

# POST-WAR EDUCATION

**( A REVIEW OF THE SARGENT SCHEME WITH SUGGESTIONS )**

# REPORT

## Post-War Educational Development in India

### INTRODUCTION.

On the 15th April, 1945, at the 20th Session of the All-Bengal College and University Teachers' Conference, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted :

**Resolution 3(a) :** While welcoming the basic principles underlying the report of the Sargent Committee on Education, this Conference requests Executive Committee of the Association to examine the scheme with special reference to Collegiate and University Education and to submit a report thereon before a special session of the Association at an early date.

**Resolution 4 :** This Conference requests the Executive Committee of the Association to appoint a committee to draw up a detailed scheme of technical and technological education in view of the possibilities of post-war development of industries.

In accordance with the direction contained in the above resolutions the Executive Committee at its meeting held on the 26th April, 1945, appointed a sub-committee composed on the following persons to prepare and submit a report on the question of educational reconstruction in India with special reference to the Sargent Report and on technical education :—

(1) Vice-Principal D. Mukherjee, (2) Prof. R. K. Chakravarti, (3) Prof. R. Ray, (4) Prof. S. P. Agharkar, (5) Prof. N. C. Bhattacharyya, (6) Prof. G. D. Mukherjee, (7) Prof. R. Bhattacharyya, (8) Prof. Niren Ray, (9) Prof. S. Bhattacharyya, Secretary of the A. B. C. U. T. A. (Ex-officio).

The Sub-Committee has held four meetings and prepared the following Report for submission to the Executive Committee. It may be noted that Mr. Niren Ray, and Prof. S. P. Agharkar members of the Sub-Committee expressed their inability to serve on the sub-committee. The report has been agreed to and accepted by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee at its meeting held on 26th February, 1946 decided to narrow down the terms of reference of the above Committee to Resolution No. 3(a) only. The consideration of the matter contained in Resolution No. 4 was deferred until the appointment of a Committee of Experts at a later date. The present report therefore has reference only to Resolution No. 3(a). It may be noted that Prof. S. P. Agharkar has dissociated himself from this Report particularly because he does not agree with the findings of the committee in respect of collegiate and University teaching.

### REPORT—PART I.

I. The object of the Sargent Scheme of education is to indicate in broad outline the minimum educational requirements of India, to show how long it would take to satisfy them and to estimate roughly what it would cost. On account of its boldness of conception, far-seeing educational statesmanship and organic treatment of the problem of Indian education, the Report associated with the name of Sir John Sargent has been rightly welcomed as an epochmaking grand design regarding the educational development of India. With certain minor modifications the scheme is destined to serve as the corner stone of the educational edifice of the future. It may be regarded as the first coherent effort since the famous Despatch of Sir Charles Wood in 1854 to plan the future of education in our country.

Our task has been rendered easy on account of our general agreement with most of the conclusions of the

*Sargent Report both in principle and detail. We have, therefore, mainly confined ourselves to those aspects of the problem of educational reconstruction regarding which we found ourselves in disagreement with the distinguished authors of the Report. We have also made some suggestions which did not find their place in the official Report. Knowledge of the Sargent scheme has been assumed throughout the present report and reference to recommendations with which we are in agreement has been generally avoided.*

II. The Sargent Scheme proposes to outline a national system of education. One, therefore, naturally looks for a clear statement of educational ideals and principles of future development in the Report. It is to be noted that the Sargent Report pays inadequate attention to this aspect of educational planning. As the formulation of the ideals of education would appear to be indispensable part of a scheme of national education we would venture to state them as follows:—

Ideals of a system of national education.

(a) To equip a person for the struggle for existence and enable him to stand four square against all the winds that blow; (b) to help him in securing a complete development of his personality in all its aspects, physical, moral, intellectual and artistic; (c) to equip the citizens in a manner conducive to the maximum development of the material resources of the nation with a view to the improvement of the standard of living in accordance with the principles of social justice; (d) to develop and realise fully the genius character, traditions and capacities of the nation; (e) to produce good citizens conscious of their responsibilities to their immediate surroundings and the nation at large and (f) to foster and develop in the individual a consciousness of the legitimate demands of internationalism. We are of the opinion that education at all stages must be relative to the principles formulated above.

III. A system of national education as proposed by the distinguished members of the Central Advisory Board of Education will need for its success the back ground of national independence. In the absence of a nation-wide sympathy and support and willingness to make necessary sacrifice for the fulfilment of the educational ideal, the scheme is bound to fail. It is needless to state that an adequate amount of sympathy, support and sacrifice on the part of the people cannot be expected unless they feel the magic touch of national independence.

Condition  
of success  
of Sargent  
Scheme.

IV. The authors of the present Report feel that all educational systems must necessarily be relative to national economy. Educational and economic planning are vitally inter-connected. Educational reconstruction in India has, therefore, to be relative to the economic planning of the country. It may be pointed out, in particular, that any scheme of technical education has to be linked up with agricultural and industrial planning. If our educational statesmen keep this in view they will be able to eliminate a lot of waste of time and energy.

Education and  
Economic  
plan.

