into a life of service of the neighbourhood. The law of varna which rules out all unhealthy competition ensures equality in the social sphere. As there will be no centralized production, no heavy transport is called for; and the agricultural rural civilization based on handicrafts would enable the gradual effacement of all vestiges of modern civilization such as machinery, courts, hospitals and big cities from the ideal state. Bread-labour rules out professional doctors; not will they be needed, as diseases which pester humanity today will
disappear with inward control acquired by the Satyagrahi. He and his village will be able to defy the might of the world as everyone is prepared to die in defence of his honour and that of the village.

To Gandhi the relation between the individual and society is one of close interdependence. He rejects alike the unrestricted individualism which ignores social obligations and the totalitarian view which reduces the individual to be a mere cog in the social machine. He says, "I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike a mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and

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1. Vide infra, pp. 159-161.
2. Harijan, 26.7.42
the society of which he is a member"¹. But as between the individual and society, the individual stands first in Gandhi's philosophy. Man is the supreme consideration; he is the soul, while society is not. The evolution of non-violent democracy depends on the average individual evolving genuine non-violence and acquiring personal swaraj. Hence society must provide opportunities for the maximum growth of the individual. Where either fails, the other has the duty to resist it non-violently. This is a safeguard against the violation of social obligations on the part of the individual, but he is constantly reminded of his duties to society more by his inward morality and by the dharma of the social group in which he finds himself. "Dharma or social ethics of the non-violent society, which will exert strong moral pressure on the individual and thus reinforce his conscience, will be a very important factor in sustaining social cohesion. The children born and educated in the ideal non-violent atmosphere will imbibe the new morality in the natural course². In a society where

1. Harijan, 27.5.39
2. Dhawan, op. cit., p. 324.
dharma has taken the place of custom and law, and moral restraint rules out all coercive sanctions for keeping order, individual freedom is reconciled with social restraint. The individual will use his opportunity to advance 'the greatest good of all' while society will give to the individual maximum opportunity.

Gandhi's conception of Ramaraj transcends all forms of government that have ever been, but he finds its nearest approximation in the village communities of ancient India. "The nearest approach to civilization based upon non-violence is the erstwhile village republic of India. I admit it was very crude. I know there was in it no non-violence of my definition and conception. But the germ was there." Gandhi wished to bring paradise on earth. In such a paradise "there will be neither paupers, nor high nor low, neither millionaire employers nor half-starved employees, nor intoxicating drinks or drugs. There will be the same respect for women as vouchsafed to men, and the chastity and purity

1. Harijan, 13.1.40
of both men and women will be jealously guarded. Where every woman except one's wife, will be treated by man as his mother, sister or daughter according to her age. Where there will be no untouchability and where there will be equal respect for all faiths. They will all be proudly, joyously and voluntarily bread-labourers ...." He envisaged a state-less and class-less social order in which there will be no police or military, doctors or lawyers, centralized production or heavy transport. This, he knew, can only remain in an inspiring ideal rather than a goal to be soon reached - "... the ideal is never fully realized in life". Society can become State-less only when men have acquired complete inner control and grown used to spontaneous observance of social obligations without external compulsion. It will take a long time before people could rise to this exacting ideal, and Gandhi was prepared to tolerate these vestiges of modern civilization as a necessary evil, hoping to see them naturally destroyed in the evolutionary process towards the golden age. He recognized

2. Y.I., 2.7.31.
it as a hard fact that "nowhere in the world does a State without government exist". He also conceded that a "government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent because it represents all the people". And he allowed for all these imperfections when he declared, "I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society".

2. The structure and functions of the predominantly non-violent State. The justification for the continued existence of the State lies in the fact that there will always be some individuals or groups who are anti-social and whose activities have to be curbed if only to make possible normal and peaceful social life for all. The structure of the non-violent State will thus depend on the quality of non-violence reached by the average individual in the society of which it is made. As control will vest in the masses, it will be a democracy; and as the masses are wedded to non-violence, it will be a 'spiritualized democracy', i.e. where "in matters of conscience the Law of

1. Y.I., 2.7.31
2. Harijan, 9.3.40 (Italics mine)
3. Ibid.
Majority has no place". "Democracy", says Gandhi, is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is zealously guarded. I, therefore, believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority".

Indeed it was Gandhi's view that the majority should not suppress the opinion of even an individual if it is sound. Gandhi wished that people recognized the fact that no school of thought has a monopoly of right judgement. To err is human, and therefore anyone may be wrong; so, the least we should do is "to try to understand the opponent's viewpoint, and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we expect him to respect ours". Whenever majority views conflict with minority views, the best course for each is to convert the other through persuasion and self-suffering. Thus, there is not merely no tyranny of the majority in the non-violent State, but there is the 'magnanimity of the majority' in full play. Where there is no offence against

1. Y.I., 4.8.20
2. Y.I., 2.3.22
3. Cf: Dhawan, op. cit, p.339
4. Y.I., 17.4.24
5. Harijan, 1.7.39
moral sense, however, the minority has the duty to acquiesce in majority decision since no social life would be possible without such co-operation.

To Gandhi there is nothing sacrosanct about the State. It is only 'one of the means' to secure the greatest good of all. It is a concession to human weakness and the more men do without it the more real will be their freedom. He rejects the absolute sovereignty of the State which requires unquestioning obedience to State laws. Believing that the sovereignty of the people is based purely on moral authority\(^1\), Gandhi proclaimed that loyalty to the State is conditional, depending on its appeal to one's moral conscience. Disobedience of laws repugnant to one's conscience thus became not merely a right but a duty, and is the key to democracy.\(^2\) Thus he sought to develop in the Satyagrahi the capacity to resist State authority. "... real Swaraj will come not by acquisition of authority by a few but by the

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1. Harijan, 2.1.37
acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.

As Gandhi considers the ultimate purpose of the State as the greatest good of all, he would like the State to give to the individual the maximum opportunity for growth. The State should govern least and use the least amount of force. Consistent with the moral level of the people, it should aim at reducing its functions so as to efface itself ultimately. Gandhi endorses the view of Thoreau that "that government is best which governs the least". Swaraj government, he points out, would be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life. "Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control." People who have acquired the capacity for voluntary co-operation will regulate much of their

1. Y.I., 29.1.25
2. Harijan, 11.1.36
3. Y.I., 6.8.25
social life through voluntary organizations, of which the State is only just one. The 'bewildering multiplicity of functions' which characterizes the modern State will not be required of the non-violent State because of the simplicity of life, decentralization and rural economy and the absence of violent conflicts and wars. The State will still use coercion in the discharge of its functions but it will be the minimum necessary for preventing crime and violence on the part of the small unsociable element that will exist in every society. Gandhi considers crime a disease caused by social failings, and so, in the non-violent State, though there may be crimes, he does not want any one to be treated as a criminal. Gandhi does not believe in punishments but concedes that under present conditions they cannot be entirely given up, and so would like them to be non-violent. Their aim must be purely reformative. "A murderer would be sent to a penitentiary, and there given

1. Cf: Dhawan, op. cit, pp 173-175.
2. Harijan, 5.5.46
3. Harijan, 23.10.37
a chance of reforming himself". But crimes will be few since the pressure of social ethics will induce far more spontaneous conformity to the demands of social obligations than it does today.

Gandhi concedes that in a non-violent State a police force is necessary, though it will have to change its character. "Its rank will be composed of believers in non-violence .... In fact the policemen will be reformers". Prisons there will be, but will take the form of reformatory schools and hospitals for converting the defectives to the non-violent way of life. There will also be an army, which again will be composed of men trained in non-violent resistance. Though, as a believer in ahimsa, Gandhi would certainly rule out

1. Harijan, 27.4.40
2. Ibid, 1.9.40
3. Ibid, 8.1.38
4. "The positively necessary training for a non-violent army is an immovable faith in God, willing and perfect obedience to the chief of the non-violent army and perfect inward and outward co-operation between the units of the army" - Harijan, 12.5.46
the use of force in almost all circumstances, he is too practical to apply it to the world of today. Where violent methods fail he would certainly prefer the lesser violence of punishment and police action to the greater violence of crime and lawlessness. The practical sense in him always made him see through the realism of human imperfection. Courts of justice there will be, but they will be little used as most of the disputes will be settled by arbitration by the panchayats. To make justice cheap, speedy and efficient, court-procedure will be simplified. There will, of course, be lawyers, but their true function will be to unite the parties - as Gandhi himself did when he practised law in South Africa. Ideally lawyers would depend on bread-labour for their living and serve people free; if payment cannot be avoided, they should be paid the same wages as doctors, teachers or bhangis.

The non-violent State will be able to achieve not equal but only equitable distribution of wealth owing

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1. Harijan, 23.3.47
to the partial realization of the ideals of bread-labour and trustee-ship; thus some economic inequality will continue, though this will be kept at the lowest level possible by diverting excess earnings to be spent for the good of the community. The ideal of equal distribution of economic resources or equality of non-possession will be realized only in the Stateless society.

The non-violent State will share its material and moral resources with the rest of mankind. Neither exploiting nor exploited, it will be at peace with all. For its defence it can naturally rely on the goodwill of the whole world. Says Gandhi, "A non-violent man or society does not anticipate or provide for attacks from without. On the contrary such a person or society firmly believes that nobody is going to disturb them. If the worse happens, there are two ways open to non-violence. (One is) To yield possession but non-co-operate with the aggressor. Thus supposing that a modern edition of Nero descended upon India, the representatives of the State will let him in but tell him that he will get no assistance from the people."
They will prefer death to submission. The second way will be the non-violent resistance by a people who have been trained in the non-violent way. They would offer themselves unarmed as fodder for the aggressor's cannon. The underlying belief in either case is that even a Nero is not devoid of a heart. The unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor must ultimately melt him and his soldiery. The internal economy

1. Harijan, 13.4.40. Satischandra Das Gupta thinks that voluntary destruction of property and foodstuffs is not inconsistent with non-violent defence. He says, "If necessary, railways and other means of quick transport will have to be voluntarily destroyed .... He will remain ever vigilant and destroy all food and other necessaries before they fall into the hands of the invader" - Cf. Defence through Ahimsa, V.B.Q., p.274. But Gandhi has made it very clear that there is no place for the technique of 'Scorched earth' in non-violent resistance. He says "There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water ... not is there any sacrifice in it, for it does not purify me ... Non-destruction of property involves bravery because the resister deliberately runs the risk of the enemy feeding himself at the former's expense and pursuing him, and sacrifice because the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles the resister" - for a detailed discussion see Harijan, 22.3.42; 19.4.42; 22.4.42; 3.5.42.
of the non-violent State will be her strongest bulwark against aggression because while the enemy will gain nothing by destroying the village crafts, the devastated country will take very little time to recover. "Even if Hitler was so minded", writes Gandhi, "he could not devastate seven hundred thousand non-violent villages. He would himself become non-violent in the process". An army that passes over the corpses of innocent men and women would not be able to repeat the experiment. The moral force created by genuine non-violent resistance of a State, though it may involve immense suffering, will produce incalculable moral effect and stagger the aggressor, the public opinion of the aggressor country will respond, and the government of that country will find it hard to carry their own people with them. Thus, "In Satyagraha more than in an armed warfare, it may be said that we find life by losing it".

3. The Indian Prospect. It was Gandhi's firm conviction that if ever a non-violent State came

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1. Harijan, 4.11.39
2. Ibid, 28.7.40
into being it would be in India. But, for this it was imperative that she should regain her freedom. Freedom of a country is essential not only for its own progress but for that of others. Control by one country over another is destructive of democracy in both and leads to wars. Freedom is "part of truth", and unless a nation is free it cannot "worship the true God". So every nation should be free to rule itself. Holding this view Gandhi sought the freedom of India, and believing as he did that freedom must be got by non-violent means if it is to be real freedom, he fought the whole battle non-violently. To him, freedom for India meant more than independence. The word Swaraj is a Vedic word meaning self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which independence often means. The root meaning of swaraj is self-rule; thus it signified more than mere transference of authority.

1. V.I., 3.4.24.
2. Ibid, 15.10.31.
from the white bureaucrat to the brown bureaucrat. It is the vesting of ultimate authority in the peasant and the labourer. Non-violent democracy involved self-purification or moral regeneration by the individual. Individual self-government is thus the condition of self-rule and must precede it.

If people in India accept the way of non-violence, the democratic State that emerges will be inspired by ideals of truth and non-violence. All the component parts will be voluntarily interdependent under a representative central authority which will derive its sanction from the confidence reposed in it by the component parts. "The central power", he adds, will be based on "universal suffrage exercised by a disciplined and politically intelligent electorate". To him bulk was not the test of democracy. "True democracy", he said, "is not inconsistent with a few persons representing the spirit, the hope and the aspirations of those whom they claim to represent".

Gandhi would have liked the democratic State to be administered by a few representatives selected by the people and removable at the will of the people.

The seven hundred thousand villages of India will be organized, each according to the will of its people, all of them voting. These villages, each having one vote, will elect their district administrations, and they, in their turn, will elect the provincial administrations. These last will elect a president, who will be the national chief executive. It will decentralize power among the seven hundred thousand units. There will then be among these villages voluntary co-operation which will produce real freedom. This indirect election is not undemocratic. It will give the country representatives tried and tested in the life of groups and substitute active participation for the present day passive representation. It will also diminish excitement, bribery and corruption at elections. It must be remembered in this connection that at the Round Table

Conference Gandhi had pleaded for indirect election through village panchayats, while he was opposed to all special representation of interests and to Second Chambers as being undemocratic. Those seeking elections must be selfless and uncorruptible — i.e., must have acquired personal swaraj. The vote should go to them not as a result of canvassing but by virtue of service rendered in the past. They will hold all public office in the spirit of service, without the slightest expectation of personal gain. The franchise should be given to manual workers and not property holders as at present.¹ Labour franchise is the application to politics of the ideal of bread-labour.

"Non-violence, with its technique of Satyagraha and non-co-operation, will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village-guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The government of the village will be conducted by the panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum

¹ Y.I., 26.12.24
prescribed qualifications ... this panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office"¹. The non-violent State will be a secular State, which will not favour any one religion. The abolition of untouchability, loosening of caste rigidity and the establishment of social equality are the conditions precedent to its very inception. All economic life will have to be simplified and organized predominantly on the basis of handicrafts. Even if centralized production and mechanical transport would not have completely disappeared, its sting, the profit motive will be completely removed, and the emphasis will be on small groups, voluntary organizations and moral control. These will secure social justice and economic freedom.

"The non-violent democracy is the highest form of State that man has yet been able to envisage" says Dhawan². When such a State comes to be established in India, it will inaugurate a revolutionary change in the politics of the world -

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1. Harijan, 26.7.42
a change for the better. Indian nationalism, as non-violent nationalism, is an essential pre-condition of sound internationalism, and it will express itself for the benefit and service of humanity at large. India will endeavour to live "on the friendliest terms with all its neighbours ... and shall covet no foreign territory". Gandhi hopes that "India's coming to her own will mean every nation doing like-wise". If every nation accepts non-violence, it "... will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order".

1. Harijan, 20.4.40
2. Ibid
3. Ibid, 21.6.42
CHAPTER V.
GANDHIAN IDEOLOGY IN RELATION TO GANDHIAN EDUCATION.

I. UNITY OF GANDHIAN IDEOLOGY.

Gandhi's personality was enigmatic, more baffling than the strangest characters of fiction to those who did not care to understand him. He was as simple as a child and yet as astute as the hardest lawyer at conferences. He was a confirmed ascetic who embraced poverty but spared no pains for the promotion of the moral and material welfare of the people. He soared high, fixing his eyes on Heaven, but had his feet firm on earth. He smiled heartily, played with children and cracked jokes with those around him while he was guiding the severest battle for freedom or was facing the ordeal of a fast. He was sensitive to the beauty of nature but he rarely mentions the arts and totally disregarded the aesthetic needs of the men and women who followed him. He was a pacifist but never a passivist and advocated the strongest resistance of evil without least harming the evil-doer. He stood for the village and spoke for the world. He stood for
progress but sought it in what seemed to others as 'going backwards'. He advocated complete decentralization in politics and economics, but he held before him a brighter and more complete picture of a morally united world than was visualized by the creators of the United Nations. He held strong views on diet and sex, but allowed complete freedom in these matters to those who held different views from him. He condemned sexual life without hating women, and he never hated the Englishmen even when he strongly called on them to quit India. He was a saint who made politics a major activity. He wrote and spoke with ease on God and Birth Control. He called himself a Sanatanist Hindu while he refused to abide by the scriptures where they were in conflict with his notion of ethics. He was an idolater and an iconoclast who declared that there was no God in temples closed to the untouchables. He was a conservative and revolutionary at the same time. He lived with the bhangis and moved with the elite with the same ease, loving them equally. He

1. See Supra, p. 144.
lived most contented, most happily with nothing
to call his own. He was derided as a 'naked fakir'
and hailed as the Mahatma by people living in the
same generation.

But Gandhi was no multiple personality¹.
When Polak says, "Gandhi the mystic, Gandhi the
devotee, Gandhi the servant of mankind, Gandhi the
missionary, were so many expressions of the multiple
personality of Gandhi the man, who saw God in the face
of the most humble, the most hostile, the most
ignoble among his fellowmen"², he was in fact
stressing more the unity of Gandhi's personality
than pointing out incompatible and functionally
separated integrations. It is indeed a 'puzzle'.

1. Different situations may call into play different
combinations or proportions of traits. At home
a man may be domineering, at work submissive.
When the case is very extreme, as Dr. Jekyll and
Mr. Hyde, when the same individual has utterly
incompatible and functionally separated integrations,
one may speak of dual personality. When there
are more than two independent systems, it is a
case of 'multiple personality'. One shows different
selves. Cf: Allport, Personality, Henry Holt and
2. P.B.P., op. cit, p. 45
to many to grasp as a harmonious personality Gandhi the tactician and organizer and Gandhi the saint. Says Brailsford, "There were not two Gandhis, the saint and the tactician. The key to the puzzle is that Gandhi thought and acted on two planes, one of them physical, the other moral. Sometimes he talked and seemed to be acting, as if he accepted the 'common-sense' mechanical or psychological interpretations of life, society and politics, which his contemporaries assumed. But for him there was a second world. He believed literally in God's government of the Universe ... When he said that God blessed his services, he meant that some system of spiritual or ethical causation was at work, which saw to it that efforts made in the right state of mind, and only these, would produce the desired result .... There was all the time the deep conviction that inspired him, the theory of cosmic causality on which he acted.¹ No one can understand Gandhi if he assumes that his main purpose in life was the political emancipation of India; for his kingdom, like that of Christ or the Budha, was not of this world, and his sole aim

¹. P.B.P., op. cit, p. 155 f.
the moral emancipation of his countrymen.

"Nevertheless, unlike the founders of the two great religions, Gandhi stepped down from the high plane of spiritual leadership to mingle in the arena of everyday affairs. In that he nearly resembled the Hebrew prophets who played an active part in the statecraft of their day". He did so because he saw in the acceptance of wrong political conditions, a degradation of human spirit, and because he identified himself with the common people and desired to be a partner in their joys and sorrows, their struggles and achievements. In fact, like all dynamic personalities in history, he developed for himself a vast medium for the proper and harmonious expression of his creative will when he assumed the tremendous responsibility of leading India to social and political salvation. "This, then, seems to be the significant fact about Gandhiji. Great as he is as a politician, as an organizer, as a leader of men, as a moral reformer, he is greater than all these as a man, because none of these aspects and

1. P.B.P., op. cit., p. 305
activities limits his humanity. They are rather inspired and sustained by it. Though an incorrigible idealist and given to referring all conduct to certain pet formulae of his own, he is essentially a lover of men and not of mere ideas; which makes him so cautious and conservative in his revolutionary schemes. Had not Gandhi said of himself that he was no mere visionary, that he was a practical idealist? 

"Idealist ... Gandhi certainly was, but his genius lay not so much in his idealism as in his fundamental grasp of the realities of a situation, and in his applying the ideals immediately to transform the environment. He was essentially a man of action, who took his ideals seriously and put them into practice irrespective of consequences. He was therefore necessarily a rebel and a revolutionary, but a constructive revolutionary who was interested in building rather than destroying. Essentially a free thinker he worked unfettered by tradition or prejudice, and showed the way of the spirit; and he

2. Y.I., 11.8.20
exemplified in his own work how political action could be made an instrument of spiritual endeavour. He strove in himself to wipe out the distinction between the secular and the religious in human effort by seeking to have all secular activities permeated by the spirit of religion, and showed that this was the way to avoid living a double life which will pull man in opposite ways. By spiritualizing politics he sought to inform all aspects of human activity with a common purpose and thus make them a unity expressing itself in a manifold diversity.

Rabindranath Tagore, the poet-sage of India, who, in his unequalled insight and far-sight saw the spiritual greatness of Gandhi even before the latter started his active socio-spiritual life in India and bestowed on him the distinction of Mahatma¹, 'the Great Soul', which was soon to become universally acclaimed, speaks of him as "the complete man who is absolutely one with his ideas, whose visions perfectly blend with his whole being"². Indeed it is difficult

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1. Tagore referred to Gandhi as Mahatma in a letter he wrote to C.F. Andrews on 18.2.15. "One wonders if in this letter Gandhiji was addressed as 'Mahatma' for the first time". - Cf: Nirmalchandra Chattopadhyaya, op. cit, p. 325
2. Tagore, op. cit, V.B.Q., p.13
to imagine a more thoroughly and firmly integrated personality than Mahatma Gandhi. Without the danger of least exaggeration, it could be said that Gandhi was more Tolstoyan than Tolstoy. The cardinal trait of his personality, the radix of his life, was his adherence to Truth. This eternal value had become such a central part of his ego that he called himself a humble seeker after Truth and was prepared to risk everything in the preservation of Truth as he saw it. In other

1. Of Tolstoy, G.K. Chesterton says, "... He is one of the two or three men in Europe who have an attitude toward things so entirely their own, that we could supply their inevitable view in anything - a silk hat, a Home Rule Bill, an Indian poem, or a pound of tobacco. There are three men in existence who have such an attitude: Tolstoy, Mr. Bernard Shaw, and my friend, Mr. Hilaire Belloc. They are all diametrically opposed to each other, but they all have this essential resemblance, that given their basis of thought, their soil of conviction, their opinions on every earthly subject grow there naturally like flowers in a field. There are certain views of certain things that they must take; they do not form opinions; the opinions form themselves .... Everything in the world, from the Bible to a bootjack, can be and is, reduced by Tolstoy to this great fundamental Tolstoyan principle, the simplification of life" - Cf: Allport, op. cit, p. 190 f.
words, he felt ego-involved whenever truth, and its inevitable companion, non-violence were involved in any activity, and as in the nature of things there can be nothing in the world which can be viewed as apart from truth and non-violence, these served as the acid test of every human activity for Gandhi. Truth was the Master-Sentiment that guided

1. Ego-involvement sets a level of aspiration in its wake and makes the individual determined to keep his status through thick and thin. The intensity of ego-involvement decides the consistency of one's opinions, the tendency to discern the relationship of all that he does to some basic frame of reference - Cf. Sherif and Cantril, The Psychology of Ego-Involvements, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1947, passim.

2. William McDougall attributes all consistency of conduct to the predominance of some one sentiment - concrete or abstract that is capable of supplying a dominant motive, that directs all conduct towards the realization of one end to which all other ends are subordinated. This he calls the master sentiment - See William McDougall, An Introduction to Social Psychology, 23rd ed., Mathuen, London, 1936, pp. 222-226.
him through thick and thin. Truth was both his means and end, the 'open sesame' of all Gandhian ideas and activities. If Gandhi preached and practised non-violence, it was because without non-violence Truth could not be realized in this world, and if it seems to anyone that he ever compromised his principles of non-violence, this apparent infringement was only in the larger interest of Truth; if he lived and asked

1. Louis Renou speaks of Gandhi having abandoned non-violence where it suited him to do so and poses the question, "Did he not write that violence is better than cowardice?" - see Renou, op.cit, V.B.'Q., p.232). Gandhi once had life taken out of an ailing calf, and he advised women to take their lives, if necessary to save their honour. Of the first Gandhi says that he followed 'the light within' him even at the risk of being misunderstood. He justifies the action thus: "I felt that humanity demanded that the agony should be ended by ending life itself .... Just as a surgeon does not commit himsa but practises the purest ahimsa when he wields his knife on his patient's body for the latter's benefit, similarly one may find it necessary under certain imperative circumstances to go a step further and sever life from the body in the interest of the sufferer". (Hindu Dharm, p.216f - italics mine). In the latter case all that he meant was that a woman should not be a slave to fear but bravely resist the lust of the assailant event to the extent of immolating herself; self-defence consisting in dying bravely and with honour. He also imagines circumstances in which 'not to kill would spell himsa, while killing would be ahimsa': 'Suppose for instance that I find my daughter ... is threatened with violation and there is no way by which I can save her, then it would be the purest form of ahimsa on my part to put an end to her life and surrender myself to the fury of the incensed ruffian (Ibid, p.217f, italics mine). As a votary of truth, Gandhi finds true ahimsa in these. Gandhi's answer to those who doubt that he ever compromised his principle of non-violence is implicit in his concluding statement, "... to kill or cause pain to a living being with a view to its spiritual or physical benefit from a pure selfless intent may be the purest form of ahimsa ... The final test as to its violence or non-violence is after all the intent underlying the act. (Hindu Dharm, p. 219)
people to live a simple life of pristine glory, it was again because that was the only way to realize Truth; if he advocated village government and cottage industries, the motive was the same; the basis of his religious views and social reform was Truth; and Truth was the *raison d'être* of all Satyagraha, whether it was non-co-operation or Civil Disobedience. There was nothing that Gandhi did which went against Truth. All the central traits of his personality and the minor traits, so converged on to this eminent trait, that practically Truth became the foci of Gandhian personality - the cardinal trait had indeed become so much identical with his personality that to speak of both is mere tautology\(^1\). This is the reason why Gandhi is baffling to those who try to appraise him merely as a politician, a reformer or a saint. "One great contribution of Gandhi towards the progress of humanity", says J.B. Kripalani, "is the idea that human life is a unity. It is a synthetic whole. It cannot be divided into air-tight compartments"\(^2\). He elaborates

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1. For the theory of traits, see Allport, op.cit., Chs. XI and XII.
the proposition thus: "Gandhiji, in his life and teachings discards all double standards of morality. He wants us to eschew all falsehood and violence. He holds that evil means contaminate good and desirable ends. ... For Gandhiji, there is no economic, political or biological man. Whatever profession a man follows he must not injure the Lord residing in his heart. ... For Gandhiji there are no departments of life, whether political or economic, which can afford to dispense with truth and non-violence or a scrupulous regard for the means used. ... They are intimately connected. They flow from each other. ... Acting in conformity with them one avoids a split personality and a double conscience."¹

How exactly do the conditions laid down by Allport to demarcate a mature personality, all of them, apply to Mahatma Gandhi?² Indeed, in their idealist extremes, it seems they just fit him and

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¹ J.B. Kripalani, op. cit, p.22
² Allport points out, a well-integrated personality must have three differentiating characteristics, viz. an extension of the self, self-objectification which implies insight and a sense of humour — and a unifying philosophy of life. Cf: G.W. Allport, op. cit, Ch. VIII
fit him only - much more than Tolstoy. It is no wonder, for "This man, as Edward Thompson truly said of him, was the greatest Indian since the days of the Buddha. And was he not, since Francis of Assisi, the greatest of the saints?" ¹.

As Gokhale has aptly pointed out, "Mr. Gandhi is one of those men, who living an austerely simple life themselves and devoted to all the highest principles of love of their fellow beings and to truth and justice, touch the eyes of their weaker brethren as with magic and give them a new vision. He is a man who may be well described as a man among men, a hero among heroes, a patriot among patriots, and we may well say that, in him, Indian humanity at the present time has really reached its high watermark" ². Dr. Francis Neilson, the author of the Tragedy of Europe refers to Gandhi as a "Diogenes in action, a St. Francis in humility, a Socrates in wisdom" ³. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the greatest living philosopher of the East today says that the Mahatma "was a giant among men measured

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1. H.N. Brailsford, P.B.P., op. cit, p. 118
2. P.B.P., op. cit, p. 77
3. J.H. Holmes, op. cit, p. 253
by the greatness of his soul. . . . His profound sincerity of spirit, his freedom from hatred and malice, his mastery over himself, his human, friendly, all-embracing charity, his strong conviction which he shared with the great ones of history that the martyrdom of the body is nothing compared with the defilement of the soul, a conviction which he successfully put to test in many dramatic situations and now in this final act of surrender, show the impact of religion on life, the impact of the eternal values on the shifting problems of the world of time"¹. The ascetic in Gandhi did not make him a recluse but plunged him in the service of mankind. Though his thoughts were steeped in religion, "he had an unusual sense of humour, a certain light-heartedness, even gaiety, which we do not associate with ardent religious souls"². "The strangest thing about him" says H.N. Brailsford, "was that with all his rejection of the joys of life, this man was habitually happy and even gay. Between his fasts he knew how to laugh and joke like a boy. I have seen him anxious and perplexed in times of difficulty. But the face that lives in my memory was as serene and unclouded as it was kindly"³.

¹. Radhakrishnan, op. cit, p.257
². Ibid, p. 258
³. P.B.P., op. cit, p. 115
This rare sense of humour was born of true insight. "This playfulness was the outcome of an innocent heart, a spontaneity of spirit. While he redeemed even the most fugitive and trivial moment from commonness, he had all the time a remote, a far-away look. The abuses and perversities of life did not shake his confidence in the essential goodness of things". Gandhi's philosophy was plain; it was articulate; he lived it and showed the way to those to whom he preached it.

Gandhian ideology has thus a logical unity, it being a reflection of an unusually integrated, unique personality. One who knows it could easily "supply the inevitable view in anything". Hence its importance for the study of his ideas on education. Gandhian ideas on education must be a reflection of Gandhian ideology, and any scheme he had envisaged must seek the realization of the non-violent values he had stressed and result in evolving the non-violent social order in which truth shall reign supreme. All educational movements have resulted from philosophers trying to translate their ideas into practice, and therefore are "the workings out of various philosophical positions". As Prof. Ross points out, "a philosopher,

1. Radhakrishnan, op. cit, p. 258
2. Vide supra, p. 173n.
if he is in earnest, naturally becomes an educationist". Gandhi was a true philosopher in the Socratic sense of the term, and he was indeed in earnest for he was confronted with a population in his own neighbourhood who required immediate redemption from misery, fear, sloth and by a wider circle of peoples of the world who were equally moving in the dark without a vision of the true goal. There was little that he did as a nationalist the methods of which were not applicable internationally and this applies as much to education as to other subjects. Says Margaret Barr, "He was the true internationalist, the Universal Man. Though first and foremost and every inch an Indian, and the liberator of his people, his vision went far beyond the bounds of his own country and his own race. The vision which dominated his life, for which he toiled and suffered, lived and died, was the vision of a united world in which all lesser loyalties and patriotism should be subordinated to the greatest of all Loyalties - loyalty to the One God Who has made

1. Ross, op. cit, p. 22.
all and to the human family consisting of all His children. "The oneness of the world", points out Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, can only be the oneness of purpose and aspirations. A united world can only be the material counterpart of a spiritual affinity. Changes in the social architecture do not alter the minds of peoples. Wars have their origins in false values, in ignorance, in intolerance. Institutions are of little avail unless we are trained to obey our conscience and develop brotherly love. Gandhi had faith that the world is one in its deepest roots and highest aspirations. He knew that the purpose of historical humanity was to develop a world civilization, a world culture, a world community. We can get out of the misery of this world only by exploiting the darkness which is strongly entrenched in men's hearts and replacing it by understanding and tolerance. So, Gandhi, the sage and statesman naturally played the role of an educationist, and became the great "teacher of mankind".

1. Margaret Barr, Gandhiji and Peace through Education, V.B.Q., p.161 f
2. Radhakrishnan, op. cit, p. 262.
3. The phrase is used by Lord Pethick-Lawrence, P.B.P., op. cit, p.295.
II. REVIEW OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS BEARING ON EDUCATION.

We have in the foregoing pages elaborately discussed the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi. We saw that he calls himself a "practical idealist". As education is the dynamic side of philosophy, no educational system can be seen in true perspective without understanding the philosophy on which it is based. Aims of education merely reflect the philosophical position taken by the educational thinker and the curriculum of studies is only the medium to realize these aims. It is necessary for us, therefore, to briefly review the fundamental philosophical presumptions of Gandhi before we take up a study of the system he adumbrated.

1. Gandhi's view of Reality. Mahatma Gandhi uses the term Truth to mean reality, i.e., Truth in the Platonian sense of Absolute, universal, infinite Truth. Truth or satya is the 'real existent', and so synonymous with God. God transcends the senses and the intellect.

1. Vide supra, p. 173
2. Vide Supra, Ch. I. See I.
If realization must be outside the senses and the intellect, it can be possible only through a living faith. Gandhi says that faith "acts like a sixth sense to unravel that which is beyond the purview of reason".

Gandhi's idea of reality, thus, partakes of the Socratic theory of the existence of permanent natures - 'forms' or 'Ideas' - beyond the world of sensible things and not knowable by the senses. Like Socrates, Gandhi also believed that man must naturally seek liberation from the material world if he is to find perfection. But unlike Socrates he did not believe that perfection or 'wisdom' is attainable by mere contemplation when once the soul could free itself from the bonds of flesh. He wanted 'to mortify the flesh to gain control over animal passions', but it did not mean a disparagement of the body or of manual activities. He looked upon a life of active social service as the true way to know God, and in this life of service, gave a prominent place to manual labour. He held that God is made known in His works and truth is to

1. Harijan, 6.3.37
2. Vide Infra, p. 267
be found in action. In thinking of God as ever active, speaking in and through the turmoil of social and political events, and in subscribing to the view that Truth is something to which one cannot think one's way but which one has to live one's way, Gandhi testified to an incarnate notion of Truth, and the Biblical view of reality as both transcendant and immanent. Gandhi considered that God is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, i.e. true, good and beautiful. Truth, Beauty and Goodness are thus objective values recognized but not constituted by the human mind and have to be realized actively by living a true, beautiful and good life. He held that the true end of all contemplation must be action; intellectual activity is justifiable only in so far as it interprets the world of experience and aids action.

Gandhi's view of reality thus shares of the Classical and the Biblical, both of which agree in affirming "the existence of absolute values which are neither the projection of individual minds, nor

the product of the social process”. The Classical and the Biblical tradition stand together in condemning modern relativism as disintegrating intellectual coherence and corroding moral values. Gandhi would have nothing to do with a philosophy which considers reality as wholly immanent. For, it rules out all abiding norms by which the world is to be regulated, and the effect of such a philosophy could be a denial of all moral and personal values. What is most necessary to guard against in the world of today is the tendency to depersonalize human beings, to cease to think of men as ends in themselves.

2. The Concept of Man.

(a) The dignity of personality. When Gandhi declares that “The individual is the one supreme consideration”, he is stressing, in the most effective language possible, the dignity of the human soul. Personality is sacred because the soul in man is part of God. In fact what is reality in man is only the soul - he is nothing but brahman. Gandhi's belief

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 97
2. Vide supra, p. 129
in the \textit{advaita} doctrine that there is but one \textit{brahman} in all, whether it be human or sub-human beings, means that all living beings are bound together inseparably to God. "It makes man the servant of God's creation and not its lord". It means also that whatever happens to one body must affect the whole of matter and the whole spirit; this is why Gandhi believes that "if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent". This is a conclusion of great significance since we find herein a powerful argument for universal education.

The Gandhian concept of equality as between men is also derived from the concept of the universal soul. He says, "In my opinion there is no such thing as inherited or acquired superiority. I believe in the rock-bottom doctrine of \textit{advaita} and my interpretation of \textit{advaita} excludes any idea of superiority at any stage whatsoever. I believe

\begin{itemize}
\item [1.] Harijan, 26.12.36 (italics mine)
\item [2.] Ibid, 12.11.38
\item [3.] Y.'I., 4.12.24
\item [4.] \textit{Vide Supra}, p. 114 f
\end{itemize}
implicitly that all men are born equal. All -
whether born in India or in England or America
or in any circumstances whatever - have the same
soul as any other .... I consider that it is
unmanly for any person to claim superiority over
a fellow-being .... He who claims superiority
at once forfeits his claim to be called a man"¹.
This is in line with the Christian belief that
man's worth arises not from his civic status
but from his being a child of God. "Because
children of God, all men are brothers"². As
Prof. Aneurin Reid points out, human beings are
not in fact equal - not all people are 5 ft. 10 inches
or equally intelligent; but there is a factual basis
for saying that all men are equal, in the 'ultimate'
sense in which fact and value are united - what
Christians affirm when they say that the God of Love
created all men as persons, that every person, his
life and his destiny, is infinitely precious, and
that the prime human obligation of every created
person is to love every other person as a child

¹. Y.I., 29.9.27
². Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 148
of God. Gandhi's letter to the Rev. Keithahn makes this normative concept of equality clearer still. "All men", he says, "are born equal, but one is much stronger or weaker than another physically and mentally. Therefore superficially there is no equality between the two. But there is an essential equality. In our nakedness God is not going to think of me as Gandhi or you as Keithahn. And what are we in this mighty Universe? We are less than atoms, and as between atoms there is no use asking which is smaller and which is bigger. Inherently we are equal. The difference of race and skin, of mind and body, and of climate and nature are transitory."

(b) Free-will versus Pre-determination. Hindu Philosophy attributes the inequality among men to karma, the effect of one's own deeds in the lives he had lived in the past, and so, of his own making. In line with Hindu tradition Gandhi too believes in the doctrines of karma and rebirth, but he interprets both as favouring the spiritual growth of the individual instead of working to put him in chains.

2. Harijan, 13.3.37
3. "I believe" said Gandhi "in rebirth as much as I believe in the existence of my present body", Y.I., 5.6.24
The doctrine of rebirth ensures that even a little effort in this life is not wasted because it provides repeated opportunities for the man, who has not been able to fully realize himself in one birth, to work again and again for self-development. The law of karma is the law of moral continuity; it lays down that our future will grow out of the present even as the latter is the outcome of our past. This is why Gandhi declares "The law of karma is inexorable and impossible of evasion. There is thus hardly any need for God to interfere. He laid down the law and as it were retired." Any breach of the Divine law is sure to have its consequences. "We are the makers of our destiny. We can mend or mar the present and on that will depend the future", says Gandhi.

Gandhi's acceptance of the law of karma does not in any way imply that he believed that our life and activities are completely determined. Such

1. Y.I., 5.6.24
3. Harijan, 8.6.47.
determination paralyses moral effort and cuts at the very root of ethics. It denies creativeness to the human spirit and deprives man of the privilege of establishing his own government. As Prof. Jeffreys says, "Man is both within the time process and outside it, both immanent and transcendent. From one point of view he is bound by the chain of events. Yet from another point of view he has a freedom from the time process ... because he does not live only in the moment. He transcends the time process by virtue of being able to think about it and to relate events to one another in ways quite different from their chronological sequence. He can see the time process as it were from above, and to that extent he can act upon it from above. That is to say, he can act not only under the immediate stimulus of events but in the light of knowledge and imagination and with reference to ultimate considerations." Gandhi's notion of the presence of God in man amounts to a belief that man has

1. Jeffreys, op. cit., p. 25
free-will, reason, conscience, love. If he chooses to use his reason correctly, and guides his life by listening to the dictates of his conscience, and lives with love and fellow-feeling in his heart, he can realize God and bring heaven on earth. Freedom of will is a necessary postulate of morality to Gandhi as with many ethical thinkers. "The real question", points out Jeffreys, "is not whether behaviour is free or determined since it is obvious that all behaviour, being a response to some 'given' stimulus, must be in some sense determined. The question is how it is determined - that is, whether it is determined from within or from outside the self. When we say that behaviour is 'free', what we really mean is, not that it is undetermined, but that the self acts as a whole, summoning all resources of knowledge and imagination, making the action his own, taking full responsibility for it - acting, that is to say, as a person. Such self-determined behaviour is to be contrasted with behaviour at the instinctive level, where action is determined in a quasi-reflex manner by immediate stimuli and the
only unity is that represented by the resultant
groups of forces. In the first type of behaviour
we recognize personal volition; in the other case we
see a creature of impulse"\(^1\). Mere mechanical action,
performed under the influence of blind impulse or
custom, cannot therefore be moral. Morality implies
conscious, deliberate volition. Gandhi expresses it
thus: "No action, which is not voluntary can be
called moral. So long as we act like machines, there
can be no question of morality. If we want to call
an action moral, it should have been done consciously
and as a matter of duty"\(^2\). In fact, there is no
antithesis between the law of karma and the freedom
of will. The doctrine of karma implies freedom,
for it says that man is the architect of his own
destiny. Continuity with the past implies creative
freedom of the individual. No doubt, our previous
karmas limit the range for the exercise of our
free-will. There are some other limitations too,
which cannot entirely be overcome - the limitations
with which one is born, the laws of nature to which

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1. Jeffreys, op.cit, p.36. Prof. Jeffreys also points
out that we do not become aware of the wholeness
of action which we know as self-determination or
'freedom' only because we see human experience from
outside and not from within (Ibid, p.39).
2. Ethical Religion, p.8.
man is subject, and the hardened core of his own habits and tendencies, which begin to 'drive' him. Thus Gandhi recognized that "the free-will which we enjoy is less than that of a passenger on a crowded deck". But, in spite of all these limiting influences, and within their own field, man has sufficient freedom for exercising his will and moulding his environment, body and mind. The freedom we have may be little, but it is real in the sense that we are left 'unfettered' to choose how we use that freedom. We can choose "to act at the level of decision instead of being acted upon at the level of cause and effect". The right to err, which means freedom to try experiments is, of course, the universal condition of progress. If he wills, man can improve his condition, change his habits and shape his destiny.

Gandhi has pointed out, however, that though our will is free, "we cannot command results; we can only strive". "Man can change temperament, can

1. Harijan, 23.3.40
2. Y.I., 5.3.25
3. Jeffreys, op. cit, p.123
4. Harijan, 6.5.39
control it, but certainly not eradicate it. God has not given him so much liberty. If the leopard can change his spots, then only can man modify the peculiarities of his spiritual constitution\(^1\). Of course, he can counteract the effects of past mistakes by attaining complete detachment;\(^2\) but "In spite of the greatest effort to be detached no man can altogether undo the effect of his environment or of his upbringing"\(^3\). While conceding that people are controlled by their environment, Gandhi would like them to live by self-direction and not by mere habit\(^4\). In other words he would like to have them live as 'persons' acting at the moral level. This, Gandhi considers, is only proper. He does not believe in complete freedom which might enable man to sever himself from or transcend nature. Such freedom can mean only chaos. That is also the lesson of the Bible. Christianity recognizes that man is a creator in his own right, being made in God's image, but traces all sin and the need for redemption to the

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2. *Harijan*, 7.4.46
3. *Y.T.*, 30.1.30
abuse of this freedom.

(c) The 'self' in 'self-expression'. The problem of free will and the problem of evil are closely connected, as evil arises out of the abuse of free-will. Of course, Gandhi assumes that for God there is nothing good or evil. "Good and evil are, for human purposes, from each other distinct and incompatible, being symbolic of light and darkness ..." God is self-existent, but evil is not; it flourishes only by the implication of good that is in it, and dies when that support is withdrawn. Gandhi points out that purity of means is, therefore, the only safe means to minimise evil - "... in order to overcome evil, one must stand wholly outside it, i.e. on the firm solid ground of unadulterated good."

1. Cf: Jeffreys, *op. cit*, p.116. "Although a creator, man is also creature, and his true nature is to create within the conditions of his creatureliness. If he denies and rebels against his creatureliness he violates the laws of his being and defeats himself. But, since his freedom is real and not only a semblance, he does rebel against his creatureliness and tries to make himself free from God instead of free for God. The conflict in man is the revolt of the divine in man against the laws of his being, and this Promethean revolt is the essence of sin".

2. *Harijan*, 20.2.37

Man's body is part and product of nature, growing and decaying according to the laws of nature; but this does not mean that man is only physical. He has consciousness, reason, will, emotion and such other qualities and powers as are the expressions of the Spirit or Soul present in him. The true self is this Spirit, not the finite individual with his lust, whims and passions; our finite self, with all its imperfections and weaknesses, Gandhi points out, is false. When Gandhi preaches 'self-expression', it does not, therefore, mean what the Naturalists mean — asserting oneself in any way one likes. It is not the false self that is to express itself but the true self. The expression or assertion of the false self, Gandhi considers, is 'aggression' as against the expression of the true self, which he calls satyagraha. A satyagrahi will actively assert himself against evil. This is done best as participating in truth. Our duty, therefore, is to know truth, and so far as we know it, to assert it; for, to assert it is to assert our
true self$^1$. Man can degrade himself by ignoring truth, neglecting conscience and pampering to the animal passions, and can turn himself into a brute. "If he yields to the temptation", says Prof. Jeffreys, "to subside on to the 'natural' level, he makes a beast of himself; and the beastliness of man is something quite different from the naturalness of the beast. Animal though he is, man is nevertheless compelled from within to repudiate the animal and to strive for a synthesis of his powers at the rational and moral level"$^2$. Thus, if he wills, man can follow the spiritual path and become more and more like God in love, goodness and abiding joy; for, "The divine powers within us are infinite".

As a believer in the theory of evolution, Gandhi is conscious of man's animal origin, and so he does not subscribe to the Wordsworthian view that the child comes from heaven "trailing clouds of glory"$^3$ - that man is born all good, an angel. "We were perhaps all originally brutes. I am prepared to believe that

2. Jeffreys, op. cit, p.5.
we have become men by a slow process of evolution from the brute". It is because he has the brute in him that he often chooses more easily the downward course than the upward, especially if the downward course is presented to him in a beautiful garb. He thus contends that every one of us is a mixture of good and evil, the difference between the cultured and the brute being only a question of degree. So long as man is in the flesh even the greatest man can only be imperfect. "There is no one without faults, not even men of God. They are men of God not because they are faultless but because they know their own faults ... and are ever ready to correct themselves." The glory is that man is not mere brute. He is above all the soul, and so, even the most brutal of men has the potentiality for goodness. It is this self-conscious impulse to realize the God inherent in him that distinguishes man from the beast. Says Gandhi "We were born with brute strength but we were born in order to realize God who dwells in us. That indeed is the privilege of man and it distinguishes him from the

1. Harijan, 2.4.38
2. Ibid, 1.2.35
3. Ibid, 10.6.39
4. Ibid, 28.1.39
brute creation". "Man as animal", adds Gandhi, "is violent but as spirit, is non-violent. The moment he awakens to the spirit within he cannot remain violent". There is thus goodness inherent in human nature. That man has godliness in him implies that it is more natural for man to be good than to be evil. It is Gandhi's firm faith that man, by nature, is going higher. "I believe", he says, "that the sum-total of the energy of mankind is not to bring us down, but to lift us up, and that is the result of the definite, if unconscious working of the law of love. Human civilization has become possible only because of man's control of his baser instincts and their replacement by the new traits of goodwill and love. And, "If we believe", says Gandhi, "that mankind has steadily progressed towards Ahimsa, it follows that it has to progress towards it still further. Nothing in this world is static, everything is kinetic. If there is no progress, there is inevitable retrogression". Here is a challenge to the educators

1. Harijan, 2.4.38
2. Ibid, 11.8.40
3. Ibid, 18.5.40
4. Y.I., 12.11.31
5. Harijan, 11.8.40
of the new generation.

3. **Ends and Means: Self-realization through service.**

   In Gandhian philosophy, and so in Gandhian education, means and ends are convertible terms, inseparably intertwined, and so both should be pure. Following the Gita doctrine of *nishkama karma* which teaches that a good deed produces only good result, Gandhi holds that "if one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself"\(^1\). The end grows out of the means. "The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree"\(^2\). The emphasis on means is partly due to the fact that man can only strive and not command results.

   The ultimate end of life, and so of education is, realization of God or *moksha*, which is the same as knowing one's true self i.e. self-realization. It is a goal which is, perhaps, too high to be completely reached. Like Plato\(^3\), he repeatedly affirmed the unattainability of perfection in human life. "No one can attain perfection while he is in the body for the

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\(^1\) *Harijan*, 11.2.39.
\(^2\) *Hind Swaraj*, p.60
\(^3\) *The Republic of Plato*, V.
simple reason that the ideal state is impossible so long as one has not completely overcome his ego, and ego cannot be wholly got rid of so long as one is tied down by the shackles of the flesh"¹. "The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress the greater the recognition of our unworthiness"². So, the ideal state which is the perfect state can be attained "only after the dissolution of the body"³. Thus between the ideal and practice, "there must always be an unbridgeable gulf. The ideal will cease to be one if it becomes possible to realize it". Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment; full effort, he considered as full victory. Man's duty is, therefore, to try for greater and greater progress though he might never reach absolute perfection; and the merit of the unattainable ideal is in evoking and keeping up this ceaseless effort. The same idea has been tersely put by Prof. Jeffreys thus: "All we can say is that even if we knew for certain that there could be no Kingdom of Heaven on earth (and we can never know that) we should still have an absolute obligation to strive for it. The war of the spirit may never be

1. Y.I., 20.9.28
2. Y.I., 9.3.22
3. Harijan, 17.4.37
won in this world; but equally it is never lost". 1

While Gandhi does not believe in the perfection of human nature, we have seen that he believes in its perfectibility. All men alike have the capacity for the highest possible development, as the "soul is one in all". Any man or woman can, therefore, achieve what Gandhi himself had achieved, provided he or she held the same high ideals and made the same effort. A nation of little Gandhis was thus no utopia to him. He held that "primary virtues of mankind are possible of cultivation by the meanest of human species. It is this undoubted universal possibility that distinguishes the human from the rest of God's creation" 3. The ethical discipline that he evolved for his ashramites was thus the result of his belief that the cultivation of those cardinal virtues by them must culminate in the development of truly integrated personalities.

Not that Gandhi did not realize how difficult it is to change and control one's nature. It is beyond man's powers to completely get over his old Samskaras 4. It is only by a very strenuous course of training that

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2. Harijan, 18.5.40.
3. Harijan, 16.5.36.
one attains to a mental state of non-violence. The moral confusion created by modern civilization with its emphasis on wrong values, on physical pleasures, acquisitiveness, competition and other self-regarding propensities makes the task more difficult. What we should do therefore, and perhaps, all we can do, is to exert to the best of our ability, with hope and faith but without forcing the pace, to approach the ideal. Each one must have a level of aspiration but it should not be set too high, if a break-down of personality is to be avoided. "In every case", Gandhi wrote to Mirabehn, "never go beyond your capacity. That too is a breach of truth". He holds the view that forcing one's pace often leads one to play a hypocrite, and so, stresses slow, steady, advance towards progress. And his belief in rebirth comes to his aid in this.

Gandhi advocates suffering and renunciation for moral and spiritual growth, since he is convinced that

1. Y.I., 1.10.31.
4. Supra.
"the strength of the soul grows in proportion as you subdue the flesh". "It is not possible to see God face to face", he says, "unless you crucify the flesh. It is one thing to do what belongs to it as a temple of God, and it is another to deny it what belongs to it as to the body of flesh". The human body is meant for service, not for indulgence, and so the secret of happiness lies in renunciation. We must, therefore, limit our wants and discipline the flesh to serve the spirit. Of course, mortification as a means to subdue the flesh is not an end in itself and has no inherent merit. Indeed, it is harmful if it is carried to excess for it prevents one from making full use of one's body for service. "Suffering has its well-defined limits. Suffering can be both wise and unwise, and when the limit is reached to prolong it would be not unwise but the height of folly". So mortification should stop when it enables one to have full control of the body.

1. Y.I., 23.10.24
2. Harijan, 10.12.38
3. Y.I., 12.3.31
to devote it to the soul, that is to make the body an efficient instrument for social service. For, Gandhi does not mean by renunciation that other-worldliness which stands for ignoring the demands of our present life and retiring into the forest. He says, "There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'". Therefore, "To do no work is no renunciation. It is inertia". Gandhi wants us to develop the spirit of renunciation which transmutes work into worship so that we may be able to love and serve. He wants us to live a dedicated life using all our abilities for service in a sacrificial spirit. "Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God".

