

RECONSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION IN RURAL INDIA

IN THE LIGHT OF THE PROGRAMME
CARRIED ON AT SRINIKETAN
THE INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION
FOUNDED BY
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By

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With an Introduction by

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LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
MUSEUM STREET

P R E F A C E

OF all the problems that India presents to-day, there are probably none so pressing, none so urgent, as the problems of rural reconstruction and rural education.

In this study I have described what Tagore, who is better known as a poet, philosopher, dramatist and novelist, is doing and has achieved with regard to these problems.

Cities like Bombay and Calcutta do not represent India, and yet they have been exploiting the villages and living on them, hence the degraded condition of the Indian villages.

As the title of the study indicates, the problems are of Bengal villages, but they can very well be the problems of the rest of rural India, and the same measures with very little modification could be employed in the work of rural reconstruction and rural education in those parts.

In places I have criticized the Government for its neglect of these rural problems, and for its being responsible in many ways for the poverty of the villages. These criticisms have been made in a helpful spirit and with the best of intentions, and not from any evil or revolutionary motives. As a humble citizen of the country, it is my right to point out to the Government where it has failed in its duty towards the country it has undertaken to govern. I have at the same time not spared the people themselves, who too are responsible for many of their miseries. The evils of the caste system, the social and religious customs, have not only hampered the path to progress, they have reduced the people further and further to misery and despair.

The keynote of the work of rural reconstruction is co-operation, which will be found running through all the pages of this study. The recommendations which I have made,

while based upon a study of a restricted area, may be found helpful to all those interested in these problems. They are by no means exhaustive, and if they are found to be of the least assistance I shall feel that my study has been successful in attaining its purpose.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION. By Rabindranath Tagore	15
<small>CHAPTER</small>	
I. THE PROBLEM OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION	25
II. ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF VISWA-BHARATI AND THE INSTITUTIONS OF SANTINIKETAN AND SRINIKETAN	32
The Problem of Education	32
History of the Educational System	36
Founding of Santiniketan and Maharshi Deven- dranath Tagore	37
The Founding of Viswa-Bharati	43
A Day at Santiniketan	45
III. SRINIKETAN, THE INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECON- STRUCTION	51
The Location of Sriniketan	51
A General Survey of the Economic, Social, Educational, Sanitary and Health Conditions of the Locality	53
Aims and Objectives of the Institute of Rural Reconstruction	61
IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE	62
Agriculture	62
Vegetable Gardening and Small-Fruit Growing	63
Dairy	63
Poultry	65
Industries	66
Weaving	67
Tannery	69
Carpentry	70
Lacquer Industry	71
Pottery	72
Bookbinding, Embroidery and Tailoring	72
Mechanical Workshop	73
Village Welfare Department	74

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE— <i>continued</i>	
Sanitation and Health	74
School Activities	80
Rural Circulating Library	82
Lectures	82
Training Camps	83
Brati-Balaka Organization (Scout Movement)	83
The Baden Powell Scout Movement in India	84
Brati-Balaka (Scout) Organization at Sriniketan	87
V. THE RURAL EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL	93
The Principles underlying it, and the Results so far achieved	93
<i>PART II</i>	
VI. EVALUATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF VISWA-BHARATI AND OF THE INSTITUTE OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION	115
Sriniketan	120
Evaluation of the Activities of the Institute	121
Agriculture	122
Industries	123
Village Welfare Department	125
Vocational Education	129
Rural Experimental School	131
Conclusion	137
<i>PART III</i>	
VII. THE RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	141
Aims of Rural Education	141
1. Development of Health	142
2. Citizenship	144
3. Literacy	147
4. Home-Making	148
5. Recreation	149
6. Cultural Activities	151
7. Social Activities	153
8. Religious Education	154
9. Vocational Education	156
Curriculum	159
Methods and Techniques of Teaching	163
Principles of Teaching	165
Methods	165

CONTENTS

13

CHAPTER

PAGE

VII. THE RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL—*continued*

Building the Village School as a Community Centre	167
Building the Village School	170
Activities of the Community Centre	173
1. Activities common to all the People	174
2. Activities of Adults	174
3. Activities of Boys and Girls	174
Teacher's Place in the Community Centre	175

VIII. THE SCOUT MOVEMENT 177

IX. THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS 184

History of Adult Education in India	187
Agencies which have been responsible for this kind of Adult Education	187
Village Bards or Minstrels	187
Kathakas (Story-tellers)	188
Kirtans (Religious Operas)	189
Theatre	189
The Weekly Market	190
The Village Fairs	193
Adult Education through Exhibitions	195
The University Extension Service	198
Training of Workers in Adult Education	200
Rural Libraries in the Programme of Adult Education	200
Literature for Adult Education	203
Summary and Conclusions	204

X. THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS 206

The Women's Movement and Women's Societies	209
Training the Women in some Crafts	212
Education of Girls	213
The Curriculum	214
Teachers	215
Literature for Women and Girls	216
Summary and Conclusions	217

XI. VOCATIONAL TRAINING AT THE INSTITUTE 218

Students and Apprentices at the Institute	218
1. Teachers from Different Schools	219
2. Workers from various Social Service Organizations	219
3. Artisans	219
The Present Curriculum	219

CHAPTER	PAGE
XI. VOCATIONAL TRAINING—<i>continued</i>	
Suggestions on Curricula and Courses of Studies	220
General Courses	220
Courses in Agriculture	221
Courses in Industries	222
Methods and Techniques	225
Organization and Administration of Vocational Education	228
Conclusion	229
XII. THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS	230
The Present Qualification of Village School Teachers	230
Qualifications of Teachers in other Phases of Village Life	232
Aim of the Institute to propagate its Ideas	233
Suggested Courses of Study and the Programme of Instruction	234
Programme for the carrying 'out of the Objectives of Different Courses	247
Facilities for such a Training at the Institute	250
Conclusion	250
BIBLIOGRAPHY	253
INDEX	261