V. In the Introduction of the Sargent Report (page 5 —paragraph 10) reference is made to apathy and inertia which have reigned so long in the educational domain. It is the considered view of the Sub-Committee that the alien rulers of the land have, as a matter of policy effectively stood in the way of the educational progress of the country. Leaders of the people have not been oblivious of the vital educational needs of the masses. When the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale introduced the Primary Education Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council it was killed by the opposition of the

Alleged apathy  
of the people  
re : education.

official block. Even the Syndicate of the University of Calcutta placed themselves in opposition to the Bill.\*

VI. While holding that the legitimate needs of higher education should be adequately fulfilled, the sub-committee is of the opinion that for years to come special emphasis has to be laid on basic education. More than 85% of our countrymen are illiterate. In order to reach the present literacy level of an advanced state like the U. S. A. or the U. S. S. R.

we shall take, according to the Sargent Scheme, 40 years, including a five-year period of preparation. During the time the peoples of other state would certainly reach further heights in the educational scale, and comparatively India would be considered to be as backward as ever. The sub-committee feels that India can hardly afford to wait for so long a period as forty years to attain the standard of mass literacy already reached by some civilised states. We, therefore, advocate a system of basic education by 'forced marches'. The sub-committee recommends what may be called "educational conscription" to quicken the pace of literacy. It may be ordained that any body joining the University will have to serve as a teacher for six months or that during the longest

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\*"That the Syndicate while sympathising in principles with Schemes for the extension of Education have great doubts as to the desirability of compulsion in matters of instruction, specially with regard to girls, and the imposition of new Taxes in that behalf.

That the Syndicate further are of opinion that the actual conditions of colleges and secondary schools leave much to be desired, in as much as many of these institutions, from lack of funds and Trained Teachers, do not come up to the requirements of the new Regulations, and that they hence can not at present support new undertakings for which neither additional funds nor competent Teachers are likely to be available, and which on the other hand might divert the application of the funds urgently required to meet the present needs and the legitimate expansion of the University and secondary education."

*Minutes of the Syndicate, 1911, Part II, Page 745 (Minutes dated May 20, 1911).*

vacation of the year all students shall have to serve as teachers. A similar duty may be imposed on all aspirants to appointments in Government departments or local bodies. In short, the nation should be prepared to make greater sacrifices in the interest of mass education and we hope that given proper initiative and financial backing the target of universal literacy may be reached in half the time specified by the Sargent Report. We note with satisfaction that the scheme of educational reconstruction prepared by the Government of Bengal contemplates that compulsory primary education will have been introduced throughout Bengal in 20 years time.\*

VII. The authors of the present Report note with regret that the Sargent Scheme does not advocate complete secularisation of education in all its reaches. We are opposed to religious instruction in educational institutions on the following grounds: (a) Religion is a matter of personal realisation. So it is best left to the parents and the family circle. Therefore educational institutions ought to follow a policy of non-interference in the matter of religion; (b) Modern state is a secular institution and hence in state schools or aided institutions the education imparted ought to be entirely secular, (c) Religious instruction in schools is almost bound to lead to communal cleavage.

VIII. We are of the opinion that the Sargent Report has failed to lay adequate emphasis on the modern instruments of education of the young, viz., magic lantern, epidiасcope, cinematograph, gramophone, radio, educational museums, etc., so effectively utilised in the U. S. S. R., the U. S. A. and other progressive countries of the world. We believe that the employment of these instruments would lead to a quick progress of education and improvement in its standard at different stages.

\*Post War Reconstruction : Bengal Governments' Plan, page 23.

IX. So far as technical education is concerned the sub-committee after mature deliberation accepts generally the conclusions of the Sargent Report. In order that such a scheme might achieve the desired success it would be necessary to impart a vocational or practical bias to basic education. According to regional advantages pupils of basic schools have to be brought into contact with the local craft or trade or productive process. Vocational bias must not be taken to mean the conversion of basic schools into technical schools. What it implies is the development of manual dexterity, manipulative skill and power of observation of economic processes by personal contact with them. It may be noted here that the Wardha Scheme of basic education is in full agreement with the recommendations made by the Wood-Abbott Report so far as the *principle of learning by doing* is concerned. This activity should be of many kinds in the lower classes and later should lead to a basic craft the produce from which should be saleable and the proceeds applied to the upkeep of the school.\*

X. The sub-committee regrets that the Central Advisory Board of Education did not consider the desirability of establishing vocational guidance committees for advising pupils by the application of psychological tests at different stages as to their future vocation. We are of the opinion that Provincial and Central Vocational Guidance Committees should be established for the purpose.

XI. Industrialisation in India will largely depend on the facilities for practical training and apprenticeship. In order to facilitate practical technical training through a regulated system of apprenticeship it may be necessary to resort to conscription of

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\*Report of the Second Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, 1939.

Also Cf. Note 6, Part II of this Report.

industries for the purpose. Firms and industries, under such a scheme, would have to accept and train apprentices in accordance with a scheme adopted by the Government.