1. Harijan, 26.7.42
2. Harijan, 20.4.35.
3. Harijan, 29.8.36.
We have already seen that Gandhi's God is not an abstract entity, but the absolute Truth, the Reality that lives in man's own self and in the selves of others. The realization of God can therefore be best attained through the realization of the God in one's own self and in humanity. "The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour, simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in his creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all". In his own life Gandhi has given expression to this positive spirit of seeking God through the service of man, the realization of the truth through action. The idea that salvation can

1. Harijan, 29.8.36
be had through seclusion and solitude is completely foreign to him.  

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1. The conception of service as the way to self-realization is not new in Indian tradition. We find the Buddha, in pre-Christian era, preaching compassion for all living beings and devoting his long life actively to the redemption of suffering humanity. Shankara too preached an active philosophy of service and lived it in his life. But later the positive and constructive elements of their philosophies came to be forgotten and the negative aspect of their teachings were stressed by many, and the result was that India became the contemplative East plunged in the halo of maya and defeatism. During the last hundred years, however, positive aspects of their philosophy were revived and revitalized. Vivekananda declared time and oft, "If you want to find God, serve man" and threw all his energy into a mission of human service. Rabindranath Tagore too taught the same idea of constructive social effort, and in the Gitanjali, sang of God, "Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and the lowliest and lost". Gandhi utilized the new positive ideas of modern India by assimilating them in thought, living them in his life, and giving them social and political shape. Cf: D.M. Datta, Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 62-71.
Prof. Jeffreys echoes this idea when he speaks of "the paradoxical experience that self-seeking defeats its own ends - that the conscious and deliberate pursuit of 'happiness' or self-fulfilment, albeit at a high ethical level, is strangely self-frustrating - and that the first condition of the fulfilment of personal destiny is to be set free from self by being claimed and taken possession of by something more than self, in which the self is lost but which gives back the self enriched". He points out that there is in all living organisms a tension between the two-way urge, 'to get' and 'to give'. 'Getting' is the assertion of the individual self against social good while 'giving' is the dedication of the self to common good. The individual can fulfil himself only by 'giving!', that is to say, only by service to the community. He says that "... not any or every kind of service is liberating". The relationship in which service is freedom, is love. ".... devoted service liberates and fosters personal growth where unwilling service does not "

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 110
2. Ibid, p. 17.
3. Ibid

a law of life that persons grow to full stature by giving, not by getting"¹; "... it is through loving and being loved that persons grow as persons"². This is universal human experience, he points out, which was known to Socrates and the stoics as much as to the Christian revelation, which runs: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospels shall save it."

As God is the only abiding Reality, that expresses itself through the changing phenomena of birth, decay and death, Gandhi held that to do God's work alone is to work for this abiding principle. Says Gandhi, "We are living in the midst of death. What is the value of 'working for our schemes' when they might be reduced to naught .... But we may feel as strong as a rock, if we could truthfully say, "We work for God and His schemes". Then nothing perishes"³

This is noble self-surrender to the will of God. The will of God is the dictates of one's own

¹ Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 18  
² Ibid  
³ Y.I., 23.9.26
conscience, where one is pure-hearted. God being only the name given to the best motive forces of love and harmony which work in man for unity, to be a mere instrument in the hands of God is, only to avoid selfish motives and work for the greatest good of all. Christian philosophy too believes that once man has "yielded his self-will to God's will, God can take him and re-make him, bringing him into the new life which has God and not self for its centre". Surrendering self-will to God's will helps him also to avoid frustration from failure and helps him thereby to pursue steadily the path of duty with calm judgment. Work without attachment, as a mere instrument of God's will, was Gandhi's ideal; it is the way to ensure peace and satisfaction to the worker and success to the work. "The more one thinks of the selfish pleasures to be attained, the less can one concentrate energy on the action. It is best to do the will of God and let Him take care of the results; good results must follow true discharge of duties. Says D.M. Datta, .. "Renunciation

1. Jeffreys, op. cit., p. 117
for Gandhi was not flying from the world nor salvation a post-mortem goal. True renunciation is action without selfish motives and true salvation is liberation from bondage of selfish desires and passions that fetter and torment man. Gandhi's final aim, like that of Christ, rightly interpreted, was 'to bring heaven upon earth' ¹.

A life of service, thus, tends to replace the little self by the universal self and generates a spontaneous and dynamic humility; and selfless activity done in all humility, can only bring abiding joy. Gandhi expresses it thus: "A life of service must be one of humility .... True humility means most strenuous and constant endeavour entirely directed towards the service of humanity. God is continuously in action without resting for a single moment. If we would serve Him or become one with Him, our activity must be as unwaried as His .... This restlessness constitutes true rest. This never-ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable"².

This is how Gandhi reconciles renunciation and self-development with active social and political life.

¹. Datta, op. cit, p. 44
². N.K. Bose, Selections from Gandhi, N.P.H., 1948, p. 10
There can be no conflict between the individual and society where service is done by all the individuals in the spirit of renunciation; herein is the secret of 'true freedom' and 'true community'. Gandhi's asceticism is no repression; he prescribes restraint not for its own sake but only as an indispensable means of realizing the highest ideal known to man - the ideal of love that is service. Instead of frustrating our life, true renunciation would make it joyous. Education should be so imparted as to develop an attitude to life which would make service the source of real happiness.

III. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY.

When ancient India looked upon man as an imperfect emanation of God and on education as an end in itself, the modern world has stressed his character as the most well-developed among animals gifted with reason and used education as a means to further his material progress. Faith in man and human achievement was a legacy of the Renaissance. For three centuries the adventure of man in the field of science and technology carried him from triumph to triumph. Science liberated man from slavery to want and brought at least
the possibility of health and happiness, knowledge and beauty, within the reach of all mankind. It was assumed that if everyone works for his own interest soon it will bring happiness and prosperity to all. But scientific materialism did not prove an unmixed blessing. It nearly threatened the process which through Hebrew and Greek cultures had started long ago, of building man as a person. As social and industrial processes became more and more technical and elaborate, human life too became more and more mechanized. "Man, desiring no longer to be the image of God", became "the image of the machine".

He was not merely mechanized but, he was "bestialized and depersonalized" in consequence. Mastery of techniques, developed at the expense of conviction about ultimate meaning and purpose, began to threaten spiritual values and ultimately man's autonomy itself. All education was reduced to mere technique; and it began to occupy itself with means rather than with ends.

Towards the last

1. Berdiaev, cited in Jeffreys, op. cit, p.133
2. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 61.
century it became increasingly evident that the technological achievements portended disaster more than progress, and man's faith in reason was rudely shaken. It is now realized that "man should rather draw things up to the human level than reduce humanity to their measure". The emphasis on reason, narrowly interpreted and identified with the purely ratiocinative element in man, tends to deny or ignore the other elements of personality, and consequently develop in man an intolerant and rigid outlook. What is needed, therefore, is a proper conception of reason in which imagination and feelings will find their proper place. We must educate the emotions and imagination if we are to combat fanaticism and intolerance. Indeed, as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru points out, democracy could never become real unless man regained his power of thought and contemplation; for it has a tendency to throw up leaders who would either be dictators or mere politicians, crudely strong or

insensitive men, in whose hands human dignity is bound to suffer. Education must stress human dignity and impart a common ideological understanding among the masses, if they are not to pull apart in ignorance of each others' culture and destroy civilization.

Every effort should, therefore, be made to recover the belief in Truth, Beauty and Goodness as transcendental values recognized but not constituted by the mind and that the human soul is sacred. In the words of Jeffreys, "We must educate for the Kingdom of Heaven, nothing less ... The Kingdom of Heaven is not the Garden of Eden, nor is it 'citizenship', nor 'social adjustment', nor the 'development of individual potentiality'. But it is something which, if sought first, will bring all these things with it". We should educate our people to be 'persons' and not mere technical instruments. This means that children should be made not merely to do their own thinking, but to do the right kind of thinking which springs from deep convictions. Human dignity must be assured and the spirit of social

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 156.
service fostered by recognizing the worth of labour. Education must be related to life and thought should issue in action. Gandhi's educational system is designed with this end in view.
PART II.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF EDUCATION.

I. EDUCATION AS PURPOSIVE DIRECTION.

In conformity with Indian tradition Gandhi considers education as a serious purposive business, the educator doing his job to further a definite end in view. "That education alone is of value" he says, "which draws out the faculties of a student so as to enable him or her to solve correctly the problems of life in every department". Education is thus no aimless sojourn, devoid of definite direction, but a discipline directed to a certain end - Sikshana. It is not for the pupil, therefore, once he has joined a school, to "choose what or how he will learn". He may respectfully put his doubts before his teachers. He need not believe what does not appeal to him. But if he has respect for his teachers, he will do without believing what he is asked to do, not out of fear, not out of churlishness, but with the knowledge that what is dark to him today, will some day be made clear to him. So Gandhi requests the students to have the same faith in teachers as they have in him. "A student

1. Harijan. 23.5.36
2. Y.I., 23.9.26
3. Ibid. Psychologists today give great importance to Prestige Suggestion in learning.
4. Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 512.
is like a soldier ... who may not argue about matters of discipline, when he has put himself and chooses to remain under it ... Here there is no under-rating or despising the intelligence of the student. It is an aid to his intelligence for him to come voluntarily under discipline". "It is for teachers to make attractive and intelligible, what to pupils may, at first, appear repulsive or uninteresting". It is for the teacher, with all his knowledge and experience of life to point the way. "It is the duty of the teacher" says Gandhi, "to teach his pupils discrimination. If we go on taking in indiscriminately, we would be no better than machines. We are thinking, knowing beings, and we must, in this period distinguish truth from untruth, sweet from bitter language, clean from unclean things and so on". Naturally teachers should be embodiments of the virtues they would like to inculcate in their pupils. " ... the best way to do this, in my opinion, is for the teachers rigorously to practise these virtues in their own person. Their very association with the boys, whether on the play-ground or in the class-room,

1. **Y.I.**, 14.10.26
2. **Ibid**, 23.9.26
3. **Ibid**, 29.1.25
will then give the pupils a fine training in these fundamental virtues"¹. "It would be idle for me if I were a liar to teach the boys to tell the truth. A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant, and a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint"². "Teachers who themselves do not believe in non-violence or truth or non-co-operation, cannot impart to their students the spirit of any of these things ... nor may they expect to infect their pupils with love of the charka or khaddar if they will not spin themselves or wear khaddar"³. For, "Even a lofty utterance, that has not the backing of sincerity and experience, will be inert and lifeless, and will utterly fail to penetrate and quicken the hearts of man, while the speech that springs from self-realization and genuine experience is always fruitful"⁴. So, the "teacher had always to be mindful of his p's and q's whether he was in the midst of his boys or not"⁵. In the matter of religious instruction, no good work is ever done

1. Y.I., 12.12.28
3. Y.I., 15.7.26 (first italics mine)
4. Harijan, 21.11.36
except by the teacher living the religion himself. "I have found" says Gandhi, "that boys imbibe more from the teachers' own lives than they do from the books they read to them, or the lectures that they deliver to them with their lips. I have discovered to my great joy that boys and girls have unconsciously a faculty of penetration whereby they read the thoughts of their teachers. Woe to the teacher who teaches one thing with his lips, and carries another in his breast". Gandhi, therefore, asks teachers "to cultivate their hearts and establish with the students a heart-contact". He wants them to "fashion their (the students') hearts rather than their brains" and so calls for intimate contact, all the time, both in and out of school, between the educator and the educand. In fact, he stresses the influence that the educator can bring to bear on the educand by personal example more than by teaching, and outside of the school than, perhaps, inside. "I have felt" he says, "that the teacher's work lies more outside than inside the lecture-room. In this work-a-day life, where teachers and professors work for the wages they

2. Y.I.I., 4.4.29  
3. *Ibid*
get, they have no time to give to the students outside the class-room, and that is the greatest stumbling block in the development of the life and character of the students today\(^1\).

Gandhi's view of education as purposive direction is perhaps not fully in line with the prevalent notion that the best education consists in withholding all influence from the child, allowing him to develop entirely as his nature prompts. This is a legacy of the naturalist philosophy of education. Rousseau, and like him, other naturalists, believe that child nature should be allowed to unfold itself naturally as true education takes place when the nature, powers and inclinations of the child are allowed to develop freely with little guidance. The child should be allowed to follow the lines of his natural interests and to have a free choice of activities, with no interference or thwarting. The educator is barely tolerated. "Because the child comes from heaven there is a suggestion that the educator comes from another quarter"\(^2\). He is not

merely forbidden to resort to coercive or didactic methods but he may not even seek to influence. He could merely be an observer, from behind the scenes, of the child's development rather than be a giver of information, ideas, ideals, or a moulder of character. These the child will forge himself. His education is the free development of his interests and motives rather than an artificial effort made on him by an educator. Education is not so much preparation for living as living itself.

The idealist holds on the other hand that the aim of life is the exaltation of personality, or self-realization. It is true that every child has an inherent impulse to achieve his own proper form and attain perfection, but the educator has to help and guide him in this process. Indeed, some Platonic idealists believe that there exists in the nature of things a perfect pattern of each individual, and education should therefore be aimed at fostering in each individual life the realization of this perfect pattern. It is culture that welds humanity together, and so, to attain one's highest, truest self, one must delve into this common heritage of the race. The business of education thus becomes mainly
the transmission of spiritual experience, that is to say, the product of man's moral, intellectual and aesthetic activities throughout the ages. The idealist, therefore, looks upon education as purposive. If education is acculturization to any extent, its function enlarges beyond a mere leading-out process to active induction of the young into the culture of the community. In the last analysis this means that education must consist of influence brought to bear upon one mind by another. What is sought is a modification of natural development, and so education becomes purposive direction. The definition of education as "nurture of personal growth" and as "conservation, transmission and renewal of culture" implies the purposive nature of education in each of the two aspects of the process. The classic definition of education by Mill, years ago, as the "culture which each generation purposely gives to those who are its successors, in order to qualify them for at least keeping up, and if possible for raising, the level of

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 102 (italics mine)
improvement which has been attained \(^1\), indicates the purpose, perhaps more explicitly. The conception of education as a 'bi-polar' process by Sir John Adams\(^2\) stresses that the process is a conscious and deliberate one, the educator having a clearly realized intention of modifying the development of the educand. Gandhi, as an idealist, thinks on similar lines.

II. FREEDOM AND INDOCTRINATION.

Acceptance of the theory that education is directed discipline by the teacher does not, in any way, imply that the student should give blind obedience to whatever is taught or done by the educator. Gandhi makes this point quite clear in his reply to a teacher who wrote to tell him that boys of his school spin "merely on account of intense love" for Gandhi. "If anyone asks them the reason for their spinning" the teacher wrote, "they reply, 'it is Mahatmaji's order. It has to be obeyed'". Gandhi's observation on this was as follows: "I can conceive of occasions when implicit obedience, without waiting

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for reasoning out causes, is a necessity. ... But occasions for such obedience are, and must be, rare in any well-ordered society. The worst thing that can happen to boys in school is to have to render obedience to everything that the teacher says. On the contrary, if teachers are to stimulate the reasoning faculty of boys and girls under their care, they would continuously tax their reason and make them think for themselves ... teachers of national schools will take note of the warning I have uttered and prevent their pupils from lazily basing their actions upon statements, without testing, of men reputed to be great". In fact, he wants students to resist teachers' orders if they are not moral. "Thus, for instance, if a Principal, running counter to public opinion, refuses to recognize a day of universal rejoicing as a holiday, which both parents and their school or college-going children may desire, students will be justified in declaring a strike for that day .... In my opinion,

1. Y.I., 24.6.26
2. Cf: "Man needs society, but under actual conditions of imperfection, he must defend himself against society" - Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 55. In the school community too the same thing applies. Indeed in either case, the guarantee of freedom lies in this right to rebel against injustice.
students of a college are in duty bound to resist such breach of honour by their Principal .... It is impossible to render to a teacher that unreserved respect to which he is entitled by reason of his honourable calling, when he is found to be guilty of breach of honour .... They (the students) have a right to be left free to hold, and actively to advocate, what political opinion they choose". Students must be guaranteed the greatest freedom of opinion and speech. Gandhi is convinced that teachers can only point out to their pupils what they consider is the best way. Having done so, they have no right to curb their pupils' thoughts and feelings. Discipline has nothing to do with artificial restraint upon the students' all-round growth. Indeed Gandhi would give the students so much freedom of opinion that if they find teachers lacking in vitality, he says, they may, far from submitting to the teachers, burn them in their fire of righteousness; and if they have a real grievance against the teachers, they may have the right to strike and even picket their school or college,

1. Y.I., 24.1.29
2. Harijan, 2.10.37
though only to the extent of politely warning
the unwary from attending their classes"1. Gandhi
does not justify political strikes and demonstrations
by students2; what he favours and enjoins, is
that they should rebel against whatever is morally
repugnant. For example, he considers it "the
duty of every pure-minded student to rebel against
obscenity"3. Justifying the decision of his
daughter-in-law to omit to learn obscene and
erotic passages which filled pages and pages in
the textbooks prescribed for her university
examination, Gandhi says, "It is a mild strike

1. Harijan, 4.5.39.
2. "Whilst I have pleaded for the removal of
restrictions on speech and movements of students,
I am not able to support political strikes or
demonstrations ... They may openly sympathise
with any political party they like. But in my
opinion, they may not have freedom of action
whilst they are studying. A student cannot be
an active politician and pursue his studies at
the same time". Of course, Gandhi qualifies
this statement of his, immediately by one
observation: "It is difficult to draw hard and
fast lines at the time of big national upheavals.
Then they do not strike or, if the word 'strike'
can be used in such circumstances, it is a
wholesale strike; it is a suspension of studies.
Thus what may appear to be an exception is not one
in reality" - Harijan, 2.10.37
3. Harijan, 15.10.38
on her part, but this is an occasion which not only justifies a strike on the part of students and pupils, it is in my opinion, their duty to rise in revolt against such literature being forced on them .... Such a strike would not be boisterous. It would simply consist in the students notifying boycott of examinations, which require a study of objectionable literature¹. Indeed he would call upon the students to resist, in every legitimate manner, any attempt to force on them anything against their will².

It is important, thus to remember, that while Gandhi advocates indoctrination in education, he immediately adumbrates the necessary checks and balances to prevent its abuse. The discipline to which he would subject the student is purely voluntary discipline, arising out of love and respect for the teacher and his views. "Restraint self-imposed, is no compulsion. A man who chooses the path of freedom from restraint, i.e. of self indulgence, will be a bond slave of passions, whilst

1. Harijan, 15.10.38
2. Ibid, 9.1.37 (italics mine)
the man who binds himself to rules and restraint releases himself. All things in the universe, including the sun and the moon and the stars, obey certain laws. Without the restraining influences of these laws, the world would not go on for a single moment. You, whose mission in life is service of your fellow-men, will go to pieces if you do not impose on yourselves some sort of discipline... It is discipline and restraint that separate us from the brute. If we will be men walking with our heads erect, and not walking on all fours, let us understand and put ourselves under voluntary discipline and restraint". Of course, voluntary submission to authority is one thing, and forced obedience, quite another. The first is reminiscent of the moral influence of the saint and the expert, the second of the brute authority of the policeman. While the first is liberating, the second is suffocating, choking, killing the soul of man. Gandhi pointedly draws attention to this difference, when he says, "... there is compulsion and compulsion. We call self-imposed compulsion self-restraint. We hug it and grow under

1. Y.I., 23.1.30
it. But compulsion to be shunned, even at the
cost of life, is restraint super-imposed upon us
against our wills, and often with the object of
humiliating us and robbing us of our dignity as men
and boys, if you will. Social restraints generally
are healthy, and we reject them to our own undoing.
Submission to crawling orders is unmanly and cowardly.1

With the example of the totalitarian
States, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Communist
Russia, in our own times using education as a means
of indoctrination in ideologies that depersonalize
man and submerge him in an idolized and idealized
social order, we are indeed tempted to look askance
at the very idea of indoctrination. Instinctively
any one will say that we should have nothing to do
with an education which smacks of indoctrination.
But the fact remains that "no true education can
escape the responsibility of communicating a view of
life - that is, "indoctrinating".2 Says Professor
Jeffreys, "The cult of the open mind is a way of
camouflaging the poverty of an education which has no

1. Y.I., 14.10.26
2. Jeffreys, op. cit, p.56
view of life to communicate. Indoctrination is not an educational crime; it is an educational necessity, in religion as in table-manners. The crime is to indoctrinate in such a way as to destroy the freedom and responsibility of the pupil. It is by no means impossible - and the world's greatest teachers from Socrates onwards have proved it to be the very heart of teaching - to present a strongly held faith in such a way as to challenge the beholder to come to terms with it on his own personal responsibility. That there is no necessary opposition between doctrine and freedom is clear: when personal freedom is at the very heart of the doctrine. ¹ Gandhi's view of education as purposive direction need not, therefore, offend lovers of freedom, unless they stand for the freedom which comes from lack of conviction and leads ultimately to chaos. The Naturalist's view of freedom which leaves boys and girls to make up their own minds, actually leaves them, in most cases, incapable of doing so, and reduces knowledge to little more than information and fails to present a coherent

¹ Jeffreys, *op. cit.*, p. 56
view of life. Authority, there must be, if there is to be real education, but this is not to be an authority which kills freedom, subordinates truth to political expediency, and considers inculcation of orthodox opinion more important than cultivation of the power to think for oneself. Any true education must combine authority and freedom, as has been done by Gandhi. If education is to avail anything, it must have the unity and drive which comes from strongly held convictions, but it must leave the disciple to decide for himself how far he should partake of it. Jesus taught 'as one having authority', but He never questioned any one's freedom to reject Him; that way, he showed how authority and freedom should be combined in education. Gandhi is a true disciple of Christ, in this as in many other things.

"What is the secret of the combination of authority and freedom?", asks Prof. Jeffreys, and he supplies the answer that Christ had repeatedly stressed: in one word, it is Love. "Love is the key to all true relationship between persons;

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p.163
in fact, persons can grow as persons only if they love and are loved. For that reason love is at the very heart of education”¹. Gandhi's answer to the problem is the same as Christ's. Says Gandhi, "... It (ahimsa) is no wooden or life-­less dogma, but a living and life-giving force ... In the hands of the educationist, therefore, it ought to take the form of the purest love, ever fresh and ever gushing spring of life, expressing itself in every act"². The guru or teacher of the Indian tradition took the sishya or disciple into his hermitage, to live with him, and loved him as a father would his son, and by precept and example, nurtured his soul and body with his mind set on Heaven; and this supreme example of the love-bond between the teacher and the taught is what is behind the Gandhian concept of education as indoctrination.

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¹ Jeffreys, op. cit. p. 163
² Y.I., 6.9.28
CHAPTER II.

THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION: THE NURTURE OF PERSONALITY.

I. AIM OR AIMS?

If education is purposive direction, the question that naturally arises at once is 'what is that purpose?'. Educational aims "are correlative to ideals of life"¹, and so, as long as these ideals diverge, educational aims will also fail to agree. Aristotle had long ago recognized this truth when he said, "There is no agreement as to what the young should learn .... To begin with all people do not appreciate the same kind of goodness, so it is only to be expected that they should differ about the required training"². Thus, while Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus directed all his efforts to the greater glory of God, Herbert Spencer sought to make the best of the earth and so held preparation for complete living as the aim of education. While the Classic philosopher Plato stood for liberal education, the Christian philosopher St. Benedict stood for technical education. A variety

of aims have been proposed from the days of Plato to this present day which diverge all the way from the self-realization ideal of the idealists to the self-expression and adjustment-to-environment aim of the naturalists, and range through all the phases of education from a knowledge of 'useless' subjects pursued for its own sake to a knowledge of the purely useful ones which helped man immediately to earn his bread. Knowledge, culture, morality, utility, social efficiency, individuality, harmonious development of personality, have all been put forward at one time or another by well-meaning educationists according as they valued human life. Some philosophers laid down 'one good' as the goal of all our actions while others were content to say that several goods may co-exist and motivate our behaviour; and that therefore, in education, we may seek for "an aim or for aims".

Adams catalogues a long list of these aims and finding that "it is hopeless to select any one as the most likely to focus all the elements involved", he concludes that "Self-realization is in itself an all-comprehensive educational ideal" and that the others are only "complementary". Indeed, the sponsors of each of these aims saw part of the truth, not the whole truth, and were both right and wrong, like the blind men who gave different descriptions of the elephant. As Welton observes, "Divergence of view

"Preparation for complete living; the harmonious development of all the faculties; adaptation to environment; a sound mind in a sound body; the perfection of nature; the preparation for a perfect citizen; to develop children as imperfect beings into perfect beings; inward development; a gradual adjustment to the spiritual possessions of the race; to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright; a completely moral man; to develop self-activity; the transmission of life from the living through the living to the living; socialization, - an interminable list".

Evolution of Educational Theory, p. 39

1. Ibid, p. 146
2. Ibid, p. 11
3. Ibid, p. 40
4. Gandhi says, in the context of religion, "The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view and wrong from the point of view of one another, and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant" - Y.I., 21.1.26
as to what is man's highest good is possible only because our knowledge is fragmentary and our insight imperfect. The most opposed views as to life's issues which thinking men have advanced may be assumed to be true on their proper plane and in their right relations. Falsity comes in with exclusion; then partial truth is exalted into full truth, and one aspect of life given a dominance which a fuller knowledge would show it should not possess. To the extent to which we can see such unjustified limitations we may suggest a synthesis which would show that doctrines which are antithetical on a lower plane are really complementary on a higher".

The ideal of self-realization is held out by Gandhi as the end of all education, as is done by Sir John Adams; indeed it is the educational goal of all idealists, in one form or another. It is a synthetic aim which takes note of the claims of both the individual and of society, and of the aims severally suggested. Sir Percy Nunn's individual aim too, properly interpreted, takes note

of the claims of both the individual and community. Any good education has to take into account these two aspects. This is why the process of education cannot be truly understood unless looked at as a process affecting both the individual and the community. Thus Prof. Jeffreys, while holding that "the aim of Christian education is to glorify God" by doing His work, defines education in the following words: "Considered as the process by which the

1. Sir Percy Nunn's statement, "We shall stand throughout on the position that nothing good enters into the human world except in and through the free activities of individual men and women and that educational practice must be shaped to accord with that truth" (Education, Its Date and First Principles, 1920, p.4) together with his biological arguments in support of the theory, have led people to believe that he is unduly stressing the claims of the individual - even to the extent of self-expression in the naturalist sense. But Nunn does not forget the social obligations of the individual, for he says that "individual life can develop only in terms of its own nature, and that is social as truly as it is self-regarding" (Ibid). All that can be said, therefore, is only that Nunn lays greater emphasis on the individuality than on socialization. To Nunn, as Prof. Cavenagh says, the individual is not a fragment of an already existing society, but society is an agglomeration of individuals - Cf: F.A. Cavenagh, The Development of Educational Thought in the United Kingdom 1920-35. A Review of Educational Thought, Evans, London, p.29
individual human being becomes the best that he is capable of becoming, education may be described as the nurture of personal growth. Considered as an instrument by which the community maintains itself, education may be described as the conservation, transmission and renewal of culture". Aims of education too, it is now realized, cannot be properly understood unless similarly considered analytically and comprehensively and not, as was done before, in merely general terms. "Principles must be interpreted in the context of actual situations, and particular programmes must be seen as interpretations of general aims. That is to say, education has both general and special aims. There are things which it is always the business of education to do; and there are the means by which these things have to be done in given circumstances. If the general aim alone is stated, we find ourselves presented with indubitable but useless truths. If only the special aim is stated, we have something practical but merely pragmatic and not related to first

principles - i.e., not fully understood. If we are to frame a satisfactory philosophy of education it is therefore necessary to state a general aim and a special aim of education\(^1\). Jeffreys states the general aim of education as "the creation of personal freedom in community"\(^2\) and the special aim today as "a double redemption, of the individual and of society - of the bewildered individual from depersonalization and of the planned society from tyranny"\(^3\). The creation of a "community of free fellowship"\(^4\), he says, is the only way out of the Scylla and Charybdis of chaos and collectivism, false freedom and false community, but considers it as an ideal impossible of achievement. What is practical in a democracy will be, he thinks, to provide such a combination of liberty and order as is most conducive to the development of the "community of freedom and responsibility". In this community man will glorify God by doing His work.

\(^1\) Jeffreys, op.cit, p.9  
\(^2\) Ibid, p.45  
\(^3\) Ibid, p.55 f  
\(^4\) Ibid, p.55
The idea of a "universal aim" of education applicable to all persons, as conceived by Gandhi and Adams is, however, questioned by Sir Percy Nunn. He says that beyond the ideal of developed individuality "there can be no universal aim of education if that assertion is to include any particular ideal of life; for, there are as many ideals as there are persons". Prof. Gayenagh points out how Sir Fred Clarke has trenchantly criticized this view. The idea of the individual as the unit predominates Nunn's thesis but:"Nowhere does Nunn show a real grasp of ... Reality as a whole. He sets out from the conception of a human individual as given and exhibits education as the guided and assisted development of the individual as such. It is all development, the

1. Nunn, op. cit (3rd ed.), p. 13. Nunn thinks that no single formula will suffice for 'the good' "For", he says, "A's idea of a fine character turns out to be either ridiculous or rankly offensive to B; what C regards as complete living would be a spiritual death for D; while the mens sana in corpore sano that E reveres F loathes as the soul of a prig housed in the body of a barbarian", Ibid, p. 9.
individual makes himself; and there is no revelation of him as a centre in which a whole universal order comes to a self-conscious realisation of itself. But, just as the individual being an unreal abstraction, cannot be taken as a datum, so his unique contribution cannot exist as a thing apart, peculiar to himself. Prof. Clarke maintains on the contrary that "there is a universal aim of education that holds for all alike ... 'To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever' .... The assertion of personal responsibility and of personal value does not at all require the implied denial of an eternal objective order expressing itself in and through the lives and achievements of free responsible individuals". Gandhi would have completely endorsed this view of Prof. Clarke.

1. Cavenagh, op.cit, p.29 f.
II THE NURTURE OF THE SATYAGRAHI.

1. Culture of the Heart. We have already seen that Gandhi's ultimate aim is to lift the human species to a higher moral and spiritual plane where they could "glorify God and enjoy Him for ever". This higher life could be ushered in by purging life of its sources of error and mischief. It was clear to Gandhi as to the thinking men of the West today, that "the supreme need of the modern world is the maintenance of personal values and the creation of personal living. Any attempt to achieve the truly personal level in living and thinking must also be an attempt to create true freedom and true community". The first paragraph of the revised syllabus for the Training of Basic teachers indicates this special aim of education: "The objective of Nai Talim is the balanced and harmonious development of all the faculties - physical, intellectual and spiritual - of the individual and the evolution of a new social order based on co-operative work". Thus Gandhi's special or immediate aim is two-fold - the all-round development of the individual and the evolution of a new community. If what we seek is

1. Jeffreys, op.cit p.45
freedom and peace, and not war and wealth, our entire economic, social and political set-up will have to be re-shaped, and education will have to be directed to this end. For it is persons who make society and a new society cannot be ushered in except by re-making souls. Thus the two-fold aim, as envisaged in the syllabus for teachers, practically narrows down to the raising of a particular type of individual—whom Gandhi calls the Satyagrahi. The Satyagrahi individual is the brick to raise the new social order—the non-violent co-operative society, which is the nearest approximation to the "community of free fellowship" envisaged by the Christian thinkers, and which Gandhi has called the Ramaraj. Ramaraj is Heaven on Earth, and naturally, the pursuit of its citizens will be the glorification of God by doing His work.

Gandhi dreams, we might say in other words, of creating a nation of little Gandhis—not soul-less imitations but fully developed personalities, who, disciplined in non-violent values, will be able to see beauty in simplicity, poverty and slowness, and will find God in responding adequately, of their own will, to the demands of social service. And Gandhi is no
mere dreamer, an arm-chair philosopher evolving mere theory; his thoughts are rooted in experience and he was convinced that they are capable of translation into practice. Many things we had thought once impossible have happened, and Gandhi's ideals were never thought, at least by him, as impossible. "I am a dreamer", he says; "If am, indeed, a practical dreamer. My dreams are not airy nothings. I want to convert my dreams into realities as far as possible". So he drew up a scheme of education directed so effectively to this end. Knowing how difficult it is to change people in adult life and how comparatively easy it is to bring up children in better ways, he pinned his faith on children and in a better way of education to bring about this silent, social revolution.

The first requisite for self-realization, according to Gandhi is self-purification. This is possible only through an ethical discipline and so the moral discipline of the Satyagrahi becomes his first consideration. The seeker after truth should be disciplined in non-violent values as truth can be discerned only through non-violence – a pure heart.

1. Harijan 17.11.33, (italics mine)
2. Cf: The discipline of the Satyagrahis as outlined in Part I.
devoid of all cobwebs of ignorance alone can hear the voice of God within and live up to it. Ahimsa being the means to truth, education should be directed towards cultivating the non-violent spirit, and education in truth will follow from it as its natural end. Ahimsa is not so much a mental or intellectual attitude as a quality of the heart and soul. So, an "unswerving faith in God" must be the "first and last shield and buckler" of the Satyagrahi. Everything must be done Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam. For, "Goodness conceived apart from Him is a life-less thing .... so are all morals. If they are to live in us they must be considered and cultivated in their relation to God". Religion and morality, of both of which, truth is the bottom, thus become supreme considerations in education. Education becomes 'religious education' when, as A.N. Whitehead puts it, it is "an education which inculcates duty and reverence".

Morality, for Gandhi, is the very corner-stone of life. The existence and progress of individuals and

1. Harijan, 23.6.46
2. Ibid, 13.10.40
3. Ibid, 24.8.47
society depend on it. The moral sense is ingrained in man's nature, and has become his inner guide. It goads man to reform himself by keeping in check the passions, impulses and selfish desires which, otherwise, lead to discord, strife and moral ruin and by promoting the other-regarding sentiments which create peace, harmony and happiness. Love is the essence of morality; for it helps the finite individual to widen his narrow self and include in his life more and more of others, and thereby progress towards the Universal or God. All religions agree that "it is in and through love that persons grow". It is love that creates freedom, and it is love alone that can redeem the misuse of freedom. All our duties towards fellow-beings are an expression of love. Love in man is thus the Divine Law or the God inherent in him. The path to the realization of the true self or God, therefore, lies through love of others and the performance of duties in the spirit of sacrifice towards others as such love demands. Morality thus becomes the essence of religion or the way to God. It should be possible for man by his discipline in morality, to become a law unto himself,

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1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p.45
2. Ibid, p.116
thus making the external pressure of state laws unnecessary. As Sir Stafford Cripps, not long ago said, the supreme test of democracy is whether people can do the right thing of their own accord. When this stage is reached we will be nearing the stage of enlightened anarchy which Gandhi envisaged.

Idealist educators from the days of Socrates have recognized that education must be directed towards the development of character and personality. But many of them had thought that virtue depended on knowledge and therefore could be taught. Socrates thus held that the man who had true knowledge could not be other than virtuous: "No man" he says, "who either knows or believes that other things are better than that which he is doing, if they are such things as he can do, proceeds to do the less good when he might do the better". Herbart, who held morality to be the 'one and the whole aim of education' also exalted the power of knowledge to produce virtue. Believing that the 'circle of thought' will lead to wise and virtuous activity, he wanted the child's mind to be planted with

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p.52
2. Curtis and Boultwood, op. cit, p.347
ideas in order to make him a moral being. John Locke, the English 18th century philosopher, too, considered knowledge as the supreme good or at least the gateway to it and advocated intellectual training, as the panacea for all evils. But, "Logic unaided has not so far succeeded in carrying us to the heart of reality"\(^1\). "... after six thousand years of civilized history, man still fails to achieve the community of love"\(^2\). Persistent sinning against the light by man, all through these ages, has proved that virtue is not, as Socrates maintained, a function of reason. It is one thing to perceive and know what things we ought to do, but quite another "to have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same"\(^3\). Convinced that mere intellectualism cannot deliver the goods, people have now taken to faith, and a "yearning for something to believe is discernible"\(^4\). "Like Aristotle we again realize that virtue is a state of the will rather than the intellect. Modern education regards character-training as of supreme importance, seeking to discipline the emotions, to orientate the

1. Ross, *op. cit*, p. 31
2. Jeffreys, *op. cit*, p. 19
3. *Ibid*
4. Ross, *op. cit*, p. 31
feeling-life, emphasizing doing rather than knowing. Even religious training and Bible teaching are advocated, often by the most unexpected people”¹.

"Genuine education for character is genuine education for community", says Martin Buber. For, "A great and full relation between man and man can only exist between unified and responsible persons"². A.J. Toynbee expresses the same truth when he says that "the transference of the field of action from the macrocosm to the microcosm" is the criterion of the growth of civilization³. All development must be inward, in the individual; the prospect of a better world depends, as we have seen before, on 'remaking' people, not in inventing 'systems'. No system could ever be a guarantee against the mischief of the perverted individual. The salvation of mankind lies in man.

This is why Gandhi emphasizes 'culture of the heart' much more than the culture of the head - training of the emotions and the feeling life more than the intellect or the power of abstract thinking. "Culture

¹. Ross, *op. cit*, p. 32  
². Cf: Jeffreys, *op. cit*, p. 140  
³. Ibid.
of the mind must be subservient to the culture of the heart"\textsuperscript{1}. In his \textit{Autobiography}, he writes, "I had always given the first place to the culture of the heart or the building of character" - in referring to the education of children in the Tolstoy Farm; and he proceeds to say, "I regarded character-building as the proper foundation for their education, and if the foundation was firmly laid, I was sure the children could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends"\textsuperscript{2}. To a gathering of Burmese students in Rangoon, his advice was "Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything will be added unto you. Do not go to your books or to your teachers with impure hearts. Go with the purest hearts, and you will get from them what you want. If you want to become patriots, real patriots and protectors of the weak, espousers of the cause of the poor and the oppressed... if you want to become guardians of the purity of every girl and woman in Burma, purify your hearts first"\textsuperscript{3}.

Addressing a group of college boys, he said,""Your education is absolutely worthless if it is not built on a solid foundation of truth and purity. If you, boys, are not careful about the personal purity of

1. Mahadev Desai, \textit{op.cit}, p.144
3. \textit{Y.I.}, 4.4.29
your lives, and if you are not careful about being pure in thought, speech and deeds, then I tell you that you are lost, although you may become perfect finished scholars"\(^1\). "All your scholarship, all your study of Shakespeare and Wordsworth would be in vain", he told students at Agra, "if at the same time you do not build your character, and attain mastery over thoughts and actions"\(^2\). At the Zahira College, Colombo, he warned students, "All the education you are receiving in this great College will be reduced to nothing, if it is not built on the foundation of a pure character"\(^3\). In Madras he spoke as follows: "When your heart is not pure, and you cannot master your passions, you cease to be an educated man .... And what is education without character, and what is character without elementary personal purity?"\(^4\). A chivalrous boy, Gandhi said, "would always keep his mind pure, his eyes straight and his hands unpolluted"\(^5\). "The conquest of lust is the highest endeavour of a man or woman's existence. Without overcoming lust, man cannot hope to rule over self. And without rule

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2. Y.I., 19.9.29
4. Y.I., 15.9.27
over self there can be no swaraj or Ramraj ... No worker who has not overcome lust, can hope to render any genuine service to the cause of Harijans, communal unity, khadi, cow-protection or village reconstruction. Great causes like these cannot be served by intellectual equipment alone, they call for spiritual effort or soul force. Soul force comes only through God's grace, and God's grace never descends upon a man who is a slave to lust. Thus, purity of personal life, controlling lust and self, and purity of heart, in thought, word and deed, Gandhi considered constituted the chief factors in character. This would easily follow if boys took their stand on truth and non-violence, which are the 'solid foundation' of all character. Inner purity, pointed out Gandhi, must show itself in outward acts and outward behaviour as well. Thus a boy who wants to keep his mouth pure, will, not merely not utter a bad word but he will not drink or smoke, or take any other stimulants - even coffee or tea. He would be "fearlessly truthful against heaviest odds

1. Harijan, 21.11.36
3. Ibid, p.75f, Vide supra, p.74 f
4. Y.I., 15.9.27
under every circumstance imaginable. A truthful boy, a brave boy, will never think of hurting even a fly. He will defend all the weak boys in his own school and help whether inside the school or outside the school all those who need his help'1. Gandhi expected this inner purity and fearlessness to express themselves also in pupil's manners. "All the education they receive will be in vain" he said, "if they do not learn good manners"2. He considered that it was "as much the concern of professors and school teachers to ensure gentlemanliness among their pupils as to prepare them for the subjects prescribed for the class-room"3.

Character-training has been upheld as the end of education in England from the beginning of the Public Schools. And the first Code for Elementary Schools, issued in 1904 by Robert Morant declared it to be the aim of the public system of education as well: "The purpose of the Public elementary school is to form and strengthen the character and to develop the intelligence of the children entrusted to it ... to fit themselves practically as well as intellectually for the work of life"4. But there has, perhaps, never been

1. Mahadev Desai, op. cit, p.109
2. Harijan, 31.12.38
3. Ibid
unanimity as to the precise statement of the English ideal of character. Matthew Arnold had said that his ideal was to make Christian gentlemen, and he meant by it certain ethical ideals of conduct such as loyalty, self-control, endurance, courage, prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, and these came to be known as the Public School virtues. This is now "absorbed into our general educational philosophy, with the result that schools of every type in this country practise in some degree the various methods of indirect training in social habit which the great Victorian Headmasters were so fond of expounding". The character envisaged by the Board of Education has also been one of duty. The British aim, in short, has been to turn out sensible individuals appreciative of their civic responsibilities. "We have sought to prepare men and women to live and to expect themselves to live, at a moral level which was neither that of a saint nor that of the fool or the selfish hedonist ... We have expected our schools and colleges to make us wish to put more into the pool than we took out; to accept the responsibilities

laid upon us by our natural gifts and other advantages; to do many things with credit, and one thing as well as we are capable of doing; to act from desire for human welfare; and not from fear; and to acquire according to our abilities, the self control, endurance, and intellectual acumen and enterprise necessary for this way of life.

"This programme differs from the aims as given by the great philosophers only by setting the sights too low. There is nothing in it about beauty and the arts; nothing about truth and pure reason; nothing about the love of God or religion. If the truth be told, we have traditionally been tempted to leave it to other agencies to see to these things. But if in our education we have aimed rather low, we have been taught by many to come very near in the past to hitting the mark we aimed at". It is true that this practical ethics have stood the English in good stead but all the same, it has not been considered by many as a complete ideal. Prof. Jeffreys points out as its defect that "There is no suggestion made that the controlling force should be the love of a personal God";

1. G.R. Morris, The State and Education, Dobinson, op. cit, p. 11f
education is man-centred, and it makes a
great difference in the attitude of man from what
a god-centred education could develop. Freedom
from frustration can come only from belief in God.

Herein is the difference in the conception
of character as defined by the Mahatma. His
standards of conduct are broad-based on religion
as well as practical ethics, and so character
envisioned by him is deeper and more comprehensive—he wants to turn out individuals appreciative
not merely of civic responsibilities but sensitive
of their membership of the Kingdom of God. Thus
he insisted on pure brahmacharya even on the
part of married students, and on absolute
simplicity of life. "... during your student
days", said Gandhi, "you are expected not to
dissipate energy but to conserve it". He points
out that "the ancient word for a vidyarthi is
brahmachari, because all his study and activity
had as their objective the search of Brahman and
he built his life on a sure foundation of stoic

1. Y.I., 19.9.29
simplicity and self-restraint, which every religion has enjoined on the student"\(^1\). The word *brahmachari* means "searcher after God, one who conducts himself so as to bring himself nearest to God in the least possible time"\(^2\). In ancient India, the *guru* enjoined on his disciples a life of austere simplicity and strict celibacy; and in dispensing knowledge to them, he had subordinated the secular to the spiritual. "Modern education", says Gandhi, "turns our eyes away from the spirit. The possibilities of spirit force or soul force do not therefore appeal to us, and our eyes are consequently rivetted on the evanescent, transitory, material force"\(^3\). No education can be real unless it caters to the spirit. Says Gandhi, "Long before I undertook the education of the youngsters of the Tolstoy Farm I had realized that the training of the spirit was a thing by itself. To develop the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards a knowledge

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1. *Y.I.*, 21.7.27  
2. *Ibid*, 8.9.27  
3. *Ibid*, 14.11.29
of God and self-realization. And I held that this was an essential part of the training of the young, and that all training without culture of the spirit was of no use, and might even be harmful". Gandhi believes that "those who defer preparation for this invaluable experience until the last stage of life, (i.e. Sannyasa), attain not self-realization but old age amounting to a second and pitiable childhood, living as a burden on this earth". He regards the life of a student as spiritually similar to that of an ascetic, as both must be devoted to the things of the spirit, 'eternal verities' and be the purest possible.

Thus Gandhi would like to turn all schools and colleges into "factories for the making of character", turning out "good men and women". Opening the Gujarat Vidyapith, Gandhi said: "We inaugurate it to inculcate character and courage

1. Autobiography, II, p. 200 f
2. Ibid, p. 201
3. Y.I., 29.1.25
4. Ibid, 30.7.31
in students"¹ and he called upon the Principal and Professors to teach them lessons of freedom, "not by their scholarship but by their sterling character"².

The end of all knowledge, according to Gandhi, must be the formation of character; for, he realized that virtue consists not in the possession of ideas but ideals. He says, "... education should automatically serve to bring home to children the essential distinction between man and brute, to make them realize that it is man's special privilege and pride to be gifted with the faculties of head and heart both, that he is a thinking no less than a feeling animal as the very derivation of the word manushya shows; and to renounce the sovereignty of reason over the blind instincts is, therefore, to renounce a man's estate. In man, reason quickens and guides the feeling; in brute, the soul lies ever dormant. To awaken the heart is to awaken the dormant soul,

¹ Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 511.
² Ibid, p. 510
to awaken reason, and to inculcate discrimination between good and evil"\(^1\). It is no wonder that holding this view, Gandhi's reply to the question "What is your goal in education when India obtains self-rule?" was: "Character-building. I would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget oneself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy, academic learning is only a means to this great end"\(^2\).

2. **Culture of the Head.** Neither naturalism nor pragmatism nor idealism declares knowledge as the end of education, though adjustment to environment, creation of values, or the perfection of personality, is hardly possible without it. Practically, therefore, all educators, whatever their philosophical standpoint be, turn to knowledge as the indispensable means to achieve their ends. Gandhi, too attaches great importance to knowledge for rearing the *Satyagrahi*. Knowledge

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1. *Harijan*, 21.11.36
2. N.K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 254
greatly helps the culture of the heart. Love and knowledge of truth help each other. Love, in its un-enlightened form manifests itself as a blind animal impulse centred mostly in the body; it is knowledge which liberates love from its narrow limits. It is when man realizes his underlying Reality and through it his inseparable relations with the rest of existence, that his love extends beyond his body and his immediate interests. Knowledge is, similarly necessary to assess the conditions of other fellow-beings concerned in the action, the environmental conditions, and above all, the motives behind the action. "Our desires and motives may be divided into two classes - selfish and unselfish. All selfish desires are immoral, while the desire to improve ourselves for the sake of doing good to others is truly moral". Knowledge helps one to carry out a self-analysis and thus to purify one's action. It may also help one to see himself as others see him and thus rectify the mistakes, if any, arising out of self-analysis.

1. N.K. Bose, op. cit, p. 223.
Knowledge alone can lead to humility, which is absolutely necessary to enable one to realize God. Even to understand what is truly moral, knowledge is required. "The only moral life" as Stephens Spinks points out, "is a continuous attempt not only to be better than has been done (sic) before, but also to enlarge the arena of action over which the distinction between Right and Wrong applies." True morality is thus progressive. The morality of custom is static; it seeks to maintain and not surpass the standards reached in the common life of a society, and unless challenged, custom soon grows into tyranny, ceasing to be moral 'in any neutral sense'. Gandhi had this distinction well in mind. In line with Hindu philosophy, he believed that human progress depended on individuals and social groups basing their lives on the five cardinal virtues of truthfulness, non-violence, self-control, non-stealing and non-possession, but in line with the

conception of progressive morality, he had his own interpretations given to each of them. He also held that a progressive re-planning of social, economic and political life on the basis of these moral principles alone could assure a regeneration of moral life. Education, he held, must, therefore, enable students to reform social evils. "Of what value is their education" he asks speaking of educated girls agreeing to give dowry, "if it does not enable them to defy a custom which is wholly indefensible, and repugnant to one's moral sense?". In short, if spiritual freedom is the end of education, knowledge has a great deal to do with it. "The motto of the Gujarat Vidyapith is sa vidya ya vimuktaye. It means: that is knowledge which is (leads to) salvation. On the principle that the greater includes the less, national independence or material freedom is included in the spiritual. The knowledge gained in educational institutions must, therefore" says Gandhi, "at least teach the way and lead to such freedom."

1. See supra I, Chapters 1 & 2
2. Y.I., 9.6.27
3. Harijan, 23.5.36
4. Y.I., 20.3.30
It is unfortunate that there is wide-spread feeling that "Gandhiji lays all stress on character and attaches little importance to intellectual training and development". It is true that Gandhi stresses character more than the intellect; this is because intellect without character can be very dangerous. But it is far from neglecting intellectual training. What he says is only that "Mere mental training is nothing if it is not accompanied by a true training of the heart". Education of the heart consists in the refinement of our emotions and impulses; promoting our deepest feelings of love, sympathy, and fellowship through such activities as drawing, music and handicrafts. He puts his faith on right thinking, and right thinking, he defines as the right conception of fundamentals. He recognizes the importance of the intellect in the pursuit of non-violence, for he says, "If the intellect plays a large part in the field of violence, I hold that it plays a larger part in the field of non-violence".

3. Harijan, 21.7.40
that the conscious cultivation of non-violence itself will bring about the intellectual development of the satyagrahi - "... true practice of ahimsa means also in one who practises it, the keenest intelligence and wide-awake conscience"\(^1\). Truth and non-violence are not for the dense. Pursuit of them is bound to result in an all-round growth of the body, mind and heart. If this does not follow, ... we are untrue"\(^2\). The Gandhian concept of education as "that which draws out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of children"\(^3\) certainly militates against any undue neglect of the development of the intellect.

What Gandhi was against, and strongly against, was the prevalent practice of making a fetish of literary training as the sole means of training the intellect and character. "My experience has proved to my satisfaction that literary training, by itself does not add an inch to one's moral height and that character-building is independent of literary training"\(^4\). "Literacy is not the end of education

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1. Harijan, 8.9.40
2. Ibid, 8.5.37
3. Ibid, 11.9.37 (italics mine)
4. Y.I., 1.6.21 (italics mine)
nor even the beginning. It is one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education. Indeed, education and literacy are two different things, and there are examples in history, of many a great man who was educated in the strict sense of the term without being literate - the Great Moghal, Akbar, for example. And as Prof. Ross points out, have we not among us many unlettered saints and erudite scoundrels? Gandhi considers true, 'primary' education as character-building, and so in his opinion, an unsophisticated shepherd who is possessed of character is more truly educated than many who have had modern schooling, which is nothing but literary training. "The ordinary meaning of education is a knowledge of letters. To teach boys reading, writing and arithmetic is called primary education. A peasant earns his bread honestly. He has ordinary knowledge of the world. He knows fairly well how he should behave towards his parents, his wife, his children and his fellow-villagers. He

1. Harijan, 31.7.37
understands and observes the rules of morality. But he cannot write his name. What do you propose to do by giving him a knowledge of letters? Will you add an inch to his happiness?" In saying this, Gandhi realizes that the real curse to be removed is ignorance, not illiteracy. If literacy is not education, says Gandhi, neither is mere learning of a few subjects like geography, astronomy or algebra, true education; for, they do not become an aid for man's controlling his senses. "Therefore", he says, "whether you take elementary education or higher education, it is not required for the main thing. It does not make men of us. It does not enable us to do our duty". This is a truth recognized by all educators. Says A.N. Whitehead, "Education with inert ideas is not only useless: it is, above all things, harmful — corruptio optimi, pessima". Mere information is more a burden than help; facts, if they are to be of any use must cease to be the furniture of the mind

1. Hind Swaraj, p. 78
2. Ibid., p. 79
3. A.N. Whitehead, op.cit, p. 2
and become the mind itself - fact must become faculty. Knowledge is power to do, and so must include practice. "First-hand knowledge is the ultimate basis of intellectual life. To a large extent book-learning conveys second-hand information, and as such can never rise to the importance of immediate practice .... The second-handedness of the learned world is the secret of its mediocrity". "Mere book-learning" says Gandhi, "will be of little use to you in after life. I know from correspondence with students all over India, what wrecks they have become by having stuffed their brains with information derived from a cart-load of books. Some have become unhinged, others have become lunatics, some have been leading a life of helpless impurity. Liberal education is not 'bookish' education but an education which makes one 'free' - liber in this context means not 'book' but 'free', and this seems to have been long misunderstood - free from the fetters of ignorance, prejudice and obsession, free to think independently;

2. A.N. Whitehead, op.cit, p.79
3. Y.I., 4.4.29
it is one which enables "men and women to understand the world in which they live and to contribute to the understanding of its problems". Gandhi is not an opponent of liberal education in this sense. All that he did was to decry an education which bred book-worshippers, which divorced thought from action.

