

THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL
EDUCATION IN INDIA

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THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL EDUCA- TION IN INDIA

BY

LAJPAT RAI



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DEDICATED
TO
MY FATHER

PREFACE

THIS book has grown in greater volume than I intended. It is still incomplete. I would have liked to have added a few more chapters, for example, on the value and method of teaching music, on the value and method of teaching social subjects, and so on. I feel, however, that these topics must be reserved for treatment in a subsequent volume. The urgency of the question demands the immediate publication of these articles in book form. The book does not claim to provide anything new for experts or for those who have made a special study of education as a science. It is meant for the lay reader. Its object is to educate the people in the problem of education in India and to help in the formation of public opinion.

A few more words about my right to claim a hearing on the subject. In the first place I have the honour of being the son

of a teacher—the first of a group trained by the British Government in its normal schools in the 'sixties. My father stood at the top of his class, securing in some subjects the highest marks given. I received my first training from him. Excepting English, I learnt practically everything else from him until I passed my middle school examination and joined the High School at Lahore. I owe to him my interest in education. I have met numerous teachers in my life, but in India I have never come across a better teacher than he. He treated his pupils like comrades and enjoyed their company. He gave the best in him to his pupils, not in a spirit of giving, but in a spirit of co-operation. Wherever he went he was the idol of his pupils. He never cared how much they remembered of the text, so long as they had an intelligent grasp of the subject he taught. He never taught; he just helped them learn in their own way. All this was natural to him, since, not knowing a word of the English language, he never studied the science nor the art (whatever you wish to call it) of teaching. In the

second place, ever since I left school I have been actively associated with educational movements. My educational activities are known to my countrymen, and I need not mention them in detail. The study of educational institutions, educational ideals, and educational methods has been one of the passions of my life. In foreign countries also I have devoted a substantial part of my time and energy to the study of educational questions, always with a view to their adaptation to the needs of India. This book is the result of these studies.

The work was written in the second half of 1918, while the war was still going on. It was ready for the press in the beginning of 1919, but publication was delayed on account of the absence of the author from England.

LAJPAT RAI.

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