XII. We record our approval of the scheme of basic education contained in the Report and note with satisfaction that the authors of the Sargent scheme admit the mother tongue as the medium of instruction up to the Matriculation stage. The sub-committee is further of the

Medium of  
instruction.

opinion that the medium at all stages of education should be the mother tongue. We strongly feel that the Universities in India have a duty to perform in this matter. A special department of this University should take up in right earnest the task of translating into the various provincial languages the classics and important text books and learned treatises in English and other foreign languages. Particular care should be taken to facilitate the translation into Indian languages of scientific and technical treatises and publications of permanent value on educative subjects appearing in foreign languages. The sub-committee is, however, of the opinion that working knowledge of one European language (English or French or German) must be expected of all University students. In order to ensure it there should be a compulsory test in composition in the language selected by a University student. Except in the case of students specialising in English literature, the present emphasis on all-round proficiency in English would appear to be unnecessary in future, once English is replaced by Hindusthani as the state-language of India. We, however, feel that in order to enable the citizens of India to keep in touch with the culture and current of thought of the rest of the world English should continue to be a compulsory subject of examination for the Matriculation.

XIII. The sub-committee is of the opinion that for the sake of developing a vital contact between the different provinces and sections of the people of the vast sub-continent of India, it is desirable that a

Hindusthani as  
*lingua franca*.

determined attempt ought to be made for the popularisation of Hindusthani which has virtually established itself as the *lingua franca* of India. Arrangements must, therefore, be made for the teaching of Hindusthani in all basic schools so that at the end of the junior basic stage (6 to 11 years) pupils may be enabled to acquire a working knowledge of Hindusthani. At the beginning of the senior basic stage English should be introduced and continued as a compulsory subject up to the Matriculation Stage. This arrangement we believe will make for an even distribution of burden so far as the young learners are concerned and produce better academic results.

XIV. The sub-committee is of the opinion that at this juncture of our educational evolution we ought to adopt the Roman script, *i.e.*, the international phonetic script as the universal medium of instruction at all stages of education. We advocate its acceptance on the following grounds: (a) that it is easier to learn; (b) that the international phonetic script is more scientific than any other existing script; (c) that the acceptance of the script would render the learning of provincial languages other than one's own much easier, today the barrier of script proves to be much too baffling indeed; (d) that it would solve by one stroke the bitter and unseemly controversy between the advocates of Arabic script and the protagonists of Devanagiri script in the teaching and writing of Hindusthani; and (e) finally the adoption of the Roman script would prove to be "a solution to the language difficulty and greatly minimise the work of both scholar and teacher." \*

XV. We are also of the view that time is now ripe for the standardisation & decimalisation of coins, weights and measures. We believe that the decimalisation would put a stop to the waste of time and energy involved in learning the present complicated

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\*Report of the Second Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education, 1939.

systems of coins, weights and measures varying from province to province. We would like to emphasise that judged from the standpoint of education decimalisation is a necessity which should no longer be resisted.

XVI. We cannot but admit that the type of education imparted in our schools and Universities cramps the mind and intellect of the young learner. It fails to enrich the sentiments of the pupils or widen their sympathies or broaden their outlook. Love of the beauty of nature or art is not awakened; love of fellowmen and kindness to the animal world are not generated. It is also true that civic training is almost entirely neglected. At the present stage of the social and political evolution of our country the need for such a training cannot be overemphasised. Civic training should be directed

Outlook and civic sense and character.	to the cultivation of a sense of responsibility towards the state, society and different sections of the community. Love of fair play, gentleness to the weak, love of the country and humanity at large, toleration of the feelings and sentiments of other communities are some of the virtues which have to be developed through the corporate activities of the educational institutions. It is also doubtful if the present system of education fosters the growth of character and personality, grit and stamina. Courage, truthfulness, self-control, cleanliness of mind, body and speech, temperance and self-denial, independence, individuality and love of freedom are the very essence of a virile personality. The authorities entrusted with the task of regulation and control of education will have to apply themselves to the cultivation of methods conducive to the growth of these virtues in the future citizens of our great land. The sub-committee notes with satisfaction that the central Advisory Board of Education is fully alive to some of these needs.
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XVII. We would, however make one further suggestion in this behalf. The sub-committee feels that compulsory

military training extending over a period of two years would go a long way towards the development of civic virtues. The existing University Training Corps may be utilised for the purpose.\* Besides there should exist in all basic schools adequate arrangements for squad drills. A graded system of physical training according to age, sex, state of health and environment should also be evolved for the sake of the physical betterment of the pupils.

XVIII. The question of co-education has attracted the attention of educationists all over India. As men and women are bound to be thrown together in future increasingly in service to the state and society co-education would appear to be desirable. On the other hand there is a certain age from 11 to 16 or 17 during which education would seem to be psychologically undesirable. We, therefore, recommend that co-education may be practised in the junior basic stage and may re-appear at the collegiate stage of education.