Indeed, Gandhi had a hard time convincing unbelievers of the "utterly false idea that intelligence can be developed only through book-reading". "It is not by making our brains a storehouse for cramming facts" he pointed out, "that our understanding is opened. An intelligent approach to industrial training is often a more valuable aid to the intellect than an indifferent reading of literature". He adds, "... the quickest development of the mind can be achieved by artisan's work being learnt in a scientific manner. True development of the mind commences immediately the apprentice is taught at every step why a particular manipulation of hand or a tool is required". As Whitehead points out, "What

1. Spens Report, H.M.S.O. 1938, p.XXI.
2. Harijan, 9.1.37
3. Y.I., 21.6.28
4. Harijan, 9.1.37
education has to impart is an intimate sense for the power of ideas, for the beauty of ideas and for the structure of ideas, together with a particular body of knowledge which has peculiar reference to the life of the being possessing it. For this, "education should give the pupil a technique, a science, an assortment of general ideas, and aesthetic appreciation". If Gandhi attached great importance to education or intellectual training through manual work, it is because he realized the full significance of education in this sense. He did not cry down a knowledge of letters in all circumstances. "In its place it can be of use and it has its place when we have brought our senses under subjection and put our ethics on a firm foundation. And then, if we feel inclined to receive that education, we may make good use of it. As an ornament it is likely to sit well on us". For, in its essence, a literary education is an aristocratic education implying leisure and freedom from want, and so far as it promotes thought and aesthetic appreciation its value will be truly cultural. Sarvepalli

1. A.N. Whitehead, op.cit, p.18
2. Ibid, p.75
3. Hind Swaraj, p.80
Radhakrishnan points out, "Mere knowledge which gratifies curiosity is different from culture which refines personality. Culture is not remembering a mass of curious details about the dates of birth of the great heroes of the world or the interesting names of the fastest ships which cross the Atlantic or entertaining odds and ends gathered from the latest Who's Who". "A man's culture is not to be judged by the amount of tabulated information which he has at his command but by the quality of mind which he brings to bear on the facts of life". Though literary training may lead to culture, it need not necessarily lead to true culture; and it is not the only way to it. We find that Gandhi considers spinning to be more ennobling for its cultural value than anything else. In his address to the girls of the Kasturba Balikashram, New Delhi, Gandhi defines his idea of culture. "I attach far more importance to the cultural aspect of education than to the

1. Dr. Sir. S. Radhakrishnan, Freedom and culture, Natesan, Madras, 1936, p.29.
2. Ibid, p.30
3. Mahadev Desai, op.cit, p.108
literary. Culture is the foundation, the primary thing which girls ought to get from here. It should show itself in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal behaviour, how you sit, how you walk, how you dress etc, so that anybody might be able to see at a glance that you are the product of this institution. Inner culture must be reflected in your speech, the way in which you treat visitors and guests, and behave towards one another and your teachers and elders". In fact, he calls it the 'music of life'. Speaking at Santiniketan, he says, "The music of life is in danger of being lost in the music of the voice. Why not the music of the walk, of the march, of every movement of ours and of every activity? It was not an idle remark which I made at the Mandir service about the way in which boys and girls should know how to walk, how to march, how to sit, how to eat, in short how to perform every function of life. This is my idea of music". This idea of culture as a quality of the soul permeating all aspects of one's behaviour is reminiscent of the idea of culture in English education as embodied in the notion of 'the Oxford

touch and the Girton manners'.

The distinction between knowledge and literacy which Gandhi so clearly draws is seen again in his statement that a knowledge of letters is not our

Kamadhuk. Apart from this, Gandhi never under-rated the need for literary training. He valued it "too much to despise or even belittle its merit as a vehicle of education". Both in the Tolstoy Farm and in the

Satyagraha Ashrams, he had made special provision for the literary education of the men, women and children under his care. And with regard to the Wardha Scheme, he says: "There is nothing in what I have said, to warrant such a belief. For, have I not contended that the children in the schools of my conception will receive every instruction through the handicrafts? That includes literacy. In my scheme of things the hand will handle tools before it draws or traces the writing. The eyes will read the pictures of letters and words as they will know other things in life, the ears will catch the names and the meanings of things and sentences. The whole training will be natural, responsive, and therefore,

1. Hind Swaraj, p.80
the quickest and the cheapest in the land. The children of my school will, therefore, read much more quickly than they will write ... they will trace correct letters even as they will trace correct figures of the objects they see. If the schools of my conception ever come into being, I make bold to say that they will vie with the most advanced schools in quickness so far as reading is concerned, and even writing, if it is common ground that the writing must be correct and not incorrect as now in the vast majority of cases". "The scheme I am adumbrating does not exclude literary training. No course of primary instruction would be complete that did not include reading, writing and arithmetic". And the syllabus of the scheme includes a good deal of history, geography and the sciences as well as literature, "all this and much more".

3. Culture of the Hands. Gandhi had, from the very beginning of his educational experiments in South Africa, looked upon education as an "all-round development of the boys and girls". As Mahadev Desai points

4. Harijan, 28.8.37
2. Y.I. 11.7.29
3. Vide Infra. Part III, Ch. 7 Sec II
4. Harijan 18.9.37
out, "Education, he has often explained, must draw the whole man out of the boy and girl, and no education could be sound that does not make useful citizens, whole men of boys and girls". This conception is in line with the harmonious development aim of the idealists and it stresses attention to all the four aspects of human personality - the body, heart, mind and spirit. How similar does this sound to the view accepted by the Board of Education in England that "the aim of education should be to develop to the full the potentialities of every child at school in accord always with the general good of the community of which he is a member". In India, the growth of the whole nature of the boy, and not the growth of his intellect merely, was the objective of... ancient pedagogy... Their aim was to produce not mere recluses or scholars but whole men, ideal householders who would perfect family, society and country. The head and heart and hand of man are a trinity in unity, and so, education of the whole man meant perfection of human nature by a harmonious development of all the powers - neglect

2. Handbook of Suggestions, p. 12
of any one aspect would be incomplete, faulty education. All this was no new idea, but it was certainly a new idea originating with Gandhi that this all-round development could be achieved best by education through craft. It is true that in the Middle Ages, handicrafts were taught to students, "but the occupational training, then, was far from serving an educational purpose. The crafts were taught only for the sake of crafts, without any attempt to develop the intellect as well". Answering an educational officer who mentioned that the underlying ideas of his scheme were mediaeval, Gandhi wrote, "I do not know what happened in the Middle Ages. But I do know that the aim in the Middle Ages, or any Age was never to develop the whole man through crafts. The idea is original". There has been education of the head, heart, and hands before, but not education of the hand and the heart through the education of the hands. Says Gandhi, "We have up to now concentrated on stuffing children's minds

1. Educational Reconstruction, p. 118. There were, of course, exceptions - Vide Supra, p. 7 f.
2. Harijan, 16.10.37
with all kinds of information, without ever thinking of stimulating and developing them. Let us cry a halt and concentrate on educating the child properly through manual work, not as a side activity, but as the prime means of intellectual training".\(^1\)

Says A.N. Whitehead, "There are ... three main roads along which we can proceed with good hope of advancing towards the best balance of intellect and character: these are the way of literary culture, the way of scientific culture, the way of technical culture. No one of these methods can be exclusively followed without grave loss of intellectual activity and of character. But a mere mechanical mixture of the three curricula will produce bad results in the shape of scraps of information never inter-connected or utilised.... The problem of education is to retain the dominant emphasis, whether literary, scientific, or technical, and without loss of co-ordination to infuse into each way of education something of the other two".\(^2\).

Education through craft solves the problem, perhaps better than anything else could do. Not that education

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1. Harijan, 18.9.37
2. A.N. Whitehead, op. cit., p.84f.
through educationally productive mental work will not suffice. But Gandhi claims for craft decidedly superior psychological, social and economic advantages. Whitehead himself seems to throw his weight in favour of an education with its emphasis on the training of the hands. He remarks, "It is a moot point whether the human hand created the human brain or the brain created the hand. Certainly the connection is intimate and reciprocal." Like Gandhi, he wants us to keep this connection between the hand and the brain in mind in planning education. "In order to obtain the full realization of truths as applying, and not as empty formula, there is no alternative to technical education. Mere passive observation is not sufficient. In creation only is there vivid insight into the properties of the object thereby produced. If you want to understand anything, make it yourself, is a sound rule. Your faculties will be alive, your thoughts gain vividness by an immediate translation into acts. Your ideas gain that reality which comes from seeing the limits of their application".

1. Dr. Zakir Husain's view cited in Unesco Projects in India, p.92 f (italics mine).
2. A.N. Whitehead, op. cit, p. 78
3. Ibid, p. 83
Man is a God in the becoming and therefore possesses the supreme attribute of God - the power to create, to do. If education does not awaken this power, it is of little use; and no education can do this so well as education through manual activity. If the activity is a useful craft, then it becomes more than merely educational, for human labour is not wasted, and a moral value gets attached to its educational value. "Pedants sneer at an education which is useful. But if education is not useful, then what is it? Is it a talent to be hidden away in a napkin?" asks Whitehead, who, thus shows his support not merely of manual training but of a training that has a utilitarian end.

Gandhi explains his theory as follows: "I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, eg. hand, feet, eyes, ears, nose etc. In other words, an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and

1. A.N. Whitehead, op. cit, p.3.
quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a lopsided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. A proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore, can take place only when it proceeds pari passu with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. According to this theory, therefore, it would be a gross fallacy to suppose that they can be developed piece-meal or independently of one another.

"The baneful effects of absence of proper co-ordination and harmony among the various faculties of body, mind and soul respectively are obvious ... What goes on by the name of education in our schools and colleges in the cities today is in reality only intellectual dissipation. Intellectual training is there looked upon as something altogether unrelated to manual or physical work. But since the body must have some sort of physical exercise to keep it in health, they vainly try to attain that end by
means of an artificial and otherwise barren system of physical culture which would be ridiculous beyond words if the result was not so tragic. The young man who emerges from this system can in no way compete in physical endurance with an ordinary labourer. The slightest physical exertion gives him a headache ... As for the faculties of the heart, they are simply allowed to run to seed or to grow anyhow in a wild undisciplined manner. The result is moral and spiritual anarchy ...

"As against this, take the case of a child in whom the education of the heart is attended to from the very beginning. Supposing he is set to some useful occupation like spinning, carpentry, agriculture etc, for his education and in that connection is given a thorough, comprehensive knowledge relating to the theory of the various operations that he is to perform and the use and construction of the tools that he would be wielding. He would not only develop a fine, healthy body but also a sound vigorous intellect that is not merely academic but is firmly rooted in and is tested
from day to day by experience. His intellectual education would include a knowledge of mathematics and the various sciences that are useful for an intelligent and efficient exercise of his avocation. If to this is added literature by way of recreation, it would give him a perfect, well-balanced, all-round education in which the intellect, the body and the spirit have all full play and develop together into a natural, harmonious whole. Man is neither mere intellect nor the gross animal body, nor the heart nor the soul alone. A proper and harmonious combination of all the three is required for the making of the whole man and constitutes the true economics of education.  

Gandhi wanted the handicraft to be "the pivot and centre of education" and claimed that such education "would promote the real disciplined development of the mind resulting in conservation of the intellectual energy and indirectly also the spiritual". Without the use of our hands and feet, our brains would be atrophied. A.N. Whitehead points out how the "disuse of

1. Harijan, 8.5.37 (italics mine)
2. Ibid, 5.6.37
the handicraft is a contributory cause of the brain-lethargy of aristocracies". Dr. G.S. Arundale warns that, "However much thought may be stimulated, it is valueless save as it mellows into doing. The same may be said as regards the emotions and feelings, so dangerously neglected in most modern systems of education. India needs her youth to be workers - workers whose character is such - developed through education - that it naturally becomes translated into work, into practical capacity, into service. Gandhi would, naturally begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. He holds that "the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education". The only condition is that the handicraft should be taught not mechanically but scientifically, making the child know the why and wherefore of every process.

1. A.N. Whitehead, _op. cit_, p.78
2. _Harijan_, 2.10.37
3. _Harijan_, 31.7.37
History, geography, and mathematics, the pupil would learn in correlation with the handicraft and so, as useful information. "This is a revolutionary proposal" says Gandhi, "but it saves immense labour and enables the student to acquire in one year what he may take much longer to learn. This means all-round economy"¹. There is no fear that efficiency would suffer. "The fact that the whole person of the boys and girls has to be developed through a vocation automatically saves the schools from degenerating into factories. For, over and above the required degree of proficiency in the vocation in which they are trained, the boys and girls will have to show equal proficiency in the other subjects they will be expected to learn"². And Gandhi wanted "to teach through handwork all other subjects such as history, geography, arithmetic, science, language, painting, and music. All this teaching will have to be done according to a definite plan"³.

¹. Harijan, 31.7.37
². Ibid, 30.10.37
"Gandhiji's outstanding contribution to educational theory and practice", says M.S. Patel, "is the fact that he restored the human hand to its legitimate place in the scheme of education". He played the role of a modern St. Benedict in stressing manual work, and went far beyond him in making all education centre on a craft. Advocates there had been before him for giving a craft-bias to education of children, but few had thought of a craft-based educational system to develop the full man. Gandhi not merely believed that a craft-based education alone can best serve that purpose but set himself to work out a scheme for it.

Various arguments have been put forward to support Gandhi's theory of craft-based education. Kakasaheb Kalelkar pointed out at the Wardha Education Conference that it would serve best to develop the full man. "Experience has taught us now" he said, "that in order to develop the whole personality of the students,  

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2. Vide supra, Introduction.
education through manual work is essential. So far we have used the tongue and the ear for the evolution of the mind and the heart. Eyes also have been used more for cramming than for observation. But now we should realize that the true development of the mind and the heart can be achieved only through manual labour"\(^1\). The Zakir Husain Committee, examining the question psychologically, came to the following conclusion: "Psychologically it is desirable because it relieves the child from the tyranny of a purely academic and theoretical instruction against which its active nature is always making a healthy protest. It balances the intellectual and practical elements of experience, and may be made an instrument of educating the body and the mind in co-ordination. The child requires not the superficial literacy which implies, often without warrant, a capacity to read the printed page but the far more important capacity of using hand and intelligence for some

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1. *Educational Reconstruction*, p. 137
constructive purpose"¹. They called this capacity the 'literacy of the whole personality'"². Gandhi too, had stressed this psychological feature of the scheme. He said, "Our education has to be revolutionized. The brain must be educated through the hand. If I were a poet, I could write poetry on the possibilities of the five fingers. Why should you think that the mind is everything and the hands and feet nothing? Those who do not train their hands, who go through the ordinary rut of education, lack 'music' in their life. All their faculties are not trained. Mere book-knowledge does not interest the child so as to hold his attention fully. The brain gets weary of mere words, and the child's mind begins to wander. The hand does the things it ought not to do, the eye sees the things it ought not to see, the ear hears the things it ought not to hear, and they do not do, see or hear, respectively what they ought to"³. Activity and proper co-ordination of activity, he considered essential

¹. Basic National Education, H.T.S., 1939, p. 9
². Ibid
³. Educational Reconstruction, p. 95.
if true learning is to result. As against the compartmentalization of knowledge, "a fragment of an educator addressing itself to a fragment of a pupil about a fragment of a subject"¹, which has reduced man to a factor and led to a neglect of his total personality, Gandhi calls for an integration in the education of the child, of all knowledge, through the medium of craft activity.

The 'theory' on which Gandhi's educational scheme is based has been put thus, admirably by the Editor of Basic Education:

"(a) that true education of the individual, which is all-round development of his faculties, is best obtained through action. If biologically thinking develops in man only as an aid to action, as evolutionary psychologists tells us, then Gandhi's scheme of education bases itself on the sound and indisputable fact that knowledge and understanding develop in relation to problems set by action. Information thrust on the mind

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apart from action is most often only a burden on the memory and causes intellectual indigestion if nature does not come to the rescue and cast such learning to oblivion.

"(b) further, this education, if it is to draw out to the full the latent capacities of the child, has to be through a craft. For, it is a craft, which is capable of being manipulated by the child that sets problems to him and calls out in relation to them his thought, character and artistic sense. Under literary education, on the other hand, whatever training is given to the child is given in isolated sections. The mind is sought to be trained in the class apart from manual work, the hand and eyes in manual work apart from mind, and the heart in art and religion apart from the mind and action. But since the child is an organic unit, it is obvious that it is only such training as draws on all the faculties in a correlated manner, that can best develop a harmonious and well-balanced personality".

In this harmonious development, Gandhi's

concern with the hand did not blind him to the psychological need for the proper exercise and training of the other bodily organs. He did not under-rate the building up of the body, and for this, in the Tolstoy Farm, he had enjoined that all manual labour from cooking down to scavenging was to be done by the inmates. Referring to Nai Talim he says, "I would therefore give compulsory physical training through musical drill", though, in fact, as in cases where students learn agriculture by going into the field to plough and weed, they would have sufficient physical exercise, and "artificial exercises, therefore, would be necessary". Alongside of manual training, he recommended the teaching of music in schools. "The modulation of voice is as necessary as the training of the hand. Physical drill, handicrafts, drawing and music should go hand in hand in order to draw the best out of the boys and girls and create in them a real interest in their tuition. That this means a revolution in the system is admitted. If the future citizens of the state

1. Autobiography, II, p.191
2. Educational Reconstruction, p. 120.
3. Ibid, p. 133.
are to build a sure foundation for lives' work, these four things are necessary. One has only to visit any primary school to have a striking demonstration of slovenliness and disorderliness and discordant speech. Gandhi meant by manual training not what was usually being done in the Primary Schools of India - an apology of paper cutting and clay moulding - but training in a 'craft': a craft, that was not merely educational but of social and economic value, and this makes all the difference between this and other educational systems. "Useful manual labour, intelligently performed", Gandhi says, "is the means par excellence for developing the intellect. One may develop a sharp intellect otherwise too. But then it will not be a balanced growth but an unbalanced, distorted abortion. It might easily make of one a rogue and a rascal. A balanced intellect presupposes a harmonious growth of body, mind and soul. That is why we give to manual labour the central place in our curriculum of training here. An intellect that is developed through the medium of socially useful labour will be an instrument for service and will not easily be led astray or fall into devious paths. The latter can well be a scourge. Apart from developing a

1. Harijan, 11.9.37
2. Harijan, 8.9.46 (italics mine)
balanced intellect, it serves also to instil a sense of the dignity of labour.

"Socially considered, the introduction of such practical productive work in education to be participated in by all the children of the nation, will tend to break down the existing barriers of prejudices between manual and intellectual workers, harmful alike for both. It will also cultivate in the only possible way, a true sense of the dignity of labour and of human solidarity - an ethical and moral gain of incalculable significance". Manual work had been long regarded as inferior, and the manual workers like carpenters, shoe-makers and weavers were looked upon as inferior 'castes'. Gandhi's new scheme would raise the crafts to the status of 'callings' having an independent status of their own, equal to the status that learning enjoyed. Gandhi makes the following masterly assessment of its social effects: "My plan to impart Primary Education through the medium of village handicrafts like spinning and carding etc. is conceived as the spear-head of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequences. It will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the

village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all this would be accomplished without the horrors of a bloody class war or a colossal capital expenditure such as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill. Lastly, by obviating the necessity for highly specialized talent, it would place the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands.

Education through a useful, productive craft is the application of the ideal of bread-labour to education. By recognizing labour as a moral force, it would help to build a bridge between theory and practice, in industry and learning, artisan and student. Striking

1. Harijan 9.10.37
2. See Supra part I ch.2, sect.4
a nail on the coffin of social and class hatred, it would forge the non-violent democratic social order which is the first step to Ramaraj.

Gandhi looked for an economic justification also for the craft that was to be the basis of education, and he considered it as the 'acid test' of the success of the endeavour. As we have seen before, the manual training is not to consist in producing articles for a school museum or toys which have no value. It should result in producing marketable articles, though children will do them; not as factory hands do, under the whip, but because it entertains them and stimulates their intellect.

"We can teach our children to make clay toys that are to be destroyed afterwards. That too will develop their intellect. But it will neglect a very important moral principle, viz. that human labour and material should never be used in a wasteful or unproductive way. The emphasis laid on the principle of spending every minute of one's life usefully is the best education for citizenship and incidentally makes basic education self-sufficient". He called his educational scheme basic "because it stands for the art of living".

1. Harijan 6.4.40
2. Harijan 11.5.47.
it also Rural National Education as it is primarily intended for village India – to develop a rural civilization. He said that "if we want to keep all the 700,000 of our villages alive, and not only a fraction of them, we have to revive our village handicrafts. And you may be sure that if we can impart scholastic training through those crafts we can bring about a revolution". "The child at the age of 14, that is after finishing a seven years' course should be discharged as a earning unit ... the state takes charge of the child at seven and returns it to the family as a earning unit. You impart education and simultaneously cut at the root of unemployment. You have to train the boys in one occupation or another ... He will be master of the craft he learns". This differs from the aim of the craft-biased education of English Modern and Technical schools of today in two ways. As C.R. Morris points out, the craft-bias in England is generally considered "a satisfactory kind of education for the less intellectually interested children". Secondly, when

1. Harijan, 7.5.38
2. Harijan, 18.9.37 (italics mine)
3. C.R. Morris, op.cit, p.8
a school is giving the boy an opportunity to practise a special skill, it is not teaching him that special skill, in a narrow sense, for its own sake. The specially applied skill of hand and eye, which will make the man a quick and efficient worker in his trade, will be learnt later in the workshop, as it requires concentrated practice which is not possible at school. Rather the boy is encouraged to try several skills, so as to have some acquaintance with others than that which will eventually be his own. This is done as it has a value of its own throughout life; it is general education. Gandhi aims to give general education through a selected craft, to develop the child's intellect through the craft, and at the same time, give sufficient practice in the craft itself with a view to making the child master its tricks sufficiently to ply it as a trade if necessary in life. He finds only in such education a hope for the revival of the ancient crafts of India, in the true village atmosphere, every child being returned to it as a perfect artisan, having been given not mere skill in a craft but an all-round education through studying the science and art of it and much more than that. He will be able to earn his bread by himself

when he goes out of school, and thus become a socially efficient individual and not be a burden to his parents and to society at large. He would thus find himself ready to ask the question "What shall I do for my country", not "What shall my country do for me?", and certainly this must be one of the aims of any good education.

Gandhi had no hesitation in declaring that "education ought to be for them a kind of insurance against employment". Only then could they rise above the cares of material life and devote themselves to the pursuit of the soul. Food, clothes and shelter, being the needs of animal life, have to be worked for by all, and there is nothing base or materialistic in making education useful for earning them. It might smack of a low ideal as the term 'bread-and-butter aim' suggests, but it is truly liberating, and has to be, whether we like it or not, part of any true liberal education. Gandhi as a practical idealist has coped with this test of a sound education in a remarkable way. "The ancient aphorism, 'education is that which liberates' is as true today" says Gandhi to a student who asked

1. Harijan, 11.9.37
him what he was to do after finishing his studies, "as it was before. Education here does not mean mere spiritual knowledge nor does liberation signify liberation after death. Knowledge includes all training that is useful for service of mankind and liberation means freedom from all manner of servitude even in the present life." As Prof. Ross observes, "an education that fails to produce a man capable of earning his living and pulling his weight as a member of society can hardly be called liberal. A man who is dependent on the efforts of others without making an equivalent contribution of his own is not free." Gandhi desired that each boy and girl should be 'self supporting' after leaving school by finding an occupation - unlike the product of the prevalent system of aimless education. "...the handicraft feature of the new education provides a solution to the problem of unemployment by training pupils to earn their bread and thus enabling them to be self-supporting after they finish their school course." It aims at giving

1. *Harijan*, 10.3.46
2. Ross, *op. cit* p.225
the right kind of education to village children - education to fit them for life, education suited to their environment and hereditary occupations". It will bring about in the child "at as early an age as possible, the determination of the future career it should expect to pursue, and will arm him with at least one occupation, which will give him a wage sufficient for a healthy subsistence. There is, of course, no fear that the craft will turn him into a base mechanic depending on others for his living - a depersonalized individual like a 'factory hand'. Shri Mashruwala points out that "Industry will not be only the means and medium of instruction; but to the extent it is an inevitable condition of human life, it will also be an end of instruction. So that the aim will be to inculcate in the pupil a sense of the dignity of all manual labour - even scavenging, and the duty of earning an honest livelihood by labour". Every one will be turned out a self-respecting artisan who could ply the trade to the enjoyment of himself.

3. Ibid.
The education based on a craft has a definite bread and butter aim included in it. Gandhi held that if in the early years at school each boy is able to earn, say, two pice a day, he would be able to earn more as he goes into higher classes, and the power of production would go on increasing, till he shall be able to earn his livelihood in later life. From the point of view of mass education, this is of great significance in that the child's earning at school would make education pay its way, at least to some extent. Indeed, Gandhi held that if the state purchased all that the children produced, the proceeds should go a long way towards meeting the running costs of education. "If the state takes charge of the children between seven and fourteen and trains their bodies and minds through productive labour, the public schools must be frauds and teachers idiots, if they cannot become self-supporting"¹, said Gandhi. This "self-sufficiency" aim of education through craft was a 'startling proposal' which came in for a lot of criticism at the hands of experts who made this

¹. Harijan, 11.9.37
the target of a virulent attack as against all fundamental principles of education. Some likened the boys trained in these schools to the boys of the semi-slave plantations of Ceylon. To them Gandhi replied: "... the boys in the plantations are not treated as students. Their labour is not part of their training. In the schools I advocate, boys have all that boys learn in the high schools less English plus drill, music, drawing, and of course, a vocation. To call these factories amounts to an obstinate refusal to appreciate a series of facts. It is very like a man refusing to read the description of a human being and calling him a monkey because he has seen no other animal but a monkey, and because the description in some particulars, but only in some, answers that of monkeys1. Some visualized dull, dreary faces toiling and moiling, because the craft would rob the school of all play, and much of education, as play is the vital means of education. To them Gandhi had to explain that "the takli was a good enough toy to play with. It was no less a toy

1. Harijan, 18.3.37
because it was a productive toy"¹. In fact there is real education, and so, more of it in this school than elsewhere, as it enables the pupils to follow their natural instincts to translate thought into manual skill, and manual activity into thought. Others considered the whole scheme sordid because of its economic considerations. Gandhi's answer to them was this: "Let no one consider these economic calculations in connection with education as sordid or out of place. There is nothing essentially sordid about economic calculations. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard, just as all true ethics to be worth its name, must at the same time be also good economics"². We have the authority of no less a person than John Dewey to back up this point of view. He says: "To charge that the various activities of gardening, weaving, construction in wood, manipulation of metals, cooking etc. which carry over these fundamental human concerns into school resources, have a merely bread and butter value is to miss their point. If

1. Harijan, 30.10.37
2. Harijan, 9.10.37
the mass of mankind has usually found in its industrial occupations nothing but evils which had to be endured for the sake of maintaining existence, the fault is not in the occupations, but in the conditions under which they are carried on. The continually increasing importance of economic factors in contemporary life makes it the more needed that education should reveal their scientific content and their social value. That an education pays its way is no educational crime unless it is pursued merely for that end. Referring to the education provided in the factories, Prof. Jeffreys remarks: "The fact that it pays does not make it bad education." The economic advantage must be incidental, but all the same it must be taken note of as an advantage and must be properly utilized. Says Gandhi: "If such education is given, the direct result will be that it will be self-supporting. But the test of success is not its self-supporting character, but that the whole man has to be drawn out through the teaching of the handicraft in a

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2. Jeffreys, *op. cit.*, p. 84
scientific manner. In fact I would reject a
teacher who would promise to make it self-supporting
under any circumstances. The self-supporting part
will be the logical corollary of the fact that the
pupil has learnt the use of every one of his faculties.
If a boy who works at a handicraft for three hours
a day will surely earn his keep, how much more a boy
who adds to the work of a development of his mind and
soul!1. Gandhi had made it very clear that
"self-sufficiency is not an apriori condition, but to
me it is an acid test .... Taking the entire period
of seven years covered by the basic education plan,
income and expenditure must balance each other.
Otherwise, it could mean that even at the end of
their training, the basic education students will
not be fitted for life"2.

Educational history is replete with
opposition of this kind to all new ideas. Supporters
of a false liberal education had strongly resented
the idea of giving education the slightest vocational
bias for long. Plato, exalting a life of contemplation

1. Harijan, 11.6.38
2. Ibid, 25.8.46
had looked upon manual arts as vulgar. Aristotle had declared that "Men ought not to labour at the same time with their minds and with their bodies; for the two kinds of labour are opposed to one another - the labour of the body impedes the mind, and the labour of the mind the body"; and considered vocational education as 'illiberal' exercise in banausic occupations which 'deform the body and degrade the soul', while hailing the liberal arts as 'conducive to the exercise of virtue'. The highest purpose of education was, for long, looked upon as the production of good men, and the production of good tradesmen and even good citizens was considered an inferior operation which should not be allowed to interfere with the other. It is now generally recognized that the "antithesis between a technical education and a liberal education is fallacious. There can be no adequate technical education which is not liberal, and no liberal education which is not technical; that is,

1. Politics, VIII.4
2. Ibid, VIII.2
no education which does not impart both technique and vision"¹. All education in the broad sense is vocational, as "people cannot be educated in perfectly general terms but only in relation to some particular kind of society and some particular function in that society"². We have come to understand that a "vocational bias does not degrade education but gives it significance and that there is in fact no meaning or purpose in developing personal qualities and abilities unless they are used in the service of the community"³. Any good education, therefore, has to recognize the essence of the liberal principle that man is more than his techniques and life more than a complex of economic processes and at the same time take note of the lessons of the vocational principle that a man's duty to his fellows has the first claim on him, that the satisfaction of fully developed faculties ought not to be an end in itself but a by-product of a useful life, and that an idea has to become

¹ A.N. Whitehead, op. cit, p. 74
² Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 88
³ Ibid
incarnate in action at a specific time and place before it can avail anything. All true education should undertake the responsibility of explaining the world in which we live and this necessitates bringing the world into the school and taking the school out into the world. Indeed, education today is increasingly being looked upon as "a total community mobilisation", an idea which would have shocked educators a century ago. The connection between the school and the rest of the community is never so convincing", says Prof. Jeffreys "as when work done in the school is of direct value to the community" - a revolutionary idea, may be, but of proved merit. It was 'war-time shortages' that, in England, fortunately provided an opportunity to reveal this aspect of educational possibilities. "For many years the workshops at Oundle School have repaired farming machinery. Alternatively, the school workshops can produce materials for the school itself. I recall a Home Office School for delinquent boys

3. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 80 (italics mine)
where the brickyard not only produced the bricks for building an extension to the school but provided a first-rate education in close co-operation"¹.

Prof. Jeffreys also points out that in war-time, schools were making toys for public nurseries². What a far cry from the education in useless subjects to education in useful subjects, nay, useful directly to the community even as pursued in school! There could no more be any stigma attached to an education which, incidentally, pays. On the other hand, one truth has emerged from it all: "It is difficult to exaggerate the value of this kind of reality in education. There is all the difference in the world between something done merely as an academic exercise and something done for a practical purpose"³.

Gandhi's success in the evolution of a scheme of education in which the child could earn while he learns, had in it tremendous possibilities of universal education, and of the right type. Putting into the hands of children when they are admitted to the school simple village tools which

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¹. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 80 n. (italics mine)
². Ibid
³. Ibid, p. 80
they can handle freely and remuneratively, instead of slates and pencils, means a big revolution in educational methodology. But nothing short of a revolution can put education within reach of every child of school-going age. The knowledge of the 3 R's, imparted formally in the schools today, is usually forgotten inside of one year by the village child, if only for want of use; but if a vocational training, in keeping with their surroundings is given to these children, they would not only repay the expenses incurred in the schools but would turn their training to use in after-life. They will gain initiative and learn to think and act for themselves, and the whole education will be viewed in a spirit of joy arising from purposive activity. Like Madame Montessori's method of education, it will serve to draw the best out of children, but while, in India, Montessori's method of education can be availed of only by the children of the well-to-do, Gandhi's scheme will make it possible "for the children of paupers to receive training of this nature." Basic education has grown out of the atmosphere of village

1. Y.I., 11.7.29
2. Ibid, 19.11.31
India and is in response to it. India is poor, and whole masses un-educated. "... as a nation we are so backward in education that we cannot hope to fulfil our obligations to the nation in this respect in the given time during this generation, if the programme is to depend on money. "I have therefore made bold" says Gandhi, the practical man, "even at the risk of losing all reputation for constructive ability, to suggest that education should be self-supporting"\(^1\). He adds: "... looking to the needs of India, our rural education ought to be made self-supporting if it is to be compulsory"\(^2\). "In no other way can Primary Education be made free, compulsory and effective"\(^3\).

Further, a self-supporting education alone is consistent with the principle of non-violence. "Dr. Zakir Husain was not right", Gandhi points out, "when he said that the scheme was educationally sound irrespective of the ideological background"\(^4\).

He says, "The plan springs from non-violence. I

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1. Harijan, 31.7.37
2. Ibid, 18.9.37
3. Ibid,
4. Ibid, 30.10.37
suggested it in connection with the nation's resolve to effect complete prohibition, but I may tell you that even if there was to be no loss of revenue, and our exchequer was full, this education would be a *sine qua non* if we did not want to urbanize our boys. We have to make them true representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation. We cannot do so otherwise than by giving them a course of self-supporting primary education. Europe is no example for us. It plans its programmes in terms of violence ... If India has resolved to eschew violence, this system of education becomes an integral part of the discipline she has to go through. We are told that England expends millions on education. America also does so, but we forget that all that wealth is obtained through exploitation. They have reduced the art of exploitation to a science, and might well give their boys the costly education they do. We cannot, will not, think in terms of exploitation, and we have no alternative but this plan of education which is based on non-violence"¹. Adds Mahadev Desai, "The idea of self-supporting education cannot be divorced

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¹ Harijan, 30-10-37.
from the ideological background of non-violence, and unless we bear in mind that the new scheme is intended to bring into being a new age from which class and communal hatred is eliminated and exploitation is eschewed, we cannot make a success of it. We should therefore approach the task with firm faith in non-violence and in the faith that the new scheme is evolved by a mind that has conceived non-violence as the panacea for all evils"¹. The purpose of Gandhian education, being the rearing of non-violent values, the means employed cannot be anything but non-violent.

CHAPTER III.

THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION ; FREEDOM IN COMMUNITY.

I. HARMONIZING INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL PRINCIPLES.

Gandhi's insistence on craft-centred education does not, in the least, mean that his emphasis is on craft and not on the child. He has asserted categorically that "the individual is the one supreme consideration" and by implication meant that in education, the child is the supreme consideration. He would have endorsed the view that "Individuality is a fact of God, who makes individuals. It is man who makes classes". Gandhi recognizes, like Sir Percy Nunn, that no two persons are identical in ability or temperament; that each one has individual characteristics which distinguish him from others. He has great respect for the individuality of each human being, irrespective of caste or creed, and he believed that this individuality has to be preserved at all costs, if we are to achieve any progress, material or spiritual, in this world.

In himself, "Mr. Gandhi stands as a vivid contemporary example of the part that the individual can play in the advancement of mankind". Imagine the loss the

2. Stephens Spinks, op. cit, 209A
world would have had to sustain if Gandhi had been curbed and not allowed to develop his own way and express himself freely, because he was so different from others; and there were few in authority at the time in India and abroad who did not think, at one time or another, that he was an idiosyncratic crank, who preached funny, nay dangerous ideas. Naturally he realized that the progress of the world depends solely on the free growth of individuals. "No reform", he says, "has ever been brought about except through intrepid individuals breaking down inhuman customs or usages". In the words of Waterhouse, "Society itself is unprogressive apart from the initiative of individual members. No one has succeeded in showing how change comes in any society apart from the fact that certain individuals react in a manner different from that which is traditional in society ... It is impossible to think that the history of mankind could have been written as it is, apart from some of the outstanding individuals of history". This is why Gandhi looked askance at the increasing power of the state, and advocated a community of free

1. Harijan, 25.7.36
2. Eric Waterhouse, op. cit, p.122
fellowship in which every one will be able to express himself: "I look upon an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress".

Indeed from the beginning of history, one of the major problems of educational philosophy has been to reconcile the claims of the individual with those of society. Extreme individualism means the negation of community and of all claims upon independence. It will lead to complete anarchy - anarchy not merely in the social, political and economic life but in the moral sphere as well. It will result in a culture with no norms, no coherent view of life, and is conducive to the development of techniques and separate bodies of knowledge, which will create intellectual chaos. Such a situation ultimately is man's ruin, for in it man will lose his personal stature. The claims of society,

1. N.K. Bose, op. cit., p. 27
pushed to its limits, again works similarly to disastrous consequences. It means a total surrender of the individual's responsibility for conduct to the state or party machine, which 'dictates' norms. The annihilation of personality is a necessity in totalitarianism since depersonalized individuals alone will be convenient material for being ordered about. As Jeffreys says, "... he who no longer, with his whole being decides what he does or does not, and assumes responsibility for it, becomes sterile in soul. And a sterile soul ceases to be a soul"¹. Thus, no education worth the name can cater to the extreme individual aim or the extreme social aim without damage to personality. The problem of education, therefore, is how to adjust the claims of the individual and the claims of society, to mutual advantage. Indeed the key to the problem lies in human nature itself. Man's higher or spiritual nature is essentially social, and man can realize his best only in and through society. True individuality is "spiritual

¹ Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 54
individuality"¹, and it is bound to be in line with the social good. Personality cannot be "expressed in any but social terms"², and no development of personality could ignore the social obligations of the individual. "True freedom is in true community; ideas of false freedom and false community alone are in conflict. Thus individuality does not, and should not, mean "the supremacy of the free subject over against the social environment"³. The end of life is to acquire "an inner relation to infinity"⁴. The good that is sought, thus possesses universal character. Personalities developed by the search for it must certainly have much in common, since they are severally in harmony with the soul of the universe. Thus the developed personality, the realized self, is a principle not of separation but of unity among mankind.

Gandhi means by self, the spiritual self, and so sees no conflict between the individual and

¹. Rudolf Eucken, Life's Basis and Life's Ideal, translated by Alban G. Widgery, London, 1911, p. 245
². J.M. Baldwin, Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development, Macmillan, New York, 1897, p. 21
³. Eucken, op. cit, p. 96
⁴. Ibid, p. 370
social aims. "I value individual freedom but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is the law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the mean between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member". Eric Waterhouse expresses the same view thus: "The relation ... of society to the individual is one of interaction, and in this relation egoism and altruism must find their balance .... True altruism is a form of self-realization, and the true egoism is to find one's self in something greater than self .... In a perfect life there is neither egoism nor altruism, for the individual and the common good are one".

In Gandhi's view, individual development and social progress are interdependent to such an

1. Harijan, 27-5.39
2. Eric Waterhouse, op. cit, p. 122
extent that the one is inconceivable apart from the other. Indeed this follows from his conception of the essential unity of man. "A nation cannot advance", he says, "without the units of which it is composed advancing, and conversely, no individual can advance without the nation, of which he is a part also advancing". "I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent". Society is nothing impersonal apart from or as against the individual unit, of which it is made, but merely an agglomeration of fully realized individuals.

What Gandhi wants is to build a society in which the individuals will play their part for the good of the community without losing their individuality, that is to say, in which individual freedom and social welfare will be identical. The redemption of social order depends, as we have seen, on creating proper persons and not an artificial society. Gandhi was against any social order, however good it may be, which is brought about by the use of force. He says, "It would be a sad thing if India also tried to

1. Y.I., 26.3.31
2. Ibid, 4.12.24
build up the new society based on co-operation by means of violence. Good brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change was effected through the persuasive power of non-violent co-operation, i.e., love, could the foundations of individuality be preserved and real abiding progress be assured for the world."¹

J.B. Kripalani puts this plainly in the Latest Fad. "To avoid unregulated and anarchic individualism of the capitalistic system and also the crushing concentration of the power of the communists, Gandhi proposes to build the economic and social structure on decentralized agriculture and industry"².

The brick of this new structure is the Satyagrahi individual, and he has to be reared by education in non-violent values. With the advent of the machine the worker has lost his sense of individual responsibility. He may share in the production of parts but none has the supreme satisfaction of making a complete thing. "This tends", as Zakir Husain points out, "to reduce the individual's grasp of reality by making him, not an artist, not even an artisan, but a mere cog in the productive

¹. Harijan, 9.3.47
². Acharya Kripalani, The Latest Fad, p. 84
process"¹. This is why Stephens Spinks thinks that "What is being challenged in the West is not the merits or demerits of private enterprise or of political democracy, but the place of the individual in society"². This factorized human being has to be reconstituted into a full personality and nothing but education can do it. A harmonious society cannot be built without integrated and developed individuals. Gandhi was, therefore, primarily concerned with the individual. Good individuals could automatically create good society, and so Gandhi looked to education to develop in the individual an attitude of co-operation rather than competition. He says, "I would feel that if we succeed in building the character of the individual, society will take care of itself. I would be quite willing to trust the organization of society to individuals so developed"³.

The inter-relation between the individual and society can be ignored only at the peril of both. Says J.B. Kripalani, "Any over-emphasis on the one will be at the expense of the other. Such over-emphasis

1. Cf: Unesco Projects, p. 92
2. Stephens Spinks, op. cit, p. 209A
3. N.K. Bose, op. cit, p. 255
destroys the balance which a true and lasting civilization needs. Most of the troubles of the world have been due to the loss of this balance. Sometimes the individual with his anarchic tendencies produces confusion in society. At other times, society so crushes the individual that his initiative and personality are lost and he becomes a mere automaton. Humanity has been oscillating between the thesis of the individual and the antithesis of society"1.

It is now recognized that social bonds originate within man's nature and are woven inextricably into the texture of his being. As Sir Percy Nunn points out, "The most original personality is unintelligible apart from the social medium in which it grows; no Thoreau could hide himself so deeply in the woods as to escape from the social in his own mind"2. Gandhi's new social order achieves a true synthesis between the individual and society by making self-realization possible only through social service and sacrifice. As Adams puts it, "We sacrifice in realizing, and we realize our highest self in sacrifice"3. Thus

1. Kripalani, op. cit, p. 77
2. Nunn, op. cit, p. 4 (First Edition 1920)
3. Adams, The Evolution of Educational Theory, p. 130
the good of the state becomes the natural pursuit of the individuals, and education for citizenship, therefore, becomes part of any good education. Says C.J. Varkey, "The present system of education has completely ignored this aspect ... a system of national education must produce a new generation with opportunities of understanding its own problems and rights and obligations. For this purpose we need a completely new system of education that will secure at least the minimum of education required for the intelligent exercise of rights and duties of citizenship". Gandhi, "with his clear insight and his deep understanding of human nature, ... knew full well that no political revolution, the advent of no new social order however perfect, least of all, national liberty itself, could ever achieve very much unless a whole generation were educated up to live in and organize the new stage" says Margaret Barr. She continues: "Nai Talim therefore puts

1. C.J. Varkey, op. cit, p. 39f. Cf: Prof. Jeffreys, speaking of England, says, "A century ago, the aim of elementary education in this country was to produce a literate people. Today, literacy is not enough, and it is clear that democracy cannot hope to work without an educated people; that is, in the sense of being capable of intelligent and responsible behaviour". Glaucon, p. 78
education for citizenship, not as a secondary objective, but as part of the main one. For, every individual is destined to be a citizen as well as a private individual. Therefore, any scheme of education which truly sets before itself 'the balanced and harmonious development of all the faculties of the individual' cannot lose sight of the fact that every child is a citizen of tomorrow and that therefore it is at least as important to make him a competent citizen as to make him a competent earner of living". Primary education, as adumbrated by Gandhi would, therefore, "include the elementary principles of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, of doing their own work, helping parents at home etc". In this scheme, says Gandhi, "cleanliness and sanitation form the very alpha and omega of your training. Scavenging is a fine art you should take pains to learn". The school will thus be not a place of passive absorption of second hand information, but a workshop for experimentation and discovery.

1. Margaret Barr, op. cit, VBQ, p. 161
2. Harijan, 30.10.37
3. Ibid, 8.9.46
learning by doing. The child, therefore, would acquire his knowledge actively and utilize it for understanding the social environment and playing his part in it. Education through craft is true education for social service. Productive labour is true cultural training and a symbol of identification with the poorest among the poor. "When you combine with hand-spinning the idea that you are learning it not for your own individual self but for the poorest among the nation, it becomes an ennobling sacrament". Craft teaches dignity of labour and respect for man irrespective of his status and calling, promotes a feeling of equality and calls forth sympathy and understanding. "Whilst the child could be encouraged to spin and help his parents with agricultural jobs, he would also be made to feel that he did not belong only to his parents, but to the village and to the country and that he must make some return to them .... They would make them self-confident and brave by their paying for their own education by their own labour". The school will be an experimental

1. Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji in Ceylon, p. 108
2. Harijan, 30.10.37
3. Y.I., 13.10.27
farm in co-operative effort and selfless service. "The end of all education is service"¹ says Gandhi. Addressing the students of the Prem Mahavidyala at Brindaban, he said, "Your education, if it is a vital thing, must shed its fragrance in your surroundings. You must devote a certain portion of your time daily to serving the people around in a practical manner. You must, therefore, be prepared to take the spade, the broom-stick and the basket. You must become voluntary scavengers of this holy place. That would be the richest part of your education, not learning by heart literary thesis"². Service, not monetary ambition, must be the guiding star of every Satyagrahi. "While continuing his studies in the institution which he has joined, he should ever keep before him the ideal of service set forth by me and use his studies with a view to serve that ideal, never for making money"³. And "if a student gets an opportunity of rendering service even whilst he is studying he should consider it a rare opportunity and treat it

1. Y.I., 13.10.27
2. Ibid, 14.11.29
3. Harijan, 10.3.46
not really as a suspension of his education
but rather its complement". For, "What better
book can there be than the book of humanity?" he asks,
and "what better education can there be than to go,
day in and day out, to Harijan quarters and to
regard Harijans as members of one human family?
It would be an uplifting and ennobling study ... 
realizing the essential brotherhood of man". He
insisted on students visiting Harijan quarters
and sweeping their roads and washing their children
because such work could not be done among these
'untouchables' by hired labour; 'it is a labour
of sacrifice' and as such, "an acid test of the
education received by them in the schools and
colleges". During long vacations, he wished to
see them going into the villages to conduct classes
for adults, to teach villagers rules of sanitation,
and to teach them spinning; he considered it as
"obviously the best preparation for dedication to

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1. Y.I., 13.10.27
2. Harijan, 30.3.34. Gandhi was writing at a time
when he was concentrating his attention on
Harijan work. By implication, it means social
work among the poor, the slums, etc.
3. Ibid, 17.11.33
exclusive village service after finishing their studies". Gandhi would like all students who have finished school or college, to return to the villages and devote themselves to rural reconstruction work. "The village life has to be touched at all points, the economic, the hygienic, the social and the political". The social worker is to work with his own body and labour to dig trenches for burying excreta and other refuse and turning them into manure, for cleaning wells and tanks, for building easy embankments, removing rubbish, and generally to make the villages more habitable. They should "gently persuade the people to give up bad customs and bad habits such as untouchability, infant marriages, unequal matches, drink and drug evil, and many social superstitions". They must also "teach them the dignity of freedom, self-reliance and self-help in everything". In other words, they should devote themselves to adult education as well as the education of the young, which alone can truly uplift their

1. Y.I., 26.12.29
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
life. "I claim", says Gandhi, "that the equipment for this service is a large heart and a character above suspicion"\(^1\), and his educational scheme is naturally intended to develop these virtues. "Students have to reach upon dumb millions. They have to learn to think, not in terms of a province, or a town, or a class, or a caste, but in terms of a continent and of the millions who include untouchables, drunkards, hooligans and even prostitutes, for whose existence in our midst every one of us is responsible"\(^2\). They should devote themselves selflessly to reform evils and to better life in society, and in doing so, realize God.

This view of the importance of social obligations is quite reasonable and more or less in line with the one held in England. "Education for citizenship" and "Education for social service" are oft-heard cries among teachers in England, and they mean education of the individual directed in a broad sense, for the good of the community, without in any way depersonalizing him. The individual is trained to be unselfish, to put the needs and desires of others

\(^1\) Y.I., 26.12.29
\(^2\) Ibid, 9.6.27
before his own, so that if there is a conflict between his own individual desires and his duties as a citizen, which are consistent with morality, the latter will occupy the first place. It tacitly agrees with the social efficiency aim as propounded by Prof. Bagley with its three-fold dimensions: economic efficiency - each one pulling his own weight; negative morality - willingness to sacrifice one's desires when their gratification would interfere with the economic efficiency of others; and positive morality - the willingness to sacrifice one's desires when their gratification is not conducive to social progress. And, while turning out every pupil as a loyal citizen, it stresses that loyalty does not consist in blind obedience to whatever the state orders but in intelligent criticism and willing co-operation with the state. Something of this, as we have seen before, has characterized Public School education for long. "Everywhere there will be a spirit of team work involving a certain amount of self-abnegation; always the emphasis will be laid

on the community"¹. Says the Hadow Report, "A well balanced educational system must combine these two ideals in the single conception of social individuality. The general aim should therefore be to offer the fullest scope to individuality while keeping steadily in view the claims of society ... The purpose of education is the development of the full potentialities of the child in accordance with the good of the community"². "Christian education" says Prof. Jeffreys, "would have reality - that is to say, the life of the school or college would go on in close relation to the life of the community, seeking to understand the larger community and contributing in practical ways to its welfare"³. Indeed, this is the ideal that has come to prevail in all modern democracies. The Educational Institute of Scotland, in its Report on "Educational Reconstruction" (1944) states that "the first duty of the school is to develop the child as a human being and a member of the community"⁴, while the Federal Council of Teachers of Northern Ireland in its "Report on Educational Reform" issued in the same year, states that "Primary

¹. Ross, op. cit, p. 44
². The Hadow Report, H.M.'s O., p.101 (italics mine)
³. Jeffreys, Education Christian or Pagan, p. 11
and Secondary education should prepare the child to lead a useful life in the service of the community, and to carry out the tasks for which his natural talents best fit him". The French Government after World War I had stated as their aim of education that it "serves the interest of all and at the same time the well-being of the individual". The Australian Council of Educational Research in a pamphlet issued on "The Future of Education" in the same period says that "... education will be regarded as the nurture of desirable personality in the members of the community; it seeks to have persons who will behave justly and decorously in social relations ...".

The Report of the Survey Committee of the Canada and Newfoundland Education Association (1944) states that "an efficient school leads to a better community, because it will eventually consist of responsible enterprising, and co-operative citizens". "The Proposals for Public Education in Post-war America",

1. Kandel, op. cit, p. 15
2. Ibid, p.
3. Ibid, p. 12
4. Ibid, p. 10
a pamphlet issued in 1944, states that education should enable every child "to live most happily and usefully... and... to contribute all he can to the development and preservation of a peaceful, co-operative, and equitable world order"1.

What a far cry from this is the aim of education in totalitarian states can be seen by a glance at education in Soviet Russia. "The chief moral and political aim", said the Commissar of Education in the R.S.F.S.R. in 1943, "is the training of the pupils in the spirit of patriotism"; and for this, children's books must be "deeply patriotic in content. Such themes as bravery, heroism, high patriotic feeling, burning hatred must find a clear expression in our children's literature"2. There is no mention of the development of personality, for it is the very antithesis of an idealized state. Such education, which submerges individuality in an impersonal collective, is really education for war. The attitude of

1. Kandel, op. cit, p. 16
2. Ibid, p. 11
'my country right or wrong' is not patriotism but jingoism, and it breeds bellicosity. The history of education in Germany is an instance in point. Following the defeat of Germany at the hands of Napoleon at Jena in 1806, Fichte, in his Addresses to the German Nation pointed out that the State could regenerate itself only through education, and the idea of Fatherland - Deutschland über alles - was deliberately instilled in young minds. The philosophy of the idealized state reached its climax in the pages of Hegel. "From the idealism of Hegel more than from any other source, the Prussian mind derived its fanatical belief in the absolute value of the State, its deadly doctrine that the State can admit no moral authority greater than its own, and the corollary that the educational system, from the primary school to the University, should be used as an instrument to engrain these notions into the soul of a whole people". The result of this education was the first World War. German education under Hitler followed the same ideology. "The German School,

1. P.T. Nunn, op. cit, (First ed.) p. 3
it was declared, "has to form a political man, who in all his deeds and thoughts, through sacrifice and service, is deeply rooted in his people and is inseparably bound with the history and fate of his State"\(^1\). "The highest task of the school" was considered to be "the training of youth for service to nation and State in the National Socialist spirit"\(^2\). Naturally, physical and military training were considered to be the best subjects of the curriculum, and history, literature and even mathematics was 'cooked up' from the Nazi point of view and presented to the child. While this served for the 'mass perversion of the whole people'\(^3\), partisan elites were given an additional dose of indoctrination in the Napola or "National Political Institutions" which were State Boarding Schools admitting youths,

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2. Ibid, (italics mine) cited from Leitgedanken *Zur Schulordnung* (1933)
3. Ibid, p. 230
"completely healthy, racially without blemish, with fine character and superior mental ability". There were also founded the Hitler Youth and the Union of German Girls, which worked on military lines, and were intended to impart 'physical and spiritual values' and so included political indoctrination, sports, camping and military training. Education in Germany, under Hitler was thus aimed at the sole purpose of creating soldiers, and anything which promoted the aim was encouraged while everything else was neglected if not suppressed. It is interesting, in this connection, to recall that Mussolini, in Italy, suppressed the Montessori schools as a pernicious influence working against the good of the State!

From very early times there has been in most national States a desire to use education to increase the efficiency of the citizen in times of war. At its worst, it has led to a complete control by the State of the curriculum and organization of the schools in an attempt to mould the people into a pattern which makes for the State's preservation and enhancement. Such was the case in Sparta, where
the Spartans, who were a minority, had always to be on guard against internal and external foes. Lester Smith points out how this 'fear complex' had made their educational system more or less a perpetual "national-fitness campaign". Weak babies were killed and the fit were brought up in severe discipline in 'boarding schools' where a premium was laid on physical excellence and the pugnacious instinct was nurtured as a virtue. Herbert Ward has shown how education in France and Germany in the 19th century was influenced by the needs of war, living as did the two countries, in mutual suspicion. He points out that the lycées and collèges of France looked like barracks inspired by military ideals and controlled by a military discipline. Education, in both France and Germany had been highly centralized from the beginning, and among the many virtues of schooling it was legitimate for them to expect the schools to be the recruiting ground for

1. Cf: Lester Smith, op. cit, p.27
the officers of the army. Military training itself is imparted at school in many States today as a part of the school activities. There is nothing wrong in this as long as war is a possibility, nay fact, and as long as the States do not believe in non-violence; but no such education can be helpful to achieve real

1. Cf: Gandhi, in an address to teachers, says, "You know that the scheme of this education has been drawn up in pursuance of the Congress programme. Now the Congress is pledged to win swaraj by non-violent and truthful means. Therefore the cultivation of these cardinal virtues is the foundation of the scheme. And if you do not show these in your daily contact with your pupils and a character in keeping with them, you will fail and so will your school. You know what Hitler is doing in Germany. His creed is violence, of which he makes no secret. The other day we were told that the sword was their soul. The boys and girls there are taught the science of violence from the beginning. They are taught to hate the enemy even in their arithmetic, and you will find that the examples have been chosen with a view to inculcate the military spirit. If we endorse their creed, we must recognize the necessity of inculcating the spirit of violence from infancy. The same thing is happening in Italy. We must be honest even as they are honest". - Harijan, 30.4.38 (italics mine).
peace in the world, which man so badly needs today.

II. EDUCATION FOR PEACE.

In his book, The Outlook for Homo Sapiens, H.G. Wells makes a powerful plea for the introduction of an education which would make Homo Sapiens look upon themselves first and last as world citizens, and strikes a note of warning that unless this is immediately done the outlook for mankind is hopeless. It would certainly appear, living as we do at the time of the atom bomb and the hydrogen bomb — with the cobalt and nitrogen bombs perhaps in the making — that civilization today is faced with a race between true education and total annihilation of the race.

Speaking at the P.E.N. Conference, Chithambaram, on 16th April, 1954, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India, said: "The events of the last few weeks portend either the end of human history or a turning point in it. This warning is given to us in letters of fire. We recover moral control and return to spiritual life, or we

pass out as so many other species". All our education, therefore, must be for peace. Wars undermine individual and group morality; they can never be a good solution for tensions, and so, should be abandoned even as an instrument of policy. Wars can be avoided if we learn to tolerate and respect views which differ from ours, curb all desire for exploiting others, and desire justice to be done to all, individuals and communities alike. All tensions, whether national or international, can ultimately be traced back to a handful of mal-adjusted individuals. It is the longing for domination, the desire to impose one's will on others, which generally lead to conflict and the use of violence. Education should therefore make one realize that man is not infallible and that any attempt to impose one's will on another is wrong, and in the context of modern scientific developments, fraught with dangerous consequences. It should develop in the individual an attitude of consideration and toleration, even for those from whom he differs vitally on all questions. It should be directed

1. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Community of Mind, as reported in India News, 24.4.54
at the conversion of aggressive and acquisitive tendencies into socially useful, co-operative habits. It should develop a consciousness of human rights and duties — perhaps more of duties than of rights. Education must also aim at developing a spirit of non-violent resistance to aggression since the individual must always be ready and sure to oppose evil, in whatever form it appears and under any circumstance, without ever resorting to physical force.

Gandhi felt, perhaps even more strongly than Wells, that if the cause of world peace, to which his whole life was dedicated, was to thrive, one of the first things to do was to start revolutions in the hearts and minds of people by revolutionizing education. And he set about,

1. Cf: "If at first a revolution can only be guaranteed by force, by means of education it can in ten years be founded on conviction, and in twenty years it will have become an unconscious tradition. It follows that a democratic method of education is the only guarantee of a democratic revolution — indeed, to introduce a democratic method of education is the only necessary revolution" — Herbert Read, Education through Art, Faber & Faber, London, 1944, p. 297.
as a practical idealist, and man of action, immediately to effect such a revolution in the education of children in his own country. Nai Talim is the result of this thought. This is the great merit of Gandhi that he put forward a practical scheme of education for peace. Educators and politicians, stressing the need for peace and pointing to education as its means, have been many, but no Montessori, Wells or Huxley ever came out with such radical proposals for reform in education. Gandhi not merely preached a principle but forged an effective methodology for translating the principle to practice. His scheme of education was primarily intended for the general and political regeneration of his country but it was equally a plan for the moral regeneration of the world at large. It seeks to develop the integrated personality of the individual by centering all instruction round a socially useful craft that will more than any other type of education, humanize him and make him one with the lowliest and lost. "Educationally

1. Cf: Mr. William Williams told the House of Commons in 1846 after the Rebecca Riots that 'an ill-educated and undisciplined population ... is one that may be found most dangerous to the neighbourhood in which it dwells, and that a band of efficient school masters is kept up at much less expenditure than a body of police or soldiery" - Education in Wales 1847-1947, H.M.S.O., 1948, p.5
productive work" says Dr. Zakir Husain, "helps to integrate the personality of the individual to himself and in relation to society, and thus serves to advance the cause of peace by resolving personal and social tensions". The application of non-violent methods depends on organized effort which appeals to the conscience of the people, and so it demands a feeling of community between those who practise it and those towards whom it is directed. Naturally, they can be applied to international tensions only as the feeling of one-ness of the human family grows. The feeling of a common brotherhood among men should, therefore, be fostered by education ending racial exclusiveness, religious bitterness etc, and impressing upon all the idea of the dignity of man. "If we recognize the essential identity of man in spite of all differences in abstract dogma or creed and further recognize that the test of truth is in action rather than in intellectual recognition, we will find a way out of the ethical crisis which threatens the world today", says Humayun Kabir. Then if we

1. Unesco Projects, p. 92
2. Ibid, p. 100
find that there are people who differ from us, we will think it our duty not to fight them but to remake them, to open their eyes to the sterility of their programmes by persuasion and sympathetic understanding; and that will assure peace in a world divided, as it is today, by differing ideologies. The whole theory of Gandhian education is based on the conviction that truth and love are the most abiding bases of human society and individual progress. He stressed the highest moral principles in education and aimed thereby to make every man a good man, realizing his abilities, and contentedly performing the duties of his station. The false civilization of today has undermined personal and social morality so much that the youth of the world tend to exalt acquisition of wealth and power over other values, and to change this attitude radically is no easy task. Gandhi recommends a limitation of our physical and mental needs and a reorganization of society on the basis of individual and group self-sufficiency in order to curb the aggressive and acquisitive tendencies and promote the innate peace-loving nature of man.
"In short", as Gurdial Mullick says, "there is only one pivotal principle of peace; namely to let man's larger and luminous, all-embracing and all-loving self occupy the first place in his vision and in his work, and his calculating and quarrelsome, greedy and grasping self the second. This will imbue him with the spirit of contentment and quiet which, in their turn, will induce at-one-ment in himself and with all the others. The spirit of concord is born verily, in the concord of the spirit". Ahimsa in education thus becomes the royal road to peace, inter-personal and international. It will dispel hatred, anger, malice, fear, and the wrong competitive spirit. "Until recent years and the advent of such educational pioneers as Madame Montessori, it was always taken for granted that some sort of incentive in the form of rewards and prizes must be offered to children to make them do their school work .... As such prizes are inevitably competitive this has meant that the formative years of school life have been vitiated for generation after generation by the competitive spirit which ... is the bane of the modern world and which will destroy

civilization if not brought under control in time. How can war ever be driven out of a world whose inhabitants are systematically and from early childhood taught to regard others as rivals instead of their brothers and fellow-workers?

In Nai-Talim, the only reward for good work is the joy and the satisfaction of learning something new... "Ahimsa in education puts the mutual relations of students on a different footing altogether. Says Gandhi, "Where the whole atmosphere is redolent with the pure fragrance of ahimsa, boys and girls studying together will live like brothers and sisters in freedom and yet in self-imposed restraint; the students will be bound to the teachers in ties of filial love, mutual respect and mutual trust. This pure atmosphere will itself be a continual object lesson in ahimsa. The students brought up in such an atmosphere will always distinguish themselves by their charity and breadth of view, and a special talent for service. Social evils will cease to present any difficulty to them, the very intensity of their love being enough to burn out those evils. For instance, the very idea of child-marriage will appear repugnant to them. They

1. Margaret Barr, op. cit, p. 164 f
will not even think of penalising the parents of brides by demanding dowries from them. And, how dare they, after marriage regard their wives as chattel or simply as a means of gratifying their lust? How will a young man, brought up in such an environment of _ahimsa_ ever think of fighting a brother of his own or of a different faith?"¹

Gandhi, like Madame Montessori and all modern educators, knew that "what you would put into the future, you must hide in the heart of the child"². Paying tribute to Madame Montessori, Gandhi writes, "You have very truly remarked that if we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with children and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, we won't have the struggle, we won't have to pass fruitless idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all the corners of

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¹ Y.I., 6.9.28
² Cf: "... something is done to children in the first few years of their lives that can never be undone .... they are almost automata for the rest of their lives under the control of attitudes fixed in these early years .... Let there be no mistake about it, the things which are determined at the very beginnings of life are among the most important things" - C.R. Morris, _op. cit_, p.9
the world are covered with that peace and love for which consciously or unconsciously, the whole world is hungering.  

Gandhi did stress the national aspect of education. He considered education nothing if it did not promote a love for the best things in one's own national culture, without which no nation could rise. But, at the same time, he stressed that the aim of education should be to help the individual and the nation to develop their capacities along their own lines towards the realization of human unity and international amity. He stood for universal understanding and so advocated a synthesis of cultures. He looked not for the East or the West but for the best. Thus, addressing the students of the Gujarat Vidyapith, he said, "The Vidyapith does not propose to feed on, or repeat, the ancient cultures. It rather hopes to build a new culture based on the traditions of the past and enriched by the experience of later times. It stands for synthesis

1. Y.I., 19.11.31
of the different cultures that have come to stay in India, that have influenced Indian life, and that in their turn, have themselves been influenced by the spirit of the soil". Only, the individual and the nation must, each stand on its own legs firm, before possibly, they could embrace others. This is what Gandhi meant when he said "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet". That, of course, is the true internationalism of the Satyagrahi. Individuality is not damped and the universal is attuned to.

The following fundamental ethical principles were adopted by the Second World Youth Congress, which met at New York in August 1938:

"(a) Man's foremost loyalty is to religion of philosophical truth which comes before his allegiance to any institution or individual;
"(b) he requires complete freedom for self-development, for the right to work, for freedom of speech, for freedom of association and action;
"(c) his personality can only be developed in, and through, service to the common good; and
"(d) his ideals must be expressed in action and love, and in the creation of human solidarity and co-operation."

How strangely Gandhian these look! If the world is educated to practise them - and not merely to preach - where will the need be to make hydrogen bombs and seek for still more powerful weapons of destruction? The UNESCO, as a specialized agency of the U.N. could pave the way for the emergence of the new world. "The task has only just begun of using education as an instrument for the promotion of peace and understanding among the peoples of the world," says Kandel. He adds: "... the cultivation of international co-operation cannot be undertaken in separate lessons. The ends can be achieved, if pupils are brought to a realisation that

1. Gurdial Mullick, op. cit, p. 153 f
2. Kandel, op. cit, p. 28
civilisation and culture represent the collective contributions to the human heritage by all races and religions of mankind, and that ideals of moral conduct must be guiding principles in relations with members of other nations as much as with one's own fellow-citizens. Herein is a re-iteration of Gandhi's plea for world peace by one who thinks that the crisis of today has imposed this obligation upon education that it should lead to "a recognition that the welfare of all humanity is dependent upon the elimination of war as a method of settling conflicts of national interests". The world today sees hope only in education in the principles of love and tolerance, which Gandhi preached to our generation as Christ did two thousand years ago. "Nothing he ever did nor initiated reveals his supreme wisdom and understanding so clearly as this courageous attempt to revolutionize education as the surest road to peace."

1. Kandel, op. cit, p. 27 f
2. Ibid, p. 27
3. Margaret Barr, op. cit, p. 165
CHAPTER IV.
THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF EDUCATION.

I. EDUCATION, CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION.

"Education is in fact nothing other than the whole life of a community viewed from the particular standpoint of learning to live that life". The first function of education, therefore, is the reproduction of the type, that is to say, to ensure the solidarity and preservation of the group. It is the means employed by society to communize the individual so that he may become one with those in whose midst he finds himself and live without hitch the life that others live. Conformism or acculturization, is thus the chief business of education. "All education that is not meaningless is education for some end; and the ends which schools and colleges must serve are set for them by the general pattern of living in the societies whose purpose and values they exist to serve". Schools educate for a given society as institutions of that society always bearing the imprint of its cultural values and social set up. However much it is claimed that education is free from ideologies, in practice it is

1. Jeffreys, Glaucon, p.3. (italics mine)
hardly so; behind the education imparted in a monarchy we will find an unconscious but all the same effective current of loyalty and respect for the throne, while education in communist countries openly indoctrinate children in communist principles; for, each is trying to reproduce the type. "The general educational system in any society, Marx held, could be only a part of the paraphernalia of class government and of indoctrination in the notions and attitudes required by the ruling class in its subjects in order to make its system of exploitation work smoothly... They (the ideas) might be presented as autonomous, or as the teachings of religion or philosophy". Says the Spens Report: "Speaking broadly, the interest of the State is to see that the schools provide the means by which the nation's life may be maintained in its integrity from generation to generation; to make sure that the young are prepared to preserve - and some of them to advance - its standards in all modes of activity which are important to the common weal. In a democratic community it must 'educate its masters'; in communities of other types it must see that the citizens are trained for obedient and willing

service. Underneath this explicit, overt educational activity of the State, working through laws and regulations, there is the unformulated but very real demand of the community that the young shall grow up in conformity with the national ethos. Looked at as a social instrument, education is thus the process through which the community imparts its heritage of knowledge, ideas and attitudes to its incoming members. Normally, therefore, every educational system tends to be a reflection of an existing social order - unless it be that the social order itself is in a state of flux.

Education, as cultural instrument, has a threefold function: conservation, transmission and renewal of culture. If ordinarily education is a passive reflection of an existing social order, it can also be an instrument for changing that social order. Indeed, renewal of culture is as much important as conservation and transmission if society is to be healthy. If civilization denotes social structure and function, culture is what we make of it. A culture that interprets a false civilization - that is, a civilization that is not true to the times - or one that is dead or has never been in existence, can never thrive

1. Spens Report, p.147 f
in a virile community. True culture will always be
in living relation to civilization and will respond
sensitively to social change, anticipating social
adjustment. Education is, therefore, very much con­
cerned with the proper relation between culture and
civilization. "The three things, civilization,
culture and education, are in fact connected in such
a way that none of the three can be healthy unless all
three are in proper relation to one another. If the
culture of a community is out of gear with its civili­
zation - if, for example, the culture represents a
social pattern and social values which no longer exist-
the education of that community, using the obsolete
culture as its material, is bound to be ineffective
and unreal" 1.

Before discussing the unreality of Indian
education as Gandhi saw it and the steps he took to
reform education in order to bring it in line with the
true culture and civilization of India, it may be
useful to examine how these three aspects are inter­
related in English education, and how far education is
being depended on as an effective instrument of social
change.

1. Jeffreys, op.cit p.7
English public education, as Prof. Jeffreys points out arose directly from the needs of the Industrial Revolution for the supply of clerks, technicians and administrative personnel. 'Elementary education' was really education for the poor, as distinct from 'primary', which is the initial stage in the educational process, "a limited kind of education, cheap and of short duration, and considered sufficient for all but the intelligent few and the socially privileged". This dual system of social classes, which Disraeli described in his Sibyl as 'two nations', was not in accord with modern conditions. Educational justice presupposes social justice. It soon became evident that "Equality of educational opportunity" cannot be a reality without equality of social opportunity and that "Disinherited youth is wrong material out of which to make young citizens". The "unreality and anarchy of the educational content and the injustice of the social order" had both to be combated and replaced if education is to cater for the true democratic social order which alone is compatible with the facts of the

1. Jeffreys, *Education, Christian or Pagan*, p.28
2. Ibid, p.56.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid, p.58
day. This was realized in the thirties of the present century and every effort has, since then, been made to bring education to accord with modern civilization. The Spens Report pointed out that "the existing arrangements for the whole-time education of boys and girls above the age of 11+ in England and Wales have ceased to correspond with the actual structure of modern society and with the economic facts of the situation". The separation of the school from life and the unreality of the curriculum became matters of grave concern to the realist educators who were convinced that no education can explain the world in which we live unless we bring the world into the school and take the school out into the world. Contemporary events, civics and citizenship training were thus advocated in place of mere literary training. Further, realism demanded that all education should be vocational in character. As Sir Walter Moberly in his Crisis in the University, pointed out, "if industrialism and democracy are the outstanding and significant forces in the modern world, no philosophy of life or of education, which gives to

1. Spens Report, p. XXII
them only a secondary place and a subsidiary function, can hope to convince"¹. A study of industry and trade has thus, today, become a vital necessity; indeed a study of Caxton and Stephenson is in the context of modern life, as much liberalizing as a study of Shakespeare and Milton. Sir Fred Clarke, in his book, Education and Social Change, contended that the "habits of thinking about education in terms of class ... has made our educational categories and terminology the chaotic thing they are. Our thinking is likely to be much more relevant both to actual social necessities and to the values of education as an instrument of social control and transformation if we keep it clear of any distracting ideas of a rigid class-structure"². For this reason he advocated "unification of the system over the whole range"³. The Education Act of 1944 embodied the suggestion of the Spens Report as to the recognition of the 'vocational' principle, and paid heed to this demand for unification of the educational system to disrupt the theory of two nations. The elementary school was done away

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3. Ibid.
with and the primary school, as the first stage of education was ushered in, and secondary education for all was made a reality. Still it did not satisfy all sections of the people; for it left intact the Public School, the private school and the preparatory school. The Socialists, the Trade Union Congress and the Working Men's Association, all have attacked the exclusive Public Schools and the old universities as the hotbeds of reaction and demanded a liquidation of Public Schools, and the institution of a system of Comprehensive Schools in the place of the separate Modern, Technical and Grammar Schools. The Socialists believe that "in the comprehensive system of education lies the basis of educating the next generation to form a Socialist society". They advocate a 'broad highway' of education as against the present 'ladder' of promotion - thus making higher education available not merely to a chosen few clever children, who thereby would become a superior social class, but to all who are capable of travelling along with it. G.D.H. Cole points out that "... in a democracy, there needs to be a close

resemblance between the education of those who occupy the leading positions and of those whom it is their function to lead. If the promising young persons who are 'spotted' for positions of leadership and high technical expertness are removed from the rest at an early stage and given a segregated education, nothing can prevent them from developing the characteristics of a 'managerial class', even if the hereditary element among them can be kept within bounds"¹. The Socialist stand for "Secondary education for all" is clarified by Prof. Tawney in a book of that name². They claim that the Comprehensive School will have the effect of democratizing access to universities and will help best the establishment of a classless society. As against this, there are others in England who believe that the best way to remove class distinctions is to educate all children in the same primary school. "... our weaknesses in primary education constitute a serious leak in our educational vessel"³, says Prof. Dobinson. Adherents of this school of thought

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1. G.D.H. Cole, op. cit, p. 57
3. Dobinson, op. cit, p. 130
point out how in the Scandinavian countries all that is considered necessary for national homogeneity is that the bulk of the children shall be educated in the same primary schools; where class barriers are created by different schooling, it is much more likely that they take their origin from separation in early years, before differences of tastes and aptitudes have advanced far.

Whether it be the Secondary or the Primary, all educationists are agreed that the school is a potent factor in changing social attitudes. "The extent to which they can be creatively formative of that society depends on their capacity and freedom to interpret valid social ideals and the goals to which a dynamic social evolution is tending". Any planned society, depends upon 'the transformation of man', as Karl Manheim puts it, and education is the chief means of bringing about this transformation. We have many examples in history of educational systems which are deliberately planned and effectively used in order to produce certain definite social

2. Curtis and Boultwood, op. cit, p. 497
results. The education of the Spartan, the mediaeval Knight, the Nazi, and the Bolshevik remind us of the power of education not merely to create a type of person but to forge a type of society. Gandhi was not slow to realize this function of education or to make use of it to that end, and the question of the relative potency of primary and secondary education in this changing of attitudes did not bother him as he rolled them into one.  

II. GANDHIAN EXPERIMENT AT CHANGING ATTITUDES.

Gandhi wished to bring about a wholesale change in the attitude of the Indians, classes and masses, young and old alike, to re-create them as a virile nation. Education, as a socially creative force, being effective propaganda, he set about the task by precept and example. "India has to be awakened from her torpor and enforced idleness .... India today is nothing but a dead mass movable at the will of another." On his return from South Africa, what he saw in India was a fear-stricken, humiliated race, whose elite section believed in

1. Vide infra. See IV.
2. Tendulkar, op. cit, p. 274
humble petitioning and prayer to those in power as the sole means of redressing grievances. He, therefore, decided, first of all to revive their spirit of self-respect, a sense of the dignity of man. Once this was done, he knew, resistance to evil would become normal. By decreeing defiance of unmoral, unacceptable laws, which naturally made an appeal to the morally conscious, he goaded them to court arrest and imprisonment at the hands of the Government. Courting imprisonment, which had hitherto been a detestable thing, now became an act of heroism, the way to martyrdom. "By overcoming the fear of jail, Gandhiji wrought a psychological revolution, whose extent we can hardly realize today".

His no-tax campaigns, which came next, educated the people to give up their all in the cause of national freedom. Those who had lately been undaunted by physical violence and threat of jail now became bold to defy all threats of fine or confiscation of property and welcomed truth, simplicity and poverty. Soon they were prepared to 'do or die', to face death if need be for the righteous cause they advocated, and

1. Humayun Kabir, *op. cit*, p.221
when this miraculous change had been brought about, their re-education was practically complete. For, the soldiers of freedom who, thus shed the fear of death had also been enjoined the severe discipline of a Satyagrahi. Pyarelal mentions how Abani Babu, the Bengali artist had depicted this moral and spiritual evolution of the Indians as a result of the Mahatma's work, in a trilogy of paintings showing the three stages in the metamorphosis which came upon his own servant. In the first he is shown just as he was when he came from his village home in search of service - ill-clad, starved, fever-wracked, with a stupid, hangdog look in his face. Then comes the non-co-operation movement: he begins to read newspapers and the light of intelligence begins to dawn on his face. In the third, he has become a full-fledged Khaddarite, donning the 'Gandhi cap' on his head, flashing the Congress volunteer's tri-colour badge on his shoulder and wearing a look of proud self-respect on his face - he feels several inches taller spiritually. "He is one of the millions like him", Abani Babu is reported to have told as he showed the pictures, and that
is the truth of the miracle that was wrought.1

What was the secret of Gandhi having been able to change the attitude of an entire nation in so short a time as, say, one generation? He was primarily a moral saint, who toiled for the emancipation of the poor and the oppressed millions from the limitations of social injustice and political slavery, in complete disregard of personal comfort. Fame and fortune, which were values treasured by the people of the time, he spurned as of no consequence. He stood for the Good undaunted by persecution or fear of death, and this made him a 'prestige figure' whose suggestions were taken, as for their own good, by the masses who rallied around him. The virtues he held up, and practised in his own person, became the 'frame of reference' for the millions, who found in them a new way for the satisfaction of felt 'needs'2. He incarnated in his life the hopes and aspirations of his countrymen, who reposed all confidence in him, and under his inspiring leadership did many things which they would never have dared

1. Pyarelal, op. cit, p. 306
doing individually. He led and the masses followed without question because they felt instinctively and saw, after a time, that he was right and his motive was to benefit them. He was a leader who had completely identified himself with the people whom he led. His loin cloth and walking stick were symbolic of the dress and the stick of the poor old rustic; his ashram was but a replica of the peasant's village hut, and like the poor and the lowly, he often footed his way for long distances in his travels round the country-side, talking to them in their own language, eating their own food, and moving freely with them on equal terms, advising, comforting, joking and playing with them. "It was from his strong sense of unity with the starving, naked, ignorant masses of India that he derived his own power. And by his identification with them he sought to transfer some of that power to the masses themselves". It was the supreme merit of Gandhi that he never asked his followers to do anything which he himself did not do first. Thus, whether it be spinning, going to prison, practising truth and ahimsa or abjuring

1. Humayun Kabir, op. cit, p. 213
worldly possessions, his precept was reinforced by his own practice. Though an incorrigible idealist, he was essentially a lover of men and not of mere ideas, and this made him cautious and conservative in his revolutionary schemes. As he never called for a sacrifice, the price of which he did not pay first himself, there was no hesitation on the part of the masses to do what he asked. Gandhi believed in a divine mission and took up the work of regeneration of his countrymen with faith, faith in the cause and in the masses. He believed that the lowliest among men was perfectible, and when he did not succeed, he did not find fault with anyone but his own humble self. "When you find that your pupils are without faith", he told teachers at Santiniketan, "you should say to yourself, 'I am without faith'. I have found that again and again in my own experience".  
"Try again and again, and never say that you are defeated. Do not get impatient and say, "the people are no good". Rather say, 'I am no good'. If the people do not respond within the time-limit prescribed by you the failure is yours, not theirs". Jesus had said that he came not to destroy but to fulfil the law and the prophets. In the same way Gandhi was  

1. Pyarelal, op. cit., p. 315  
2. Ibid, p. 314
faithful to his past tradition. He never broke with the best in the past. His whole programme and philosophy of action grew out of the great concepts and traditions of India, and this had much to do with his hold on the masses. Truth and non-violence were the new weapons he gave, them for a new fight for dignity and freedom; but they were as old as the Vedas. Again and again to he said, "... we shall move to our goal in the manner of the east, not in the manner of the west, for, we are of the east. We shall grow up in the beautiful manners and customs of India ..." and this gripped the masses and made them one with him. The revolutionary re-education which he began, was presented to them as a mere return to the ancestral pattern and naturally evoked no protest or psychological difficulty of adjustment. Institutions like caste and untouchability were too deeply seated to be destroyed quickly by a frontal attack. Gandhi was, however, able to strike a lethal blow at them, because he was known to be temperamentally a conservative and professedly an orthodox Hindu; and when this champion of Hinduism
told them again and again that they were not of Hinduism but mere accretions, lesser folk were prone to be convinced. Indeed, as a religious man he called untouchability a 'sin', and the masses, deeply religious, gave it great significance. Of course, wherever reasoning had weight, he had argued out the cause too, and this served to open the eyes of the sceptical elite to the evils they had cared little to notice. Satyagraha was, to Gandhi, truly a religious movement, which was to be performed with great solemnity. In a speech in Madras, he said, that as the name implies Satyagraha "is an insistence on truth, which dynamically expressed means love ... the strength lies in a definite recognition of the true religious spirit and the action corresponding to it and once you introduce the religious element in politics, you revolutionize the whole of your political outlook. You achieve reform, then, not by imposing suffering on those who resist it but by taking the suffering on yourselves ..."\(^1\) "Satyagraha is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks

\(^1\) Tendulkar, op. cit, p. 300
to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self-suffering". This non-co-operation, he stressed, "was neither with the English nor with the west. It is with the system which the English have established, with the material civilization and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak".

This distinction between systems and persons made it possible to oppose evil without hating the evil-doer, and this appealed tremendously to people's minds. In his hands, Satyagraha became an educative process through which the individual progressed towards perfection — it was training in non-violent values, the best means of creating the Satyagrahi. "Passive resistance", he says, "is the noblest and best education .... It should be an essential of real education that a child should learn that in the struggle of life, it can easily conquer hate by love, untruth by truth, violence by self-suffering".

The long marches of Satyagrahi volunteers, the symbols they held and the slogans they cried out, served to

1. Tendulkar, op. cit, p. 300
2. Ibid, p. 264
3. Hamijan, 12.4.42
4. Tendulkar, op. cit, p. 200
educate them and the masses - they pointedly drew their attention to their slavery and helplessness and kindled a new spirit in them. "There are times when symbols, whether they are spinning wheels or hammers and sickles are more powerful than the best equipped means of industrial production". Slogans are equally effective as symbols, especially when they point to a need. Such was the cry for swaraj in general and more so, the cry for redress of specific grievances like the abolition of the salt-tax which was a burden on the poor. The masses usually follow the classes; and Gandhi's marches were led by men of eminence who followed him to the spirit and letter in the practice of non-violent virtues, and were themselves fit to be emulated. Gandhi himself toured the country delivering the message of truth and non-violence from village to village, "a kind of pilgrim into the hearts of the people"; and wherever he went, "he left behind what we have learnt to call this day a kind of cell, an organized group of men and women just a few of them in each village who understood and were ready to act". There is nothing like truth

1. Stephens Spinks, op. cit, p. 207  
2. Prof. J.H. Holmes, op. cit, p. 249  
3. Ibid, p. 251
to make any propaganda effective, and that was the secret of the power of Satyagraha. There was nothing secret about it - in fact, Gandhi gave advance notice to authorities about his movements - and so nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed of. Everything was done openly, and people who first doubted saw its effect and were gradually converted to embrace its fold. In the fight for freedom Gandhi had called on every one to contribute his or her mite, and his genius as a general lies in the fact that he gave everyone something to do easily, even as they sat in their own homes - spinning; and wherever the spinning wheel was humming, one could be sure that Gandhi's ideals were kept alive and burning. The congress uniform soon became the outward symbol of the changed frame of reference that its wearer had come to possess.

Thus Gandhi was able to bring about the change of attitude he wished for in the Indian masses, and as it was done by non-violent means and not by force, he hoped, it must have lasting effect. He says: "Force has been used to alter the structure of society in some countries. But I have purposely eliminated it from our consideration". The results of violent

1. Pyarelal, op. cit, p. 314
revolutions are, we have seen, often upset by counter-revolutions. But what is achieved by persuasion is less likely to be upset by force. This is the merit of revolution in the Gandhian way, by a change of heart. Gandhi's method of persuasion consisted mainly in speeches delivered in conferences or on public platforms, statements issued to the Press and in the court-rooms, and articles which he published in his papers, the *Young India* and the *Harijan*. The articles he wrote were always in answer to questions posed to him by some inquisitive compatriot or sceptical critic, native or foreign, or on the burning topics of the day, issues which gripped men's minds, and so were realistic, and naturally, powerfully educative. In fact, the growing political consciousness of the people thus aroused, has been a main factor responsible for the progress the country has achieved in adult education during its long period of tutelage under the British; and it is "fairly correlated with the tempo of our political struggle for free
nationhood"¹. The cheap newspaper became the
chief medium of adult education from 1920; "... almost the entire political education of the middle
classes was carried on through the newspapers"². In this, the place of honour goes unquestioningly
to the Young India and the Harijan, articles from
which were copied or translated and given wider
publicity by other newspapers in the country.
Gandhi's fasts and prayers also were his engines of persuasion. His morning prayers were usually
attended by the inmates of the ashram and the occasional visitors. "But the evening prayers
were largely attended. Students and teachers, factory workers and professional politicians,
congress workers and officers in departments run by the Government, they fistled (sic) side by side,
listened with wrapt attention and joined the rythmic beatings of the palms when there was the Ramdhun.
Gandhiji had felt the need of speaking to his audience and sharing with them the thoughts that were uppermost in his mind. In the serious mood which a prayer meeting was bound to create, Gandhiji spoke,

¹. Teacher's Handbook of Social Education, Ministry of Education, Delhi, 1953, p. 5
². Ibid, p.6
after prayers, to his audience in a language and style that came straight from the heart and went also straight to those who had gathered to hear him". It is well-known how, during the troubled days following the partition of India, Gandhi used his prayer meetings as the chief platform to combat the Hindu-Muslim riots and bring about communal harmony.

"Much as Gandhi could do through the Press and the two powerful organizations (the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association) to change the mind of the old world peasant, he realized that in the long run the future depended on the village school." To the education of children, therefore, he devoted constant attention, and "with his usual boldness he worked out a comprehensive theory of his own".

III. THE NEED FOR OVER-HAULING EDUCATION.

The British had introduced in India the western system of education with a view to giving her the best in English language and culture. They had also the utilitarian aims of raising a body of Indo-Anglian gentlemen who would identify themselves

1. Priyanarayan Sen, op.cit, p.147
2. P.B.P., op. cit, p.215
3. Ibid.
with the British and back up her administration in India, and a body of English-knowing clerks who would be available for employment. In these it was supremely successful. But this western culture remained a superficial adjunct and did not percolate to the masses, and so had the disastrous consequence of alienating the masses from the classes. "The Indian intellectuals were so dazzled by European civilization that they attempted to transplant wholesale the culture of Europe to Indian soil. They hardly thought in terms of synthesis, for synthesis implies mutual give and take. To the Anglophil, there was little that India could give. For them, India's function was only to receive. The vast masses of Indians did not, however, feel that way. They had an instinctive sense of the value of their culture and resisted attempts at disrupting it. The Anglophil, therefore, sought to create an Indo-Anglian culture without the co-operation of the Indian people themselves. Such attempts at achieving a new culture had no roots in the life of the people. It was therefore not at all surprising that the forms and conventions of Indo-Anglian society soon became objects of
ridicule"¹. Indian civilization is essentially rural while the Western is urban, and the two are poles asunder. Says Gandhi: "... modern civilization represents forces of evil and darkness, whereas the ancient i.e., Indian civilization represents in its essence the divine force. Modern civilization is chiefly materialistic, as ours is chiefly spiritual. Modern civilization occupies itself in the investigation of the laws of matter, and employs the human ingenuity in inventing or discovering means of production and weapons of destruction; ours is chiefly occupied in exploring spiritual laws. Our Shastras lay down unequivocally that a proper observance of truth, chastity, scrupulous regard for all life, abstention from coveting others' possessions and refusal to hoard anything but what is necessary for our daily wants is indispensable for a right life; that, without it, a knowledge of the divine element is an impossibility. Our civilization tells us with daring certainty that a proper and perfect cultivation of the quality of ahimsa, which in its active form means purest love

¹. Humayun Kabir, op. cit, p. 213
and pity, brings the whole world to our feet ..." \(^1\)

Gandhi thus showed how this super-imposed culture did not interpret true Indian civilization, and proclaimed, as did the authors of the Spens Report a decade later, that "our educational system is faulty. It does not correspond to the requirements of the country, certainly not to the requirements of pauper India. There is no correspondence between the education that is given and the home life and village life" \(^2\). "... the system of education has no connection with our surroundings which, therefore, remain practically untouched by the education received by a microscopic minority of the boys and girls of the nation" \(^3\).

It had served to add a new class of English educated gentry who had little in common with the masses of the country and so were looked upon with suspicion and jealousy by them. Gandhi was convinced that "the impurity that we see about the boys in schools, the carelessness about things that matter in life, the levity with which the student world deals with the greatest and most fundamental questions of life, is due to this uprooting of tradition from

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1. *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p.331 f
2. Y.I., 8.9.27. *Vide supra*
3. *Hatijan*, 23.5.36
which boys have hitherto derived their sustenance". 

Gandhi, in one connection or another, recounted all the defects of this education, which, to begin with, he points out, was "conceived and born in error, for the English rulers honestly believed the indigenous system to be worse than useless", and "nurtured in sin, for the tendency has been to dwarf the Indian body, mind and soul". "As a result of English being the medium of instruction, we have lost all originality. We have become birds without wings ... " It has made us a nation of "faithful imitators of the west" - "blotting sheets of western civilization"; and no nation has ever become great by producing a race of imitators. It is an "unnatural system" as it forces the Indian child to think in an alien tongue. He could prove it an 'unmitagated evil' - "English education has emasculated us, constrained our intellect and the manner of imparting this education has rendered us

1. Y.I., 22.9.27
2. Ibid, 27.4.21
3. Ibid, 10.2.27
4. Ibid
5. Ibid, 15.10.31
6. Ibid, 27.4.21
effeminate". It was his considered opinion that "English education, in the manner it has been given, has emasculated the English-educated Indian, has put a severe strain upon the Indian students' nervous energy and has made of us imitators". He says, "A foreign medium means an undue strain upon the youngsters; it robs them of all originality. It stunts their growth and isolates them from their home. I regard therefore, such a thing as a national tragedy of first importance. He explains it further, thus: "... most of the time of the children was taken up by memorizing English words and phrases, and even then they could not properly follow what the teacher taught them. On the other hand they forgot their own language by sheer neglect. Another grave defect of this education is that it "places exclusive emphasis on literary merit". Knowledge and literary training are no recompense for emasculation. The irony of it is, however, that "the so-called knowledge of the three R's that is at present given in Government schools is of little use to the boys and girls in after-life. Most of it is forgotten inside of

1. Y.I., 13.4.21
2. Ibid, 27.4.21
4. Harijan, 11.6.38
5. Y.I., 13.10.27
6. Ibid, 21.6.28
one year, if only for want of use". Education is largely 'sit-stillery', with no manual work. The result is: "Most of the boys were lost to the parents and to the occupations to which they were born. They picked up evil habits, affected urban ways and got a smattering of something which may be anything else but not education". Gandhi calls it 'intellectual dissipation'. "Intellectual training is there looked upon as something altogether unrelated to manual and physical work". He points out that an education which "takes no account of the starving millions of India and that devises no means for their relief" could never be "national" as far as India is concerned. Yet another defect of this system of education is that it is costly and so only the children of the rich could afford it. Parents send children to school, even at considerable inconvenience because they think "that an entry into the best society is impossible without a knowledge of English" and that is, to say the least, "doing violence to the manhood, and especially to the womanhood of India". Children who are thus sent to English schools,

1. Y.I., 11.7.29
2. The phrase was used by Prof. Crawford: Cf: Progressive Education: U.S.A. Year Book of Education, 1952, p.68
3. Harijan, 30.10.37
4. Ibid, 8.5.37
5. Y.I., 17.6.26
6. Ibid, 2.2.21
"go there for a career, read their books for examinations, and the moment they leave their examination-hall, forget the books along with what they have learnt from them. Many care more for degrees than for knowledge"¹. Parents "feel that their children should be educated only in order that they may earn wealth and position. Education and knowledge are being thus prostituted and we look in vain for the peace, innocence and bliss that the life of the student ought to be. Our students are weighed down with cares and worries when they should really be careful for nothing. He (the student) has to fight the hostile atmosphere around him. Instead of the sacred surroundings of the Rishi Guru's Ashrama and his paternal care, he has the atmosphere of broken down home and the artificial surroundings created by the modern system of education .... The present day student has to live in the midst of heaps of books, sufficient to choke him"². The majority of them "look out for loaves and fishes"³ of office immediately as they get out of schools, and, if they fail to get what they seek, easily get frustrated. They get frustrated because " ... the vast majority of

¹. Y.I., 2.2.21
². Ibid, 29.1.25
³. Ibid, 8.9.27
students who pass through the Government educational institutions are devoid of religious instruction”¹, and so are spiritually bankrupt. Gandhi says "... a proper religious spirit is the greatest and most immediate need ... owing to the religious spirit being dormant in us, we are living in a state of perpetual fear."² The greatest curse of this education is that it alienates the educated from the rest of the masses, and makes them unfit for social service. Far from inspiring them for social work, "students are made to think that whilst they are pursuing their literary studies, they may not do acts of service at the sacrifice of their studies, be it ever so small or temporary"³. Thus "the system of education is responsible for the lack of character wherever it shows itself"⁴. Teachers have a conflict of loyalties, and teach what they do not believe; they do not convince as they teach loyalty to a foreign government and stifle everything nationalistic. Even in the field of sports, he points out, national games have been replaced by football and cricket⁵. Cut off from one's social background, the student who emerges 'educated' has no desire to reform social evils like

¹. Y.I., 25.8.27
². Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 329 f.
³. Y.I., 13.10.27
⁴. Ibid, 6.3.30
untouchability, infant marriages etc, though he might 'talk' contumaciously of them, and Gandhi has no hesitation in saying that "There is something radically wrong in the system of education that fails to arm boys and girls to fight against social and other evils". The painful absence of the education of the heart is the worst defect of the present education. Education of the heart can be done only through the living touch of the teacher. And Gandhi asks, "who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools? Are they men and women of faith and character? ... Is not the method of engaging teachers for lower schools an effective bar against character? Do the teachers get even a living wage? And we know that teachers of primary schools are not selected for their patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment".

Gandhi's criticism of Indian education did not stop here. He goes on to say that, "With the best motives in the world, the English tutors could not wholly understand the difference between English

1. Harijan, 23.5.36
2. Y.I., 1.9.21
and Indian requirements. Our climate does not require the buildings which they need. Nor do our children brought up in the predominantly rural environment need the type of education the English children brought up in surroundings predominantly urban need. The result is that "the present system of education was not only wasteful but harmful". Gandhi summarises his arguments succinctly thus: "The present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. English, having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning, has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many. It has prevented knowledge from percolating to the masses. The excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educative class a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. Absence of vocational training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically. Money spent on primary education is a waste of

1. Y.I., 11.7.29
2. Harijan, 30.10.37
expenditure in as much as what little is taught is soon forgotten and has little or no value in terms of villages or cities. Such advantage, as is gained by the existing system of education is not gained by the chief tax payer, his children getting the least".1

College education was largely an urban proposition and Gandhi would not say that it was an unmitigated failure, though its results were fairly disappointing2. "I am not against higher education", he said, "But I am against only a few lakhs of boys and girls receiving it at the expense of the poor tax-payers. Moreover I am against the type of higher education that is given. It is much cry and little wool. The whole system of higher education, and for that matter, all education, needs radical overhauling".3

There were, of course, a good many men and women in India who thought that western culture was superior to eastern, and that all the reformers from Raja Ram Mohan Roy to Mahatma Gandhi, who have achieved anything worth mentioning, were the products of western education. Gandhi, on the other hand,

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1. Harijan, 2.10.37
2. Ibid, 30.10.37
3. Ibid, 9.3.40
held that their achievements were "due to the extent they retained their Eastern culture in spite of the adverse influence of the Western". Speaking of himself, Gandhi said, "Whilst I have fully acknowledged my debt to Western culture, I can say that whatever service I have been able to render to the nation has been due entirely to the retention by me of Eastern culture to the extent it has been possible. I should have been thoroughly useless to the masses as an Anglicized, denationalized being, knowing little of, caring less for and perhaps even despising their ways, habits, thoughts and aspirations".

It was more than difficult to estimate the loss of energy caused to the nation by her children being obliged to resist the encroachments of a foreign culture, which, "however good in itself, was unsuited for them whilst they had not imbibed and become rooted in their own". The greatest danger of the British system of education and the aping of western culture by the Anglophil lay in that it denationalized the people, bred in them an inferiority complex and

1. Y.I., 5.7.28
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
ever remained a sign of the slavery and degradation of the nation. Gandhi puts all the blame for the increase of hypocrisy, selfishness and tyranny among the educated people on this "false education" which being more intellectual dissipation, "encourages this vicious tendency, misdirects the mind and thereby hinders its development". It is also worthy of note, he points out, that "the systems that the Europeans have discarded are the systems in vogue among us. Their learned men continually make changes. We ignorantly adhere to their cast-off systems".

Gandhi quickly realized, more than any professional educator, that education which lags behind, and has no relation with the culture and civilization of the people can never be an effective instrument for social improvement, and so set himself to the task of educational reform.

IV. NEW EDUCATION FOR A NEW SOCIAL ORDER.

As the Editor of Basic Education points out, "... (1) the unpractical nature of the education

1. Hind Swaraj, p. 80, 81
2. Harijan, 5.8.37
3. Hind Swaraj, p. 81
introduced by the British in India and (2) the non-violent order which Gandhiji wished to see established in our country constitute the background of his scheme of New or Basic Education as he later called it" ¹. Gandhi wanted to perpetuate the rural civilization of India and so thought of an education for village children as against the English educators who had all along tried to urbanize the country. "We are inheritors of a rural civilization. The vastness of our country, the vastness of the population, the situation and the climate of the country have, in my opinion, destined it for a rural civilization. Its defects are well-known, but not one of them is irremediable. To uproot it and substitute for it an urban civilization seems to me an impossibility, unless we are prepared by some drastic means to reduce the population from three hundred million to three, or say, even thirty ... We must perpetuate the present rural civilization and endeavour to rid it of its acknowledged defects. This can only be done if the youth of the country will settle down to

village life". The urban education which the British gave to children who least needed it, was to them, apart from its ineffectiveness "inordinately expensive". "When it is difficult for millions even to make the two ends meet, when millions are dying of starvation, it is monstrous to think of giving our relatives a costly education... Is there not, may there not be, a way of each boy paying for his own education?" Gandhi began to ponder. His immediate reaction to this thought was characteristic of the nature of the Satyagrahi: "There may be no such way. But there is no doubt that when we deny ourselves the way of expensive education, seeing that aspiration after higher education is a laudible end, we shall find out a way of fulfilling it more in accord with our surroundings. The golden rule to apply in all such cases is resolutely to refuse to have what millions cannot". He found the key to the problem

1. Y.I. 17.11.29
2. Y.I. 24.6.26
3. Ibid
4. Ibid.
of making education effective and at the same time inexpensive in imparting it through a vocation. He had learnt by experience that "if a vocational education in keeping with their surroundings is given to the children, they would not only repay the expenses incurred in the schools but would turn that training to use in after-life". Only, it must be remembered that "... not vocation cum literary training but literary training through vocational training is the thing". Education then, would be rural, and it could be put within the reach of every child. Indeed it is the only practical way of universalizing education in a poor country like India. Education through craft would develop initiative and enable the child to think and act for himself and cease to be a helpless imitator. And it will instil sympathy and understanding with the human brotherhood and lead to willing social service. It would serve best to remove ignorance. "Indeed" says Gandhi, "in my opinion, what we have reason to be ashamed of is not so much illiteracy as ignorance". Gandhi looked

4. Y.I, 11.7.29
2. Harijan, 11.6.38
3. Y.I, 3.6.26
4. Harijan, 5.6.37
upon primary education as the first stage, and the most important stage of education, and evolved a scheme of primary education of the child to the age of 14, including in it what is usually called secondary education as well. This was necessary because primary education was the only education that was available to the village children. "Directors of Public instruction have admitted", Gandhi pointed out, "that the present system of primary education is a colossal waste, that a very small percentage of the pupils reach the higher classes, that there is nothing like permanency in the literacy imparted, and that even as it is, it touches but a small fraction of the vast rural areas."

And, "What is your secondary education" he asks, "but compelling the poor boys to learn in a foreign language in seven years what they should learn in the course of a couple of years in their own mother tongue? If you can make up your minds to free the children from the...

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1. Harijan 30.10.37. Primary education in many parts of India at this time was a 4 years' course from 5 - 9, and secondary education a 7 years' course after it, going up to the age of 16. The School Leaving Examination was, for some time known as Matriculation.

2. Harijan 28.10.39

3. Harijan 21.8.37
incubus of learning their subjects in a foreign
tongue and if you teach them to use their hands and
feet profitably, the educational puzzle is solved" 1.
The abolition of the foreign medium of instruction and
its substitution by the child's mother tongue would
enable teachers to impart all secondary education
in a shorter period and herein lay the justification
for its inclusion in Gandhi's scheme of Primary educat­
ion. Gandhi attached the greatest importance to such
a real, primary education. He says, "I attach the
greatest importance to Primary education which, accord­
ing to my conception, should be equal to the present
matriculation less English. If all the collegians
were all of a sudden to forget their knowledge, the
loss sustained by the sudden lapse of the memory of
a few lakhs of collegians would be as nothing compared
to the loss that the nation has sustained and is
sustaining through the ocean of darkness that surrounds
three hundred millions. The measure of illiteracy is
no adequate measure of the prevailing ignorance among
the millions of villagers" 2.

It was a pity that such an obvious proposition
as learning through the medium of mother tongue and

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1. Harijan 21.8.37
2. Harijan 31.7.37
not a foreign language, had to be proved, but such was the case in India. And Gandhi argued thus: "To inflict English on children is to stunt their natural growth and perhaps to kill originality in them. Learning English from the beginning is an unnecessary tax on a child. He can only learn it at the expense of the mother tongue". He held it to be as necessary for the urban child as for the rural, to have the foundation of his development laid on the solid rock of the mother tongue. "I must cling to my mother tongue as to my mother's breast", he says, "in spite of its shortcomings. It alone can give me the life-giving milk". This did not mean that he ignored the importance of English. "I love the English language in its own place, but I am its inveterate opponent, if it usurps a place which does not belong to it. English is today, admittedly the world language. I would therefore accord it a place as a second, optional language, not in the school but in the university course. That can only be for the select few - not for the millions. Today, when we have not the means to introduce even free compulsory primary

1. Harijan 9.9.39
2. Ibid
3. Harijan 25.8.46
education, how can we make provision for teaching English"? He wished to have all English books which are valuable translated into the various Indian languages so that we may not lose the best in English thought. A select few must have good English education; but that was different from making every child learn English, and learn every subject through the English medium. He points out, "Russia has achieved all her scientific progress without English. It is our mental slavery that makes us feel that we cannot do without English. I can never subscribe to that defeatist creed." Every cultured Indian ought to know in addition to his own provincial language, if a Hindu, Sanskrit, if a Muslim, Arabic; if a Parsee, Persian; and all Hindi which should be the national language. It would be cruel to compel all to learn English in addition.