XIX. The Sargent Committee is of the opinion that the Intermediate course has no place in University education and accordingly favours the transference of the first year intermediate classes to High Schools. They also recommend that the two-year graduate course is to be lengthened into a three-year period. Adoption of this policy would lead to the extinction of the present Intermediate colleges and serious financial loss to other colleges engaged in intermediate and post intermediate education. The sub-committee feels bound to point out that the transference of the intermediate first year classes to schools will lead to a general deterioration in the standard of teaching unless the schools are placed on a much sounder footing than that existing at present. However, on principle, we are not opposed to the recommendations of the

\*Cf. Calcutta University Commission Report, Vol. IV, P. 92.

Sargent Committee who in this respect followed the lines indicated by the Sadler Commission. But we strongly urge that the above policy should by no means be accepted unless adequate arrangements could be made for the suitable employment of those who are thrown out of employment as the result of the operation of the policy. Secondly, colleges engaged in both Intermediate and post-Intermediate education have a right to expect adequate financial compensation for the financial losses that they will sustain due to the abolition of the Intermediate stage.

XX. While agreeing with the recommendations of the Sargent Committee that the activities of the different Universities in India ought to be co-ordinated to avoid overlapping of academic activities, the present sub-committee thinks that within a University also there is a good deal of room for Co-ordination of University and college activities. In Indian Universities modelled on the University of London there is much of avoidable overlapping so far as teaching is concerned. It is desirable that a scheme of co-operative effort in the sphere of teaching should be developed in Calcutta and elsewhere. The need for such co-ordination is particularly urgent in Honours teaching. If such a scheme could be worked successfully it would go for greater efficiency and prevent a waste of academic energy.

XXI. The sub-committee feels that it would be failing in its duty if it did not devote special attention to the problem of the University of Calcutta. It is needless to refer to the services that have been rendered by the University of Calcutta to the cause of higher education in Bengal and India. There is, however, undoubtedly much room for improvement in certain directions.

In the first place the need for thorough overhauling of the courses of study in most subjects right from the

Matriculation standard to the M.A. or M.Sc. standard is urgent. In particular we would like to point out briefly that the two Matriculation regulations tried one after another since the supersession of the old Entrance curriculum have proved to be utter failures. The first Matriculation regulations lowered the educational standard and sapped the foundation of secondary and higher education in Bengal and Assam. The second Matriculation regulations introduced a few years ago, while imposing upon the young learners too heavy a burden of miscellaneous subjects failed to improve the standard of knowledge. Moreover for financial reasons the University has consistently exploited secondary education in the interest of higher education by raising in an irresponsible manner the percentage of success in the examination. But it has failed to make any constructive contribution towards the reorganisation of secondary education on modern lines.

Secondly, the Post-Graduate department under the University has not, admittedly, produced the results that were expected of it. It has failed to foster to any desirable extent a spirit of research and free thought and practically converted itself into an institution whose principal function has been to deliver a number of 'mass lectures.' It has also neglected to establish personal contact between teachers and students essential to the growth of original thinking.

Thirdly, having failed to realise the professed aims of its teaching department the University has not been able to give a proper lead to collegiate education and inspire it by a better example. As at the University so in the colleges also mass lecturing has been the general rule and tutorial system conspicuous by its absence except in rare instances.

Fourthly, the administration of the University in its various departments leaves much to be desired. Efficiency has steadily deteriorated since the beginning of the second decade of the present century and has been going down from day to day.

Well-wishers of the University hoped that the authorities of the University would take adequate steps for drawing up a scheme of post-war reconstruction of education in the province. It is to be regretted that the University did nothing of the kind. In the light of the above failures the sub-committee feels strongly that so long as the effective control of the University does not vest in bonafide teachers who have accepted teaching as their life's profession there appears to be very little possibility of effecting essential reform.

Lawyers, medical men and the miscellaneous company of political partisans who dominate the University, have their principal interests elsewhere. While we admit that in the past meritorious services have been rendered to the University by some belonging to the above categories, it is generally true that many have tended to use the University as a jumping off board for gaining personal advantages to which they have set their heart. People who have controlled the University machinery have served their *Alma Mater* in spare time according to their leisure and inclination. Consequently the activities of the University have suffered. Essential tasks have been made to wait for an unreasonably long length of time to suit the personal convenience of men in power. If circumstances like these are permitted to continue at the University all questions of reform will have to be postponed for an indefinite period, and efficiency which has already touched a low level will further deteriorate. We believe it is unsound educational policy to entrust higher education to a heterogeneous body composed largely of lawyers, medical men and political careerists. They lack the knowledge and personal experience and sense of vocation needed for the

proper guidance of higher education and so fail to develop a congenial academic atmosphere favourable to the growth of learning.

We, therefore, propose (a) that ordinarily none but teachers ought to be appointed Vice-Chancellors of Calcutta University. Secondly we urge that only whole-time teachers should be nominated to Fellowships of the University. The sub-committee is of the opinion that the acceptance of these principles will in the long run produce desirable results. We would take this opportunity to point out that a thorough going reform of the constitution of the University is overdue. But no reform can be considered desirable which does not secure at the University the functional control by those who have taken up teaching as their life's work.

Before we conclude this section we would like to add that the only purpose of our criticism is to place our *Alma Mater* on a sound basis. There is no desire to hurt, but every desire to be helpful. We mean offence to none. We have spoken openly and frankly because we have felt strongly about a chronic wrong on the removal of which the educational and cultural future of Bengal depends.