In his Foreword to the second edition of Basic National Education, the Report of the Committee

1. Harijan, 25.8.46
2. Hind Swaraj p.83
3. Harijan 25.8.46
4. Hind Swaraj p. 83
appointed by the Basic Education Conference, Segmon, in 1937, Gandhi pointed out, about this scheme of education that a "more correct, though much less attractive description would be Rural National Education through village handicrafts. 'Rural' excludes the so-called higher or English Education. 'National' at present connotes truth and non-violence. And 'through village handicrafts' means that the framers of the scheme expect the teachers to educate village children in their villages so as to draw out all their faculties through some selected village handicrafts in an atmosphere free from super-imposed restrictions and interference. Thus considered, the scheme is a revolution in the education of village children"¹.

It is true that Gandhi had, in discussing the question of primary education, deliberately confined himself to the villages. This was because "it is in the villages that the bulk of India's population resides", and to tackle successfully the question of the villages is to

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solve the problem for the cities also". But he unhesitatingly recommended the adoption of the vocational basis for primary education in the cities as well. "I want to resuscitate the villages of India. Today, our villages have become a mere appendage to the cities. They exist, as it were, to be exploited by the latter and depend on the latter's sufferance. This is unnatural. It is only when the cities realize the duty of making an adequate return to the villages for the strength and sustenance which they derive from them, instead of selfishly exploiting them, that a healthy and moral relationship between the two will spring up. And if the city children are to play their part in this great and noble work of social reconstruction, the vocations through which they are to receive their education ought to be directly related to the requirements of the villages". Gandhi's aim was to make all children in India, whether in villages or cities, producers and so to change the pace of the whole nation, "for it will permeate the whole of our social being". A

1. Harijan 9.10.37
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid, 12.2.38
classless society of producers will be the 'persons' who constitute his new social order.

The propositions which Gandhi wished to place before the Education Conference at Wardha, which met on the 22nd and 23rd of October, 1937, to discuss his ideas of educational reform were, chiefly the following:

1. "The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to matriculation standard less English plus a substantial vocation.

2. "For the all-round development of boys and girls, all training should so far as possible be given through a profit-yielding vocation. In other words, vocations should serve a double purpose - to enable the pupil to pay for his tuition through the products of his labour and at the same time to develop the whole man or woman in him or her through the vocation learnt at school .... This primary education should equip boys and girls to earn their bread.

3. "Higher education should be for meeting national requirements whether in the various industries, technical arts, belles-lettres or fine arts ...."  

1. Vide Supra p. 396
2. Harijan, 2.10.37
Gandhi claimed that "if the whole scheme is accepted, it will solve the question of the greatest concern to the State - training of its youth, its future makers".  

The fundamentals in these proposals were further clarified in the following statement: 

"1. Primary education extending over a period of seven years or longer, and covering all the subjects up to the matriculation standard, except English, plus a vocation used as the vehicle for drawing out the minds of boys and girls in all departments of knowledge, should take the place of what passes today under the name of Primary, Middle and High School education. 

"2. Such education, taken as a whole can and must be self-supporting; in fact, self-support is the acid test of its reality". 

Below are the resolutions of the Conference passed on 23rd October, 1937:

"1. That in the opinion of this Conference, free and compulsory education be provided for seven

1. Harijan, 2.10.37
2. Ibid.
years on a nation-wide scale.

"2. That the medium of instruction be the mother tongue.

"3. That the Conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre round some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

"4. That the Conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of teachers".

The fundamentals of Basic Education were further re-stated by Gandhi in 1947, in an address to teachers under training in Basic Education. They are:

"1. All education to be true must be self-supporting, that is to say, in the end it will pay its expenses excepting the capital which will remain intact.

"2. In it the cunning of the hand will be utilized even up to the final stage, that is to say, hands of

1. Harijan, 30.10.37
the pupils will be skilfully working at some industry for some period during the day.

"3. All education must be imparted through the medium of the provincial language.

"4. In this there is no room for giving sectional religious training. Fundamental universal ethics will have full scope.

"5. This education, whether it is confined to children or adults, male or female, will find its way to the homes of the pupils.

"6. Since millions of students receiving this education will consider themselves as of the whole of India, they must learn an inter-provincial language. This common inter-provincial speech can only be Hindustani written in Nagari or Urdu script. Therefore pupils have to master both the scripts"¹.

Gandhi realized, more than any one else, the importance of education outside and beyond school - adult education and further education. Regarding adult education, ie, social education of the illiterate, and the literate but not educated adult,

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1. Harijan, 2.11.47
Gandhi says, "I should have an intensive programme of driving out ignorance through carefully selected teachers with an equally carefully selected syllabus according to which they would educate the adult villagers' mind." His proposals before the Conference had indicated the lines on which he had envisaged reform on higher education. He wanted the further education of children who left the Basic school to be quite realistic. "I would revolutionize college education and relate it to national necessities. There would be degrees for mechanical and other engineers. They would be attached to the different industries which should pay for the training of the graduates they need. Thus the Tatas would be expected to run a college for training engineers under the supervision of the State, the mill associations would run among them a college for training graduates whom they need. Similarly for the other industries that may be named. Commerce will have its college. There remain, arts, medicine and agriculture. Several private arts colleges are today self-supporting. The State

1. Harijan, 5.6.37
2. See Supra, p. 402
3. An industrial firm in India, chiefly devoted to the manufacture of iron and steel goods.
would therefore cease to run its own. Medical colleges would be attached to certified hospitals. As they are popular among moneyed men they may be expected by voluntary contributions to support medical colleges. And agricultural colleges, to be worthy of the name, must be self-supporting. I have a painful experience of some agricultural graduates. Their knowledge is superficial. They lack practical experience. But if they had their apprenticeship on farms which are self-sustained and answer the requirements of the country, they would not have to gain experience after getting their degrees and at the expense of their employers. The aim of university education should be to turn out true servants of the people who would live and die for social service. He was, therefore, of opinion that all university education should be co-ordinated and brought into line with basic education.

We should bear in mind that the whole scheme of Gandhian education sprang out of non-violence.

1. Harijan, 31.7.37
2. Ibid, 25.8.46
and aims at rearing the younger generation on non-violent values. Hence, as Gandhi says, "... we shall have to concentrate on non-violence .... All our problems therefore have to be solved non-violently. Our arithmetic, our science, our history, will have a non-violent approach and the problems in these subjects will be coloured by non-violence .... whereas history is a chronicle of kings and their wars, the future history will be the history of man. That can be or is only non-violent .... Our text-books will have also to be prepared with the same end".

This was Gandhi's scheme to bring education, culture and civilization into true alignment, taking into view the realities of the situation in India and to make the best use of it to evolve the new social order of his conception. "If Nai Talim is really new", Gandhi claimed in his message to the journal, Nai Talim, "it should lead to the following results: our sense of frustration should give place to hope; our penury and starvation to a self-sufficiency of means to maintain ourselves; unemployment to industry and

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1. Harijan, 7.5.38
work; discord to concord. It should enable our sons and daughters to read and write and know along with it a craft through which they will acquire knowledge." It has no doubt" he says, "that if the scheme is worked with all its implications and becomes popular throughout India, a silent social revolution would have taken place ... " When once Sri Aryanayakom took a few boys who had practically completed their seven years' course in the Sevagram Basic School, Gandhi was struck by their bearing - they were clean, well-groomed, disciplined and well-mannered; and he seized the opportunity to point out that "if the school had done its duty by them, boys of fourteen should be truthful, pure and healthy. They should be village-minded. Their brains and hands should have been equally developed. There would be no guile in them. Their intelligence would be keen but they would not be worried about earning money. They would be able to turn their

1. Basic Education, p. 16
2. Harijan, 30.4.38
hands to any honest task that came their way. They would not want to go into the cities. Having learnt the lessons of co-operation and service in the school, they would infect their surroundings with the same spirit. They would never be beggars or parasites". Gandhi saw in each one of them a Satyagrahi individual, the brick of Ramaraj.

1. Harijan, 8.9.46
PART III.
The Educative Process.

CHAPTER I.
The "Basic" Curriculum.

I. Principles of the Curriculum.

The curriculum of studies is generally dictated by the aims of education. The Spartan curriculum was dominated by games and gymnastics because they wanted to turn out soldiers. The sponsors of the Charity Schools of the 18th century had an equally specific aim: to turn out children as "good men and women and useful servants"\(^1\), and so the curriculum of these schools contained little of academic studies. Children were taught to read the Bible, but writing was considered for long as unnecessary, and singing was frowned upon by authorities as it might lead "into a more polite form of education"\(^2\). Vocational training formed the major part of the training of girls - training in knitting, spinning, housewifery, which will fit them for humble domestic work. The aim of Public School education in England was quite different. What Milton in his Tractate on

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2. Ibid, p. 81
Education calls "a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war" may well be applied to the Public Schools. Their curriculum naturally was made up of the Classics, English, Mathematics and a host of other subjects and they gave much importance to organized games. The curriculum of of the Public Elementary School under Robert Morant reflected his aim of developing the character and intelligence of the children entrusted to it. The 1944 Act laid down that education should secure "the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community"¹ and so, envisaged the provision of a "variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes"² in order to ensure the fullest possible development of each individual. The Ministry of education in England today recognizes that "All secondary education must, to some extent, be vocational, since a good general education

¹. Education Act, 1944, H.M.S.O., Sec.7
². Ibid, Sec.8
prepares for the whole of life, not merely for particular phases of life .... Preparation for the work which he or she will do for the community in the process of earning a living is bound to enter into any kind of education at the secondary stage\(^1\); and the curriculum of secondary schools in Britain naturally attaches great importance to vocational subjects. Indian education too might be cited to illustrate this truth - the aim under the British having been mainly to impart Western culture and to turn out English-knowing men and women who would be capable of holding administrative and clerical posts, education imparted in schools has been purely academic. As Dr. McKee points out, "A mere command of the tools of literacy will not change the attitudes, appreciations and ideals of the people. It will not bring about better economic, social and health conditions. It will not unite village people with urban people. It will not lead to a united India"\(^2\). If pupils are to reveal initiative,

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2. W.J. McKee, New Schools for Young India, University of North Carolina Press, 1930, p. 362
purposefulness, reflection, co-operation, social responsibility, high ideals and progressiveness in later life, these qualities must be exercised and developed in the class-room. Where such conditions prevail, says McKee, "we have substantial grounds for expecting the gradual development of attractive, capable, socially minded personalities whose vision, purpose, and effort will mean a better social order".

The Gandhian scheme of education, as it aimed at the creation of active Satyagrahis, who were to forge a new social order, had naturally to look to a different type of curriculum than the purely academic.

An utilitarian aim, however narrow it may be, can always be perceived behind any educational system. This criterion for the curriculum was laid down long ago by Aristotle. "There can be no doubt", he says, "that children should be taught those useful things which are really necessary". In our own generation it is re-stated by the Board of Education thus: "... our attitude towards the curriculum

1. W.J. McKee, op. cit, p. 362
has been influenced, even if only obscurely, by a desire to assist children to acquire or develop habits, skills, interests and sentiments which they will need both for their own well-being and for that of the people among whom they live"¹.

Thus, "every normal child must acquire the power of speaking his own language, of reading and writing it and also some knowledge of arithmetic and measurement. Similarly the importance of health and physical training on the one hand, and of practical instruction on the other, is so great that no one would propose their omission from the curriculum of an Elementary School"². Any utility criterion which prescribes that school studies must include the skills and knowledge which the child requires not only for his present life as a child but for his future life as an adult is an advance on the naturalist contention that school studies need concentrate only on the present experience, activities and interests of the child at school. An extreme naturalist philosophy has no idea of a goal beyond that of fostering the growth

¹. *Handbook of Suggestions*, p. 37
of a free, active, well-adjusted human being, and hence their idea of the curriculum does not go beyond the present interests of the child. This is what, for example, Mr. A. S. Neill is doing at Summerhill. Usually, however, naturalism is corrected by pragmatism, and then, the utility criterion as outlined above, emerges. But the pragmatist agrees with the naturalist in holding that the school studies should be based on the present interests, activities and experience of the child. So, even the best pragmatic curriculum cannot satisfy an idealist like Gandhi. For, his aim is to enable the child not merely to be a creator of values, as the pragmatists would have him be, but to realize certain values which are "already there". All idealists aim, as Gandhi does, to create the moral individual who would live a truly social life. Such an aim leads them to the position that it is not so much the present experience of the child as the experience of the human race through the ages that ought to be the stuff of education. But the experience of the human race through the ages is such a vast field that it cannot be transmitted to the child except

representatively, by a judicious selection and grouping of what is most worth knowing. The most important problem of curriculum construction has thus come to be the problem of epitomization of human experience in a suitable form to be imparted at school. Various approaches to this question have been suggested by idealist educators, and an examination of some of these is very helpful to appreciate the Gandhian curriculum.

Human experience, psychologically analysed, falls into three groupings: **conation** or the active striving experience; **cognition** or the knowing experience; and **affection** or the feeling experience. School studies, to fulfil their function properly, should naturally represent the fruits of man's striving, knowing and feeling. In other words, the curriculum ought to include the major crafts of mankind, especially those which subserve the essential needs of food, shelter and clothing. Language and literature, mathematics and science, history and geography, must all find their place in the curriculum as the major modes of man's thinking. Art, poetry and music are the expressions of man's feeling-life and so, must have a place in any scheme of studies.
Sir Percy Nunn regards a nation's schools as "an organ of its life, whose special function is to consolidate its spiritual strength, to maintain its historic continuity, to secure its past achievements, to guarantee its future. Through its schools a nation should become conscious of the abiding sources from which the best movements in its life have always drawn their inspiration, should come to share the dreams of its nobler sons..."

The school curriculum, therefore, should be a reflection of those human activities which are of the greatest and most permanent significance in the wider world, that is to say, "the grand expressions of the human spirit". These activities fall into two groups. "In the first we place the activities that safeguard the conditions and maintain the standard of individual and social life: such as the care of health and bodily grace, manners, social organization, morals, religion; in the second, the typical creative activities that constitute, so to

1. Nunn, op. cit (3rd ed.), p. 253
2. Ibid, p. 263
speak, the solid tissue of civilization"¹. The activities of the first group, Nunn further points out, "cannot from their nature, be treated as 'subjects';" they could only pervade the whole life of the school and thereby shape the conduct and character of the pupils. Still, "they should be inspired and nourished by the pupils' studies and must to a varying extent be guided by definite teaching"². The activities of the second group would comprise, "(i) literature, including at least the best literature of the motherland; (ii) some forms of art, including music, the most universal of the arts; (iii) handicraft, taught with emphasis either on its aesthetic aspect, as in weaving, carving, lettering, or in its constructional aspect, as in carpentry and needle work; (iv) science, including mathematics, the science of number, space and time. History and geography should appear in it in a double guise. On the one hand, history belongs with literature as geography belongs with science. On the other hand they should have a central position in the curriculum as the subjects in which

¹. Nunn, op. cit, p. 263
². Ibid, p. 264
the human movement is as such, presented and interpreted".  

Rusk, in his *Philosophical Bases of Education*, adopts a two-fold analysis of man's environment into (1) material or physical, and (2) cultural or mental. The cultural environment is peculiarly his own, and he must enter into this spiritual heritage of his, if he is to be truly human. Man's spiritual activities have been traditionally classed as falling into three groups, intellectual, moral and aesthetic, following the spiritual values they seek, namely, truth, beauty and goodness. Rusk adds religion as a separate spiritual value, and says that education should, therefore, be religious, moral, intellectual and aesthetic. The physical aspect of education also must be given adequate attention if the aim is a harmoniously developed personality. This resolves into: (a) care of the body to keep it fit and healthy, since, without physical health, spiritual pursuit will be seriously handicapped; and (b) a fostering of the

1. Nunn, op. cit, p. 264.  
3. Ibid, p. 103 f.
bodily skills which will help him considerably in the task of manipulating the artefactual environment to his own liking.

Eric James seeks the justification for including the study of a subject in the curriculum, under one of three broad heads. "A study may convey information which is essential to the business of living; it may inculcate valuable skills; and thirdly it may contribute to the spiritual development of the individual, using the word 'spiritual' to include the satisfaction of the highest intellectual, moral and aesthetic capacities".

It follows from the above discussion that any balanced curriculum of school studies should have a craft or crafts, a language and its literature, social studies and general science, art and, if possible, music, and physical education; and the school should be permeated by a religious spirit, if religious studies is not included as part of the school course. The Gandhian curriculum is well balanced, judged by such a criterion. When this is conceded, there arises the question of right emphasis. English

education, at least in specified branches, had once stressed manual training, but finding that learning was "subordinated to labour which was conducted for a profit, and not for its educational value", the elementary school "abandoned work as an educational method" and "made reading the supreme weapon of instruction, with all its attendant verbosity". Today, manual training as a means of education has advanced so much in popularity and prestige that "there is even a danger of its educational value being over-rated". Craft has supreme claims to inclusion in the curricula as most "related to life". Eric James has a very interesting observation to make on this point. He says: "The view that the only value of a subject lies in its immediate usefulness or in its "relatedness to life" is often reinforced by the sentimental regard for 'practical' activities of those who have never done any. But its chief danger lies in the muddled thinking, characteristic of so much educational writing, that is incapable of making a clear analysis of what is

meant by such a phrase as 'relatedness to life' ... Aesthetic experience, philosophical speculation, the discussion of moral and political problems, all of which spring from an academic background, are not unrelated to life; they are part of its very essence ... There are no greater dangers to education than the sentimentalism and materialism which regard the life of the factory or the office as in some way more real than that of the class-room or the laboratory. The eternal problems with which men and women are faced are the same in all; and any study which can help us to come to terms with them can never be useless or remote. It is true enough that the content of our education must at every point be related to life, but the phrase has a far deeper significance than is guessed by many of those who use it, and in thinking of its social and economic meanings we must not overlook the life of the mind and the spirit"¹. This criticism is significant, but does in no way thwart the claims of craft for a place in the curriculum. In any reconstruction of the curriculum, today, the phrase

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¹ Eric James, op. cit., p. 55
"related to life", regarding the subjects for inclusion gains supreme importance, 'life' meaning practical life in this world as a worker and a citizen more than that of an abstract thinker, important certainly as it is. Prof. Jeffreys finds modern education unreal since "too much of what is taught, whether for examinations or not, is of little help in understanding the world we live in or as preparation for living in it. School and life are too far apart ... "¹ He suggests three principles for guidance in framing the curriculum. One direct object of education, he points out, must be "an understanding of the world in which we live"², and if this be the case, it follows that "The essential principle for the selection of material is relevance, not contemporaneity ... Let the curriculum be as remote, in one sense as we please, provided that it is contemporary in the other sense of laying hold on our world and interpreting it"³. Secondly

¹ Jeffreys, Glaucon, p. 66
² Ibid, p. 69 f
³ Ibid, p. 70
the school must give "direct experience of community living"\(^1\); it must be a true example of fellowship. Thirdly, "education should seek to reveal what has been called the "Vision of Greatness". We ought, that is to say, to help our pupils to enter, through literature and history, into their heritage of the best that has been thought and felt and done in the world"\(^2\). Jeffreys rightly adds: "The vision alone is not enough. The world needs not only vision but faith. But faith cannot be manufactured. What we can do is to expose ourselves and our pupils to the great sources of inspiration, so that from the vision faith may grow"\(^3\). An important part of the vision must be the contemplation of great persons and through them getting a better understanding of the meaning of the personal in human life. "It is probable that right thinking is connected with right feeling even more closely than we realize, and that the Vision of Greatness can release

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1. Jeffreys, *op. cit.*, p. 71
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
intellectual as well as emotional forces. That is to say, behaviour which is influenced by the right values will tend to be not only nobler but more intelligent. These principles are all founded imbedded in Gandhi's educational thought and have been incorporated in his scheme of education.

Prof. Jeffreys points out that so long as the aim of school instruction was merely the Three R's, the content of the subject matter did not matter. "But when the aim is to produce intelligent and responsible citizens, the content of education acquires a new importance." Gandhi had said the same thing several times. The Secondary Education Commission, which recently submitted its Report to the Government of India may be taken to reflect the latest Indian thought on the subject. "The aim of Secondary Education", says the Report, "is to train the youth of the country to be good citizens, who will be competent to play their part effectively in the social reconstruction and economic development of the country."

1. Jeffreys, op. cit, p. 73
2. Ibid, p. 68
3. Mudaliar Report, p. 5
education for true democracy should be first and foremost an education based on the worth of the human individual. No education which is not designed for an all-round development of his personality, i.e., which does not take into account all his needs, psychological, social, emotional and practical, can, therefore, hope to succeed. "The view of education that emerges from this basic concept transcends the narrow academic approach and broadens out into an education for living, i.e., an education to initiate the students into the many-sided art of living in a community". Citizenship in a democracy is a very exacting and challenging responsibility, for which people have to be specially educated. For anything more than a thoughtless exercise of the vote, he must be capable of independent judgment on social, political and economic questions, and so education should develop his "capacity for clear thinking and a receptivity to new ideas". This alone would save him from the danger of being moulded at will by self-seeking political demagogues and their one-sided propaganda. Among the qualities to be developed for

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 24 f
2. Ibid, p. 24
social living are "discipline, co-operation, social sensitiveness and tolerance". Education should seek to develop these virtues as well as true patriotism. It must also increase their "productive or technical and vocational efficiency", and "release the sources of creative energy in the students" so that they would grow to appreciate their cultural heritage and enjoy leisure. Lastly it must promote leadership. All this is a re-statement of Gandhian ideas. Gandhi would have added to this, perhaps, cultivation of the spirit of truth and non-violence and selfless service to the community.

The Secondary Education Commission has certain very valuable observations on the principles of curriculum construction. "The special function of the curriculum at the middle stage", the Report points out, "is to introduce the pupil in a general way to the significant departments of human knowledge and activity". "The phrase, in a general way, indicates the scope of the course: it is not the depth of knowledge in any particular field but familiarity with

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1. Mudaliar Report, p. 25
2. Ibid, p. 27
3. Ibid, p. 28
4. Ibid, p. 82
the different important fields in which human mind has been active throughout the ages and out of which the pattern of human culture has been evolved ... 

Care must be taken not to overload the curriculum, but nothing of abiding and significant value should be omitted. "The purpose is two-fold; the child as the inheritor of the treasures of human civilization has the right firstly to know what its main components are, and secondly, as a result of acquiring that knowledge, to choose at a later stage, the particular field in which he can in his own way contribute his share to this fund of human culture." A language and its literature, social studies, the natural sciences and mathematics, it will be conceded, should naturally find a place in the curriculum. "But then there are a few other subjects whose claims are not so freely admitted, or admitted in a grudging manner so that their position in the curriculum is regarded as ornamental or at best secondary. In this group we include art, music and craft. These subjects demand expression and achievement, with as much importance in their own way as the purely intellectual subjects;

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 82
2. Ibid, p. 82 f
and they can be used for the education of the human mind as easily and effectively as the so-called intellectual subjects. Historically speaking, these came much earlier in the field of human activity, long before subjects like mathematics, science and others came to be formalised and regarded as worthy of human pursuit. As a valuable media for the development of the emotional side of the mind their place is certainly higher than that of the ordinary subjects. Their inclusion in the school curriculum is valuable for the proper development of the emotions and helpful to the growth of other aspects of the personality, intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual. Who could deny the intellectual and aesthetic value to a student in the creation, undertaking and completing of a piece of art or music or hand work?" 1 Mr. Eric James might question the claim of a higher place for the arts but he too will only agree with the conclusions reached.

The Commission considers physical education as "much more than a 'subject' in the curriculum". "As intellectual development comes through the study of various subjects, so physical development comes

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 82
through various forms of activities. It is much wider than what is usually denoted by the term 'P.T.' So physical education as a series of activities will form a part of the curriculum but the approach to it will be somewhat different from the approach to other subjects". This is in line with the Commission's view of what constitutes the curriculum. The report points out that "... according to the best modern educational thought, curriculum ... does not mean only the academic subjects traditionally taught in the school but it includes the totality of experiences that a pupil receives through the manifold activities that go on in the school, in the class-room, library, laboratory, workshop, playgrounds, and in the numerous informal contacts between teachers and pupils. In this sense, the whole life of the school becomes the curriculum which can touch the life of the students at all points and help in the evolution of a balanced personality". This reminds one of the attitude of Sir Percy Kunn towards the curriculum, not to speak of Dewey and the pragmatists, and, as will be clear from the following pages, is a true

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 82
2. Ibid, p. 80
reflection of the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi.

II. **THE CONTENT OF BASIC EDUCATION.**

The Wardha Education Conference had left the working out of the content of the Basic Curriculum to a Committee of educationists under the chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Husain of the Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi. The scheme of studies, which they drew up, consisted, as visualized by Gandhi, of the following subjects:

1. The basic craft
2. The mother tongue
3. Mathematics
4. Social Studies
5. General Science
6. Drawing
7. Music, and
8. Hindustani.

They had included in the Report a detailed syllabus only for Spinning and Weaving as the basic craft, but they made it very clear, in submitting the Report to Mahatma Gandhi that they had thus limited themselves to it only because they had little time before them. "If time had permitted, we should have very much liked to include a similar scheme for more crafts."
For we are anxious to avoid the impression that we do not attach equal importance to the other crafts with similar or better educational possibilities. At a later date ... we hope also to include a detailed scheme of Agriculture and Gardening as the basic craft. When presenting the graded syllabus of Basic education, at a later date, they did include such schemes, not merely for Agriculture and Gardening, but for Woodwork and Metal-work as well. Several more schemes have since then been worked out by Basic enthusiasts, to suit the basic craft to local conditions. Thus in Assam, all sorts of cottage industries are being tried in the Basic training centres; at Titabar an attempt has been made successfully with sericulture; at Raha, bee-keeping has been started and , at least one school has sought to develop a syllabus based on machine tools. The graded syllabus framed by the Zakir Husain Committee was also not considered by them as in any way final; and they welcomed changes in it in the light of experience. The Committee had worked out the

1. Basic National Education, p.4
2. Progress of Education in India 1947-52, Quinquennial Review, Ministry of Education, Delhi, 1953, p.38
3. Ibid, p.28
detailed grade-placements of the subjects for the seven classes of the basic school, with spinning and weaving as the basic craft, only to show that it is possible to include the essential subject matter in language, mathematics, social studies, general science and drawing, within the time available for the purpose, and to co-ordinate it with craft work to a considerable extent. The Committee also wished to show that in this curriculum, while no really significant units of the cultural heritage are omitted, the subject matter selected is not excessive. In no way did they want to impose it on the public.

"A syllabus of this kind which aims at far-reaching reconstruction of educational practice, really requires", the Committee said, "a background of fairly extensive experimental work on the lines indicated in our Report ..." and so, "this should be regarded as a tentative scheme". And they hoped that "... it will be possible to improve the scheme progressively. Such an experimental attitude of mind on the part of teachers is essential for the success and efficient working out of this educational scheme".

1. Basic National Education, p. 48
2. Ibid, p. 47
3. Ibid, p. 48
1. The Basic Craft. It was suggested that any one of the following may be chosen as the basic craft: spinning and weaving, carpentry, agriculture, fruit and vegetable gardening, leather work or any other craft for which local and geographical conditions are favourable, provided "the craft or productive work chosen should be rich in educational possibilities. It should find natural points of correlation with important human activities and interests, and should extend into the whole content of the school curriculum"\(^1\). For, "The object of this new educational scheme is NOT primarily the production of craftsmen able to practise some craft \textit{mechanically}, but rather the exploitation for educative purposes of the resources implicit in craftwork. This demands that productive work should not only form a part of the school curriculum - its craft side - but should also inspire the method of teaching all other subjects. Stress should be laid on the principles of co-operative activity, planning, accuracy, initiative and individual responsibility\(^2\). However, the craft should be one with rich economic possibilities too;

\(^1\) Basic National Education, p.10
\(^2\) Ibid, p.11
for, a seven years course in it must enable a pupil "to pursue it as an occupation after finishing his full course". Every pupil is, therefore, expected to gain reasonable skill in the handicraft chosen, with this end in view. For, "in modern times the intelligent citizen must be an active member of society, able to repay in the form of some useful service what he owes to it as a member of an organized civilized community. An education which produces drags and parasites - whether rich or poor stands condemned. It not only impairs the productive capacity and efficiency of society but also engenders a dangerous and immoral mentality. This scheme is designed to produce workers, who would look upon all kinds of useful work - including manual labour, even scavenging - as honourable, and who will be both able and willing to stand on their own feet".

The Committee starts on the assumption that "modern educational thought is practically unanimous in commending the idea of education through some suitable form of productive work". The Wood-Asher

1. Basic National Education, p. 16
2. Ibid, p. 12
3. Ibid, p. 9
Report, published at this time is an eloquent testimony to this contention¹. Adolf Ferriere, in the Activity School, advocates "Progressive manual work for children from four to fifteen" as "the true and only procedure for normal development, since it opens up indeed the only road along which Nature herself attempts to lead the child"². The following passage from Lewis Mumford's Culture of Cities may also be quoted in support: "Every child should have first hand acquaintance with the primitive substratum of economic life. The geography and geology of the text book should be annotations to these experiences, not substitutes. So, with work in the garden, the vegetable patch, the hayfield and the grainfield, here is the very substance of regional life, and no system of education, no urban environment, can be considered even remotely satisfactory that does not include these experiences as a vital element.

Child labour, as Marx pointed out, will be an essential

¹ Report on Vocational Education in India by A. Abbott, formerly Chief Inspector of Technical Schools, Board of Education, England, with a section on General Education and Administration by S.H. Wood, Director of Intelligence, Board of Education, England, Manager of Publications, Delhi, 1937
² Ferriere, op. cit., p. 103
part of all education once the element of exploitation is removed from it"¹. But the term productive has not been considered very happy by some, who are inclined to think that the term might imply that, in the scheme, economic production outweighs educational development. The Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education for the consideration of the Wardha Scheme, appointed in 1938 and presided over by Sri B.G. Kher, then Premier and Education Minister of Bombay, thus preferred the word "creative" to productive², and said that they "unanimously agree with the principle of educating children through purposeful creative activities which should gradually develop into productive work"³. They did not, however, object to education being productive of saleable material. "We emphasize" they said, "that the Wardha scheme stresses the educative value of craft work. That saleable material will be produced in the higher classes of the basic school is no objection to the scheme. Indeed, unless saleable material is produced, the educative possibilities have not been satisfactorily

¹.Cf: Arthur E. Morgan, Higher Education in Relation to Rural India, 1949, type-script, courtesy.
².First Kher Report, 1939, p.7
³.Ibid
exploited. The income from the sale of such material might well be applied to the upkeep of the school". Similarly, Gandhi's idea that education shall be integrated round a single basic craft in each school, also came in for criticism at the hands of some. The Kher Committee was of opinion that "in the lower classes (to the age of about 10+) there should be no single basic craft but that the various forms of activity should serve as a preparation for, and develop into, a productive basic craft in the higher classes". Their argument is given below. "To prescribe one basic craft in the lowest class of a school which children of the age of about 6 may join is educationally unwise. The activities in these classes arise from the child's interests and desires and should not be forced on him by the

1. First Kher Report, p.7
2. Cf: Gandhi says, "... one school will not teach many crafts. The idea is that we should have one teacher for twenty-five boys, and you may have as many classes or schools of twenty-five boys as you have teachers available, and have each of these schools specializing in a separate craft - carpentry, smithy, tanning or shoe-making". - Harijan 18.9.37
3. First Kher Report, p.7
adult. Any activity which appeals to a child's interest is suitable as long as it 'makes a demand on a boy's skill, judgement, sense of observation and power of calculation and combines all or some of these in a constructive effort to achieve an end which he himself wishes to achieve'. As the Wood-Abbott Report says, 'it is not so much the thing made or done as the integration required in the making or doing, which is of educational value'. Dr. Zakir Husain himself emphasises this point in his appendix to the Activity School when he says, "It is not the attainment of skill but the process of acquiring it that is educative".

As the child becomes older his interests change. Many of them become less transitory and can be satisfied through one basic craft in which the pupils should reach a high degree of skill. Such crafts as agriculture, weaving, wood work, metal work provide facilities for educational development, appeal to the growing child's sense of making and doing something, increase his self-respect since the produce of his labour has a marketable value and tend to remove the false
idea that manual work is objectionable". Even if we do not question the contention that the process of learning is more important than what is learnt, we must point out that this attitude with regard to the basic craft is not consistent with the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. He had a definite social and economic ideal imbedded in the pursuit of the craft, though it was subordinated to the educational ideal, and the single craft, which is economically productive, alone could satisfy it. "I want to resuscitate the villages of India" he said, and he insisted that the vocations through which even city children were to receive their instruction, therefore, "ought to be directly related to the requirement of the villages". Again, while conceding that any craft which has educational possibilities could be adopted, he had added a proviso, that "It should be a village craft and should be useful". What is learnt is

1. First Kher Report, p.7
2. Cf: Eric James says, "In place of what is learned, the process of learning itself is the centre of interest for many educationists" - op.cit, p.47
3. Harijan 9.10.37
4. Harijan 18.2.39
thus of vital importance in Gandhi's scheme of education, and so 'any activity' will not suffice. Further, the single-craft scheme alone was consistent with the economic organization of schools. When financial considerations make it a serious problem even to provide for one craft in each school, to think of providing for a variety of crafts in each school would only mean few schools being started, and this would indefinitely postpone provision of education for the masses at large. The Committee's argument that the child's interests are transitory and need diverse channels of expression is a serious one indeed, but it becomes less serious when we note that Gandhi's scheme makes the child start the craft at the age of 7 and not at 6, and when we realize that children's interests can easily be guided into purposive activity without making them less joyous. The child begins by playing and imitating, but soon reaches the stage when he likes to create something, and if this something is in any way useful, the pleasure derived must be immensely greater to him. Gandhi aims only
at exploiting this innate disposition of child
nature in seeking to give a definite form to
the child's play at the age of seven. The
basic craft serves all the purposes of play,
without reducing it to mere frivolous activity.
Whether play is construed with Herbert Spencer
as the expression of surplus energy, or with
Karl Groos as the rehearsal of future human
activities, or looked upon as a recapitulation
of the activities of primitive life as did
Stanley Hall, the pursuit of craft activities
can be play. And children can easily find
diverse fields of interesting activity within
the same craft as in a variety of crafts.
When the question was posed, "Would it be better
to teach more than one craft in every school?
The children might begin to feel bored of doing
the same thing from month to month and year to
year", Gandhi's reply was, "..... There will be
newness in every lesson just as there can be
new music on the same instrument. By changing over
from one craft to another a child tends to become
like a monkey jumping from branch to branch with abode
nowhere". The idea of self-supporting education

1. Harijan 4.3.39
which was so dear to Gandhi had made him stress education through the single craft from the very beginning; and all deviations from this, suggested by others, have arisen from either a failure to cognize this stand or out of conviction that education can never become self-supporting. In any case, these alternatives do militate against the spirit of the Gandhian ideal. Gandhi's insistence on single-craft schools can be seen reflected again in the resolution of the first Basic Education Conference, which met at Poona in 1939, immediately after the Kher Committee had made its recommendations. "In the choice of the basic craft for any school," the resolution reads, "the predominant occupation of the people in the locality should be taken into account, and in deciding the number of schools centering round each craft in any area, reference should be made to the distribution of various occupations in that locality".

The Secondary Education Commission seems to have been greatly influenced by Gandhi's idea.
of the single craft and its pursuit with a self-supporting aim, for they recommend that every high school student should take one craft and "attain a reasonably high standard of proficiency in one particular craft, so that if necessary, he may support himself by pursuing it". They, however, hasten to justify their recommendation as based not on economic grounds only, and point out its educational advantages. "By working with the hands the adolescent learns the dignity of labour and experiences the joy of doing constructive work. There is no greater educative medium than making with efficiency and integrity, things of utility and beauty. It trains practical aptitudes, facilitates clarity of thinking, gives chances for co-operative work and thus enriches the entire personality". It is suggested that many of the advantages claimed for the single craft at the high school stage by the Committee hold good, more or less, at all stages of education, and that the standard of proficiency expected at the end of the high school stage, at least, would be greater if education were to be imparted at the lower stages.

2. Ibid.
also through the same craft.

Even where an industry, other than spinning and weaving or agriculture, is the basic craft, the Zakir Husain Committee points out that "pupils will be expected to attain a minimum knowledge of carding and spinning with the takli and a practical acquaintance of elementary agricultural work in the local area". This is because of the sociological significance of these activities. Gandhi considers spinning itself as "an education of no mean sort" as it is labouring for the country. "It is a daily practical lesson in patriotism, useful toil and giving. That a boy should begin giving even during his education without expectation of return is an object lesson in sacrifice he will not forget in after life". "Moreover, to enable a person to clothe himself through his own effort, when the alternative is to go naked, is in itself an education. An intelligent pursuit of the various processes related to cotton spinning has, besides, a very high instructional value. In fact it covers the whole education of man as no other craft does".

1. Basic National Education, p.16
2. Y.I. 7.8.24
3. Harijan 25.8.46
Indeed, Gandhi did not consider any other craft so much suitable as spinning for being a basic craft, even from the purely educational point of view. "Some people ask me why agriculture could not be a basic craft. The answer is that it has not the educational potentialities of spinning. It cannot, for example, develop deftness as in spinning. The function of Nai Talim is not merely to teach an occupation but through it to develop the whole man". Gandhi conceded that agriculture and many other crafts, however, are "bound to come in ultimately", as "the pupils and teachers of the school of my conception will together have to make provision for all they need"; but he had given the supreme place to spinning and weaving, among all crafts. He did not think that there was "a better all-round village industry" than Khadi, and any other industry which could be better universalized.

1. Harijan 9.11.47
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
"Any basic craft to serve as a medium of education must answer the test of universality .... If England can become an exporter of textiles to India and to the whole world, although she does not grow a pod of cotton, I cannot understand why we cannot introduce cotton spinning in our homes, merely because cotton would have to be obtained from a neighbouring province or district. As a matter of fact there is no part of India where cotton was not at one time grown ...." 4

This stand of Mahatma Gandhi explains why the Zakir Husain Committee recommended the inclusion of spinning and weaving in the curriculum of all schools, even where local conditions made for the choice of another craft as the basic. Gandhi attached such great importance to the economic possibilities of spinning and weaving that he did not consider it a mere medium of educational activity - a playway - though it is that to a very large extent, but said that "it must be treated seriously and must be taught in a proper and scientific manner like the other subjects" 2. He held that nothing but a craft seriously learnt would teach dignity of labour. "It seems to me", he

1. Harijan, 25.8.46
2. Y.I., 15.10.25
said, "that in our country where 85 per cent. of the population is agricultural and perhaps 10 per cent. occupied in supplying the wants of the peasantry, it must be part of the training of every youth that he has a fair practical knowledge of agriculture and hand-weaving". Naturally he argued that "in any curriculum of the future, spinning must be a compulsory subject. Just as we cannot live without breathing and without eating, so it is impossible for us to attain economic independence and banish pauperism from this ancient land without reviving home-spinning. I hold the spinning wheel to be as much a necessity in every household as the hearth. No other scheme that can be devised will ever solve the problem of the deepening poverty of the people. How then can spinning be introduced in every home? I have already suggested the introduction of spinning and systematic production of yarn in every national school. Once our boys and girls have learnt the art they can easily carry it to their homes".

2. The Mother Tongue. The Zakir Husain Committee stressed the importance of the proper teaching of the mother tongue as the foundation of all education. For

1. Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 335
2. Y.I., 19.1.21
"without the capacity to speak effectively and to read and write correctly, no one can develop precision of thought or clarity of ideas". The mother tongue is the vehicle of introducing the child to his rich heritage of ideas, emotions and aspirations, and inculcating social habits and the right ethical and moral values, and of expressing the child's aesthetic sense and appreciation. The specific objectives, outlined by the Committee, for the study are:

1. The capacity to converse freely, naturally and confidently about the objects, people and happenings within the child's environment....

2. The capacity to speak lucidly, coherently and relevantly on any given topic of everyday interest.

3. The capacity to read silently, intelligently and with speed written passages of average difficulty...

4. The capacity to read aloud - clearly, expressively and with enjoyment - both prose and poetry ...

5. The capacity to use the list of contents and the index and to consult dictionaries and reference books, and generally to utilize the library as a

1. Basic National Education, p.17
source of information and enjoyment.

(6) The capacity to write legibly, correctly and with reasonable speed.

(7) The capacity to describe in writing, in a simple and clear style, everyday happenings and occurrences, e.g., to make reports of meetings held in villages...

(8) The capacity to write personal letters and business communications of a simple kind.

(9) An acquaintance with, and interest in, the writings of standard authors, through a study of their writings or extracts from them

The objectives clearly indicate the practical, utilitarian and creative values arrived at by the study. As Shrimali points out, the Wardha Scheme takes a functional view of language. "Through language the child should be able to classify and clarify his experience". The approach to language is as a necessary tool, the vehicle of thought, and the training enjoined is primarily to enable the educated man or woman to use it in action.

Gandhi deprecated the suggestion that it would need a lot of research and preparation before the

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1. Basic National Education, p. 17 f
schools could impart technical education through the medium of the mother tongue. Those who argued like that, he said, were unaware of the rich treasure of expressions and idioms that lay unseen in the dialects of our villages. Hence in his opinion, there was no need to go even to Sanskrit or Persian for new expressions. But he was certainly not against adopting even foreign terms, if necessary. He wanted to enrich the vernaculars by translation of what is best in different languages. "The world is full of many a gem of priceless beauty; but then these gems are not all of English setting." So he "would like our young men and women with literary tastes to learn as much English and other world languages as they like and then expect them to give the benefits of their learning to India and to the world." In fact, he thought it "good economy to set apart a class of students for this." For the mass of people, the mother tongue, thus enriched, must open the gateway to all knowledge that is worth acquiring. Only, Gandhi "would not

1. Harijan, 18.8.46
2. Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p.428
3. Y.I., 1.6.21
4. Harijan, 9.7.38
have a single Indian to forget, neglect or be ashamed of his mother tongue, or to feel that he or she cannot think or express the best thoughts in his or her own vernacular . . . 

3. Mathematics. A knowledge of and adequate practice in "the four simple rules; the four compound rules; the rule of three; the use of the unitary method; interest; elements of mensuration; practical geometry; the rudiments of book-keeping" were conceived as the essentials of a study of mathematics, the objective being "to develop in the pupil the capacity to solve speedily the ordinary numerical and geometrical problems arising in connection with his craft and with his home and community life". To this end, it was suggested that "the teaching should not be confined merely to the facts and operations of number. It should be closely associated with life-situations arising out of the basic handicraft and out of the great variety of actual problems in the life of the school and the community". It was also hoped that "measurements of quantities and values in these connections would supply ample opportunity for the development of the reasoning

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1. Y.I., 1.6.21
2. Basic National Education, p.19
3. Ibid.
capacities of the pupils". There is no direct mention of algebra in the syllabus, but it does not mean that instruction, as and when necessary in the use of algebraic symbols would be taboo.  

4. Social Studies. The term "Social studies" is a comparatively new introduction in Indian education, and comprises the ground traditionally covered by such subjects as History, Geography, Economics and Civics. Ideally treated it should become a real fusion of subjects, to be handled as experiences, so that they might throw light on social conditions and problems in the "act of living" and thereby adjust the experiencer to his social environment. The syllabus of social studies in the Wardha Scheme has not, however, been framed as a 'fusion course', because in practice such a scheme often becomes nothing but a jumble of unrelated facts, illogical and incoherent, with large gaps in knowledge, and so not readily useful to the child for future use. The aim is to impart an understanding of how the family, state and the nation have come into being and an appreciation of the whole matrix of social forces and movements.

1. Vide infra, p. 566
which make present life. It should help him to acquire not only the knowledge but the right attitudes and values which make for successful community living and civic efficiency. It should also impart a sense of national patriotism which is compatible with a keen and lively sense of world unity and world citizenship. The Social Studies syllabus, by focussing the child's attention on the ideas which Indians have inherited as part of their ancient tradition and on the forces which shape contemporary life around, as well as by training him in the art of give and take in the corporate life of the school, hopes to achieve this rather difficult task. The Zakir Husain Committee had pointedly drawn attention to it, when it said that "teachers and educationists who undertake the new educational venture should clearly realize the ideal of citizenship inherent in it"1.

The objectives, as stated in the Report, are worth quoting in full:

"(1) To develop a broad human interest in the

1. Basic National Education, p. 11 f
progress of mankind in general and of India in particular.

(2) To develop in the pupil a proper understanding of his social and geographical environment, and to awaken the urge to improve it.

(3) To inculcate the love of the mother land, reverence for its past and belief in its future destiny as the home of a united co-operative society based on love, truth and justice.

(4) To develop a sense of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

(5) To develop the individual and social virtues which make a man a reliable associate and trusted neighbour.

(6) To develop mutual respect for world religions.\(^1\)

The ideological background of Gandhian education is clearly implicit in the objectives thus outlined, and gives this scheme of Social Studies its distinctive feature. It is hoped to achieve these objectives by a judicious course in history, in geography, in civics and in current events, combined with a reverential study of the different religions of the world showing how in essentials they meet in perfect harmony. The

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1. Basic National Education, p. 19 f
study begins with the child's own environment and its problems. His interest is awakened in the manifold ways in which men supply their different wants; and this is made the starting point to arouse their curiosity about the life and work of men and women near and abroad.

The history syllabus, for example, starts with the life of primitive man and takes the child through scenes of life in ancient Egypt, China and India; he shares the company, next, of the Arab Bedouins, Eskimos, African Pygmies, American Red Indians, Australian Bushmen, Ceylon Veddas and Indian aboriginal tribes; and then is made familiar with Hebrew and Roman, Persian and Greek, Chinese and Japanese, Russian and American life through representative studies which include the lives of most of the great saints, seers and selfless workers of the past. All this is done in the early classes, as stories and biographies, while, in the higher, the study enlarges into a survey of the modern activities of man, political, scientific and cultural. The French Revolution, the American Republic, the rise of Russia are given due emphasis, and the forces of industrialism, imperialism,
socialism and democracy are duly stressed. Current
events in India and abroad, especially accounts of
the Peace Organizations and the forces working for
international justice and peace, and the outstanding
problems of modern Indian life form the topics for
study towards the end of the course. It is in this
broad setting of world history that the history of
India is sought to be given. The stress throughout
is on the chief landmarks in the social and cultural
life of the people and the victories of peace. All
emphasis is laid on the ideals of truth and justice,
of co-operative endeavour, national solidarity and
the equality and brotherhood of man. Care is taken
to prevent pride in the past from degenerating into
arrogant and exclusive nationalism. Genuine
appreciation of the awakening of Indian nationalism
and the problems of Indian reconstruction is sought
through this study and by such school activities as
the celebration of national festivals and the
"National Week".

Civic training, the Committee realized, is
best given by bringing pupils to live a civic life in
the school and in close relationship with the world
outside. They are to become acquainted with the
public utility services, the working of the Panchayat and the Co-operative Society, the duties of public servants, the constitution of the local bodies, the use and significance of the vote, and with the growth and meaning of representative institutions. To make the training realistic, self-governing institutions are envisaged to be introduced in school, and the child made to participate in home, school and village activities, and social service like village cleaning, village surveys and adult education work. Even editing a school magazine or newspaper and the organisation of newspaper reading circles and discussion groups are suggested as part of the curriculum. The Committee hoped that this civic training, coupled with craftwork would inspire proper civic ideals. "Such a close relationship of the work done at school to the community will also enable the children to carry the outlook and attitudes acquired in the school environment into the wider world outside".

The course in geography is equally broad and practical. It starts with a study of plant, animal and human life in the home region and in other lands as controlled by geographical environment and

1. Basic National Education, p. 12
develops into a study of India in the context of world geography. Weather observation, methods of recording temperature and pressure, map study and map-making, study of local topography, making of plans of the neighbourhood, recognition of conventional signs and the use of the atlas are stressed. Economic geography and a study of transport systems have been given a due place. What a far cry this realistic, practical approach is to the passive absorption of long lists of place names and the names of mountains, rivers and sea-ports which used to go by the name of geography in Indian village schools, is too well-known to be dealt with here.

5. General Science. The objectives as stated by the Committee are:

(1) To give the pupils an intelligent and appreciative outlook on nature.

(2) To form in the pupils the habit of accurate observation and of testing experience by experiment.

(3) To enable them to understand the important scientific principles exemplified in

(a) the national phenomena around
(b) in the application of science to the
service of man.

(4) To introduce them to the more important incidents
in the lives of great scientists whose sacrifices
in the cause of truth make a powerful appeal to
the growing mind

An understanding and appreciation of the
fundamental principles of the natural and physical
sciences is essential to effective living in the world
of today, and so the curriculum of "general science"
epitomises a judicious selection of relevant and useful
matter which, as separate subjects, go under the names
of Nature Study, Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Astronomy,
Physiology and Hygiene. Even physical culture, in the
sense of athletics, drill and games with stress on
deshi games is sought to be included in the course
outlined by the Committee, though, the detailed syllabus
framed later by them provides only for the inculcation,
among other healthy habits, of the daily exercise
habit. While aiming, as all such courses do, at
giving pupils a basic understanding and appreciation of
scientific phenomena, biological and physical, the
scheme goes further in its declared objectives. It

1. Basic National Education, p. 23
2. Ibid, p. 24
3. Ibid, p. 187
emphasizes the need to inculcate certain scientific habits and attitudes which will remarkably add to his intellectual efficiency, as for example the attitude of critical enquiry by stressing observation and experiment. It has also a social purpose in view in that what is sought to be learnt has been selected with a view to its usefulness in practical life. School science has been linked up with actual life problems and situations like local sanitation, personal hygiene and pest-control, so that the pupil's attention, in the study, is focussed on the possibility of using science to advance human welfare. Above all, it seeks a supreme moral purpose. The inclusion in the study of the lives of great scientists, patient and selfless workers, and their 'Experiments with Truth' is intended to kindle in the child a genuine passion for the great virtues of truth and love, and open to him what Professor Jeffreys calls the "Vision of Greatness". As the Secondary Education Commission says, science becomes a part of 'liberal' education when teachers aim at awakening in the pupils a lively curiosity about the natural phenomena around them, at developing their

1. Basic National Education, p. 187
capacity for the practical application of their knowledge and appreciating the tremendous impact of modern science on all aspects of our life and at interesting them in the human side of scientific progress by introducing them to the lives of the great scientists".

Perhaps the inclusion of sexual science too in the General Science course would have made it truly Gandhian. Gandhi had said, "I am strongly in favour of teaching young boys and girls the significance and right use of their generative organs. And in my own way I have tried to impart this knowledge to young children of both sexes, for whose training I was responsible". The object of this education should be the conquest and sublimation of the sex passions. "Sexual science is of two kinds: that which is used for controlling or overcoming the sexual passion and that which is used to stimulate and feed it. Instruction in the former is as necessary a part of child's education as the latter is harmful and dangerous and fit therefore only to be shunned".

A knowledge of sex, properly imparted, will safeguard the child, to a large extent, from taking to abusive

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 94
2. Harijan, 21.11.36
3. Ibid
practices; but the qualification suffixed makes it difficult to launch into such an experiment. Gandhi had realized this more than anyone else, for he says that sexual science could be taught only by "one who has attained mastery over his passions". Perhaps, it is only because teachers are not saints that the Zakir Husain Committee thought it wise not to give it a trial. All they did, therefore, was to stress "purity of life as a preservative of health" in the General Science syllabus. Gandhi had struck a stern note of warning against any hasty experiments in sex education when he said, "To teach astronomy and kindred sciences we have teachers who have gone through a course of training in them and are masters of their art. Even so, we must have as teachers of sexual science, i.e., the science of self-control, those who have studied it and have acquired mastery over self".

6. Drawing. Like manual training, drawing has all along been a neglected subject of the curriculum in Indian schools, considered fit for the "non-studious" and perhaps pursued with avidity only by the gifted.

1. Harijan, 21.11.36
2. Basic National Education, p. 186
3. Harijan, 21.11.36
In the Gandhian scheme of studies it assumes great importance as a creative art and the Zakir Husain Committee's syllabus is ambitious, yet realistic and practical.

The objectives outlined in the report are:

1. To train the eye in the observation and discrimination of forms and colours.
2. To develop memory for forms.
3. To cultivate a knowledge of and appreciation for the beautiful in nature and art.
4. To draw out the capacity for tasteful design and decoration.
5. To develop the capacity to make working drawings of objects to be constructed...
6. Designing.
7. Scale drawing, graphs and pictorial graphs.

Work in drawing during the first four years is to be correlated chiefly with work in reading and pictorial representation in nature study and the craft. While in the lower stages it will thus be mainly pursued as an expressive activity, in the higher, it will be pursued as an artistic activity, emphasis being on design and decoration.

7. **Music.** "The objective is to teach the pupils a number of beautiful songs and to cultivate in them a

1. *Basic National Education*, p. 25
love for beautiful music" 1. To this end the best and the most inspiring songs alone are to be selected, and these should include national songs, folk songs and devotional songs. Realizing the efficiency of music as an educational instrument, the Committee lays great stress on the content as on the tunes. They attach much importance to group and choral singing, and so suggest that some of the songs selected should be of quick rhythm. In all classes there should be choral singing, and group singing during craftwork and physical training is to be encouraged. Walking in time to a fixed rhythm and beating of hands to rhythm could be tapped to develop the child's natural sense of rhythm. An elementary acquaintance with the principal Indian ragas and tals may be required of every pupil; but, as it is not expected to give scientific training in music to all children, the Committee did not draw up a syllabus for music 2.

8. Hindustani. In his Presidential address at the Second Gujarat Educational Conference, Broach, October, 1917, Gandhi had declared that a language, to be the national language, must satisfy the

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1. Basic National Education, p. 26
2. Ibid, p. 55
following tests:

1. It must be easy for the officials to learn.
2. It must be the vehicle of religious, commercial and political activities of the people.
3. It must be the speech of the majority of people.
4. It must be easy to be learnt by the masses.
5. In considering the question, weight should not be given to momentary or short-lived conditions.

He also came to the conclusion that "there is not another language capable of competing with Hindi in satisfying the five conditions." Hindustani, which is the "resultant of Hindi and Urdu, neither highly Sanskritized nor highly Persianized," is understood by over 22 crores of Indians, and, "if you want to steal into their hearts Hindustani is the only language open to you." So, Gandhi argued Hindustani should replace English as the medium of inter-provincial speech.

The Zakir Husain Committee said that teachers of this "lingua franca" should, in various ways, quicken in the students the realization that this language is the most important product of the cultural contact.

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1. *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 395
2. Ibid
3. *Y.I.*, 27.8.25
4. *Y.I.*, 2.2.21
of the Hindus and Muslims in India. It is the repository - in its more advanced forms - of their best thoughts and aspirations. Students in Hindustani-speaking areas, the Committee suggested, should learn both Urdu and Hindi scripts so that they may read books in both scripts, while in non-Hindi-speaking areas, the study of Hindustani is to be compulsory only during the fifth and sixth years of school life and students will have the option of learning either script.

The Radhakrishnan Commission on University Education (1949) also endorsed the view that Hindi or Hindustani should be the lingua franca of India. They

1. Basic National Education, p. 26 ff
2. University Commission Report, p.319. "Under whatever name the Constituent Assembly chooses the official language of the Indian Federation, it is understood that its basis will be the common substratum of the different styles of Western Hindi ... (Ibid, p.310). "There is no other alternative but to choose a language spoken by a high percentage of the people of India, to give it the status of State language, and to develop it for the chosen task ... the language spoken and understood by more than 120 millions of our countrymen, the midland tongue, the basic Khari Boli dialect, designated Hindi or Hindustani, has to fulfil this destiny". (Ibid, p. 319)
said, "It should be the official language of the Indian legislature, of the Federal Judiciary and of the Indian diplomacy ... We hope that it will be the language of inter-provincial intercourse of all societies and institutions of all-India character and of business and commerce"¹. But, in view of the fact that neither Hindi nor Urdu has an adequate technical vocabulary or scientific literature for modern purposes, the Commission recommended that the federal language be "enriched and developed" through the assimilation of words from various sources and the retention of words which have already entered into Indian languages from different sources, as well as by accepting international technical and scientific terminology. The Commission also preferred the Devanagari script to the Urdu script, which in its opinion, is to be retained as a second script only. The dethronement of Urdu from equal status with the Devanagari script reflected only the changed conditions in India following the absorption of a large part of the Urdu-speaking areas in Pakistan. The Constituent Assembly of India settled the question of national language finally in conformity with the new situation in the country by declaring in favour

¹. University Commission Report, p. 315
of Hindi. Section 351 of the Constitution of India says: "It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India ... and by drawing wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages". This stress on Sanskrit and the Devanagari script is due entirely to the changed conditions in India today, and would have certainly had the approval of Gandhi, had he been alive.

III. **ENGLISH vis-a-vis THE BASIC CURRICULUM.**

The University Education Commission, presided over by Radhakrishnan, rightly pointed out, as Gandhi had done before, that "English cannot continue to occupy the place of State language as in the past. The use of English as such divides the people into two nations, the few who govern and

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the many who are governed, the one unable to talk
the language of the other and mutually uncomprehending.
This is a negation of democracy". At the same time
the Commission added, "English, however, must continue
to be studied. It is a language which is rich in
literature - humanistic, scientific and technical. If
under sentimental urges we should give up English we
would cut ourselves off from the living stream of
ever-growing knowledge ... living nations must move with
the times and must respond quickly to the challenge of
their surroundings. English is the only means of
preventing our isolation from the world, and we will
act unwisely if we allow ourselves to be enveloped in
the folds of a dark curtain of ignorance. Our students
who are undergoing training at schools which will admit
them either to a university or to a vocation must
acquire sufficient mastery of English to give them
access to the treasures of knowledge, and in the
universities no student should be allowed to take a
degree who does not acquire the ability to read with
facility and understanding works of English authors.
We must take into account our Yu\(\text{gadharma}\). A sense of
the oneness of the world is in the making and control
over a medium of expression which is more widespread and

1. University Commission Report, p. 316
has a larger reach than any of our languages today will be of immense benefit to us".  

The Secondary Education Commission 1953, found that English is a compulsory subject of study at present at the secondary stage in practically all the states. They also found that one or more foreign languages are included in the curriculum of secondary schools in many countries. English may be necessary for those who intend to pursue higher studies, and it is not easy to know beforehand which pupils would proceed for studies requiring English. The Commission felt that no student should be handicapped by ignorance of a language which will ultimately determine the career which he should choose. It should also be recognized that even in regard to many of the diversified courses of instruction which the Commission has suggested, as matters stand at present, a knowledge of English would be extremely useful for understanding the subject matter and for further study of the same

1. University Commission Report, p.325
2. Mudaliar Report, p.61
3. Ibid p.66
subject. These considerations led the Commission to conclude that "a study of English should be given due position in secondary schools and facilities should be made available at the Middle school stage for its study on an optional basis." The Commission does not wish to impose English on any child at the Middle School stage if he or his guardian does not wish it to be studied, but thinks that provision should be made for giving such pupils, on going to the Secondary stage an elementary course in English. "In the case of those who wish to go for higher education", the Commission says that "special arrangements should be made in the Secondary schools to enable them to take the advanced course in English." The aim of the course, however, will be purely utilitarian, and so all emphasis will be on ability to read, understand and speak simple English, and not on literary appreciation.

The second Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, which

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 71
2. Ibid p. 83
3. Ibid p. 71 f.
4. Ibid p. 93
submitted its Report in 1940, had also considered English necessary. It had envisaged that most of the intelligent pupils would proceed after the Junior Basic course of five years to other types of schools where English then continued to be one of the subjects of the curriculum. And they suggested, that in order to enable deserving pupils who, however, stayed in the Senior Basic Schools, to proceed for higher education in Technical Colleges or Universities, such pupils should be taught English by special arrangement in the "Senior Basic School" outside of the curriculum as the Basic curriculum did not allow its incorporation in the time-table.\footnote{Reports 1938-43., p.12 f.}

It will be seen that all this plea for English has been put forward by the various Commissions and Committees for the main reason that it is necessary for higher studies. They seem to regard secondary education mainly as a stepping-stone to the University and seek to gear it to this top. Gandhi, on the other hand
considers the basic education of seven years as a stage complete in itself, and its curriculum is naturally not dictated by any extraneous considerations. The aim of basic education is not to enable the youth who come out of it to play an active part in international politics but to live a contented village life, wedded to a rural civilization, and this could well be lived without a knowledge of English. As we have seen before, Gandhi had no objection to a few, who wanted to serve the nation in the wider fields, learning English, but he would not allow considerations of the few to dictate the syllabus for the masses. Hence it is that the first Basic Education Conference, held in Poona, 1939, recommended that "It should be made a rule that not only in Basic schools but in all schools throughout India no English should be taught till the students have acquired a regular education for seven years through their mother tongue".

1. One Step Forward, p. 217
The anxiety about the standard of English to be acquired for university education is quite reasonable as long as basic education is artificially yoked to modern universities. The moment that idea is given up the argument for English during the school course falls. Gandhi's conception of post-basic education and rural universities certainly does not require any previous preparation in English and hence there is no need for the inclusion of English in the basic curriculum. Gandhi's insistence on ruling out English and the anxiety of Government Committees to retain English are both due to genuine educational considerations and both are right. The difference between them is due to the divergence in their objectives. If basic education is to be related to the modern university, English must be taught in the school stage; if it is to be related to the post-basic institutions as Gandhi envisaged them, then there is no need for the teaching of English at this time.
IV. RELIGION AND THE BASIC CURRICULUM.

In India, where there are many religions, it is not possible for the State to take up the responsibility for denominational religious instruction in schools, since it would mean making provision, within the school time-table, for teaching the principles of all religious denominations, each to its separate set of votaries. The problem is much more serious than in England to be solved by any system of "agreed syllabus". So the Wardha Scheme rules out such religious instruction from the school curriculum, leaving it to parents and religious bodies and confining the task of the school to the cultivation of fundamental ethics which will enrich personality and lead one to do God's work. Gandhi held that giving instruction in fundamental ethics, which is common to all religions, is undoubtedly a function of the State, while even if the State had only one

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religion, he did not believe in the propriety of teaching that religion as part of the school curriculum. For, even when the religion of all members of the community is described as the same, in reality, there will be as many religions as there are minds, religion being a purely personal affair. Each mind might conceive of God differently from others. Gandhi was not merely opposed to the State directly providing religious education\(^1\) but even to State aid to religious bodies, for he held that an institution or group which did not manage to finance its own religious teaching was a stranger to true religion\(^2\).

This view of Gandhi was no revolution in India as the State had long left religious

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1. One of the last pronouncements of Gandhi on this question is given below: "I do not agree that the government should provide religious education... Those who want to give religious education may do so on their own, so long as it is not subversive of law and order or morals. The Governments can only teach ethics based on the main principles common to all religions and agreed to by all the parties. In fact ours is a secular State". - Harijan 9.11.47

2. Harijan 23.3.47
teaching to voluntary bodies and observed a policy of strict religious neutrality.

British policy in this matter was first clearly formulated in Wood's Despatch of 1854 which said that religious instruction was not to be given in Government institutions but Government would not prevent religious instruction of any kind being given in schools under private management and aided by Government, out of school hours. The Indian Education Commission under Sir William Hunter extended the ban on religious teaching in Government Schools to all primary schools "wholly maintained by municipal or local board funds" and to collegiate education. The Government of India's Resolution on Indian Educational Policy in 1904 reaffirmed that "In the Government institutions the instruction is, 


and must continue to be, exclusively secular"¹, and it was re-iterated in 1913². Mahatma Gandhi realized the need for religious education more than any one else, but was keenly alive to the difficulties that lay in the way of imparting it as part of the school curriculum in India. In the *Hind Swaraj* he points out that "The question of religious education is very difficult", and adds, "Yet we cannot do without it. India will never be Godless. Rank atheism cannot flourish in that land. The task is indeed difficult. My head begins to turn as I think of religious education"³. But, in his own characteristic way, he boldly solved the problem. First he ruled out all denominational religious instruction from school and made it the province of parents and private agencies. "Unless there is a State religion", he said, "it is very difficult, if not impossible,

3. *Hind Swaraj*, p. 83
to provide religious instruction as it would mean providing for every denomination. Such instruction is best given at home. The State should allow enough time for every child to receive such instruction at home or elsewhere. It is also conceivable that the State should provide facilities for private tuition by those denominations which may wish to instruct their children at school provided that such instruction is paid for by such denominations." So, the Wardha Scheme neither made nor implied any alteration in the present position by which any community, at its own expense, is permitted to give religious teaching in Government or Local Body schools to the pupils of that community out of school hours. This stand was endorsed by the Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1939. "The State should", they recommended, "provide facilities as at present for every community to give religious teaching when so desired but

1. *Harijan* 16.7.38
not at the cost of the State". Secondly, Gandhi wished that pupils should be taught in school the basic truths common to all religions so that they will realize "Truth" which he had identified with God, and develop mutual respect and toleration.

"We have left out the teaching of religions from the Wardha Scheme of education", says Gandhi, "because we are afraid that religions, as they are taught and practised today, lead to conflict rather than unity. But on the other hand, I hold that truths that are common to all religions can and should be taught to all children. These truths cannot be taught through words or through books. The children can learn these truths only through the daily life of the teacher. If the teacher himself lives up to the tenets of truth and justice, then alone can the children learn that truth and justice are the basis of all

1. Cf: Report of the (Second) Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, Delhi, 1940, p.16
religions"¹. Religion to the Mahatma means "Truth and Ahimsa or rather Truth alone, because Truth includes Ahimsa ... Therefore anything that promotes the practice of these virtues is a means for imparting religious education"². "There is no religion higher than truth and righteousness"³. So the Wardha curriculum of Social Studies suggests that "Emphasis should be laid on the ideals of love, truth and justice, of co-operative endeavour, national solidarity and the equality and brotherhood of man .... Emphasis should be laid on lessons drawn from life showing the superiority of truth and non-violence in all its phases, and its concomitant virtues, over violence and deceit"⁴. It also lays down, as one among the objectives of Social Studies, the development of "mutual respect for world religions"⁵. Beyond this it is not easy to attempt at school. If, however, religious instruction is to be included as part of the curriculum, it "should include a study

1. Cited by Zakir Husain, First Kher Report, p. 10
2. Y.I., 6.12.28
3. Ethical Religion, p. 19
5. Ibid, p. 20
of the tenets of faiths other than one's own"¹, and each religion should have to be studied through the writings of its own votaries, so that the study will give one "a grasp of the rock-bottom unity of all religions and afforded a glimpse of that universal and absolute truth which lies beyond the dust of creeds and faiths"². A study of other religions in a reverential spirit does not seem to Gandhi as something difficult to advocate, since, "The Hindu system of philosophy regards all religions as containing the elements of truth in them and enjoins an attitude of respect and reverence towards them all"³.

The Rev. T.N. Siqueira criticized Gandhi's idea of "practical religion, the religion of self-help"⁴ as something "which will not take us very far on the road to God"⁵, and pleaded for a "systematic course of religious training" in school itself - "not mere moral principles based on reason, but also the fruits of Divine revelation and the practical principles which follow from them". He argued that this cannot be done at home. "The homes

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1. Y.I., 6.12.28
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Harijan, 30.10.37
from which the pupils of the elementary school come are not theological colleges, nor have their parents the knowledge or the time to impart to their children the religious education they need - this is just why schools have been invented. The duty has therefore to be undertaken by the school of instructing the pupils entrusted to it in the principles of their religion”. His suggestion was that if the State could not undertake the responsibility, "let private bodies be invited and encouraged to undertake the running of rural schools on condition that they follow that syllabus, with full freedom to teach children their religion within or outside of school hours ...". The effect of allowing private agencies to start schools in which to teach children their religion will be, as Siqueira himself admits, "that, for convenience’s sake, those of the same religion will attend the same school". But he thinks that "it will not foster communalism or separatism", which is a conclusion not warranted by the experience of such schools in the past. Religious teaching in denominational schools can only aggravate the religious differences in a country already saturated with it. Gandhi rightly regards it

2. T.N. Siqueira, Light from Wardha (italics mine)
3. Ibid
"as fatal to the growth of a friendly spirit among the children belonging to the different faiths, if they are taught either that their religion is superior to every other or that it is the only true religion. If that exclusive spirit is to pervade the nation, the necessary corollary would be that there should be separate schools: for every denomination with freedom to each to decry every other or that the mention of religion must be entirely prohibited. The result of such a policy is too dreadful to contemplate. Fundamental principles of ethics are common to all religions. They should certainly be taught to the children and that should be regarded as adequate religious instruction so far as the schools under the Wardha Scheme are concerned".

Gandhi could conceive of religion apart from the scriptures, and he held that "knowledge of religious books is no equivalent for that religion". He would have agreed with A.S. Peake's definition of religion as "fellowship with the Unseen", but he hoped to pave the way for this fellowship by inculcating certain virtues in school. Of course, religion and morality are two different things, but "they tend, as they progress to

1. *Harijan*, 16.7.38
2. *Y.I.*, 25.8.27
higher forms, to meet each other and to fuse into a comprehensive whole. Highest religion as love of God and highest morality as love of man are fused in the one law, love. At school, we might say, Gandhi aims at creating "love-sentiments" for truth, ahimsa and justice. If these are thought of as Divine attributes, then "love of them would be love of God himself, the highest religious attitude of which we are capable." Believing in Truth as God, Gandhi is convinced that an education which insists on truth and non-violence is truly religious. The training of the spirit, he had known by his own experience, could not be imparted by reading hymns or religious books to pupils but only by the teacher showing the way by living a spiritual life himself. Hinduism allows one to hold whatever religious beliefs one chooses to hold, but enjoins on all a strict code of ethical practice, and perhaps it is this tradition that made it easy for Gandhi to think of religion not as a subscription to

1. Ross, op. cit, p. 133
2. Ibid, p. 134
3. Cf. J. Radhakrishnan says, "Hinduism is more a way of life than a form of thought ... Hinduism insists on a moral life and draws into fellowship all who feel themselves bound to the claims which the moral law of dharma makes upon them. Hinduism is not a sect but a fellowship of all who accept the law of right and earnestly seek for the truth". - The Hindu View of Life (George Allen & Unwin), 1927, p. 77
dogmas or ritual but to a moral code of conduct.

On the eve of independence, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared that "the future government of India must be secular in the sense that the Government will not associate itself with any religious faith, but will give freedom to all religions to function". The University Education Commission of 1949 also wished "to ban dogmatic or sectarian religious instruction in State schools", for they held that "If we teach sectarian creeds to our children in public schools, instead of developing in them the spirit of peace and brotherly love, we encourage the spirit of strife, as the children become conscious of their divisive creeds and group loyalties". The Commission

1. Cf: The Indian Social Reformer, Bombay, 12.12.46, p.125. In his latest monthly circular to the State Congress Committees, Pandit Nehru says that the word 'secular' as applied to India "does not obviously mean a State where religion as such is discouraged. It means freedom of religion and conscience, including freedom for those who may have no religion. It means free play for all religions, subject only to their not interfering with each other or with the basic conceptions of our State". He adds further that, to him, the word has always conveyed something more than all this - "the idea of social and political equality". - India News, 14.8.54
2. University Commission Report, p. 294
is in full agreement with Gandhi's views of the need for religious education and its nature. Thus it shed no tears for the absence of any provision for teaching religious scriptures as part of the curriculum, and says, "If religion is a matter of realization it cannot be reached through a mere knowledge of the dogmas. It is attained through discipline, training, sadhana. What we need is not formal religious education, but spiritual training". The Secondary Education Commission, 1953, also concurs with this view. "Whether religious instruction or moral instruction is given, the benefit of such instruction will be derived not from its being treated more or less on the lines of class-room instruction but from the spirit of the school and the influence exercised by the teachers". They, however, felt that such influence could be supplemented, to a limited extent, by "properly organized instruction given in schools". "One of the methods adopted in some schools is to hold an assembly at the commencement of the day's session with all teachers and pupils present, when a general non-denominational prayer is offered. Moral

2. Mudaliar Report, p. 125 f
3. Ibid, p. 126
instruction, in the sense of inspiring talks given by suitable persons selected by the headmaster and dwelling on the lives of great personages of all times and of all climes will help to drive home the lessons of morality". The school assembly and the common prayer were advocated by Gandhi long ago, and are practically a feature of every basic school; and they are usually followed by some moral talk or "lesson". The common prayer and the talk are also reminiscent of the common practice in England to-day. The Secondary Education Commission, further recommended that religious instruction should be given to children in their own faith outside regular school hours on a voluntary basis, with the consent of parents and the managements. Gandhi had suggested for this, grown-up students starting their own classes, "just as they have their debating societies and spinners' clubs".

1. Mudaliar Report, p. 126
2. Y.I., 25.8.27
CHAPTER II.

THE METHODOLOGY OF BASIC EDUCATION.

I. ACTIVITY METHODS, THE PROJECT, AND THE BASIC.

We have seen that Gandhi believes in purposive direction, but this in no way implies that the child should be 'taught' and not allowed to 'learn'. In his advocacy of activity methods of learning, Gandhi is in company with the naturalists and the pragmatists, who have, more than the idealists, contributed to modern methods of education. The basic, in its methodology, very nearly resembles the 'project', but as with every other Gandhian conception, it has a few characteristic features which make it entirely new. For an understanding of Gandhian methodology, therefore, it is better that we first examine the nature of activity methods in modern education.

Rousseau had stressed the child and proclaimed the view that "education finds its purpose, its process, and its means wholly within the child life and the child experience". Education according to him is nothing more than the fostering of child development, and this

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1. Vide supra, Part II, ch. I
is done best when the nature, powers and inclinations of the child are allowed to develop freely with a minimum of guidance. The insistence by the naturalist, on the child himself rather than the educator, the book, the school or the subject of study has been responsible for making modern education child-centred, "paido-centric" as Adams calls it. Rousseau had said, "Give your scholar no verbal lessons; he should be taught by experience alone", and thus stressed observation, experiment and activity with real things. The stress on the direct experience of social life is largely responsible for the modern methods of self-government in schools, turning them into a kind of natural society in which to experience the discharge of one's rights and duties. In order to make the school society real, they advocate co-education, and to make activity real, they advocate the play-way.

The pragmatist educator, like the naturalist, holds the view that school studies should be based on the present interests, activities and experience of the child. Thus, Dewey stresses the child rather than the book, subject or the teacher. Since activity is the essential characteristic of childhood, the child must

1. Emile, or Education, p. 56
learn by activity, and school experience must be based on his natural interests. The natural interests of the child are: "the interest in conversation or communication, in inquiry or finding out things; in making things or construction; and in artistic expression". The arts of reading and writing and counting will follow these interests as they are the necessary tools which have to be mastered to further these ends. All we should do is only "(1) to furnish the child with a sufficiently large amount of personal activity in occupations, expression, conversation, construction and experimentation ... and (2) so to conduct this more direct experience as to make the child feel the need of resort to and command of the traditional social tools". This will "furnish him with motives and make his recourse to them intelligent, an addition to his powers instead of a servile dependency". Work in language, literature and number will not then be a combination of mechanical drill and formal analysis, and so will gradually find "the important place to which they are entitled". Thus, education is not so much teaching the child as

2. Ibid, p. 105
3. Ibid, p. 105 f
4. Ibid, p. 106
encouraging him to learn for himself through creative activity. But, believing that the child is a potential creator of values in a given environment, the pragmatist seeks more consciously and deliberately than the naturalist, to "modify the original nature of the child by providing him with a helpful type of experience, particularly that of a social character in which he has direct participation". To him, as Ross points out, the data of education are the child and his physical and social environment, the interaction between the two constituting the child experience. He would have the child put into situations and provided with the means of dealing with them successfully; and instead of working at separate subjects, the child would draw freely upon all knowledge that is relevant to the activity. School studies are integrated inside the school as activities are integrated in the world outside, the integrating factor being the child himself. The Project method, evolved by Kilpatrick, shows how best this integration could be done. It puts in the foreground of the learning process a definite problem to be solved. The problem comes first and all learning is incidental to its successful solution. "The general idea of this
method", says Thomson, "... is that school time shall be filled with real tasks which the pupils themselves genuinely wish to carry out, which, if possible, they have themselves suggested, and which will involve the acquisition as a by-product of the formal school subjects, such as reading, arithmetic, a modern language and the rest". Such projects may be individual or socialized activities which involve participation in social relationships, division of labour, and willing acceptance of responsibility to the community, and afford training in co-operation. Thomson points out as its defect that all learning is only incidental and so it is likely to lead to a lack of system and clarity in knowledge. He, therefore, advocates alongside of such activity in school a regular course of study in its proper place. He says, "... a judicious mixture of regular drilling with incidental learning is probably best ... A man's best work is done as play, and a boy's too; but both the man and the boy need and welcome opportunities for being definitely taught and drilled in the weapons necessary to prosecute their playtime occupations". Says Prof. Ross: "We can all agree

2. Ibid. p. 95 f.
that, especially in the early stages, formal instruction ought to occupy a place subordinate to the child's own purposive activity. If, however, a child sees the need and experiences the desire for a certain amount of formal instruction in, say arithmetic or reading, there is every reason why he should receive it. The school ought to distil for him the essence of the experience of the race and provide a store of capitalized knowledge that will be available for future use. However he or she may stress natural activities and interests, the educator is bound to make some analysis of human experience as a whole, and decide what experiences the child will most profitably undergo at school; and this will always involve a certain amount of division of the curriculum into activities that are more or less separate from one another. But let it be reiterated that such activities must always be purposive; the child should make a direct attack on a problem and realize for himself that it is essential to extend his knowledge and skill". In such a case we can say, with Eric James, that "listening, reading and thinking are no less 'active' than other pursuits.

1. Ross, op. cit, p.204 f.
more obviously so".  

The view taken by Prof. Ross is that of the idealists - that there are things which a child "ought to know" and which, it is the business of the educator to impart to the child, while the aim of the pragmatists stops with putting the educand into a position to develop new values for himself. Dewey's protest against formalism and verbalism in education have, however, ruled out passive absorption of ideas as an unsound proposition in education.

Naturalist, pragmatist, or idealist, all educators today are agreed that subjects of the school curriculum should be given to pupils as channels in which their creative energy may flow. "We get the matter in proper perspective" says Prof. Ross "when we remember that poets are literally makers or makaris, to use the old Scots equivalent. Not only in poetry, then, but in literature generally, in mathematics, science, geography, history, and all school activities, the pupil is to be a maker, a creator, a doer. Always he is to have the

1. Eric James, *op.cit*, p.47.
joy of discovery, of creative activity; he is to be satisfied by the travail of his own soul. The Board of Education said that, in the Primary School, the "curriculum should be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored". The Spens Report has urged that the same must be the case with the secondary school too. While admitting that "learning in the narrower sense must no doubt fill a larger place in the secondary school than in the primary school" the framers of the Report feel that "To speak of secondary school studies as 'subjects' is to run the risk of thinking of them as bodies of facts to be stored rather than as modes of activity to be experienced". English educational methodology in the present century has been tremendously influenced by educationists like Sir Percy Nunn. He held that "The school must be thought of primarily not as a place where

certain knowledge is learnt but as a place where the young are disciplined in certain forms of activity". Nunn observed a rhythm in pupil's reactions to their studies which he called, "wonder-utility-system", and pointed out that the project method is well adapted to the utility stage. A.N. Whitehead's rhythmic stages of Romance, Precision and Generalization also show that "different subjects and modes of study should be undertaken by pupils at fitting times when they have reached the proper stage of mental development". These theories of rhythmic stages warn us against the temptation of giving prematurely a systematic presentation of subject matter to young pupils. Realism in education, too, demands that the curriculum must be thought of in terms of activities. "In school" says Prof. Jeffreys, "knowledge comes to us in 'subjects'; in real life experience does not come to us labelled 'history', 'geography', or 'chemistry', but in practical situations in which

1. Nunn, op.cit, p.263 (italics mine)
3. Whitehead, op.cit, p.24
the historical, geographical, chemical, and many other aspects may be inextricably mixed up. For this reason we are not prepared to find our school knowledge helpful in the situations of real life". That Indian educational thought has kept abreast of these trends of western thinking is clearly evidenced by the observation in the *Secondary Education Commission Report*, that in the curriculum, "subjects should be inter-related and within each subject, the contents should so far as possible be envisaged as 'broad fields' units which can be correlated better with life rather than narrow items of information". But this is more a legacy of Gandhian thinking with regard to curriculum and methodology than a copy of western ideas on the subject.

"Strict naturalism is a theory of the head, demanding adherence faithfully to the spirit of truth and reason, and is naturally indifferent to value and emotional valuation.

Gandhi touched up its theories with emotion and thus evolved a theistic version of naturalism. This is why, though like Rousseau, Gandhi protests against the traditional system of education and against bookish instruction, decries civilization which has condemned man to a sub-human existence, and abhors super-imposed restrictions and interference with the free growth of the child's personality, he does not agree with the naturalist in giving the child complete freedom to follow any and every inclination that might arise in his mind, and seeks to guide him, in his studies, towards an ideal. Like Rousseau, he believes that nature and rural environment are important educational agencies, but he is not prepared to segregate the child, as Rousseau would like to do, from the 'baneful influence' of man and society. Gandhi stresses both physical and social environment, and seeks like the pragmatists, "the development of a creative individual who makes a creative impact on an ever more creative society". This is why we find a

1. Datta, op. cit, p. 57
remarkable similarity between his educational methods and those of the pragmatists. Believing as do the Pragmatists, that the child is a potential creator of values - a seeker after truth - Gandhi would have the child learn for himself through purposive activity and not be a mere book-worm passively taking in second hand knowledge. His craft-centred education is, like the Project Method, based on the principles of activity and interest of the child, and is equally child-centred. Like Dewey and Kilpatrick, Gandhi would like the child to acquire the knowledge of various subjects in the context of the project - in his case, a craft - on which the child works. Like the Project, education through craft involves participation in social relationships, division of labour and willing acceptance of responsibility. His school, like Dewey's, becomes a thinking school by its being a doing school; for he, like Dewey, saw in the divorce between thinking and doing a parallel social division into a non-labouring aristocracy and a labouring proletariat, which is a negation of true democracy. But there is a fundamental
difference between Gandhi's craft-centred education and the Project Method. "My scheme", said Gandhi, "is absolutely different (from Dewey's) because it is a rural one". The sociological implications of basic education are a vital part of it. In fact it is this that has made all the difference between the basic curriculum and the project method. While the project, for example, can be any activity, the craft chosen for each school must be a village craft that is pursued in the locality. Projects are unlimited, and a series of projects can be taken up by the pupils one after the other, as a project is only "a problematic act carried to completion in its natural setting"; but the village crafts that are suitable for basic education are, in their very nature, only a few, and in each school, all education has to be only through one basic craft. The projects need have only educational possibilities but the craft must have economic possibilities as well; it must be a productive craft which issues in saleable goods. Further, the Project Method stresses integration of subjects more than

1. Educational Reconstruction, p.132
correlation, while integration and correlation are alike characteristic features of learning through craft; both relate knowledge significantly to the life of the pupil, but while the project method relies on incidental learning for the most part, the basic system definitely looks to logical and systematic teaching of subjects as well. The Zakir Husain Committee says that teachers "will deal with the various subjects not as isolated and mutually exclusive branches of knowledge but as inter-related aspects of a growing and developing activity which provides the focus of their correlation. For this purpose it is essential that teachers should have some training in formulating projects and schemes of correlated studies and thus link up life, learning and activity".

II. THE TECHNIQUE OF CORRELATED TEACHING.

Gandhi held that there is no limit to the possibilities of knowledge that can be imparted through the medium of the craft. He would start all education with the takli, because it is the kamadhenu, "the cow of plenty" from the point of

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1. Basic National Education, p. 28 f
educational possibilities. It had the advantage that it costs very little, not even a penny. And, as spinning was one of the first crafts ever found out by man, starting the education of the child with the *takli* would be starting with the earliest experience of the race. He would teach them what place the *takli* occupied in our life in the early days, and this would lead into a little history, the story of its decline. Then would follow a brief course in Indian history starting from the East India Company, or even earlier from the Muslim period, showing how by a systematic process this main handicraft of the people was strangled and ultimately killed. This would be followed by a brief course in mechanics - construction of the *takli*. Next would be a few lectures on cotton, its habitat, its varieties, the countries and the provinces of India where it is at present grown, etc. The child would have to be given at this stage some knowledge of its cultivation, the soil best suited for it and the like. That would make them launch into a little agriculture. "The whole of elementary arithmetic can be taught through the counting of yards of spinning, finding out the count of yarn, making up of hanks, getting it ready

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1. Harijan, 18.2.39
2. Cf. The Recapitulation theory of Stanley Hall, "Ontogeny repeats Phylogeny".
for the weaver, the number of cross threads in the warp to put in for particular textures of cloth and so on. Every process from the growing of cotton to the manufacture of the finished product—cotton picking, ginning, carding, spinning, sizing, weaving—all would have their mechanics and history and mathematics correlated to them"¹. "Unless I know arithmetic I cannot report how many yards of yarn I have produced on the takli, or how many standard rounds it will make or what is the count of yarn that I have spun. I must learn figures to be able to do so, and I also must learn addition and subtraction and multiplication and division. In dealing with complicated sums I shall have to use symbols and so get my algebra ... "Take geometry next. What can be a better demonstration of a circle than the disc of a takli? I can teach all about the circle in this way, without even mentioning the name of Euclid"². It was his "confirmed opinion", said Gandhi, "that the commencement of training by teaching the alphabet and reading and writing hampers their (the pupils')

¹. Harijan, 11.6.38
². Ibid, 18.2.39
intellectual growth. I would not teach them the alphabet till they have had an elementary knowledge of history, geography, mental arithmetic and the art (say) of spinning. Through these three I should develop their intelligence ... I should give six months to this preliminary training. The child is now ready for learning how to read the alphabet, and when he is able to do so rapidly, he is ready to learn simple drawing, and when he has learnt to draw geometrical figures and the figures of birds etc, he will draw, not scrawl, the figures of the alphabet ... I consider writing as a fine art. We kill it by imposing the alphabet on little children and making it the beginning of learning"¹. In Gandhi's scheme of teaching, therefore, the exercise of the smaller muscles come only after the exercise of the larger muscles by the handling of tools etc., and the learning of symbols follow on the learning of the subject matter which the child wants to express in words or numbers, and thus the whole educational process becomes psychological. The principle of correlated teaching would serve to sustain interest throughout and reduce facts learnt to 'faculty'. The whole learning process becomes one of purposive activity, and schooling becomes a joy.

¹. Harijan, 5.6.37
As K.G. Saiyidain, President of the First Basic National Education Conference points out, the technique of correlated teaching is the only suitable method whereby the full intellectual value of the basic education syllabus could be exploited. The new syllabus is built round three integrally related centres as the foci of the curriculum; the child's physical environment, the child's social environment and "craft-work, which is their natural meeting point since it utilizes the resources of the former for the purposes of the latter." This has given the syllabus a unity which it did not possess before. While 'general science' interprets the physical environment and 'social studies' the social environment, work on the basic craft brings them together by utilizing the resources of the physical environment for purposes relating to the social environment.

Subject matter, within the syllabus, has been organized into 'significant and comprehensive units of experience, which will, when mastered, enable the child to understand his environment better and to

1. One Step Forward, p. 90
2. Basic National Education, p. 49
react to it more intelligently because they throw helpful light on the problems and conditions of life around him". The child is able to see the relation between the various subjects in school among themselves and to life, as work in social studies and general science issues in expressional activities in language and drawing, and the study of history and geography help the understanding and appreciation of his craft, and gardening and agriculture are done as an integral part of school activities; the school thus becomes "an active centre of experience and of abundant life". The Zakir Husain Committee has drawn our attention to the fact that an activity curriculum implies that schools must be places of "work, experimentation and discovery, not of passive absorption of information imparted second-hand", and indicated that "all teaching should be carried on through concrete life situations relating to craft or to social and physical environment, so that whatever the child learns becomes assimilated to his growing activity".

If subjects like social studies and general science are presented by teachers as long catalogues

1. Basic National Education, p. 50
2. Ibid, p. 51
3. Ibid, p. 50
of facts, the object of the syllabus will be defeated as pupils will fail to appreciate their relation with the problems of life and the curriculum would serve little use. All knowledge must therefore be acquired through real learning situations involving self-activity on the part of children. The basic craft chosen provides a natural starting point for the teacher because the child is by nature a pragmatist and loves activity. Long before he acquires intellectual maturity to understand the meaning and purpose of the various subjects in the curriculum, he usually takes interest in the practical activities connected with the craft, and so it may be psychological to start the child's education by engaging him in such activities. These might train his powers of observation and judgment as well as his practical aptitudes. As the child comes in contact with the raw materials and tools which he has to manipulate, the teacher gets numerous opportunities to naturally and gradually add to the child's knowledge of his physical and social environment. Information and skill, imparted to satisfy his curiosity and to fulfil 'needs' arising in the course of his activity, are
absorbed and assimilated and do not remain muddled, unassorted, dead lumber in his mind. If the teaching of the craft is intelligently done, the child will naturally feel interested in the study of his raw material, its origin and distribution, the processes employed in its transformation to usable articles, the appliances and sources of power used in these processes and the means of transportation employed in distributing them, and the conditions under which the workers in these trades carry on their life and activities; and much of geography, history and general science could be made available in assimilable form to the young minds. As the child acquires the capacity to read and write, and his knowledge and experience grow, his range of interests becomes wider. He is now eager to know the why and wherefore of the processes going on in the school and outside, and he is led along the direction of his own curiosity and intellectual interests. In due course, the miscellaneous items of knowledge acquired begin to fall into their proper places and the growing child is able to distinguish the significance of various 'subjects'. Here is the raison d'etre for logically arranged
subject matter; the child sees the relation of each of the subjects to practical activities in society, and they do not confuse him. Adds Saiyidain, "This is a psychological principle of great importance, it is based on the fact that the child's mind is an integral whole, welcoming experience as a unity, not as a collection of separate unconnected fragments. To the young child, the traditional division of the curricula into 'subjects' which are not only unrelated to one another but are also out of touch with the pulsating realities of life is often quite unintelligible. The technique of correlated teaching, on the other hand, makes the craft-work of the child the starting point of his learning and, just as a powerful magnet attracts to itself scattered iron filings and introduces order and system into them, similarly the focal and expanding interests in craft activities enables the child to acquire and assimilate the relevant knowledge of history, geography, civics, general science and other important subjects. Moreover, it gives to the child's knowledge greater correctness and reality
and saves it from that formal compartmentalization which makes it both dull and meaningless. Craft thus becomes a centre from which emanate many rich and progressive human interests, some historical, some geographical, some scientific, all finding their satisfaction in due course in the specialized study of different branches of knowledge". 

The technique of correlated teaching through the handicraft can take us very far into the world of knowledge; indeed, as Kaka Saheb Kalelkar thinks, we can bring all the knowledge in the world, which is worth while to the child to him through this simple and natural process. For, a handicraft "is the process by which a man makes the raw material from nature, and with his skill and intelligence transforms it into an object of use for human society. Thus it forms a process through which a child can be introduced into the world of nature, to the skill of man, and to human society and its needs. There is no branch of human knowledge which is not covered by these three aspects of human life. Where this relationship is not obvious, there should be no forced or artificial attempt at correlation". This stress on the need to avoid

1. *One Step Forward*, p. 91 f.
artificial correlation is very important, and has been stressed by Gandhi himself. So much was the caution he administered against trying to correlate subject matter which naturally would not come in, in the early stages, that some people thought that the central idea behind the scheme was that teachers should not speak a word to the pupils that could not be correlated to the *takli*, and he had to clarify his stand. He said, "It is true that I have said that all instruction must be linked with some basic craft. When you are imparting knowledge to a child of 7 or 10 through the medium of an industry, you should, to begin with, exclude all those subjects which cannot be linked with the craft. By doing so from day to day, you will discover ways and means of linking with the craft many things which you had excluded in the beginning. You will save your own energy and the pupil's if you follow this process of exclusion to begin with ..." He added that if teachers followed this suggestion with persistence, they will, in the end, find that they have included many things which they had excluded

1. *Harijan*, 18.2.39
at first, that practically all that was worth including had been included and that whatever they were obliged to exclude till the end was often something very superficial indeed.

The first Basic National Education Conference, in a resolution passed after surveying the work done in the course of the first two years, came to the conclusion that "it is possible and educationally useful to teach through the correlated technique". At the same time they pointed out that this "correlation should not, however, be unnecessarily forced, and teaching should be correlated not only to the basic craft but also to the child's physical and social environment, which offer equally rich possibilities for this purpose and enrich the children's basic knowledge profitably". Gandhi had not opposed Zakir Hussain, when in explaining Gandhi's views at the Wardha conference, he said that "there may be some aspects of a subject which cannot be taught through the takli. Shall we leave them altogether? No. We shall teach through the takli as much of these subjects as possible. The rest we must not leave untouched". Where all subjects cannot be correlated

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1. Harijan, 18.2.39
2. One Step forward, p. 219
3. Educational Reconstruction, p. 125
to the basic craft, he was thinking of utilizing some other handicraft, for the purpose. The Resolution passed at the Wardha Conference clearly endorsed this view, for, it says only "that the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible be integrally related to the central handicraft ... "¹ Shri Mashruvala too stressed this aspect beyond doubt when he said, "all training will be principally through the medium of and in correlation with such industry. Thus history, geography, mathematics, physical and social sciences and general literature will centre round and be related to that industry. Other matters in the above subjects will not be omitted, but greater emphasis will be laid on the former"². Gandhi's statement that "during the first year everything should be taught through the takli; in the second year, other processes can also be taught side by side"³, may also be taken to mean that he was prepared to allow some latitude in this matter. The resolution of the Basic Education Conference

¹. See supra
². Harijan, 4.12.37
³. Educational Reconstruction, p. 119
cited above, however, takes a still broader view of correlation and gives much more freedom to the teacher.

The point to remember is that correlation should in no case be forced. This warning is all the more important in view of the fact that it is not always that the right type of teachers are found to teach at this grade\(^1\). Sir John Sargent, then the Education Commissioner with the Government of India, must have had this in mind when he drew particular attention to this aspect of the question in his speech at the first Basic Education

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1. Cf: "Acquiring culture through a craft is an idea not easy of accomplishment except in rare cases where a highly educated teacher has also the great advantage of having only a class of gifted pupils. It will never work in a general scheme of education with the level of culture which can be expected of our teachers in elementary schools, especially on the magnificent salaries promised by the exponents of the scheme" - Principal Seshadri, *The Wardha Scheme of Education*, *The Indian Review*, Madras, Oct. 1941, (italics mine). This view, of course, is an exaggeration of the difficulties. The article is a trenchent criticism of the scheme, and the author holds the view that 'it will not be long before it (the scheme) is as dead as Queen Anne'. 

Conference. He said, "I am the last person in the world not to appreciate the importance of correlation ... But do not let correlation become a shibboleth. If you cannot correlate all subjects or you do not believe that complete correlation is suited to your circumstances, do not hesitate to start work on a less ambitious plan, or pause for a while and let the problem of correlation work out its own solution. Education is not a jigsaw puzzle into which all the pieces will fit in naturally and completely ... Do not be discouraged if your correlation is not yet as complete as perhaps you would like to make it or as your model scheme tells you it may be made. Keep the ideal before you, but do not be disappointed if loose ends, jagged corners and rough edges appear".  

The methodology of Basic Education is, of course, a very taxing one, demanding of the teachers very great knowledge of the subject matter, the craft and the world, and more than all, of child nature, and the rare ability of correlating them. It is more so because, while their approach is to be fundamentally psychological, "their ultimate goal, so far as the intellectual aspect of education

1. One Step Forward, p. 260 f
is concerned, is logical, i.e., they have to aim at building up in the child's mind, in due course, a coherent and systematic structure of knowledge. In other words, they have to conduct their teaching in such a way that knowledge, which is acquired psychologically by the child, gains scientific organization"¹.

With the above observations in mind, it may be useful to note what the Zakir Husain Committee says about the teaching of language, social studies, general science and mathematics. The close connection between mother tongue and craft work, social studies and village life and activities, is kept in view in suggesting that, in language study, the teacher's oral work and selection of reading material must be organized round the actual but growing life and interests of his pupils so that they may gradually,

"(a) develop a consciousness of the wonders of the life of nature around them,

(b) observe and describe the different processes of the school crafts and the life of their home, village and school,

(c) write simple business and personal letters as a normal activity of social life,

(d) keep a daily record of progress in the basic handicrafts,

¹. K.G. Saiyidain, One Step Forward, p. 93 f
(e) help in the editing of a school magazine and the preparation of a daily news bulletin,

(f) make a clear and connected speech of reasonable duration on some topic of general interest,

(g) appreciate beautiful literature"1.

The syllabus in Social Studies is conceived as an attempt to adjust the child to his environment in space and time, and develop in him the right social and intellectual attitudes. For the latter purpose, "the development in school of self-governing institutions and its organization as a genuine co-operative community involving mutual obligations and distribution of duties and responsibilities"2 is envisaged. It is suggested that the teaching of history, geography and civics "should not only be closely co-ordinated, but it should spring from actual social situations - the child's home, his village, its occupations and crafts - and then be extended and enriched by stories of primitive life and ancient civilizations, and by showing how different ways of life and work have developed under different social and

1. Basic National Education, p. 52
2. Ibid, p. 53
geographical conditions"¹. Geography and nature study in the lower classes should begin with observing natural phenomena and the study of seasons through excursions, tending of pets and survey of the locality; this process of acquiring knowledge actively and utilizing it for the better understanding of the social environment must, it is necessary to ensure, continue throughout the course. "Hence the need for correlating the school with the activities of the environing community life ... "² In order to make mathematics real the Committee indicated how its various processes could be correlated with the various craft processes and with the facts learnt in the Social Studies and General Science courses. Learning calculations by actually working out problems arising out of craft work and manipulating figures which throw light on economic and social facts of the village, and learning geometry by actual field work in the country must make mathematics not only an active process but a means of interpreting and understanding the social environment³.

III. THE TIME-TABLE.

An understanding of the methodology of Basic education is necessary to appreciate the distribution

1. Basic National Education, p. 53
2. Ibid, p. 54
3. Ibid
of time among the various subjects of the time-table. In a school-day of five hours and thirty minutes, three hours and twenty minutes have been allotted to the basic craft, and the rest divided as follows: music, drawing and arithmetic, forty minutes; the mother tongue, forty minutes; social studies and general science, thirty minutes; physical training, ten minutes; and recess, ten minutes. The Committee had in mind spinning and weaving as the basic craft in estimating this time, and they have taken care to point out that the "distribution might vary from craft to craft"\(^1\), but in no case should the time allotted to the basic craft exceed the above estimate. In other words, three hours and twenty minutes is prescribed as the maximum period to which children may be exercised in craft, and there is no objection to the time-table giving less time to it to suit the standard of the pupils or the craft pursued. Indeed, this has been kept in mind in framing the time-tables of basic schools in different places, and we find that the time actually allotted to it varies widely from school to school and craft to craft. Thus, Shri B.G. Kher reported to the Poona Conference that in Bombay only two hours were devoted

\(^1\) Basic National Education, p. 39
to the craft every day. Much of the criticism that has been directed against the time allotted to craft shows an ignorance of this latitude given, and an ignorance of the whole scheme when they say that it leaves very little time for academic work. The Zakir Husain Committee itself says that "the time allotted to the basic craft is not meant to be spent only on the mechanical practice of the craft, but oral work, drawing and expression work naturally connected with it, as well as instruction in the why and wherefore of the processes involved, i.e., their scientific and intelligent understanding, which is an important educative aspect of craft work, will also be given during this time. This is clearly implied in our scheme of three-centred co-ordination." 2

Doubt has also been voiced with regard to the shortness of the time allotted to Social Studies and General Science. An examination of how this work is done in a basic school would show that the time schedule has little to do with the practice of citizenship which permeates the whole life of the school. About the Segaon Village School, Shrimati Asha Devi says, "We have not only to help the child

1. One Step Forward, p. 10
2. Basic National Education, p. 56
to grow as a complete all-round individual but also as a responsible member of society, and this training has to begin from the beginning of the life in school. In fact, that is the main function of education. So, we help the child, as far as possible, to organize the life of the school into a kind of co-operative community where every member, teacher or child, big or small, has his own duties and responsibilities which he must discharge. The duties and responsibilities are not imposed upon him by us. The children themselves choose their leaders and all this organization of their activity is centred round the children's meeting, the children's gathering which they call mulamchee sabha. Every Saturday morning the children meet. It is a solemn democratic body, where duties are distributed, ministers are elected, the last week's work is criticized, the next week's is planned, the budget for the next week is prepared and certain children are entrusted with the marketing of their products. I would now like to give you a list of the ministers and their duties. First comes the minister for cleanliness of the compound, cleanliness of the class-room. Then the ministers of food — ministers who are responsible for
organizing the meals and upkeep of the kitchen. Then come ministers who distribute the *taklis* and winders, spread the mats, collect the material after the school work is over, and who are in charge of their little school equipment in the shape of slates, pencils and paper. Besides, we have a minister for organizing their games, a minister who looks after the kitchen garden, a minister whose duty is to see that the elder children do not bully the younger ones. Lastly a minister for lice. This is an important portfolio. These are the lines on which the community is working, and the organization of work and play in the school is entrusted to the school children. We are there only to help them and guide them when they need it. They organize their play, class work and all their activities. After six months' experience we have found that they can be trusted as responsible members of the school community; they can be trusted with money, to organize festivals, and to entertain

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1. In Bombay, Shri B.G.Kher pointed out in his address at the first Basic Education Conference, that "In order to form healthy habits of cleanliness, .... children are made to wash their hands and face and clean their teeth and hair in the school". - One Step Forward, p.13. See also the provisions to ensure cleanliness in the case of children whose persons or clothing is "infested with vermin" in the schools of England - Section 54 of the Butler Act - The Education Act of 1944, p.43-45
"But the civic training goes deeper, for the children are not only members of the school community; they are members of the village community .... The first step towards the correlation of the village and the school was through the festivals. The children, on their own initiative, organized two school festivals: one was Ganesh Utsav, and the other Janmashtami. To these festivals they invited the villagers; they had music and worship and they distributed Prasad".

A Press-Note issued on 10th April, 1950, by the Director of Publicity, Government of Bombay, sheds valuable light on the civic training imparted in the basic schools of that State. It runs as follows:

"... a basic school is essentially a centre of activity. The following activities have become a regular feature of almost every basic school and through it children learn to carry out their social and civic responsibilities and get training in citizenship. They also serve to make Basic schools centres for the young and the old alike.

1. Cleanliness campaign in villages: public opinion

1. One Step Forward, p. 183 f
has been aroused and the programmes are carried on with increasing co-operation from the villages.

2. Celebration of religious and National festivals and Jayantis: Each school celebrates about a dozen such festivals during the year. The local people take a keen interest and closer contact is established between the villagers and the school.

3. Entertainment programmes and simple dramatization of educative topics are performed by children.

4. Manuscript magazines are a regular feature of all the schools and they give ample scope for the development of the literary and aesthetic talents of the pupils.

5. Vastra Swavalambi groups have been formed in some Basic schools and they produce cloth necessary for their own use. The pupils are rightly proud of their achievements in this respect.

6. Each school has some kind of self-government to train children in managing their own affairs.

7. Regular and systematic excursions and contact with nature provide ample scope for teaching academic subjects in a concrete and realistic manner.

8. Children have taken part in the "Grow More Food" and "Tree Planting" Campaigns. Every agricultural-bias school
maintains compost-pits and gives demonstrations in compost-making.

9. Children work as volunteers at the time of local fairs, festivals, etc., and thus establish a living contact with the village and its activities and do feel at home in their work\(^1\).

The ten minutes' time given to physical training is for musical drill and the like. It may sound fantastic how this could be sufficient for the culture of the body unless we understand how, in the basic scheme\(^2\), physical education is co-ordinated with the other subjects of the curriculum and with life.

"So far as the theoretical aspect of physical education is concerned", says the Zakir Husain Committee, "the children will gain the necessary knowledge of Physiology, Hygiene and Dietetics through the General Science course. As for practical training, the entire work of the school, involving craft-practice, games, gardening and active methods of learning, has been envisaged as an aid to the development of the child's health and physical vigour\(^2\).

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1. The Times of India, 11.4.50
2. Basic National Education, p. 54 f
IV. EVALUATION OF THE WARDHA SCHEME.