XXII. We feel it to be our duty to emphasise that in Bengal Government has treated the University and colleges in a niggardly fashion. Consequently colleges have had to depend on students' fees and the University has sought to augment its funds by questionable means, e. g. increase of examination fees ; reduction of examiners' remuneration, publication of text books of an indifferent character, pushing up the percentage of success without adequate regard for educational standards. It is hoped that in future central and provincial Governments will be willing to bear cheerfully a legitimate share of the financial burden involved

Government  
assistance  
to higher  
education

in higher education. We fully endorse the following view expressed by the distinguished authors of the Sargent scheme : "It has yet to be appreciated in many quarters that to run education on the cheap is the falsest of false economies." While advocating the spread of higher education all over the country we note with disapproval the recognition and establishment of new colleges which do not possess sound financial backing. Caution exercised by the affiliating Universities in this direction would undoubtedly improve the standard of teaching in colleges.

XXIII. We are of the opinion that the University of Calcutta has grown much too unweildy in size. It has to supervise and control far too many colleges. The University can hardly manage to do so in the proper manner. As a result administrative efficiency has deteriorated, academic supervision has become nominal, standards have fallen, teachers and students on account of vastness and disorganisation of the University, have felt more or less unrelated to their *Alma Mater*. We, therefore, support whole-heartedly the movement for the establishment of a University for Assam. We are further of the opinion that the present jurisdiction of the University of Calcutta even in Bengal should be split up so as to make room for atleast another University of the affiliating type.

XXIV. The Sadler Commission regarded the Unitary University as a better type than the affiliating University. The authors of the Sargent Report argue that where Unitary Universities are feasible they have certain definite advantages. But any attempt to abolish the affiliating type will not solve the problem of higher education in India. In a poor country like ours affiliating Universities are an economic necessity. We advocate a golden mean. Our proposal is that affiliated colleges should teach up to the

degree stage while post-graduate studies and research work should be concentrated at the University which will function for such purposes as a residential institution.

XXV. We fully endorse the suggestions contained in the Sargent Report regarding the desirability of selection for admission into the University. We consider it essential that the candidates for admission into the Universities or higher technological institutes should be able to pass simple psychological tests and health examination. Those who can really benefit by University education should be permitted to join the Universities and not others. It has at the same time to be assured that the University education does not become prohibitive in the case of poor students of real merit. "The solution is certainly not to cheapen University education further" argue the authors of the Sargent Report "but to provide for the students in question the necessary financial assistance out of public funds." We would welcome the adoption of this principle by Governments and Universities all over India. According to the Sargent Report the percentage of failures in Indian Universities is higher than that in any other University in the world. Judicious selection of University students and financial aid to poor students of ability would reduce the percentage of failures and improve the standard of academic efficiency.

XXVI. The sub-committee notes with increasing alarm the growing unemployment amongst the graduates of the University. We believe that properly constituted appointment boards can relieve the situation considerably. The problem of "educated unemployment" is created by a thoughtless and unchecked rush of students to the University. The Sargent Committee has calculated that if Intermediate students are not considered as forming part of University organisation one in five of the High school pupils goes to a

Selection of  
University  
students.

Educated  
unemploy-  
ment.

University. If Intermediate students are included in the University the ratio is reduced to one in three. In England and Wales on the other hand one in seven seeks admission to Universities and the majority are absorbed in technical institutions. In India graduates with theoretical or literary education swell the ranks of the unemployed and create a pathetic problem for the country. Secondary education should be rescued from the common belief that every boy who passes beyond even a lengthened primary course should be educated on the assumption that he desires admission to a University.\* The public has to be educated to a right sense of values so as to divert the flow of pupils from channels which are unprofitable to others which will enable them better to face the struggle for existence. Literary education, however advanced, cannot solve the problem of existence and greater stress must be laid on agricultural and industrial education, if the growing problem of unemployment among educated youngmen is not to be accentuated.† We, however, feel that success in this direction will largely depend on the progress of industry and agriculture.

XXVII. The sub-committee believes that the cause of higher education and research would be furthered if the Universities were to be relieved of the burden of regulating professional courses like medicine, different branches of engineering, law, commerce, etc. They might be placed under the control of appropriate state Faculties or Councils or functional bodies. It will probably be conceded that training in these professional courses requires actual touch with the profession, a sort of apprenticeship and learning of professional ways. The University is not the proper body for such purposes, because it can hardly secure and regulate the condition mentioned

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\*Cf. Tenth Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India, pp. 93 - 94.

† Bihar and Orissa Government Resolution quoted in the Tenth Quinquennial Review on the Progress of Education in India page 94.

above. But post-graduate studies and research in these branches should be concentrated at the Universities and the professions would look up to the Universities for the advancement of learning in these branches.

In the work of reconstruction engineers, technologists and medical men will have to take rapidly increasing share. We, therefore, hope that special emphasis will be laid on the training of engineers, technologists and medical men in all provinces of India.

XXVIII. Regarding the control and regulation of secondary education the sub-committee is of the opinion that the early establishment of an autonomous Board of Secondary Education is an urgent necessity. Such a Board should be entrusted with the task of re-organising secondary education on the lines indicated by the authors of the Sargent Report.

XXIX. We also believe that the control and regulation of basic education should under no circumstances be left to local bodies. Control by the provincial governments should be exercised through local school boards specially created for the purpose and the amount of control should be effective so as to realise the ideal of universal education.

XXX. A word about the composition of Governing Bodies of colleges affiliated to Federal Universities modelled on the University of London may not be out of place here. In the first place it is desirable that the majority of the members of such bodies should be teachers. Secondly, it has to be ensured that the colleges are not run directly or indirectly as the private property of an individual or group.

XXXI. It is highly desirable that in all fields of education the provinces should be permitted to enjoy utmost autonomy, subject, however, to the need of co-ordinating the activities of the Universities and of the higher technological and scientific institutions. The federal centre will help, advise, guide within proper limits, and supply expert knowledge on educational questions. The sub-committee feels that too much of central control will not be to the best interest of educational development in India.

XXXII. The proposed Central Grants Committee similarly should confine itself to the following functions and should refrain from any interference with the administration of the University. The functions of the grants committee may be defined as follows: (a) to assess and distribute grants from public funds to the University; (b) to examine and advise upon all schemes for major development; (c) to visit the Universities once in five years and make recommendations, if any to them.

It would consist of men of academic eminence and experience of University administration in India. We are of the opinion that the majority of the members of the Central Grants Committee should be *bonafide* teachers.

XXXIII. The sub-committee is also strongly of the opinion that the Central Advisory Board of Education should have on it a majority of *bonafide* teachers.

XXXIV. We have reserved for consideration in the last section of this Report a matter which goes to the very root of the educational progress of our country. The worth of an educational system is relative to the worth of the teachers who serve it. There is much truth in the charge that our teachers are very often found to be lacking in a

sense of vocation and do not bring to their task the proper sense of responsibility and trusteeship that ought to characterise the makers of the future citizens of the country. It has also been said, with a good deal of justification that teachers of all grades have lacked originality, independence and freedom of thought.

But judged aright it cannot but be admitted that a large majority of teachers are victims of economic, social and political circumstances. Illpaid and often ill-treated by Governing Bodies teachers of schools and colleges are condemned to an inferior status in a society which measures the worth of a man not by the service he renders to the community but by his income. Lacking a suitable social status the teachers are deprived of the opportunity to exercise over the mind and character of their pupils the moral influence which is expected of them. It is only the rare spirits amongst them who succeed in overcoming the handicap. Secondly, political subjection of the country and the

Position of  
teachers and  
their duties.

atmosphere that it breeds inhibit originality, freedom of thought and independence. Thirdly, foreign medium of instruction has encouraged memorising and sapped originality of thought.

Indeed foreign medium has proved to be such a serious hindrance that very few have escaped from its baneful influence. Fourthly, the Universities have been permitted to convert themselves into arenas in the fight for power-politics; boss-dom has arisen in most University centres; subservience has been valued above everything else; flattery and sycophancy have flourished and freedom of outlook and thought has gone to the wall. Under such circumstances it is idle to expect independence and originality of thought.

We as teachers are ready to take a legitimate share of the blame and have no intention of laying the whole of the blame at other people's door. But we would strongly advocate the creation of a proper atmosphere for the

XXXI. It is highly desirable that in all fields of education the provinces should be permitted to enjoy utmost autonomy, subject, however, to the need of co-ordinating the activities of the Universities and of the higher technological and scientific institutions. The federal centre will help, advise, guide within proper limits, and supply expert knowledge on educational questions. The sub-committee feels that too much of central control will not be to the best interest of educational development in India.

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It would consist of men of academic eminence and experience of University administration in India. We are of the opinion that the majority of the members of the Central Grants Committee should be *bonafide* teachers.

XXXIII. The sub-committee is also strongly of the opinion that the Central Advisory Board of Education should have on it a majority of *bonafide* teachers.

XXXIV. We have reserved for consideration in the last section of this Report a matter which goes to the very root of the educational progress of our country. The worth of an educational system is relative to the worth of the teachers who serve it. There is much truth in the charge that our teachers are very often found to be lacking in a

sense of vocation and do not bring to their task the proper sense of responsibility and trusteeship that ought to characterise the makers of the future citizens of the country. It has also been said, with a good deal of justification that teachers of all grades have lacked originality, independence and freedom of thought.

But judged aright it cannot but be admitted that a large majority of teachers are victims of economic, social and political circumstances. Illpaid and often ill-treated by Governing Bodies teachers of schools and colleges are condemned to an inferior status in a society which measures the worth of a man not by the service he renders to the community but by his income. Lacking a suitable social status the teachers are deprived of the opportunity to exercise over the mind and character of their pupils the moral influence which is expected of them. It is only the rare spirits amongst them who succeed in overcoming the handicap. Secondly, political subjection of the country and the atmosphere that it breeds inhibit originality, freedom of thought and independence. Thirdly, Position of teachers and their duties. foreign medium of instruction has encouraged memorising and sapped originality of thought.