In the Wardha Scheme though the pupils are to be guided and controlled by the teacher to some extent, the chief emphasis is on children's personal experience. Knowledge and skills are not to be acquired for their own sake but related to the needs of the child and its environment. Hence, learning is based on units of experience reflecting the interests of the child or youth or drawn from social life, but arranged on the plane of the learner's comprehension. Of course, children do have to learn certain "subjects" which contain the essence of the accumulated social heritage, but these are acquired actively, in response to needs, which arise mostly in the course of practical work. As all learning is done in the spirit of the project, as purposeful activity, it develops a spirit of scientific enquiry and imparts the ability to formulate independent judgments and initiate new lines of conduct. The curriculum being community-orientated, it serves efficiently to instil national consciousness and to develop social and co-operative attitudes, with faith in truth and non-violence and a desire for social service. There is a definite stress on the practical aspect of education. "In India, where poverty is so
great and where people have to struggle for bare existence, it is no wonder that cultural values should be subordinated to the basic needs of human life. True education should be organized, co-ordinated and integrated around dominant interests. In India, at the present moment, 'the dominant interest is two-fold: the promotion of livelihood including the standard of living in the comprehensive sense of the term and the inculcation of civic responsibility.' It is therefore the special merit of the Wardha Scheme that the curriculum satisfies the needs and interests of the present Indian society ... ¹ The productive craft has the double advantage of being an agency of education and of economic support. The child, engaged in craft-work, is really working out a project which involves a purpose, planning, experimentation and discovery, and trains his senses

1. Shrimali, *op. cit*, p.107 f. The Rev.T.N.Siqueira says: "... learning by doing, and not doing useless things (in the fashionable 'play-way' of rich countries) but useful things which fetch a small price and give the child the thrill of earning while learning is natural and characteristic of a man who was deeply moved by India's poverty ... It recalled to all Indians the utter poverty of their country and forced educationists to build their system upon this real and concrete foundation". - *Journal of Education and Psychology*, Baroda, April, 1948.
and disciplines his thought. It stimulates "the spontaneous interests of children without allowing it to degenerate into mere excitement or pleasure." It engenders a sense of reality in school work, which sustains the interest and promotes genuine learning and turns the learner into a little seeker after truth. "It will also develop the moral qualities which are required in a non-violent resister. Prolonged, habitual and understood manual work has the same effect as military training. It develops habits of obedience, self-respect and self-reliance, tenacity of will, sense of unity with others, endurance of common hardships, sense of order and co-operation, energy, courage, equanimity, and practice in handling moral equivalents of weapons."

The Wardha Scheme does not dispense with books as make the pupils actually re-think, re-invent and re-write them. Its content and methodology

1. Shrimali, op. cit, p. 110
make basic education true liberal education, serving both intellectual and vocational ends, and fitting its recipients not merely for a moral but useful life. T.H. Huxley had defined liberal education as follows: "That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ... whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations ... whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to ... hate all vileness and to respect others as himself"¹. Gandhi quotes him approvingly in his Hind Swaraj², and if the intentions of the promoters of basic education mean anything, there is little doubt that they will

². Hind Swaraj, p. 79
issue in a liberal education of this kind. And, if properly worked, we could hope with Sir John Sargent to see in the basic schools, "not schools run for the profit of those who exploit children, not cramming institutions whose object is to enable pupils to pass examinations, but real schools where children can work and play, and be happy ..."¹

¹. One Step Forward, p. 263
CHAPTER III.
ORGANIZATION OF NAṬALIM

I. THE "BASIC" STAGE.

Gandhi had concentrated all his attention on 'primary' education, i.e., education of the child from the age of 7 to 14, not because he did not realize the need for the education of the child before and after that period, but because this minimum universal education of the masses was an urgent need. Of higher education, he was certainly no enemy; all he said was that to begin with "we must restrict ourselves to a consideration of primary education. For, the moment the primary question is solved the secondary one of college education will easily be settled". The Zakir Husain Committee too, only reflected this view of Gandhi when they said, "... this is a scheme of universal and compulsory basic education for all children, to be followed in due course by higher education for those who are qualified to receive it, and when that scheme is drawn up, it will have to be co-ordinated with the scheme of Basic education, so as to ensure continuity as well as proper intellectual equipment for those who are to proceed further with

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1. Cf: "I am not opposed to education even of the highest type attainable in the world" - Harijan, 9.7.38.
2. Educational Reconstruction, p. 117
their education"¹. They also made it clear in the Report that they recognized the great importance of pre-school education and envisaged the possibility of its introduction on a voluntary basis, with state help where possible².

The Committee also explained the significance of the age-range of Basic education. "... we have chosen the 7–14 age-range because we consider it absolutely necessary to keep the child at school until he is fourteen, in order to ensure that (1) he will receive the essential modicum of social and civic training, which, for psychological reasons, is not possible earlier, (2) he will become a better citizen, (3) his literary training will be thorough enough to make a lapse into illiteracy impossible, and (4) he will acquire sufficient skill in his basic crafts to practice it successfully if he adopts it as his vocation³. They also added, "We are so strongly convinced of the educative importance of the years of adolescence that if we could extend the period of education, we should like to keep the students at school till the age of sixteen in order to ensure

¹. Basic National Education, p. 57
². Ibid
³. Ibid, p. 58
proper moral, social and civic training"¹. The Committee was keen on fixing the age of compulsion as 7+, and not lower², as the child, otherwise, would not be fit, physically or mentally, for craftwork. Gandhi had made his view very clear on this matter. "Seven should be the average minimum age, but there will be some children of a higher and some of a lower age as well. There is physical as well as mental age to be considered. One child at the age of 7 may have attained sufficient physical development to handle a craft. Another one may not be able to do so even at 8. One cannot, therefore, lay down any hard and fast rules. All the factors have to be taken into consideration"³.

The first Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, Government of India, however, decided that basic education should start at the age of 6 or even less. As the "normal age for admission to school in all advanced countries is 5 or 6", and, "in India, under the existing system of education children are usually admitted to school about the age of 6", the majority of members of this Committee

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1. Basic National Education, p. 58  
2. Ibid, p. 38  
3. Harijan, 4.3.39
"preferred that the age-range for compulsory education should be six years to fourteen years though children of 5 years of age should not be excluded from school"¹. They also felt that while the Wardha Scheme was a continuous scheme for primary and secondary education rolled into one, "Primary and Secondary education however, form two well-defined stages, each with its own scope, aims and methods. The clear distinction in aims and methods between these stages must be kept in view"². They were very much influenced by the findings of the Hadow Report on transfer at 11+, and they argued in a similar way that transfer from basic to other types of schools should be permitted, for those who wish to do so, after the completion of the fifth class or at the age of 11+³. To facilitate this transfer, the Second Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, (also presided over by B.G. Kher) recommended a division of the eight year course of basic education into two separate stages: a Junior Basic of 5 years starting at the age of 6, and a Senior Basic of 3 years⁴. While admitting that the protagonists of Basic education are insistent that the whole course should be regarded as a unit in itself,

¹. First Kher Report, p.5
². Ibid
³. Ibid
⁴. Reports. 1938-43, p. 12
coherent and consecutive, the Committee held that there is nothing in this contention which conflicted with the view that adjustments in the content of education and methods of instruction should be made to suit the mental and physical changes occurring in boys and girls at about 11+. They claimed many advantages "for treating the instruction given before and after this psychological break as forming two well-defined stages, each with its scope, aims and techniques, though inspired by the same fundamental aims"; and added, "... if opportunities are to be provided for children to transfer from "basic" schools to other forms of post-primary education ... a break in the organization at about the age of 11 - 12 will become a matter of normal convenience as well as of educational desirability". Those who are transferred would have completed a planned stage in their school career, and those who are not, could be gathered in basic post-primary "Central" schools, graded according to intelligence or for the pursuit of different crafts. It would also enable co-education to be introduced at the primary stage and the separation of girls to be made at the age of 12.
The sanctity of 11+ has been questioned in recent times. Further, though the Committee reached the conclusion that "the divergence between those who regard the basic course as one and indivisible and those who realize the need for a break between the age of 11 - 12 is more apparent than real"\(^1\), it is not so. For one thing, the continuous scheme of basic education from 7 to 14, as "Primary Education", would alone ensure a true education in Gandhian ideals of citizenship, and the scheme adumbrated by the Kher Committee cut at its throat. Basic education, they knew was bound to be popular, but while they admitted that the Basic School would soon become "the normal type" of school in India, they wanted to restrict it to a period of 5 years, and then transfer many of the pupils to the other types of schools, where, even if, as the Committee envisaged, the curriculum will be "closely related to" and "develop logically from" that of the Junior Basic School, still the atmosphere will be different. This would defeat the purpose which Gandhi had in mind. Those who are transferred to the other

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schools at the end of the Junior Basic course, would not get the full basic training which alone would develop the Satyagrahi personality of the pupil and fit him for a rural social order, and even among those who choose to be in the senior basic schools, all may not get the full benefit of the scheme as the "Central" schools, which are separate institutions, may be few and far away. It would stifle the idea of self-supporting education by neglecting any preparation in the craft with that end in view in the Junior Basic Schools. And, more important than all these, it would strike at the root of the idea of evolving a classless society by reserving university education to those who are transferred to the other types of schools where English would be taught, and, indirectly reducing the basic schools to be institutions of a kind of cheap "elementary education" for the unintelligent and the unambitious. These defects must have been realized well by the promoters of Nai Talim, and that is the reason why they deprecated the idea of the break at 11+ and transfer of pupils to other institutions, as well as the teaching of English in any of these schools to
pupils below 14. The first Basic Education Conference recommended that "not only in Basic Schools but in all schools throughout India no English should be taught till the students have acquired a regular education for seven years through their mother Tongue". The Hindustani Talimi Sangh viewed with misgiving the tendency in many places to reduce the duration of the basic school to 5 years, and said, "For educational as well as financial reasons, the Sangh feels convinced that the duration of basic education should in no case be reduced to less than eight years". A unified course of Basic education from 7 - 14, and not a divided course of junior and senior basic, would satisfy Gandhi's declared objectives, and so, such schools are run by the Sangh in Behar and Sevagram. The Government of India, however, have adopted the 8 year course of basic education, divided into two stages, as recommended by the Central Advisory Board, and the first stage, the five-year course, has been widely introduced in India to-day. It is the intention of the Government to take up the development of senior basic schools at a later date.

1. One Step Forward, p. 217
as the second stage in the spread of basic education. The All-India Education Conference held in January 1948, and attended by State Education Ministers and Vice Chancellors of Universities have given their imprimatur to this, and all States have now started the conversion of existing primary schools into Basic schools, mostly of 5 years' duration. While the Post-War Development Plan, known as the Sargent Scheme, envisaged the introduction of compulsory basic education of 8 years' duration throughout India in the course of 40 years, area by area, the Kher Committee recommended that it should be done in a shorter period of 16 years. The Constitution of India laid down as a directive principle that every endeavour should be made to provide universal, free, compulsory education to all children of 6 - 14 within 10 years of its promulgation, and as the Government of India have already accepted that the education of the children in this age-group must be of the basic type, this new education has now become a fait accompli. As Vinoba Bhave, the "spiritual heir" of Mahatma Gandhi, said in his inaugural address at the Fifth All-India Basic Education Conference, held in May 1949, at Perianaickenpalayam, Coimbatore, there is

2. Ibid, p. 26
3. Ibid, p. 11
no doubt that Basic education has come to stay in India, and that it would serve best to evolve the Sarvodaya Samaj, the co-operative community of Gandhi's conception. Only he had one anxiety: What would be the shape of this education when it became a part of Government machinery? He feared that "its form may be so changed that it will be difficult to recognise it, and it may not fulfil the high hopes we have from (sic) it. One is reminded of the proverb: 'I tried to fashion the God Ganpati, but it turned out to be a monkey'. No one is to blame when this happens, because the government department is an old piece of machinery, and when new wine is poured into old bottles, the result is inevitable. Therefore, we should be alert and prepared to meet this danger". He put in a strong plea for keeping Gandhi's ideal intact, and working Nai Talim in its true form if it is to be the most potent instrument for evolving the new social order of the Mahatma's conception. The tendency to limit basic education to 4 or 5 years, its break at 11+ with a view to adding English at this stage

1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 8
and orientate it to the existing university education, and the neglect of the self-supporting ideal are all factors to be combated. He suggested, therefore, that "it is necessary that a few model schools should be run, where our ideals can be demonstrated clearly to the people. We should never dilute our ideals to make them more easily acceptable either to the government or the public". The Basic schools at Savagram and Behar are "model schools" keeping Gandhi's ideals. A few days before his tragic assassination, Gandhi had clarified his philosophy of basic education, and this must serve as the beacon-light to workers in Nai Talim hereafter:

"Basic education is generally interpreted as education through craft. This is true to a certain extent, but this is not the whole truth. The roots of Nai Talim go deeper. It is based on truth and non-violence in individual and collective life. Education is that which gives true freedom. Untruth and violence lead to bondage and can have no place in education.

"The true education must be easily available to everyone. It is not meant for a few lakhs of city

1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 9
people but must be within easy reach of millions of villagers. This education cannot be given through the dry leaves of books. It can only be given through the book of life. It does not need any expenditure in money. It cannot be taken away by force. It can have nothing to do with the teaching of sectarian dogmas or ritual. It teaches the universal truths common to all religions".

II. PRE-BASIC, AND ADULT EDUCATION.

Gandhi was incarcerated in 1942 following his initiation of the "Quit India" movement; and when he came out of jail, he brought with him a new vision of Nai Talim. He said, "I have been thinking hard during the detention over the possibilities of Nai Talim until my mind became restive."

"We must not rest content with our present achievements. We must participate in the homes of the children. We must educate their parents. Basic Education must become literally education for life."

He added, "It had become clear to me that the scope of Basic Education has to be extended. It should include the education of everybody at every stage of life."

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1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 36
2. Ibid, p.27. The phrase means two things: education through activities of life, and education throughout life.
3. Ibid
education as "co-extensive with life" was considered by educationists who met for the purpose in the Third All-India Basic Education Conference at Savagram in January, 1945. Gandhi, in his opening speech, said: "Up to the present, although our education was new, we have lived as it were in a bay ... in that our work was restricted in scope. Now we are being driven out of our bay and thrust into the open ocean. There, we have no guide except the pole-star. That pole-star is village handicrafts. Our field now is not merely the child of seven to fourteen years of age, the field of Nai Talim stretches from the hour of conception in the mother's womb to the hour of death ....

"This Nai Talim does not rely on money. The cost of Nai Talim comes from education itself. Whatever objections may be raised, I know that real education is self-supporting. There is no shame in that, but there is novelty. If we can do it, if we can show that this is the way to the true development of the mind and brain, then those who laugh at us today will sing the praise of Nai Talim and Nai Talim will become universal. And the seven lakhs of villages which today display our poverty will themselves become prosperous; their prosperity will
come not from without, but from within, from the true industry of every villager...

The Conference was faced with the problem of translating this concept of Nai Talim as education for life throughout life, into a concrete educational programme, and they proceeded by dividing it into four parts corresponding to the four stages of life.

1) **Adult Education**, or the education of men and women in all stages of life, including the care and education of the expectant mother and the mother while the baby is yet dependent on her.

2) **Pre-Basic Education**, or the education of children under seven.

3) **Basic Education**, or the education of children from seven to fourteen.

4) **Post-Basic Education**, or the education of adolescents who have completed basic education.

The Conference appointed four Committees to prepare schemes of education for these four stages of life, and Savagram was chosen as the experimental field for working out a complete programme as per the new ideal.

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1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 28
2. Ibid, p. 29
Gandhi had long ago, stressed the education of the child under five, in his autobiography. "We labour under a sort of superstition", he says, "that the child has nothing to learn during the first five years of its life. On the contrary the fact is, that the child never learns in after life what it does in its first five years. The education of the child begins with conception. The physical and mental states of the parents at the moment of conception are reproduced in the baby. Then during the period of pregnancy it continues to be affected by the mother's moods, desires and temperament, as also by her ways of life. After birth the child imitates the parents, and for a considerable number of years entirely depends on them for its growth". This makes the education of the mother an urgent need; in fact, the starting point of the programme of the New Education. Says Arthur Morgan, "One great handicap to village progress and prosperity is the general absence of the open, inquiring mind and of the scientific spirit. Most young boys

1. Autobiography, I, p. 473
and girls in India are curious and inquiring, as they are the world over, yet as they grow up that live inquiring spirit is imprisoned in the rigid cage of custom and tradition until it dies. The educational policy all the way from pre-basic education of the year old child to the graduate school, should be infused with the scientific spirit of free critical inquiry. Since the early years are largely spent with the mother, the general education of women in the scientific spirit is one of the great needs of the nation, and should be a guiding aim of education.  

1. Arthur Morgan, op. cit.
2. Autobiography, II, p. 189
on the education of parents, which, therefore, must be the first concern of the nation. In the Gandhian concept of Nai Talim, naturally the education of the adult, as a necessary prelude to the education of the new generation in new values, becomes a vital part. As Aryanayakam points out, "This programme of pre-basic and adult education for the village, closely co-ordinated with each other as two aspects of one integral educational process, forms the basis of Nai Talim". "The aim and object of adult education", as envisaged by the Committee, "is to educate the village adults to lead a better, fuller and richer life, both as individuals and social units". The method suggested was that this education "should be imparted through some suitable rural handicraft and other creative and recreative activities"; for, "it is education for life through life". It should naturally touch the life of the villager at all points and utilize all life situations

1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 29
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
for the above purpose. Says Gandhi, "The age of Basic Education includes the education of the whole of society beginning with the children and going up to adults and old men and women. It has to be imparted through the practice of handicrafts, village sanitation and medical relief, preventive and curative, especially with regard to deficiency diseases." The seriousness of the problem of adult education will be realized only when it is known that in the vast sub-continent of India, hardly ten percent of the adults are literate. They have to be made, through an efficient programme of education, worthy parents and worthy citizens of a democracy. The new concept of 'social education' formulated by the Government of India takes into consideration these aspects and its five-pointed programme of adult education, though differing from Gandhi's in its approach, seeks to lay emphasis on (a) literacy, (b) measures of

2. Progress of Education in India 1947 - 52, p.8
health and hygiene, (c) improvement of economic conditions (d) civic education and training in citizenship, and (e) recreational aspects of education, and goes a long way. A Janata College, like the Peoples Colleges in Britain, has also been opened at Alipur in 1950, to train village leaders.

We have already noted that the Zakir Husain Committee was not unaware of the importance of pre-primary education, though they did not concern themselves with it. They said, "We realize that by fixing seven plus as the age for the introduction of compulsory education, we have left out a very important period of the child's life to be shaped in the rather unfavourable surroundings of poor village homes, under the care of uneducated and indifferent parents mostly struggling against unbearable circumstances. We feel very strongly the necessity for some organization of pre-school education, conducted or supported by the State, for children between the ages of three and seven".  

When conditions in ordinary village homes are so unfavourable, it need not be pointed out how much worse are the conditions in the homes of the Harijan children. Gandhi had pointedly drawn attention to this and stressed the vital need for such pre-primary training for them. "Be it the crudest manner possible, a non-Harijan child receives some home culture. A Harijan child, being shunned by society, has none. Even where, therefore, all primary schools are open to Harijan children..., preliminary schools will be needed for Harijan children if they are not to labour under a perpetual handicap... That preliminary training should consist in teaching Harijan children manners, good speech and good conduct. A Harijan child sits anyhow; dresses anyhow; his eyes, ears, teeth, hair, nose are often full of dirt; many never know what it is to have a wash...". The aim, in other words, in any pre-primary school is not teaching the child

1. Harijan, 18.5.35.
letters but giving it rudiments of social
behaviour. This is why it is stressed that
the teacher in the Pre-Basic School should be
above all, of a "social type" and must possess
"a sanitary conscience". The child's
activities at school are also designed to this end.

In the Sevagram Pre-Basic School, the
teacher helps to mould the child's mind by
teaching him to wait for a meal till prayer
is over, to wait for his turn to take water
from the common pot, and so on. These
practices go a long way to inculcate in the
child habits of obedience and self-control.
School work begins by children cleaning the
place, followed by prayer. Children who have
not had a bath or had not cleaned their teeth
are then attended to; they are made to have
those experiences as though they were part of
a game. Then there is creative activity. In
a poor country like India it is necessary that
materials used should be inexpensive if such

schools are to be started everywhere. "The aim here is to create material from out of the things that engage a child's interest, from out of the child's familiar surroundings. Anything that the child is interested in becomes teaching material". The child wants to imitate older people, to cook, to wash, to create; and for these water, sand, a bit of rag, a bit of soap, a few palm leaves, some bamboo and a few pieces of wood are quite enough. These articles are available in the village and cost nothing. Older children pick cotton from the fields, clean it with a stick, and do a little spinning with the takli - all in the spirit of play. They also dig, sow, plant and water the plants in the garden, as well as make toys with clay or paper. These activities make education suited to the needs of the village children at little expense and make that education realistic. The programme, as worked out at Savagram, in short, consists of physical nurture, medical care, personal and community cleanliness, self help and self-reliance, social training, educational

1. Experiments in Child Education, Ministry of Education, Delhi, 1953, p. 25
and creative activities in playway, speech training, stories, songs, dialogues and conversations, music and art, and an attempt at developing unconsciously the mathematical sense and scientific spirit.

What the Gandhian pre-basic school stands for is thus greatly similar to what the Nursery and Infant schools in England aim at. "The experience of the School Medical Service showed that little attention was available for children of pre-school age - i.e. from about two to five. Yet this is a stage at which medical supervision is of paramount importance. It is also a period when desirable habits, both personal and social, are most easily acquired. As Sir George Newman has repeatedly pointed out in his annual reports, the years below five are both physically and psychologically the crucial age. But there are many homes where conditions make adequate medical and educational supervision impossible. It is for reasons such as these that nursery schools and nursery classes have come into existence .... In such schools children from two to five years .... are given full opportunity for play and rest and for the development of good and

useful habits"¹. Miss Freda Hawtry, in a note appended to the Report on Infant and Nursery Schools, expressed the view that the nursery school would be of more value if it keeps children till they are seven, at which age they would pass straight to the primary school². This view has now found great favour, and is advocated by the Nursery School Association, which was founded with Margaret MacMillan as its President in 1923. Pre-primary education till the age of seven, combining the Nursery and the Infant schools together in one would make the school very similar to Gandhi's pre-basic school, which is for children of the age-group 3 - 7. The Infant School in England, whether it is the upper part of the Nursery School or the lower department of the Junior School, is to-day, "a hive of activity and busy-ness"³. Each individual child can develop at his own pace, physically, mentally and socially. Here he learns to become a courteous and considerate member of a community. Co-operative play is an important feature at this stage and establishes pleasant social contacts. "There are joy and happy laughter, freedom of movement in and out of doors, learning through pleasurable activity, and thus

developing in a natural way the whole make-up of the child - physical, mental and spiritual"¹.

The Zakir Husain Committee, while recognizing the importance of such education and the "ultimate responsibility" of the state in this regard, did not recommend it because of the financial difficulties involved². The Second Kher Committee too considered that "while the provision of 'pre-basic' education in Nursery and Infants Schools and classes is highly desirable, it is not practicable at this stage, in view of the lack both of money and of trained women teachers, to advocate its introduction on a compulsory basis"; yet they recommended that "Provincial Governments should aim, in the first place (a) at providing model Infants and Nursery Schools in suitable centres ... and (d) at stimulating provision by voluntary agencies of efficient pre-basic schools"³. The Kher Committee, which found more reasons than the one which was advanced by the Zakir Husain Committee for shelving the question of pre-basic education for future

1. The First Fifty Years, p. 57
2. Basic National Education, p. 39
3. Reports 1938-43, p. 15
consideration, however, found added advantages as well, in case of its provision. They thus considered that, apart from helping to lay the foundations of good habits and to detect and remedy childish ailments effectively, it would also greatly facilitate the enforcement of attendance when the compulsory stage of education is reached, as parents would have by then acquired the habit of sending children to schools - and, we could perhaps add, as these children would have begun to like school. The Kher Committee, therefore, advocated the enrolment, even in "Basic" schools of children below the minimum age of compulsory attendance, a position which Gandhi would certainly not tolerate. Their decision to leave the provision for pre-basic education to voluntary agencies, is also not in line with Gandhi's views. At least one member of the Kher Committee, Mr. J.C. Powell-Price, had then dissented with this view of the Committee. "In India" he pointed out, "there is only one agency which can be entrusted with the elementary education and that is Government". This view is quite justified by

1. Reports 1938-43, p. 16
experience, for, in spite of Government's policy of encouragement and help, and the great fillip that pre-primary education in India received because of the presence of Madam Montessori in India during the forties, the number of schools, Nursery, Kindergarten, Montessori or Pre-basic, catering for the needs of pre-primary children numbered only 331 in the year 1951-52, and the number of pupils in them altogether came only 23,000; and, last but not least, many of these were in the cities. That voluntary effort alone can never be satisfactory is evidenced by the history of Nursery education in England too, where, the law at present, therefore, has made it obligatory on the L.E.A.'s to provide nursery schools or nursery classes, wherever there is a demand for it.

III. POST-BASIC EDUCATION.

When the first batch of pupils in the Behar and Sevagram schools completed their course of seven years in January, 1947, it became imperative to define the objectives and outline the programme for the next stage, and a Committee was appointed to tackle the question. It was clear that no mere extension of the

1. Progress of Education in India 1947-52, p. 239
2. Wells and Taylor, op. cit, p. 21 f
basic syllabus would suffice since it was no longer preparing children for their future, but the training of adolescents to fulfil their functions as men and women, as parents, as wage-earners, as citizens. "If Nai Talim is education for life" says Aryanayakam, "the course of Post-Basic education must not only give the students a vocation or train them for all-round individual life, but must also prepare them for wise parenthood and creative citizenship in the New Social Order based on co-operative work ... "¹

The following objectives were naturally accepted:

1. Like Basic Education, Post-Basic Education should also be developed round some form of productive work, or socially useful activity.
2. Post-Basic Education has the same social objectives as Basic education.
3. This education must be complete in itself.
4. The course of studies should be developed round activities necessary for the development of the nation; and the pupils may choose such activities as would suit their capacity and natural bent.

¹ Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 33
5. Each course of studies will develop according to the necessities of the course, the average period, however, being three to four years.

6. The medium of instruction at the Post-Basic stage is also to be the regional language.

7. The course should be so organized as to enable pupils to learn enough for their balanced diet and other minimum necessities through the activity or activities selected as the centre of their educational programme.

8. The ultimate objective of Nai Talim is that every boy and girl should also receive Post-Basic education. This will not entail any additional expenditure for the State as it is expected that Post-Basic education will be a self-sufficient unit both economically and educationally.

9. The greatest need of the nation to-day is teachers for Nai Talim. Therefore, the first task before the institutions of Post-Basic education shall be the preparation of teachers.

10. The objectives of Nai Talim can be fulfilled by organizing each institution of post-basic education as a self-sufficient, self-reliant society, fulfilling all its requirements in balanced diet, clothing,
intellectual and recreational life through co-operative work.

Many who had completed their training in Basic schools found that they could proceed only to the ordinary Secondary Schools. At Gandhi's instance, it was therefore, decided to start two experimental schools in Post-Basic education, one in Kumarbhag, Behar, and the other at Sevagram. When the members of the Committee met, Gandhi threw out the challenge that Post-Basic education must and should be entirely self-supporting. The results of the experiments now fully justify Gandhi's expectation in this matter. "These Post-Basic schools carried one stage further the principles of centering education round some selected craft and as such deserve the notice of all who are interested in new experiments in education". Gandhi did not agree with K.G. Saiyidain's

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1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 33f.

The Post-Basic school at Sevagram is co-educational, and that at Kumarbhag is partly residential. At Savagram, the programme is centred round agriculture, and all undergo training in agriculture by rotation. Everyone does some spinning too. Some specialize in agriculture while others in cloth production, dairying, sanitation, etc. In Kumarbhag, provision is made for teacher-training as well. Work is always followed up by study and discussion - Cf: Report of the Sixth All-India Basic Education Conference, 1950, H.T.S., 1950, p. 57 f.
suggestion that at the Post-Basic stage at least, the processes in the mills would have to be taught. He pointed out, "Not only was hand-spinning sound as a medium of education during the post-basic stage, what is more, millions of students could not be exempt from the necessary occupation .... The basis of mill spinning and weaving are the Takli and the Hand-loom. The West made mills because it had to exploit us. We do not want to exploit anyone. We do not, therefore, need mills, but we must know the science of the takli and the loom. If India were to copy Europe in these, it will mean destruction for India and the world".

Arthur Morgan has outlined a scheme of Post-Basic education, keeping in mind the true spirit of Gandhian ideals. He conceives the Post-Basic or 'the rural secondary school' as co-educational, residential schooling with pupils living in hostels.

1. Harijan, 9.11.47
3. "One of the advantages of creating self-supporting villages for residential secondary schools ... is that in one of them a boy or girl may have a fairly wide and rich range of common life, with associates of more than average intelligence, judgment and refinement. For such a school village to be self-supporting from industry or other income-producing work will add a very desirable quality of realism to the common life experience" - Morgan, op. cit. The term 'secondary school' as applied to post-basic schools denotes actually a higher secondary education, as the lower secondary, and perhaps more than that, is covered by basic (primary) education.
somewhat after the manner of the Danish folk-school. The school should be planned as a modern village, and if there are 150 pupils, should have 40 to 60 acres to it, accommodating the school house, hostels, play-grounds, workshops, with large pasture lands around. Life in the school would follow the course of life in a good village except that half the working time would be given to a study of farming, weaving, street cleaning and other useful village work. It should also include one or more modern industries, manufacturing goods for sale. In their study period the pupils should be getting an all-round, well proportioned education. Subjects of study should, as far as possible, be correlated to the practical work and life of the pupils, and the studies should help them to understand the theory of their work. There should be a logical study of subjects also, regardless of their own experience of the moment in geography, geology, astronomy, biology, history, literature, mathematics and a general knowledge of local and national government. But, more important than the imparting of information will be the development of habits and attitudes of mind and spirit: habits of openness and honesty, good will and fair play. "It should be the aim of the secondary school village to be
a sample of what village life can be in its human relations". "The Scientific attitude, that is, the habit of free, critical inquiry, of looking into actual facts and causes, rather than credulous acceptance of rumour and tradition, would put new life into India".

"The secondary school village should be as nearly as possible self-supporting except for providing the land and buildings. Well-planned and well-managed school industries will go far to secure self-support". Most of the food needed by the school would be raised by the pupils, who would thereby learn the secrets of agriculture. "So far as training in a modern industry is concerned, a two to four year period of work in a secondary school industry, under skilled teaching, along with related study, should produce highly skilled workers, ready to perform any of the exacting processes in new industries in new secondary school villages".
"It is possible for the basic education programme, especially after the first six or eight years, so to direct its work that industrialization and well-proportioned, all-round education shall aid each other, shall meet a large part of the cost of education, and shall help in modernizing India by a pattern that will preserve the best qualities of the new world".

Living standards of great simplicity should
prevail. There should be no extreme division of labour, for, "A narrow range of work leads to a narrow range of thinking and living". A student, who is to become a farmer would spend much of his time at farm work, while another, who intends to be a mechanist would spend most of his time working at that; but, the future farmer would learn to repair tools and the future mechanist would keep his own garden. And, every boy and girl should be able and willing to perform almost any common necessary duty.

In line with the spirit of the new Constitution every boy and girl in a basic education school should, says Morgan, make the following resolve:

"I shall never ask nor accept from any person any menial service that I would not gladly do for him or her, or for others".

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1. Cf: E.W. Aranyanayakam, reporting on post-basic education at Sevagram, says, "... its (the school's) life should be framed as an epitome of a village of the new social order ...", "... every one should be ready to take his turn at every kind of work;" "... Four hours a day are devoted at Sevagram Post-Basic School to productive work"; "There is no regular class system. The tool subjects are in the hands of the children themselves, and unless the demand for a regular class comes from them, it is needless imposition" - Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 109 f.
IV. UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

Gandhi held that the "State Universities should be purely examining bodies, self-supporting, through the fees charged for examinations". They should guide the whole field of education and should prepare and approve courses of studies in the various departments of education. But, he wanted University charters to be given liberally to any body of persons of proved worth and integrity. It was his opinion that "it is not for a democratic State to find money for founding universities. If the people want them, they will supply the funds. Universities so founded will adorn the country which they represent". All education in a country has to be demonstrably in promotion of the progress of the country in which it is given. Education should be based on realities. "To be based on realities is to be based on national, i.e., State requirements". Gandhi considered it "criminal to pay for a training which benefits neither the nation nor the individual" and held that the "university becomes self-supporting when it is utilized by the State". "The State must pay for it".

1. Harijan, 2.10.37
2. Ibid
3. Ibid, 2.11.47
4. Ibid, 7.9.47
5. Ibid, 30.7.38
6. Ibid
he said, "whenever it has definite use for it"; but this did not mean that there would not be many institutions which are conducted by voluntary contributions. Higher education, whether in industries, belles-lettres or fine arts, should normally be left to private enterprise, but it "does not absolve the State from running such seminaries as may be required for supplying State needs."¹

It was his firm conviction that the vast amount of so-called education in arts, given in our colleges, is sheer waste and has resulted in unemployment among educated classes. What is more, it has destroyed the health, mental and physical, of the boys and girls who had the misfortune "to go through the grind" in these colleges². So he advocated education in universities also through vocational training³. "Today", he pointed out, "the youth educated in our universities either ran after Government jobs or fell into devious ways and sought outlet for their frustration by fomenting unrest. They were not even ashamed to beg or sponge upon others. Such was their sad plight. The aim of university education should be to turn out true servants of the

¹. Harijan, 2.10.37
². Ibid, 9.7.38
people, who would live and die for the country's freedom. Education through a vocation would give the youths economic independence and a backbone that comes out of a sense of self-respect. "And as an effect of the industrial education of the genteel folks and literary education of the industrial classes, the unequal distribution of wealth and the consequent social discontent will be considerably checked." This meant a radical change in the pattern of Indian universities. In 1946, at a Conference of Education Ministers in Poona, Gandhi said, that if he were in the Ministerial Chair, he would issue broad instructions that, thereafter, all educational activity of the Government should be based on basic educational lines, i.e. through craft activity. This applied to university education and all post-basic education, including adult-education, as much as to primary education. The existing system of university education, he said, therefore, should be completely scrapped, and remodelled on new lines consonant with the material requirements, if it is not to enslave them. "It must be organically related to the Indian scene. It must, therefore, be an extension and continuation of the basic education course."

1. Harijan, 25.8.46
2. Towards New Education, p. 74
3. Harijan, 25.8.46
To relate university education to the Indian scene, it was also necessary to make changes in the subjects taught and the medium of instruction. A systematic study of Asian cultures as well as of the Western, and of all the Indian religions would become essential if university education is to result in a true synthesis of cultures and true fellowship. The medium of foreign language, hitherto employed, having caused intellectual and moral injury to the nation, must be given up and the Indian vernaculars, rescued from unmerited oblivion, should be made the fountains of national regeneration and culture. Thus he justified the movement for the starting of new universities in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Orissa and Assam on the ground that if the "rich provincial languages and the people who speak them are to attain their full height" these are necessary, but held that the "first step should be linguistic political redistribution of provinces" so that there will be "a proper background for these universities in the shape of schools and colleges which will impart instruction through the medium of their respective provincial languages". Though

1. Harijan, 2.11.47
the vocational idea has not become yet popular, Gandhi's stand with regard to the medium of instruction seems to have prevailed. A Conference of Vice Chancellors held in New Delhi in 1948, advised the replacement of the English medium in universities by Indian languages in graduated stages over a period of five years. The period suggested was too short to be workable, but their acceptance of the principle was significant. The University Commission, 1949, recommended that this change should be effected according to an agreed plan which would ensure that there is no deterioration in standards; and this recommendation has been approved by the Government of India. The University Commission also recommended that students at the University stage should be conversant with the federal language.

Gandhi advised caution in hastily founding new universities in India "till India has digested the newly acquired freedom" for, "where administration has been in foreign hands, whatever comes to the people comes from the top and thus becomes more and more dependent. Where it is broad-based on popular will,

1. Progress of Education in India 1947-52, p. 13 f
everything goes from bottom upward and hence it lasts .... Universities founded under foreign domination have run in the reverse direction". That this is too true is evidenced by the fact that, though, in the period between 1947 and 1952, eleven new universities were started in India, the Central Government has not so far established a Rural university according to Gandhi's ideals. Even the University Education Commission made a study of University education only "within the frame-work of that education", and so did not do justice to the real needs of India; for, to reach "a judgement as to the major overall educational needs of India and of the suitability of the present University system to meet those needs" the system should have been "viewed from outside itself, as part of the whole life of

1. Harijan, 2.11.47
2. Progress of Education in India 1947-52, p. 7
India. The fact is that nearly 85% of the Indians live in villages. The university indirectly draws its students from the villages but does not send them back. "We have asked" says Morgan, "many educators and others what has been the contribution of Indian Universities to the Indian villages. With few exceptions the answers have ranged from 'nearly nothing' to 'absolutely nothing'". Morgan points out that the "pattern and culture of the University are

1. Arthur Morgan, op. cit. The University Education Commission however recommends the establishment of Rural Colleges and Rural Universities side by side with the modern universities, and says, "There should be no feeling of conflict between existing and new type (rural) universities, any more than between engineering education and medical education" (Ibid, p. 555). The Commission is also of the view that there should be no difficulty in the interchange of students from one type of university to the other. (Ibid, p. 588). This is in line with their idea of compromise between the Gandhian ideal and the requirements of modern life. The fact that the University Commission recognized the need for rural universities is considered a revolution by the sponsors of Nai Talim, for, they find in it "a chance at last for the poor man's son to get the higher education which has so far been denied to him because of its prohibitive cost". (Cf: Report of the Sixth Basic Education Conference, p. 69). The Commission itself realized that the new universities would extend "educational opportunity to the great mass of rural India" and "give vitality and quality to rural life". (University Commission Report, p. 556)
from a foreign land and are not rooted in the native soil" and this must be changed unless disastrous consequences are to follow. Migration from village to city is often selective - the most adventurous, capable, brainy people leaving them to further their ends, leave the villages sodden, less virile, inert. This is how it leads to cultural and national decline. Morgan quotes Baker Brownell, Professor of Philosophy at North Western University, U.S.A., in support of his contention: "... When the college becomes overwhelmingly an influence toward the aggrandisement of urban society with the corresponding impoverishment of our small communities, it is no longer good... When this community is dissolved, human life breaks down biologically, morally, even intellectually, and human education becomes futile. College education is one of the erosive forces that cause our small communities to wash away under our feet". When not one in twenty who leave the village for the urban Universities returns to live in a village, because university education makes them unfit for village life, as is the case in India, the proposition becomes serious indeed. The Indian Universities today,
face towards the city and not the village, their roots are in foreign cultures and not in their own, they are too much concerned with theory and too little with practice, and even in so far as they do have a democratic concept, that concept is not to share the common lot of the common man but to give an equal chance to all able and not-too-poor men to escape from the common lot into favoured positions in the professions, where they can demand the services of less favoured persons, treating them as of a lower order of humanity. Hence at present universities are ill suited to be the agency for educating rural India. No higher education which follows the existing pattern of university education can help to re-vitalize the villages. "It is hard for a leopard to change its spots. The Indian University, an exotic from the West, has given a deep and nearly unchangeable colour and pattern to the lives of most of those who have been educated by it", and so, hope lies not in any "reform" of university education but in creating a university system which would be "strikingly new and different from its own pattern".

The traditional university tends to cut off its students from the great tradition of common life
and to immerse them in lectures, books and abstract laboratories. Rural education, from top to bottom, shall create a new pattern in which the tradition of common life will be intimately interwoven with formal learning. Multiplication of traditional universities, valuable and necessary to the State as that may be for the time being, would only continue the old process. Rural education must create a new tradition of its own.

The Rural College should draw from the surrounding post-basic secondary schools, those who, because of their ability or interest, or because of the requirements of the work they have chosen, need preparation beyond the secondary school. The range of study here should be as wide as the fields of work in rural India. In various colleges the practical work will be restricted to agriculture, the processing of agricultural crops, to mining, quarrying, lumbering, transporation and other interests. Doctors and engineers required will also have to be trained in these rural colleges. "In the colleges, as in the secondary school, practical studies should be united with general education, so that those who finish college work will be
cultured and educated men and women, as well as skilled workers". Rural Universities should receive a selected number of students who have completed rural college work\(^1\) and should prepare them for more advanced work. In industry, the student may study, for example, the design and improvement of machines and processes. He could study the methods by which small industries can co-operate in purchasing and marketing, and principles of business management. In education, the rural university can prepare teachers for administration and leadership in primary, secondary and higher rural education. In agriculture students can be prepared for leadership in production, marketing, breeding and agricultural co-operation. They can become skilled in the processes of planning and re-building agricultural villages, in the consolidation of small agricultural holdings, and in many other phases of rural life. Time should be divided between study and practical work throughout the course; and this

\(^1\) The University Commission suggests that "a rural university should include a ring of small, resident, undergraduate colleges, with specialized and university facilities in the centre" - University Commission Report, p. 575
practical work should not merely promote skill but contribute substantially to the cost of training.\(^1\)

Gandhi made it very clear that in his scheme of higher education, "there will be more and better libraries, more and better laboratories, more and better research institutes."\(^2\) It has been a puzzle to many how this scheme of rural education could lead to any research worth the name at all. They seem to associate all research with the highly equipped laboratories, and nothing less. About such research projects, Morgan says, "As we go about Indian Universities and observe the projects that research students are working at, we see a general tendency to imitate the Western world. Most research men are engaged in subjects of research that are in style in Europe or America. If they would care less for the Western styles in research and look about them for interesting and important subjects, they might be opening new fields which the rest of the world would come to respect and follow." Indeed, research work

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1. The Basic Education Conference at Angul, Orissa (1950) envisaged that the rural college should be of three years' duration, and may be followed up by a post-graduate course of two years' duration. Cf: Report of the Sixth Basic Education Conference, p. 92.
2. Harijan, 9.7.38
in rural universities should aim at meeting the vast practical needs of Indian rural life. Such research could start even in the basic elementary schools. "If all boys and girls doing farm and garden work in basic schools know that nature is constantly making changes and get at the habit of noticing them, improvement of crops would take place a hundred times fast", says Morgan. The same is true of improvement of farm tools, irrigation methods and so on. Any boy or girl can pursue his studies in the spirit of research. Many of the common processes of life are performed, generation after generation, without question. If the spirit of free, critical enquiry can become a prevailing national trait, India will neither blindly give up the great values of her past nor cling to beliefs and customs which would not stand critical analysis and which obstruct her progress. Research need not wait for university education, even for its higher phases. As Morgan points out, George Stephenson, James Watt, Robert Owen and George Mendel had no university education. This, in no way implies that

1. Cf: J.C.Kumarappa points out that useful inventions and improvements already effected, like the Magan Chula (smokeless kitchen oven) are due to the ingenuity developed by bringing education close to rural life - Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 110 f
rigorous training and scholarship are not highly important in research. It shows that the spirit of enquiry can begin to find expression very early, and at almost any stage of education, can find problems to work at which are within its powers, and which supply good training for those powers. If this is agreed to, then we can understand why Gandhi said that under his scheme of education, there would be more and better research. And as Gandhi says, "we should have an army of chemists, engineers and other experts who will be real servants of the nation, and answer the varied and growing requirements of the people who are becoming increasingly conscious of their rights and wants. And all these experts will speak, not a foreign language, but the language of the people. The knowledge gained by them will be the common property of the people. There will be truly original work instead of mere imitation. And the cost will be evenly and justly distributed".

1. Harijan, 9.7.38
CHAPTER IV.
PROBLEMS OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

I. COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

John Stuart Mill, in his famous essay on *Liberty*, had considered it "almost a self-evident axiom that the State should require and compel the education, up to a certain standard, of every human being who is born its citizen". But he was against the State providing this education. He considered that it was a good thing for the State to enforce education but a totally different thing if it was to take upon itself to direct that education. "If the Government would make up its mind to require for every child a good education, it might save itself the trouble of providing one. It might leave to parents to obtain the education where and how they pleased, and content itself with helping to pay the school fees of the poor classes of children, and defraying the entire school expenses of those who have no one else to pay for them. The objections which are argued with reason against State education do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State...".

2. Ibid, p. 95 (italics mine).
Two factors had contributed to make the English "touchy" about Government interference in educational affairs - the legacy of mistrust about the control of education bequeathed to them by the seventeenth century, and the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. If the State were to provide education, it was feared that it would infringe religious freedom, and so English opinion favoured "voluntary schools" as against a State system of education. The Government of India, however, had long established a policy of religious neutrality in education, and independent India had affirmed it by declaring itself a secular state. So there is no mistrust in India, of educational enterprise by the State. Again, in India, the Government alone is in a position to provide schools to the masses, and in the absence of the government undertaking to do so, universal education would remain a mere dream. Hence we find opinion in India strongly in favour of a State provision of schools, even if not so much in favour of the State compelling education. For compulsion has a sort of odium attached to it, and Gandhi would never force anything down the throats of unwilling persons. "All

compulsion is hateful to me" he says, "I would no more have the nation become educated by compulsion than I would have it become sober by such questionable means. But, just as I would discourage drink by refusing to open drink shops and closing existing ones, so would I discourage illiteracy by removing obstacles in the path and opening free schools and making them responsive to the people's needs ...
If the majority wants education, compulsion is wholly unnecessary. If it does not, compulsion would be most harmful .... Nothing is more detrimental to the true growth of society than for it to be habituated to the belief that no reform can be achieved by voluntary effort". He considered it unreasonable to assume that the majority of parents are so foolish or heartless as to neglect the education of their children even when it is brought to their doors free of charge, and so the only thing which was imperative was to provide the necessary schools. He was convinced of this so much that he even said " ... if we get Swaraj to-day, I should resist compulsory education at least till every effort at voluntary primary education has been honestly made and failed .... "

1. Y.I., 14.8.24
2. Ibid
The Zakir Husain Committee, however, envisaged a free and compulsory course of basic education for all boys and girls of the age-group 7 - 14, because they accepted as a principle that "the basic education should as far as possible be the same for all". In other words, the importance of spreading the ideology of basic education for erecting the new world order had weighed against all possible objections against compulsion. It was realized that "compulsion could not be made effective merely by passing an Act making compulsion universal, such a course would be unwise and impracticable". The necessity was conceived of educating public opinion to make people avail of the educational opportunities provided. The importance attached to the ideological factor in compulsory basic education can be seen also in the insistence of the protagonists of the Wardha Scheme in enforcing compulsion for the 9 - 14 age-group as against for the 6 - 11 age-group as the Kher Committee wanted it to be. "They argued that in the present circumstances

1. Basic National Education, p. 38 (italics mine)
2. First Kher Report, p. 5
education in the early years is of little worth, causes wastage and stagnation and is therefore a waste of money and that the years of adolescence offer greater educational possibilities than the age of childhood. By retaining the higher age limit, civic and social responsibilities, permanent literacy and craft skill and interest can be better developed"¹. The Central Advisory Board, however, seems to have looked at the question purely from an academic point of view, as is evidenced by the following two decisions: (1) "the compulsory period to begin from the age of 6 and gradually work up to 14"² and (2) "In any area where compulsory education up to 14 is in force, a child will remain under obligation to attend school to that age, whatever the type of school he may be attending"³.

Compulsory education of boys and girls of the age 6 - 14, has now been accepted in principle by the Government of India, and the Constitution lays down as a directive principle that universal, compulsory

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¹. First Kher Report, p. 5
². Ibid
³. Reports 1938-43, p. 13 (italics mine)
and free education must be provided for children within ten years of its promulgation.

II. AGENCIES OF SUPERVISION AND CONTROL.

An All-India Education Board and Provincial Boards of Education were conceived as the most important agencies for working out and carrying on the new programme of basic national education. The Board of Education in each province should have on its academic side an efficient staff of educational experts. They should carry on scientific research to fit school curriculum to the real life of the people, try out progressive methods of teaching, guide teachers in the use of the new standards and norms of achievement, and acquaint them with the results of successful experiments undertaken in India and elsewhere. They should also guide the training of teachers and supervisors. The All-India Education Board should function as an advisory body, whose services could be utilized by the Provincial Boards. It should largely be a central bureau for disseminating educational

1. Progress of Education in India, 1947-52, p. 1
2. Basic National Education, p. 43 ff
information. It could help in the preparation of textbooks for the new schools as well as in bringing out suitable educational literature for teachers of Nai Talim, and give advice on specific educational problems referred to it. The All-India Education Board was formed in April, 1939, and is known as the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, and it has since then been the driving force behind the spread of Nai Talim. The Provincial Boards were started first by the Bombay, Behar and Orissa Governments, and soon in other places.

Apart from these Boards, it was thought desirable to organize a Central Institute of Indian Education. It should be an independent non-official body made up of eminent persons in the field of education as well as in other fields of cultural activity. It would be the duty of this body,

(1) To serve as an advisory body on matters of educational policy and practice

(2) To study and discuss the ideas and aims underlying educational efforts in India

1. Basic National Education, p. 64 f.
and outside, and to make the results of this study available to all who are interested

(3) To collect information about and to keep in touch with the educational work of the various Provinces and States as well as foreign countries.

(4) To organise research on problems relating to education.

(5) To issue monographs and a magazine for educational workers".

A Central Institute of Education came into being in Delhi in 1948, and is run by the Ministry of Education. It is primarily a teacher-training and educational research centre, and has attached to it a Child Guidance Centre, a Basic School and a Nursery School. It has issued several educational monographs.

It was considered essential that the Department of Education should be in a position to secure the co-operation of other State departments like Health, Agriculture, Public Works, Co-operation and Local Self-Government in building up a healthy, happy and efficient school community".

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1. Basic National Education, p.44
2. Ibid, p.45.
An efficient and sympathetic supervisory staff is necessary for the proper functioning of any educational system. The Zakir Husain Committee recognized that educational supervision was a "fairly specialized work" and recommended that provision should be made for the training of supervisors to meet the ever-growing needs of an expanding school system. The importance of every supervisor being an educator more than an administrator was realized by the Committee, who, therefore, said that the minimum qualification for a Supervisor should be complete training as a basic school teacher, together with at least two years' experience of successful teaching and a year of special training in the work of supervision and administration 1. This is

1. The importance of educational administrators being primarily educationists is now recognized by the Ministry to Education in India, where the rule is that no one can hold a high administrative post unless he or she has had at least three years' experience of actual teaching - Cf: Progress of Education in India 1947 - 52, p.16
essential if supervision is not to degenerate into routine inspection. Great stress was laid on the fact that supervision should not be mere inspection; "it should mean personal co-operation and help offered by one who knows more to a less experienced or less resourceful colleague". They should be "advisers", not bosses: leaders and guides in the new educational experiment. There is to be, supervisor in each local area, which should be small and compact enough for efficient supervision of the day-to-day work of the schools. The ideal supervisor must be a well trained craftsman too, as otherwise he would not be able to discharge his work well, but until such people are available it was suggested that there may be separate craft supervisors and educational supervisors.

1. That the functions of Inspectors change as the concept of education changes and reflect the latter is evidenced by the history of the Inspectorate in England. Cf: A.M. Morley, His Majesty's Inspectorate, The First Fifty Years, pp. 137-146.
2. One Step Forward, p. 219 f
III THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

The experience of the State in respect of the quality of education after the general introduction of the Basic system has not been uniform. While the superiority of Basic over the old system is admitted by almost everyone, results have not always been commensurate with the hopes entertained. Wherever it has failed to catch up with the aims of its promoters, it will be found that it is due to the lack of teachers with the necessary ability and insight. Basic education attempts to make education easier and more interesting for the child but makes far heavier demands on the teacher. Gandhi says that "A teacher of Nai Talim must have all the qualities of the wise man described in the second chapter of the "Gita". They can "do their work most effectively only if they have faith in truth and non-violence. Then they can draw even the hardest hearts towards them, as a magnet". They should have infinite patience,

1. Perianayickenpalayam Report, p.36
2. Ibid.
and be able to "go back with love, and not only love but reverence, for the children". They must have "a character to keep" and enough loyalty and devotion to consider their calling "a great trust which they must discharge courageously, intelligently and honestly".