Indeed foreign medium has proved to be such a serious hindrance that very few have escaped from its baneful influence. Fourthly, the Universities have been permitted to convert themselves into arenas in the fight for power-politics; boss-dom has arisen in most University centres; subservience has been valued above everything else; flattery and sycophancy have flourished and freedom of outlook and thought has gone to the wall. Under such circumstances it is idle to expect independence and originality of thought.

We as teachers are ready to take a legitimate share of the blame and have no intention of laying the whole of the blame at other people's door. But we would strongly advocate the creation of a proper atmosphere for the

educational progress of the country. All that we propose to emphasise in this connection is that the lot of teachers needs to be improved; that they—particularly the college and University teachers—have to be given proper opportunity of controlling and regulating the system of education to which they devote their life and energy. We demand functional autonomy and improvement of the miserable lot of teachers throughout the length and breadth of our country. But above all, with utmost earnestness and sincerity we draw the attention of the community of the teachers to the sacredness of the task which they have taken up and we hope that given proper opportunities they will play a noble part in fashioning the future of free India.

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## PART II.

In the first part of our Report we confined ourselves mainly to principles. In this part some general features of educational construction which we have considered important have been indicated. We have refrained from entering into further details because so far as details are concerned we find ourselves in substantial agreement with the Sargent Scheme.

### A. GENERAL.

Note 1. Family environment: The success of a national system of education will depend upon the co-operation of four parties: (a) The State; (b) The teacher; (c) The parent and (d) The child. In this paragraph we shall confine ourselves

to the Parent and take this opportunity to emphasise that the vital connection between educational efficiency and family environment is very adequately realised in our country. Indian parents might with great advantage to their wards and the community at large be a little more alive to this aspect of educational endeavour.

**Note II. Teachers' Training :** While agreeing with the conclusions of the Sargent Report so far as its recommendations regarding training is concerned we suggest that a trained teacher before he begins his work should be engaged for six months atleast in a totally different atmosphere. He may be put on to some social service job or asked to undertake a wide travel with financial assistance from the State or visit educational centres. We are further of opinion that such facilities should be open to a teacher every five years. If such a scheme could be worked successfully the teachers would develop a freshness of outlook and gather a fund of experience of the problems of education and life invaluable for the builders of future generations of citizens. The above scheme should be made available to college and University teachers also.

## B. STAGES OF EDUCATION.

**Note 1. The Pre-Primary stage : ( 3 to 6 years. )**

Up to the age of six a child's wish to read is more or less unnatural. We agree with the Sargent Report that the main object of education at this stage is to give the children "Social experience" rather than formal instruction. Fresh air, play, company of other children of both sexes and medical attention are all that is needed. We do not, however, agree with the Sargent Scheme in so far as it recommends that "Pre-primery education should be free in all cases." We suggest that certain income groups should be charged.

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**Note 2. Junior Basic Stage : 6 to 11 years.**

The subjects of study should be as follows: Mother tongue, Arithmetic, Nature study, Handicraft, Tales of history, Elements of Geography, Painting, Singing and dramatics; personal and public hygiene and general knowledge suitable for the age should find a place in the curriculum. Development of social sense through games and team work should by no means be neglected. Some kind of craft such as gardening, spinning, etc must form a part of the work. Foundations of disciplined existence should be laid at this stage.

**Note 3. Senior Basic Stage : ( 11 to 14 years.)**

English should be introduced at this stage. Study of biology from a human standpoint, hygiene, geometry, arithmetic, geography and history should be considered to be essential parts of the course besides the mother tongue. For boys instruction might be based on some kind of manual trade; for girls domestic science should be regarded as an indispensable part of the curriculum. Psychologically this is the age when the need of discipline is of utmost importance. Sense of discipline might be inculcated through games and team work.

**Note 4. Secondary Stage : ( 14 to 17 years.)**

Besides English and mother tongue, Elementary Physics and Chemistry, Algebra, Geometry and a classical language should be taught at this stage. A course in social and economic history, geography and civics must form a part of the curriculum. Psychologically this is an age in which a hanker for freedom is very strong. Pupils at this stage should therefore be given a reasonable amount of freedom under proper guidance. The pupils must be encouraged to do their work by their own unaided effort as far as possible. To give the young learners the joy of creation, manual work should be regarded as essential. Vocational bias is of utmost

importance. In some schools to be called technical high schools technical subjects as indicated in the Sargent Report should be taught instead of some of the academic subjects.

**Note 5. University Education ( 17 to 21.)**

Tutorial system and contact between teachers and students in colleges should be extended as far as possible. Utmost freedom must also be given to the student community.

**Note 6. Techninal and Professional Education : Permanent Committee for technical and professional education.**

We contemplate that education should be compulsory up to the age of 14. We are, however, of the opinion that opportunities should be created in India for the beginning of technical education at the age of 11. India needs rapid economic progress for saving the masses of her people from utter starvation and nakedness. We, therefore, propose that at the age of 11 two options will be open to the young learners: (i) they may go up to the senior basic stage in general education, or (ii) they may join the junior technical schools. We would, however, provide for the introduction of cultural subjects like literature and history in such technical schools in order that the young minds might be in touch with the main currents of human progress.