They should become parents to their pupils, instinctively knowing what they need and giving it to them, and should know the history of every child under their care and understand even their parents. They should be swaraj missionaries in their own sphere, considering their work as selfless service. Such educators who are born teachers, and who take to their work with true zeal, are very rare. It is only natural, that where the question is one of mass education, we will have to depend on

1. Dr. Zakir Husain's observation at the fifth Basic Education Conference. The teacher should have reverence for the child because, "You never know what may lie hidden in any little child - a prophet, a seer, a leader of men" - Perianayickentalavam Report, p. 146.
2. Harijan, 1.12.33
3. Ibid.
4. V.I. 7.8.24
5. Ibid.
ordinary men to take to teaching as much for the love of it as, perhaps, seeing in it their means of livelihood. As Sir John Sargent pointed out at the First Basic Education Conference, "No man, either in England or in any other country has ever entered, or I hope will ever enter, the teaching profession because he wants to become a rich man", still, "if a teacher is to give devotion, initiative and enthusiasm, to render the whole-hearted service that the success of the scheme demands, he ought to be able to come to school in the morning without any worry in his mind about the domestic cares he has left behind. That postulates an adequate, or at the least a living wage". Gandhi has suggested that the teacher's salary "should, if possible, be Rs. 25 and never less than Rs. 20", and the Zakir Husain Committee had endorsed it and recommended higher salaries.

1. One Step Forward, p.261.
2. Basic National Education, p.41
for better qualified men and women to
teach higher classes of the Basic school;
and on the recommendation of the Kher
Committee of the Central Advisory Board of
Education, the Government had accepted this;
still, teachers are "among the lowest paid
public servants" and the "teaching profession
is often the resort of those who have failed
everywhere else"¹. The paucity of able
teachers, due to the meagre pay scales is a
matter to be combated if any good results are
to follow from the working of any scheme of
education, however good the scheme may be.
It is interesting to know that attempts have
been made recently in India to give them
social recognition by inviting them to high
level social gatherings, like parties at the
Government House², though this is little
compensation for hungry stomachs. Basic
teachers have been given in most States "a
pay scale which is somewhat higher than those
prevailing in the traditional Primary Schools"³,

¹. Progress of Education in India 1947-52, p.10
². Ibid, p.11
³. Ibid, p.27
but this too is poor solace when the prolonged training they need to equip them for their job and the greater effort called for in the discharge of their assigned duties, are taken into consideration.

Gandhi had, even in his earlier experiments in education, seen to it that the greatest care was taken in selecting the teachers. In 1917, when he was starting national schools in Behar, he had written to Sir Edward Gait: "I strongly hold the view that the best and the most learned teachers only should lay the foundation of little children's education. I look upon our present system with the greatest horror. Tender children at the most susceptible periods of their lives are left to the mercy of ill-paid young men who are miscalled teachers. I hope to avoid the error in my experiment, and as it is the training in character which is intended to be given, only men and women of character will be placed in charge of these schools". Naturally he attached very great

1. Letter to Sir Edward Gait, Manuscript, courtesy, British Museum - See Appendix.
importance to the problem of selection of teachers for the work of Nai Talim. The Zakir Husain Committee Report says: "The problem of selecting suitable candidates for training should be carefully and completely examined, and a reliable technique of selection evolved. We are convinced that unless this difficult problem is tackled, the scheme will have little chance of success. Teaching requires special social and moral attitudes and qualities, and it is not right to assume that everyone who volunteers to enter the profession is suitable for it. We, therefore, conduct our selection with great care and forethought and preferably take only those who belong to what the psychologists call "the social type". Gandhi had endorsed the view that "the education of little boys and girls could be more effectively handled by women than men, and by mothers rather than maidens", and to encourage women to take to

1. Basic National Education, p.41
2. Harijan, 30.10.37.
the profession, the Committee thought that special efforts should be made to provide facilities for training women as teachers. Preference is to be shown also to men and women of the locality in which the school is situated. This would go a great deal to help the teacher to know his pupils and their parents well, and to devote all his time, in and out of school to the welfare of the school community, and must become inevitable if they are to subsist on a nominal salary. Gandhi says that the teacher of Nai Talim, as a craftsman educationist, will be "a workman worthy of his hire. His wife and children too will be workers. Only thus can Nai Talim spread in every village in India". As for the academic qualifications of the aspirants to the teaching profession, the Committee thought they should have either read up to the "matriculation" standard, or passed the Vernacular final or some other equivalent examination and have put in two years' teaching

1. Harijan, 9.11.47.
experience. All these considerations are significant as they add to the quality of the teachers. The Committee recognized that the proper training of teachers is perhaps the most important condition of the success of the scheme. This training should impart to them "an understanding of the new educational and social ideology inspiring the scheme, combined with enthusiasm for working it out".

For this, the Committee suggested that training schools should, as far as possible, be located in rural areas. In rural schools, teachers could work and acquire the necessary conditions in which they would have to carry on their teaching later. If they are trained in urban environment, where they would be deprived of village contacts, they will not be able to develop the requisite attitude and habits. Not merely

1. Basic National Education, p.28
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, p.62
4. The need for counteracting the possibility of teachers developing an urban outlook has been stressed even in England—Ef: Mc Nair Report, (Teachers and Youth Leaders) H.M.S.O. 1944, p.61.
teachers for rural schools but teachers for the urban schools too must be trained in these rural training schools only, for otherwise they would not develop a common national outlook. The schools should be residential institutions, open to all communities, and where the teachers and their students will be in close contact with one another. There, they could develop co-operatively a vigorous and many-sided social and cultural life in which the individual interests of the teacher-trainees will find adequate expression.

The Committee had pointed out that the "real success of these institutions will be judged by the variety and spontaneity of the various hobbies and social activities, the enthusiasm and persistence with which they are carried out, and their reaction on the life of schools and the community". As they are to teach certain academic subjects, provision should be made for them as also for the professional subjects. But the course is to be designed not so much to teach new subjects as "to carry further and give a professional orientation to subject matter already studied". The object is not to

1. Of: Resolution passed in the first Basic Education Conference, One Step Forward, p. 144
2. A resolution of the Fifth All-India Basic Education Conference in 1949 also stressed that all Basic Training Colleges and Schools shall be residential - Perianayickenpalayam Report, p. 141
3. Basic National Education, p. 32
4. Ibid
make a thorough, systematic and scientific study of these various subjects, which should be left for later private study by the teachers when once intellectual interest and professional pride are generated, but to centre the teaching in actual concrete problems of civics, sanitation, hygiene, first aid, child behaviour and class-room practice arising in the school or in the environing community life. The training should also include a reasonably thorough mastery of the processes and technique of certain basic crafts. For, "In order to exploit the full educational possibilities of the scheme, it is necessary to train our general teachers as craftsmen also; the purpose in view will not be achieved if craftsmen are associated with teachers in the work of the Basic Schools". The objective of teacher-training is "not to produce academically perfect scholars, but skilled, intelligent, educated craftsmen with the right mental orientation, who should be desirous of serving the community and anxious to help the coming generation to realize and understand the standard of values implicit in this educational scheme". What we need is educationists with originality, fired with

1. Resolution of the first Basic Education Conference, One Step Forward, p. 219
2. Basic National Education, p. 33
true zeal, who will think out from day to day what they are going to teach their pupils. The teacher cannot get this knowledge through musty volumes. He has to use his own faculties of observation and thinking and impart this knowledge to the children through his lips, with the help of a craft. This means a revolution in the method of teaching, a revolution in the teacher's outlook. Gandhi wished that, as teachers have to teach everything through a craft, they should re-learn everything in the training institutions through a craft, imagining themselves to be children of the age of seven. As they would already have a working knowledge of history, mathematics and the like, it would mean only a linking of these subjects with the crafts, and would be easy—it would not take more than a few weeks to learn this. This would be a repetition of their old knowledge in a new setting. An average educated man can easily learn a craft, much more easily than a craftsman can acquire the general education to teach his craft, and

1. Harijan, 18.2.39
2. Ibid, 4.3.39
3. Ibid, 27.8.38
there would be little danger of the former
degenerating into a mere mechanic. The training
curriculum however is not planned with the craft as
the centre of instruction, because teachers are mature
enough to absorb the theory and practice given
separately but concurrently\(^1\). Teacher-trainees are
also to be given sufficient practice-teaching in the
demonstration schools which should be attached to
every training institution for the purpose. These
schools would also serve as laboratories where new
methods of teaching are attempted and developed, and
as models for each locality.

The importance attached to the preparation
of the teacher is seen in the fact that the course is
to be an intensive one, of three years' duration\(^2\).
The syllabus of studies includes a detailed study
of the basic craft as teachers have had no training
in the craft before. "Principles of education" to be
learnt comprise the basic idea of education through

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1. K.G. Saiyidain's view, *One Step Forward*, p. 71 f
2. In practice, the training course today is only of
two years' duration. Shri K. Arunachalam, at the
Fifth Basic Education Conference, exposed its
inadequacy and pleaded for a full three-year
course. His arguments are similar to those of
the McNair Report. *Cf:* *Periasayickenpalayam*
Report, p. 124 and the *McNair Report*, p. 65
productive work, relation of school to the community, an outline of child psychology, methods of teaching with special reference to the formulation and development of schemes of correlated studies and the objectives of new education. An outline course in physiology, hygiene, dietetics and sanitation, and a course of physical culture in drill and indigenous games are also given due place. A course of lessons in language and literature of the mother tongue and the national language, and practice in blackboard writing and drawing are stressed, as also a revision of social studies, to give the proper orientation to the manifold problems of the teacher's social environment. Great importance is attached to supervised practice-teaching.

However, the initial necessity of training a large number of basic teachers immediately to start the basic schools without losing time, made Gandhi approve of a shortened, though equally intensive course of teacher-training, of one year's duration. The number

1. "Principles of Education" is to be taught to enable the student to appreciate its historical and social significance, according to the McNair Report - Cf: Teachers and Youth Leaders, p. 67
2. Basic National Education, pp. 28-32
of teachers required is so great that he was prepared even to consider schemes of conscription of educated men and women for the purpose. Professor K.T. Shah had put forward such a scheme for the compulsory enlistment of the service of educated youngsters for a year or so, as they had done in Italy and elsewhere, and Gandhi thought that compulsion, in this case was not objectionable. He said that, the scheme really afforded an opportunity for patriotic young men and women with leisure, to offer their services to a cause which ranks amongst the noblest of all causes. He would indeed wish that they would give a number of years, say five, to the teaching for which they are qualified, on a salary not exceeding their maintenance on a scale in keeping with the economic level of the country. There was no question of conscripted labour for teaching being ineffective as some people thought; for Gandhi insisted on all such teachers taking a course of training. "Professor Shah's scheme does contemplate possession of patriotism, spirit of sacrifice, a certain amount of culture, and a training in a handicraft, before they are taken up. His idea is substantial, quite feasible, and

1. Harijan, 30.10.37
2. Ibid, See also Harijan, 31.7.37
deserves the greatest consideration. If we have to wait till we have born teachers, we shall have to wait till the Judgment Day for them. I submit that teachers will have to be trained on a wholesale scale during the shortest term possible. This cannot be done unless the services of the existing educated young men and women are gently impressed. Speaking of women volunteers, he said, "If they come forward, they will have to go through a sound preliminary training. Needy women in search of a living will serve no useful purpose by thinking of joining the movement as a career. If they approach the scheme, they should do so in a spirit of pure service and make it a life mission. They will fail and be severely disappointed if they approach it in a selfish spirit. If the cultured women of India will make common cause with the villagers, and that too through their children, they will produce a silent and grand revolution in the village life of India."
IV. TEXTBOOKS.

Gandhi was against 'loading' the pupils 'with quantities of books'. "I have always felt that the true textbook for the pupil is his teacher" he wrote in his Autobiography¹. He thought it better for children to have much of the preliminary training imparted to them orally, because he held that "Children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes"². "To impose on children of tender age a knowledge of the alphabet and the ability to read before they can gain general knowledge is to deprive them, whilst they are fresh, of the power of assimilating instruction by word of mouth"³. As most of the children are too poor to buy books, "a multiplicity of textbooks means deprivation of the vast majority of village children of the means of instruction"⁴. Further, "there seems to be no doubt" said Gandhi "that in the public schools, the books used, especially for children, are for the most part useless when they are not harmful ... they are not written for Indian boys and girls, nor for the Indian environment. When they are so written, they are generally undigested imitations hardly answering the wants of the scholar ...."⁵ So, he came to the

¹. Autobiography, II, p. 198
². Ibid
³. Y.T., 16.9.26
⁴. Ibid
⁵. Harijan, 1.12.33
conclusion that, in the lower standards at least, textbooks must be for the use of the teacher, not for pupils. The teacher, "to do full justice to his pupils, will have to prepare the daily lesson from the material available to him. This, too, he will have to suit to the special requirements of his class."

Most of the textbooks used in the Indian schools were published by foreign firms in England or elsewhere, and did not take into account Indian conditions or the needs of Indian children. "Almost from the commencement the textbooks deal, not with the things which the boys and girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the textbooks that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the home life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. The higher he goes the farther he is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as

imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes ... " So, said Gandhi. "If I had my way, I would certainly destroy the majority of present textbooks and cause to be written textbooks which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy, as he learns, may react upon his immediate surroundings". He would also have Indian history re-written by Indian patriots for the schools. "A Frenchman writing a history of India will write it in his own way. The Englishman will write it quite differently .... Indian history written from original sources by an Indian patriot will be different from that written by an English bureaucrat, though each may be quite honest. We have grievously erred in accepting English estimates of events in our national life."

Further, the aims and methods of Basic education required entirely new textbooks, permeated with the new spirit. "The introduction of craft, the co-ordination and correlation of the content of the curriculum, the close relationship with life, the

1. Y.I., 1.9.21
2. Ibid
3. Y.I., 21.6.28
method of learning by doing, the individual
initiative and the sense of social responsibility,
which are among the main factors of the new scheme"¹,
cannot be realized without supplying to teachers and
pupils, but primarily to the teachers, textbooks
which are entirely different. These, will have
to be prepared by experts. The Zakir Husain
Committee accordingly suggested that in this task,
the services of the Board of Education in each
province and the Central Institute of National
Education may be utilized.

V. EXAMINATIONS.

Gandhi considered the system of examinations
prevailing in India as a curse to education. As
the Zakir Husain Committee pointed out, a bad
system of education had been made worse by awarding
to examinations a place out of all proportion to
their utility¹. By a concensus of expert opinion,
examinations are not to-day considered a valid
or complete measure of the work either of schools
or of individual pupils. It is generally agreed

1. Basic National Education, p. 43
2. Ibid, p. 36
that they are inadequate, unreliable, capricious, arbitrary. Great care was therefore taken to guard Basic education against their baneful influence.

The Zakir Husain Committee suggested that promotion from grade to grade should be decided exclusively by the teaching faculty of the school on the basis of careful records of the pupil's work. They held that "there is hardly any justification for making pupils repeat the work of a grade" and therefore recommended that so far as possible it should not be done. "If a large number of children in a class 'fails', the work of the teacher needs

1. Cf: For detailed information on this question see G.W. Valentine and W.G. Emmett, Reliability of Examinations, U.L.P., 1932, and P.E. Vernon, Measurement of Abilities, U.L.P., 1940. In the Gandhian scheme, Vinoba Bhave considers examinations bad because of another important reason as well: teachers supervising students in the examination halls suspect them, and so, he says, pupils have already failed in their eyes. To free students from this vigil, from the suspicion of falsehood, is necessary for character training - Perianavickanpadyam Report, p. 118.

watching. If a school records many failures, its administration must be looked into, and if the number of failures in the whole system is large, there is something wrong with the curriculum and the norms set for the several grades."  

At the same time, the Committee recommended an administrative check of the work of the schools in a prescribed area by means of a sample measurement of the attainments of selected groups of students conducted by the inspectors of the Education Board, but it was turned down as defective by the Kher Committee. Efficiency of the schools is therefore tested mainly by the efficiency of the pupils in the basic handicraft and by the specific contributions made by the teachers and pupils to the improvement of the general life of the community around. Annual district exhibitions of the work of the schools also go a long way towards keeping a definite standard of achievement.

VI. SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

The distinction between discipline in the wider sense of character-training and discipline in

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1. *Basic National Education*, p. 37
2. *First Kher Report*, p. 10. Examination by sample was tried in English Elementary Schools for a while from 1895 and given up soon afterwards.
the narrow sense of order in school has been clearly brought out by Herbart who uses the term Zucht to mean the former and the term Regierung to mean the latter. Order is essential for all learning and so must be maintained. The question is how. Norman MacMunn, in "The Child's Path to Freedom" mentions three ways of doing this: repression, impression and emancipation. Repression, with the rod as its chief instrument has been the traditional method of school government; it is a direct appeal to the motive of fear to determine certain lines of conduct and inhibit others. Believing with Jeremiah that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked", the repressionists take to corporal punishment as a means of reforming the child. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" quotes the school master who wields the ferule as his insignia of office. Professor Cubberley, in his History of Education mentions a Swabian school master, Hauberle, who in the course of fifty-one years and seven months as a teacher had "given 911,527 blows with a cane, 124,010 blows with a rod, 20,989 blows and raps with a ruler, 136,715 blows with the hand ... 

and 22,763 notabenes with the Bible, Catechism, singing book, and grammar". Minor editions of this repressionist are occasionally heard of in the village schools even to-day, but generally speaking teachers have realized the evils of repression, especially of corporal punishment, too well to resort to them. Quintilian, the Roman educator, speaks as though he were a modern psychologist when he condemns corporal punishment as "a disgrace and a punishment for slaves, and in reality .... an affront". He points out that "if a boy's disposition be so abject as not to be amended by reproof, he will be hardened ..." and that the shame of it "enervates and depresses the mind, and makes them shun people's sight and feel a constant uneasiness". The Board of Education has pointed out that "mere repression is effective only when children are immediately under the authority that exercises it". Further, it ill goes with preparation for life in a

democracy. "If your goal is liberty and democracy, then you must teach people the arts of being free and of governing themselves. If you teach them instead the arts of bullying and passive obedience, then you will not achieve the liberty and democracy at which you are aiming. Good ends cannot be achieved by inappropriate means." If repression is thus considered a too severe means of discipline, emancipation is looked upon by many as too inadequate for it. Emancipation is the favourite theme of the naturalists who believe in "self-expression", and no one who believes that the child should be allowed to express freely the brute in him could subscribe to it. Between these two extremes, comes discipline by impression. Here government is by moral authority. The child is impressed by the personal example of the educator and the orderly atmosphere that is made to prevail round him. Arnold of Rugby and Thring of Uppinham are generally pointed out as having been illustrious

impressionists. They did not rule by physical violence or abusive threats, nor did they leave their pupils at large without hindrance; but they quietly impressed the children with their way of life, their ideas of conduct and gradually prevailed on them to submit to that code of behaviour without any effort. It is creating the will to voluntary obedience which is, in the last resort, the golden rule of discipline. To say that there is no corporal punishment in a school does not make the school any the better for it than a school where, once in a way, perhaps, such punishment is given for sufficient reasons and with the best of motives; it is the creation of conditions in which there will be no necessity for resort to any punishment whatever that makes the school worthwhile. This, to a great measure could be achieved by impression.

History could claim few men who are greater impressionists than Mahatma Gandhi. He never punished the boys under his care, but on one occasion, at the Tolstoy Farm, he was 'exasperated' when a 'wild, unruly', 'lying and quarrelsome' boy adamantly refused to be convinced by all his reasoning and even 'tried to over-reach' him. Then, he says, "I picked up a ruler lying at hand and delivered a blow
on his arm. I trembled as I struck him, and I dare say he noticed it. This was an entirely novel experience for them all. The boy cried out and begged to be forgiven. He cried not because the beating was painful to him; he could, if he had been so minded, have paid me back in the same coin, being a stoutly built youth of seventeen, but he realised my pain at being driven to this violent resource. Never again after this incident did he disobey me. But I still repent that violence. I am afraid I exhibited before him that day not the spirit, but the brute in me. This incident shows how much it affected Gandhi to have had to resort to corporal punishment and what effect had on the pupil. It is not the pain inflicted by the blow that changed the heart of the pupil but the pain he had inflicted on the teacher in forcing him to wield the cane - herein is the justification for a rare administration of the cane if ever it has to be resorted to. Gandhi says "I have always been opposed to corporal punishment ... Cases of misconduct on the part of the boys often occurred

after this, but I never resorted to corporal punishment. Thus, in my endeavour to impart spiritual training to the boys and girls under me, I came to understand better and better the power of the spirit". He had known that if he was to be their real teacher, a 'father' and guardian, he must touch their hearts, must share their joys and sorrows, must help them to solve the problems that faced them, and take along the right channel the surging aspirations of their youth. He thought, as did Quintilian that the mistakes of pupils were mostly due to the errors of teachers, and went beyond the Roman teacher's view in holding that the teacher should take upon himself the responsibility for the same. Gandhi had on several occasions taken upon himself the blame for the failure of others, and paid for them by undertaking purificatory fasts which, often had the desired result of touching the hearts of those who had failed and reformed them for ever. "I hold", remarks Gandhi, after speaking of these experiences, "that some

1. Autobiography, p. 204 f
3. Cf: Monroe, op. cit, p. 466 f.
occasions do call for this drastic remedy. But it presupposes clearness of vision and spiritual fitness. Where there is no true love between the teacher and the pupil, where the pupil's delinquency has not touched the very being of the teacher and where the pupil has no respect for the teacher, fasting is out of place and may even be harmful. Considering that ordinary teachers are not saints like Gandhi, they may indeed be ill-advised to resort to fasts to change the hearts of pupils, but if they do love their wards and devote themselves sincerely and without reserve to their welfare, the pupils are sure to love and respect them and do nothing that will offend them. Indeed this is the secret of all school government - love, it ennobles and conquers; it wins where everything else fails.

VII. CO-EDUCATION.

Gandhi considered men and women as equal, and attributed the semi-paralytic state of Indian society to women having been kept illiterate. "Man and woman are of equal rank, but they are not identical.

2. Harijan, 18.2.39
They are a peerless pair being supplementary to one another; each helps the other; so that without the one the existence of the other cannot be conceived, and therefore it follows as a necessary corollary from these facts that anything that will impair the status of either of them will involve the equal ruin of them both. In framing the curriculum of studies, Gandhi warned that this cardinal truth must be the guide. There was no suggestion that knowledge would be divided into two different water-tight compartments, each inaccessible to one of the two sexes, but he called for a due appreciation of the different needs of men and women and educating them to fit each one to the different tasks of life that awaited them.

Thus the education of men he held should enable them to cope with outward activities, while women should largely be educated to manage the home and to bring up and educate children properly. The few women who wanted to work for a living or undertake commercial enterprises or wished to learn English, for example, could certainly do so, but would have to take the courses with men as women's institutions could not be expected to provide for them. Basic education has been

1. Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 426
2. Ibid, p. 426 f.
designed to enable boys and girls each to grow to his or her full stature. In general outlines, the syllabus of studies is the same for both sexes up to the fifth grade of the school; but by the 4th grade, the General Science course would include Domestic Science for girls, and in Grades 6 and 7 the girls would be allowed to take an advanced course in Domestic science in place of the basic craft. In order not to wound the susceptibilities of persons who did not take kindly to the idea of keeping girls at school after the dawn of adolescence, the Wardha Scheme allowed girls to be withdrawn after the completion of the 12th year if parents so desired, but did not contemplate that the education of all girls should cease at this stage.

The second Kher Committee thought that when compulsion is enforced up to 14, it should be applicable to the girls too, and in line with Gandhian thought, suggested teaching them such subjects as cookery, laundry work, needlework, home-crafts, care of children, first aid etc., the rest of the instruction being correlated with these

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1. Basic National Education, p. 27
practical activities in accordance with the general principles of the Basic education scheme.  

The option given to parents in the Wardha scheme to withdraw girls from school after the age of 12, did not imply that boys and girls should receive co-education up to that age. The scheme allowed boys schools and girls schools as well as co-educational schools. "As for co-education" says Gandhi, "the Zakir Husain Committee has not made it compulsory. Where there is a demand for a separate school for girls, the State will have to make provision. The question of co-education has been left open. It will regulate itself according to the time-spirit. So far as I am aware the members of the Committee were not of one mind. Personally I have an open mind. I think that there are just as valid reasons for as against co-education. And I would not oppose the experiment whenever it is made."  

Opinion on co-education is divided even in the West - divided all the way from the French view that it is

1. Reports, 1938-43, p.13  
2. First Kher Report, p. 4  
3. Harijan, 16.7.38
dangerous and immoral - "qui en France, n'a cesse, 
depuis le Moyen age, de nous sembler horriblement 
dangereuse et immorale" to its being taken for 
granted in America and Scotland. The psychological 
arguments in favour are that homo-sexual attractions 
are far less in co-educational schools; that it makes 
easier friendly and natural relations with students 
of the opposite sex at the University or elsewhere; 
and that flirtations are not prevented by segregating 
boys and girls in separate schools. Further, 
"affectionate friendships between young people of 
opposite sexes are of some value as preliminary 
experiments for the final choice of a suitable mate 
for life". The naturalists have advocated

2. Valentine, Psychology and Its Bearing on Education, 
3. Ibid, p. 573. Dr. C.M. Fleming holds that 
co-education throughout serves best for social 
development. Co-education "from cradle to the 
grave" is best for boys and girls properly 
maturing socially; "Adolescents require chances 
of watching one another from a distance, of 
approaching without awkwardness" and feeling 
at home with members of the other sex. Separation 
makes this difficult. She also points out that if 
there is a slight difference in the maturing ages 
of boys and girls, that is no argument against 
co-education, for there is more mental difference 
between a group of boys or a group of girls of the 
same age - C.M. Fleming, Adolescence - Its Social 
Psychology, Reutlege and Kegan Paul, London, 
1948, Ch. 11.
co-education since it is unnatural to separate the sexes: such separation makes the school an unreal society and makes it fail as an agency for imparting direct experience of social life, and develops an unnatural attitude in boys and girls towards members of the opposite sex. "Where there is wise leadership" says Arthur Morgan "for boys and girls to work and study together may be an education in courtesy, propriety and in mutual respect and understanding". Gandhi tried co-education in South Africa, and at one time, he even made boys and girls sleep in the same verandah with no partition between them. Mrs. Gandhi and himself sharing the verandah with them. The experiment brought undesirable results. When asked if worse things did not happen in purdah-ridden societies, i.e. under conditions where boys and girls are prohibited not merely from mixing but from even seeing or talking to each other, Gandhi replied, "Yes, of course, but co-education is still in an experimental stage and we cannot definitely say one way or the other as to its results. I think we should begin with the family first. There boys and

1. Morgan, op. cit.
girls should grow together freely and naturally. Then co-education will come of itself\(^1\). Herein is the crux of the matter. In India, there are considerable variations in regard to the social intercourse of the sexes in different parts of the country and among different social groups; and co-education in schools can only be a failure in cases where the atmosphere of the school is entirely different from that of the family and the community. In this respect, the pattern of education in our schools cannot be very much in advance of the social pattern of the community where the school is located. This fact is recognized by the Secondary Education Commission, who, therefore, recommended that "where it is possible separate schools for girls should be established as they are likely to offer better opportunities than the mixed schools to develop their physical, social and mental aptitudes and all States should open such schools in adequate numbers. But it should be open to girls whose parents have no objection in this matter to avail themselves of co-educational facilities in

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1. N.K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 248
boys schools"¹. This is a sound recommendation as it would lead to gradual voluntary co-education, if it proves satisfactory.

The Secondary Education Commission found that, in India, "so far as Primary and University Stages are concerned, co-education was generally favoured, but in regard to education at the Secondary stage there was considerable divergence of opinion. Many maintained that, during the period of adolescence, it is desirable that the education of boys and girls should be carried on in separate institutions"². Mr. Avanashalingom, sometime Education Minister of Madras, had similarly said that he had no objection to co-education among children and among grown-ups when they knew their own minds, but he was not in favour of co-education at the impressionable age of 15 or 16 when most of the girls came to training schools. Gandhi, however, disagreed with him and said, "If you keep co-education in your schools but not in your training schools, the children will think there is something wrong somewhere. I should allow

¹. Mudaliar Report, p. 55
². Ibid.
my children to run the risk. We shall have to rid ourselves one day of this sex mentality. We should not seek for examples from the West. Even in training schools, if the teachers are intelligent, pure and filled with the spirit of Nai Talim, there is no danger. Supposing some accidents do take place, we should not be frightened by them. They would take place anywhere. Although I speak thus boldly, I am not unaware of the attendant risks"1. Gandhi never wished to force co-education on any age-group, though he very much wished that there should be co-education up to the age of 8, that as far as possible boys and girls should be educated together till the age of 16, and that young men and women should be left to decide for themselves after they have reached the 16th year whether to continue their studies together or in separate institutions2.

VIII. FINANCE.

Gandhi's idea of self-supporting education practical and one had sprung from two important considerations, one

1. Harijan, 9.11.47. It is interesting to find that the McNair Committee, reporting in 1944, took a stand against the policy of segregation followed generally in the training colleges of England and recommended more 'mixed' colleges - Cf: Teachers and Youth Leaders, p. 75.
2. Satyagrahashramno Itihas (Gujarati), cited in Patel, op. cit, p. 238
ideological. As a practical thinker he knew very early that "education to be universal must be free"\(^1\), and free education was as much an unthinkable proposition in India as universal education at the time. The Indian parent was too poor to pay for the education of his children, and so the only wise thing to do was "that our children must be made to pay in labour partly or wholly for all the education they receive"\(^2\). "If every school introduced spinning" Gandhi said, "it would revolutionize our ideas of financing education.

We can work a school for six hours per day and give free education to our pupils. Supposing a boy works at the wheel for four hours daily, he will produce every day 10 tolas of yarn and thus earn for his school one anna per day. Suppose further that he manufactures very little during the first month, and that the school works only twenty-six days in the month, he can earn after the first month Rs.1/10/- per month. A class of thirty boys would yield, after the first month, an income of Rs.48/12/- per month\(^3\) and this

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1. Y.I., 1.9.21
2. Ibid. (italics mine)
3. Ibid
would enable the school to employ experienced teachers and give the children good education. Gandhi at this time was not thinking of education through craft; when that idea became clear, the craft itself became as much an educational, as an economic proposition. Even if other means of providing money for education could be found, he would not now give up education through the craft, because of its educational and ideological significance. This was why he said that his scheme had nothing to do with the disappearance of drink revenues. If the introduction of prohibition cut at the roots of this source of income, government could tap several other sources, which had the additional advantage of being not so tainted. For example, they could introduce death duties. Craft centred education was education of the all-round personality in non-violent values, and at the same time, an economic proposition in that it made its recipient a good craftsman who can, if necessary, earn his living by it. This is why Gandhi considered 'self-support' as an acid test of education.

When Gandhi used the word 'self-support' he did not mean that all the capital expenditure would

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1. Harijan, 31.7.37
be defrayed from it, but that at least the salary of
the teacher would be found out of the proceeds
of the articles made by the pupils. This certainly
did not imply that the salary of the teachers must
be directly met by the sale of children's produce at
school; this was made clear by Zakir Husain in both
his Report and in the first Kher Committee. The
Zakir Husain Committee had no doubts that the
proceeds from the sale of such materials made in
school would "cover the major portion of its running
expenses", provided, as Gandhi envisaged, the State
would take over the manufactures of these schools.
Other expenses on buildings, equipment and the like,
will have to be met from other sources, public and
private. The first Basic National Education

1. Harijan, 28.10.39
2. First Kher Report, p.4. The passage in the Zakir
Husain Committee Report reads: "We should like
to make it clear that we do not contemplate any
direct connection between the teachers' salary
and the proceeds from the sale of the children's
products. Teachers are to be paid directly from
the State Treasury as at present and are not to be
dependent on the somewhat fluctuating income
received from the sale of school products, which
should be credited as income to the Treasury" -
Basic National Education, p. 59
4. Harijan, 31.7.37
5. Basic National Education, p. 59
Conference considered it the duty of the Central Government to bear its due share of the total expenditure on this most important activity of national reconstruction by contributing towards capital expenditure on buildings etc. The Second Kher Committee felt that whatever balance remained after selling the produce, to meet the cost of the compulsory system of education must be met from public funds, and they recommended that the Central Government should contribute not less than half of the approved net expenditure of the Provincial Governments on this service. The Government of India did not accept this recommendation. The Kher Committee, in 1949, amended their recommendation by reducing the share of the Central Government to only 30%. The principle that this expenditure is to be shared between the Central and Provincial Governments, however, now came to be finally recognized. And this is of great importance because, experience of Basic education on mass scale has not fully justified the claim that the income from the produce could, everywhere, be sufficient to meet the running costs.

1. One Step Forward, p. 218
2. Reports 1938-43, p. 14
While in Behar, considerable progress to this end had been made, in Bombay it is found to cover only the recurring cost on craftwork, and in Uttar Pradesh it has served only so far as to avoid certain liabilities. Gandhi in sticking to his views on self-support had experimental evidence of work in South Africa and in his ashrams to back him, and the experience of full Basic Schools run by the protagonists of Basic education too did not show that it was too much of an ambitious claim; but in the hands of teachers in ordinary Basic schools, run by Government, who do not have the same enthusiasm and quite often lack belief in its significance, the result can only be disappointing. It is certainly wise to give up the self-supporting idea in favour of the educational idea involved in the Scheme rather than subordinate the latter to the former and defeat its purpose. Gandhi had considered self-support as a vital part of the Scheme, but it is no longer regarded as one of its essential principles by most of those who work it.\(^{1}\)

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1. Cf: One Step Forward, p. 262
Gandhi had said, "Before making the scheme compulsory, we shall have to vindicate its truth in some experimental schools. If the Scheme fails, no Mahatma shall be able to save it". He was also prepared to revise and correct his views whenever necessary, but the absolute abandonment of the self-supporting aspect of Basic education is something with which Gandhi would certainly have not compromised. For, to that extent, his scheme would suffer, and must fail in its objectives.

1. Educational Reconstruction, p. 159
2. Harijan, 2.10.37
CONCLUSION.

In the fore-going pages, we have elaborately examined the educational ideas of Mahatma Gandhi. We have brought together his views on the education of people from "the cradle to the grave" and on almost every problem connected with that education; and in doing so we have tried to evolve a "theory" of Gandhian education. Gandhi stresses the education of the mother as of paramount importance as he holds the view that the process of the child's education begins from the moment of his conception. Pre-basic education is largely an education in social habits, and he would give this education to the child up to the age of seven. From seven to fourteen years the child would receive what he calls 'basic education', a course of 'primary' education which will fit him for life. After completing a course of basic education, one might follow it up with 'post-basic' education, or a (higher) secondary education which will enable him to gain a deeper knowledge of selected fields of work. This might lead to further specialization.
in a rural college and the rural university.

The central feature of education as envisaged by Gandhi is that it should be through a productive craft. The craft selected should be a rural one, and must have both educational and economic possibilities. That is to say, the craft should be one which would help to maintain and promote a rural social order; it should be one which would offer enough scope for the development of the physical, mental and moral faculties of the child; and one which, on going out of school, he might pursue for earning his bread. The craft activity in school should, while equipping the child with the skill for pursuing it as a vocation in later life, also result in paying to some extent, towards the cost of his education. This education, he further states, should be through the medium of the mother tongue of the child. There is no place for religious education in school in the sense of denominational religion, but all education should be in the religious spirit, and should give the child a firm grasp of and a good training in the bed-rock of universal ethics. The school should impart real training in democratic citizenship, through its corporate
life and social activities as well as through the curriculum of studies; and Gandhi favoured, to this end, co-education, residential schooling, school self-government and activity methods of study. He wants teachers to guide the pupils to realize their best, and so expects them to live model lives, worthy of emulation. He expects pupils to respect and obey the teacher and follow his precept and example, but at the same time he gives them freedom to accept or reject his teaching and even the right to offer satyagraha against whatever they feel is against their moral conscience. Discipline according to him is voluntary obedience, not submission to dictation, and freedom is freedom to assert one's spiritual self. He is against textbook instruction and the craze for examinations. He wants primary education up to the age of 14 to be free, compulsory, universal; but higher education, for the time-being, need be given only to those who have an aptitude for it. Gandhi has not given us a complete picture of his views on higher education, especially of university education, but he makes it clear that all
higher education must be practical and related to life.

This theory of education, it will be seen, is the result of his philosophy of life and has flowed from it. As an idealist he believes in absolute values, which have to be realized by all as a result of education. So he looks upon education as purposive direction. The ultimate aim of education is self-realization. For this, man must do God's work in a spirit of self-abnegation. Believing that the individual realizes his best only in and through service of humanity, he wants education to develop the self-less individual who will find happiness in actively working for the betterment of all. Education naturally becomes an active process. Thinking is to be developed through doing, as thought has to issue in action. Education has also to stress right thinking and right feeling. Naturally Gandhi stresses character-training much more than intellectual training. But intellectual training is not neglected since only a fully developed individual and not a
lopsided personality, can be capable of the best effort. Intellectual development through craft is training of the hand, head and heart together. It develops the creative individual, and it assures dignity of manual labour. It goes a long way to wipe out the social distinction between the thinking and the working class. It also helps the promotion of the non-violent values he seeks to inculcate in the pupils. His aim is the development of the Satyagrahi individual - one who will be a seeker after Truth. A seeker after Truth is one who seeks the way to absolute Truth through relative truth. Truth cannot be lived without non-violence and so he stresses non-violence. The school should impart training in the non-violent values - it should promote love, humility, co-operation, spirit of service, self-abnegation and fearlessness, and enable the educated man to place his duties before rights. When education succeeds in creating such Satyagrahis, Gandhi hopes that the non-
violent co-operative social order of his conception - the Ramaraj - could be evolved. All education must be for some end, and the end of Gandhian education is the creation of the Satyagrahi: individual who will be the brick of Ramaraj. The Satyagrahi will be wedded to a rural civilization and will work for his food, covet no one's possessions, live a simple life, respect all men and women, all races and all religions, and seek to serve the whole of mankind by serving his own neighbourhood. The Ramaraj will, therefore, be a social order in which persons will be treated as persons, and true freedom will lead to true community. All will be at peace with one another. When the world is made up of such sane men, we would have found a cure for all the ills of the day.

The principles of Gandhian education are not merely consistent with one another and consistent with the Gandhian ideology, but they are also in line with the modern ideals held in education. If "True education" as Henry Ford says, "consists in learning to do by doing, learning to help by helping and learning
to earn by earning"¹, then the Gandhian Scheme of education deserves to be ranked in the forefront of all educational schemes. The directing principles of the New Education as advocated in the West are a reverence for childhood, the cultivation of the uniqueness latent in the child, the strengthening of his social bonds, an assurance of his social and intellectual freedom, the release of his creative impulse by work in art and craft, and generally speaking his happiness at school. "The New Education seeks to improve" says K.G. Saiyidain, "... the existing evils of our society by advocating the cause of freedom rather than repression, by stressing creative rather than possessive happiness, by exalting the ideal of service above that of domination, by preaching toleration and respect for individual differences rather than their forcible suppression for the sake of

securing a mechanical uniformity, by nurturing the human spirit in its infinite manifestation—practical, intellectual, artistic, ethical—instead of being frightened of intelligence and originality". If these are the test, then no education can have a better claim to be called the New Education than the education sponsored by Gandhi.

Again, Gandhi's plan is the only realistic plan of education hitherto proposed for a poor country like India, with farming villages still bulking large and with huge masses of people illiterate. The problem had daunted the most daring of British and Indian statesmen. Finance is the rock on which all schemes of mass education for India are bound to founder. Gandhi's practical sense enabled him to spot out this real difficulty and tackle it in a unique way. Education through craft, which made education self-supporting partly

or wholly, was indeed a 'bold' suggestion at which many laughed, but it is the only way that is open to solve the problem. With this suggestion he pulled down the Colossus of no-money argument that came from official quarters. His scheme aimed at lessening this economic liability and turning it into an asset, and for the first time, it was possible to approach the problem in a spirit of hope. It was realistic in another sense too. In making basic education vocational, he made it an insurance against unemployment for its recipient. This was the only way to check the meaningless trek of every matriculate to the portals of the colleges and out of them into the wide world, knowing no way to earn one's bread unless employed as a quill-driver by the State or some private agency. Both of these advantages had long been ignored by his critics. As we have seen before, its vocational aspect was ignored by the Government of India when they cut up the basic course into two and blessed the Junior Basic course of five years as a satisfactory course of primary education; and the Government never had any faith in this education ever being self-supporting,
even in a limited sense of the term. Ideas have since then changed and are changing fast. The Planning Commission's Report on the First Five Year Plan\(^1\) takes the view that all education must be vocational - must have a practical bias from the very beginning\(^2\) - and that if education is to be universalized within a reasonably short period of time, the productive aspect of Basic Education must be considered important\(^3\). The Commission notes with satisfaction that the Central Advisory Board of Education has also, in their meeting of March, 1952, endorsed the productive aspect of Basic education, and affirms the view that no education can be called 'Basic' in the real sense unless it is a full and continuous course of eight years and adequate emphasis is placed on craft work in both its educational and productive aspects\(^4\). The five-year Basic

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1. Cf: The First Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, Delhi, 1952 (advance copy - type - script) Vol.II Chapter XXXIII.
2. Ibid, para 4-(3)
3. Ibid, para 9
4. Ibid, para 20 - italics mine.
course popularized by the Government is considered by the Commission as a "truncated course" and the recommendation is made that "all States should run, wherever conditions permit, eight year full-fledged basic schools instead of five year schools". They advocate giving a vocational bias to secondary education and integrating it with Basic education: the idea should be to turn out primarily 'efficient workers', and so economic activities like agriculture, cottage industries etc., should be encouraged and "made to recover at least a part of the recurring expenditure". Here at last is a recognition of all the fundamental principles of Basic education as Gandhi envisaged it, at the hands of the Government of India.

We have already seen that at the hands of the Government, Basic education is bound to suffer some changes, and however slight the changes may be, to that extent they will retard

1. The First Five Year Plan. Ch. XXXIII, para 23.
2. Ibid., paras 37, 38.
the evolution of the Gandhian social order. If at the Basic stage the scheme is adopted in toto by the Government, it would go a long way to create a nation of fully developed individuals, near approximations to the Sātvagrāhis of Gandhian conception. But the acceptance of the Basic stage without a recognition of its relationship with the higher stages of education will militate against the building up of the Sātvagrāhi even at the Basic stage. The Planning Commission, while advocating the establishment of at least one rural university by the Central Government, considers that, for the time-being, secondary education will have to be yoked to the modern universities. This, it is submitted, will in practice, react adversely on the purpose of Basic education. But this is the utmost the Government may be able to do under the circumstances. The modern universities, however defective they may be, are the only ones available, and reform can proceed only slowly.

1. The First Five Year Plan, Ch. XXXIII, para 41.
But, to offset its defects, the Commission suggests certain remedial steps. "In order to develop a more balanced outlook and personality and habits of co-operation and self-help", says the Commission, "students should engage themselves in such activities as community cleaning, making and repair of roads within the college compound, some gardening, visit to countryside and slum areas etc". This is to approximate the atmosphere of the college to the Gandhian ideal of service. The Commission's remark that "These activities would have the advantage of reducing the cost of maintaining a college" is also a recognition of the Gandhian principle of self-support. The support given by the Commission to the Gandhian ideals in education go still further; for it envisages even compulsory social and labour service by college students, "both as a measure of educational reform and as a means of improving the quality of man-power" for about one year.

1. The First Five Year Plan, Ch. XXXIII, para 48(4)
2. Ibid
3. Ibid para 117
between the age of 18 and the age of 22. Manual work must dominate in this social service, and so it should take the form of work in irrigation projects, slum improvement etc. And, in the spirit of Gandhi, the Commission too urges that a beginning be made purely on a voluntary basis.

The recommendations of the Planning Commission show that the trend in Indian education is definitely towards the acceptance of Gandhian ideals. Educational reform is being effected without any violent up-rooting of the existing system, as a sudden break with it may be attended with serious risks. The process may be slow, but seems to be certain. Where the pattern changes, it will only be to suit the requirements of the times, our *yugadharma*. 
APPENDIX

Extract of letter to Sir Edward Gait, Lieutenant Governor of Bazar, sent on November 15, 1917. (Courtesy, British Museum) 1.

Bettiah,
Nov. 15.

Dear Sir Edward Gait,

In the midst of your troubles arising out of the Shahabad riots, I am loathe to worry you with Champaran matters. But as you have encouraged me to place everything before you in this connection, I feel that I ought to keep you informed of my activity here.

On my arrival here on the 8th I sought an interview with the Acting Collector which he promptly granted. I have already seen Messrs. Norman and Hill and requested their co-operation in my

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1. The school mentioned in this letter was opened by Mahatma Gandhi on the 13th of November, 1917, at Barharwa Lakhansen, twenty miles to the east of Motihari. The Gokhalays mentioned are Mr. Baban Gokhalay and his wife Shrimati Awantika Bai Gokhalay. With them was Gandhi's youngest son Devadas Gandhi - Cf: Rajendra Prasad, Satyagraha in Champaran, Ganesan, Madras, 1928, p.257
educational work, so far as their concerns are affected. They have kindly consented to consider the matter and write to me. I spoke to Mr. Hill's raiyats at his office, and at his request, as they were causing some difficulty about payment of rent.

Having been offered a good building and invited to open a school in a non-indigo village, I have accepted the offer. The school was opened on Tuesday last at a village near Daka. Mr. and Mrs. Gokhalay, assisted, for the time being, by my youngest son, have been put in charge. Mr. Gokhalay is the owner of an Engineering concern in Bombay, and possesses independent means. He has received training in mechanical engineering for several years in Manchester, and is a public-spirited man of great culture. Mrs. Gokhalay has done educational work for years in Bombay amongst women and girls. She is a trained nurse and midwife. Both husband and wife are nearly forty years old. I could not have secured better helpers to start my experiment. I have absolute confidence in them and I am sure that their mere presence among the village folk will have a purifying influence upon them. I propose to open no more than four or
five such schools and then watch the effect of the experiment before extending it. I need hardly give my assurance that I shall take the greatest care in selecting the teachers. I strongly hold the view that the best add the most learned teachers only should lay the foundation of little children's education. I look upon our present system with the greatest horror. Tender children at the most susceptible periods of their lives are left to the mercy of ill-paid young men who are miscalled teachers. I hope to avoid the error in my experiment, and as it is the training in character which is intended to be given, only men and women of character will be placed in charge of these schools. As I have already told you, these teachers will give the villagers object lessons in sanitation and try to penetrate the "purdah". We are adding to this, simple medical help also. I do want, if I can secure it, the assistance of local officials. I seek your help in this direction, in so far as it can be consistently and conveniently given. But I know that I must
have my own way, and that I shall only do when by my conduct I succeed in commanding their confidence.

I arrived last evening at Bettiah ....

I was delighted with my visit to the Girls' Mission School. I was only sorry that strong fever having overtaken me whilst the Lord Bishop was carefully showing me everything, I was not able to give more time than I did. ....

I am,

Yours truly,

M.K. GANDHI.
GLOSSARY.

Abhyasa - study and practice
Acharya - preceptor; teacher
Advaita - the doctrine of non-duality
Advaitist - one who believes in advaita
Ahimsa - non-violence
Allah - God of Islam
Ananda - bliss
Anashakti - non-attachment
Anna - 1/16 of a Rupee, equivalent to 1½ d.
Anekantavadi - a believer in many doctrines, a sceptic (Jain)
Aparigraha - non-possession
Ardhangana - the better half
Ashram, ashrama - a place of spiritual retirement; Gandhi's colony of workers
Avarna - castless; an untouchable
Avatar - an incarnation of God
Bhagavad Gita - a sacred book of the Hindus, embodying the teachings of Lord Krishna
Bhajan - devotional song
Bhakta - a devotee
Bhangi - a scavenger
Brahmachari - one who observes continence
Brahmacharya - continence
Brahman - ultimate reality; universal soul.
Brahmana, Brahmin - first in the hierarchical order of castes: the priestly class
Charka - spinning wheel
Chit - knowledge
Crore - ten millions
Daridranarayan - God of the poor
Deshi - local, national
Deti-leti - dowry
Devadasi - a temple Nach girl
Dharma - duty; code of conduct
Dvaitism - dualism
Easwara - God
Fakir - a Muslim ascetic
Ganapati - a Hindu Deity with an elephant's head
Ganesh Utsav - Festival on the birthday of God Ganapati
Guru - preceptor
Harijan - a man of God, name given to the 'untouchables' by Gandhi

He Ram - Oh Rama

Hind Swaraj - Indian Home Rule

Hinduraj - Hindu rule

Hindustani Talimi Sangh - All India Organization (Board) for the spread of Basic Education

Imam - a Muslim divine

Janata - People

Janmashthami - Birthday of the Lord Krishna

Ji - an affix to names denoting respect

Kamadhenu, Kamadhuk - a cow of Indian mythology who fulfils all desires

Karma - action

Karmayogi - a follower of the path of action

Khaddar, Khadi - hand-woven cloth from hand-spun yarn

Khaddarite - one who wears Khaddar

Khuda - God

Kshatriya - second in the hierarchy of castes: the warrior class

Lakh - a hundred thousand

Lathi - stick

Maganchula - smokeless oven

Mahabhangi - the great scavenger

Mahatma - the great soul

Mahavidyalaya - great seat of learning, college or university

Mandir - temple

Manushya - man (Sanskrit root 'man' means 'to think')

Maya - illusion

Moksha - emancipation; freedom from birth

Mulamchee Sabha - children's assembly

Nai Talim - the new education

Nishkamakarma - action without desire for reward

Panchayat - a council of five members; a council of village elders

Paramatma - universal soul

Patita - the fallen

Pice - a quarter anna, a little over a farthing

Prasad - remnants of offerings made to the Deity

Purdah - veil; a custom of women being kept in seclusion

Quran - sacred book of the Muslims

Raga - melody

Raj - rule

Rama - an incarnation of God

Ramaraj - beneficent rule

Ramayana - a Hindu epic, the story of Rama
Ramdhun - recital of the divine name of Rama
Rishi - seer, prophet
Rupee - Indian coin, equivalent to 1 s. 6 d.
Sadhana - accomplishment
Sahadharmini - partner in the performance of duty
Samabhava - equability
Samaskara - residual traces left on the mind
Sanatani - one who believes in the ancient faith, orthodox Hindu
Sangh - organization, association
Sannyasa - the fourth stage of Hindu life, that of a recluse
Santiniketan - the abode of peace; Tagore's International University
Sarvodaya Samaj - a co-operative social order for the benefit of all
Sat - being, that which exists
Sat-chit-ananda - God who is Truth, Knowledge and Bliss
Satya, Satyam - Truth
Satyagraha - truth-force
Satyagraha ashram - ashram where the Satagrahis are disciplined
Satyagrahi - a seeker after truth; one who has taken the vow of Satyagraha
Savarna - high caste Hindu
Shastra - a sacred book of the Hindus embodying tradition
Shiva - a Hindu God
Shivan - peace and happiness
Shri - Mr.
Shrimati - Miss or Mrs.
Shudra - the fourth caste, class of manual workers
Sikshana - discipline directed to a certain end
Sishya - disciple
Sundaram - beautiful
Swadeshi - of one's own land
Swadeshist - one who preaches and practices swadeshi
Swaraj - self-government
Syadvada - an assertion of probability; a form of scepticism (Jain)
Syadvadi - a believer in Syadvada
Takli - spindle used in spinning with the fingers without the use of the spinning wheel
Tal - rhythm
Tapas - penance
Tola - Indian weight, equivalent to 3/8 ounce
Upanishad - ancient philosophical writings of the Hindus
Vairagya - renunciation, passionlessness
Vaishnava - a Hindu Sect, worshippers of the Lord Vishnu
Vaishya - third in the hierarchy of castes, the trading community
Varna - caste in its original form
Varna dharma - duty appertaining to one's varna
Varnashrama dharma - duty appertaining to one's varna and ashrama
Vastra Swavalambi - self-help with regard to clothing
Veda - sacred scripture of the Hindus
Vidyapith - seat of learning, national university
Vidyarthi - student
Vishnu - a Hindu God
Yugadharma - duty of the times
Zend Avesta - Sacred book of the Zoroastrians

N.B. Indian words are italicized even in quotations for the sake of clarity.
ABBREVIATIONS.

First Kher Report - Report of the Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed to consider the Wardha Education Scheme, (Chairman: Shri B.G. Kher), Manager of Publications, Delhi, 1939.

H.T.S. - The Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Wardha.


Reports, 1938-43 - Reports of the Committees appointed by the Central Advisory Board of Education, India, 1938-43.


V.B.Q. - Visvabharati Quarterly, Gandhi Memorial Peace Number, Santiniketan, 1949.

Y.I. - Young India, N.P., Ahmedabad.
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