Technical education must be relative to economic planning and progress and would need modification and adjustment according to the changing needs of the country. There should be established at the centre a permanent Technical Education Committee. Its function will include not only general supervision of technical education but also its review and reconstruction in response to new developments.

In order to be able to supply different grades of technicians the state ought to facilitate the establishment of four grades of technical institutions: (a) Institutions to which suitable candidates may be diverted after the junior basic stage of education; (b) Schools intended for young persons who would join them after completing the senior basic stage.

These will be the technical high schools or second grade technicums ; (c) Institutes meant for pupils who pass out of technical high schools or second grade technicums ; (d) Post-graduate or Research Departments of Universities in technical subjects or Research Institutes to which graduates of Universities in theoretical sciences or of Institutes mentioned in (c) above may be admitted. Technical institutions for music, dramatic art, painting and photography, cinematographic art, distributional trade and various branches of industry, such as, insurance, banking, office administration, etc. should also be established in order to ensure efficient service in these branches of social life. We have studied with care and admiration the views on technical education formulated in the Sargent Report. Its recommendations are based on the well-considered suggestions of more than one committee, Indian and British. We generally endorse their recommendations regarding technical education. We have, however, in the present Report accentuated those views of ours which we have thought worth emphasising.\*

Note 7. Workers' Faculty: In the U. S. S. R there is an educational avenue which is open to actual workers in fields and factories. It enables any worker to attend a three years' course, free which prepares him for entrance to the University. There are also industrial academies to which workers who have shown great proficiency in their work are sent for a five years' course free, where they receive the theoretical education which enables them to take their place as heads of industries.

We suggest that similar institutions be developed in India also with suitable modifications to enable the poor workers of ability to develop their talents and personality and thus make their contributions to society. We would like to add further that special training may be imparted to suitable workers in evening classes with a view to improving their standard of efficiency.

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\*Cf. Paragraphs IX, X and XI of Part I of this Report.

**Note 8. Adult Education :** We fully endorse the scheme of adult education formulated in the Sargent Report. It is a matter of genuine satisfaction that the Central Advisory Board of Education has laid special emphasis on it. We are of the opinion that adult education should be organised on the Russian model and ought to include literary academic, cultural and practical subjects according to the necessity of the circumstances. As to the agencies of education in this line we recommend specially, in addition to the Scheme adumbrated in the Sargent Report, the revival of indigenous methods of popular education, such as, Jatra, Kathakatha, Tarja, Folk-song, folk-dance, moorshida song, etc. The State might in this connection encourage the non-official voluntary institutions devoted to these cultural activities by payment of adequate grants and utilise them for the cultural uplift of the people.

**Note 9. Education of the Defective :** We fully endorse the Sargent Scheme regarding the education of the defectives. We would recommend further that there should be established in India a special Institute for research into defectology and training of teachers for the defectives.

**Note 10. Women's education :** In view of the important part that women teachers will have to take in nursery or pre-primary and junior basic stage of education vigorous attempts ought to be launched without delay to increase the educational facilities for women. A larger number of women might be induced to educate themselves in all grades of educational institutions by the judicious grant of stipends and scholarships.

**Note 11. Health of School children :** It is generally admitted that a large percentage of school children suffer from mal-nutrition and curable physical ailments. We note with approval the scheme of the Government of Bengal to provide for (i) midday meal, (ii) medical care and attention and (iii) training in sound physical habits and cleanliness.\*

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\*Post-war Reconstruction : Government of Bengal's Plan, p. 320.

**Note 12. School text-books :** The sub-committee is of the opinion that there is a good deal of substance in the complaint of the parents as to the frequent changes and the high prices of the text books which substantially increases the cost of education. We, therefore, recommend that copy-right of the books approved by the Text-book Committee should be purchased by the Government. They may be published by the Government and sold at cost-price to the pupils of schools. A book once prescribed should not be changed at least for five years.\*

**Note 13. Scientific education and Scientific, Technological and industrial Research :** If India is to fight successfully against the three scourges of the land—poverty, disease and ignorance, expansion of the supply of scientific personnel will be needed. The Universities and technological institutes should, therefore, prepare for a rapid growth in the number of students of science and technology. Promising youngmen already in industry are to be enabled to take full or part-time courses. The state must be ready to share the financial burden involved in these increased facilities.

Similarly scientific, technological and industrial research must be promoted in the interest of industrial efficiency which in its turn would lead to a rise in the standards of living. Universities, scientific institutes, individual industrial firms or groups of firms and Governments should play their part towards the promotion of research. The prosperity of the country and its position in the world will depend largely on its ability to organise scientific education and industrial research in its various branches.†

We, therefore, recommend the establishment of a Permanent Committee of Scientific Education and Industrial Research whose function will consist in organising, supervising and correlating scientific education and industrial research throughout India.

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\* Cf. Report of the Text Book Com. of Central Bd. of Edn. 1943.

† Cf. Scientific Edn. and Research in relation to National welfare (Government of India Press).