TAGORE'S EDUCATIONAL IDEAS IN RELATION TO CURRENT EDUCATIONAL THOUGHTS

By 'current educational thoughts' we mean the educational thoughts that are in vogue at present and not yet superseded by any new thought or rejected as antiquated or out-dated. The current educational thoughts in the modern world are being characterized as paedo-centric, scientific, national and democratic. The modern trend in education owes its origin to Rousseau's theory of education and he is said to be the father of modern education. Because in the words of Prof. S. C. Sarkar, "All the latter educators, - namely, Pestalozzi, Herbart, Froebel, Dewey were, inspite of the originality and uniqueness of their own contributions, inescapably influenced by the basic aspects of Rousseau's approach."¹

All these educators are at present widely known and their thoughts are still current in the domain of education all over the world particularly in the West. In the East there is also a galaxy of educators who made valuable contributions to education. In India Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and Gandhi are the most illustrious persons
who contributed much to the development of Indian education. Tagore's extensive and wonderful activities in this field excelled those of the above-mentioned educators. So it would be pertinent to make a comparative study of the educational ideas of the said educators if we want to find out the points of relevance of Tagore's ideas to the current educational thoughts.

Again for a better understanding of Tagore's influence on modern (post-independent) India we should have to look for the points of relevance to the observations and recommendations of various Education Commissions, specially of the latest Education Commission of 1964-66, popularly known as the Kothari Commission.

We shall, therefore, try to point out first the marks of resemblance of Tagore's ideas with those of the foreign educators by a comparative study, secondly, with those of the Indian educators, and lastly, with the views and recommendations of the Education Commissions. But for the sake of brevity we shall only refer to the major aspects of the educational philosophy of foreign educators and those of Indian educational thinkers. The fundamental features of the Report of the Education Commissions will also be referred to for the same reason.
Of the five foreign educators referred to above four educators are Tagore's predecessors and only one namely, Dewey is his contemporary. Montessori, one of the notable educators, is also Tagore's contemporary. All the Indian educators who are referred to above are contemporaneous with Tagore. Although there exist various points of similarity between the educational thoughts of Tagore and those of his predecessors and contemporaries, Tagore surpassed all of them in respect of some important aspects which could not be conceived by any of them.

Tagore and Rousseau

Of the modern great educators, it has been stated, Rousseau is the first exponent of the child-centric trend in education. The publication of his outstanding book entitled the "Emile" containing his educational philosophy ushered in a new epoch in the history of educational thought.

Let us now point out the points of similarity between Rousseau and Tagore in respect of aim, means and method of education as well as in other allied matters.

The first striking point of relevance is that both the thinkers highly advocated the Robinson Crusoe
spirit in education, that is, the spirit of adventure and inventiveness in education. Both of them are the strongest advocates of 'education according to nature.' They were in favour of allowing unrestricted freedom to the children. The place of trio— nature, man and thing — in the process of education as means was equally great for both of them. They again advocated the natural and psychological method as best suited for the children. They also recommended different courses of study for the boys and girls suiting to their constitution and temperament. They attached great importance to travelling as part of education. In other words, they strongly advocated the principle of learning by doing and teaching while travelling.

In spite of many points of resemblance between the two educators the main difference lies in the fact that while Rousseau was satisfied only with planning without any experiment, Tagore made vigorous experiments in the field of education and through various experiments beginning from the elementary education right up to the University stage he boldly put his ideas into practice, reconstructed and reviewed his philosophy wherever necessary. Herein lies his credit as a practical educational thinker and thus he excels Rousseau, a theorist, in the
matter of conducting experiments in his own institutions. Another point of difference between the two staunch advocates of freedom lies in the fact that while Rousseau was an extremist, Tagore was a moderate. The latter was moderate in the sense that he allowed as much freedom to the children as it was needed for his independent growth but this does not mean that there should not be any intermediary between the child and nature. He had given the gurus or the preceptors the most exalting place in his centre of education, and so there is no fear of curtailment of freedom. In this respect Tagore surpasses Rousseau by permitting the teacher to stand between the child and nature without infringing the principle of freedom, because according to Tagore, 'perfect freedom lies in a perfect harmony of relationship.' He does not interpret it in the sense of independence only. But Rousseau did not permit any intermediary — guru or guardian — to stand between the child and the world. He is in this sense an extremist and this extreme view has been charged with the possibility of destruction and degeneration.

Though both of them are in favour of 'education according to nature, 'Rousseau's interpretation of nature is not free from criticism. His theory of leaving the
children up to the age of adolescence to receive education from nature has been subjected to serious charges and is no more accepted as a sound educational theory. But Tagore's view on this point is that we should be both 'vital savages and mentally civilized' and we should have the gift to be natural with nature and human with human society.' That is to say, Tagore wanted to mean that children should be taught or educated in the natural environment or in the surroundings of nature where children should not feel that they have been forcibly confined in a prison house for the cause of being trained for a special purpose. In other words, he wanted to create such a healthy and cheerful atmosphere where the children will receive education spontaneously and joyfully. He did not support the view that the best formative period of childhood and boyhood should be spent in wilderness. Therefore, he started experiment at Santiniketan which was quite free from the din and bustle of the city and pregnant with the beauties of nature. In other words, Santiniketan was the topovana of the old. This is what he meant by education according to nature. His theory is now widely accepted in some form or other in India and abroad. In this point also Tagore claims to be original and excels Rousseau.

Tagore also surpasses Rousseau in respect of
formulation of method. He not only made the method natural and psychological, he made it also cheerful. He introduced the elements of delight, such as, music, dance, drama, etc. in his system in order that the attention of the children may not be diverted to other things. This was only possible for him because Tagore was a poet and an artist having a very sensitive mind which Rousseau did not possess.

An important point of difference between Tagore and Rousseau lies in the fact that Tagore, being an Indian and having spiritual heritage and being inspired by the tapan ideals of ancient India laid equal stress on the spiritual development of the children as also the development of other faculties. This is but natural with him in as much as he wanted a balanced and harmonious development of the 'whole' child. Thus in the matter of realization of spiritual aspect in man Tagore excelled Rousseau as the latter's view is not clear and vivid like Tagore's although he touched the point slightly. While Rousseau stressed the need of knowing, Tagore emphasized on the need of being. Tagore not only made his educational atmosphere beautiful and charming by incorporating various delightful elements in his programme, he also made the inmates of the ashrama feel the presence of a Supreme
Soul around them in all things by means of meditation and the service of humanity. Tagore having a great practical insight wanted to create a band of young men and women that would be able to render valuable service to humanity at large being imbued with his educational ideas but Rousseau being a wild visionary failed to make his Emile and Sophie useful for the society. Tagore also widely differs from Rousseau in respect of introducing trades for the children. The former's view was entirely for the development of aesthetic sense along with physical development of the child while the latter's was mainly concerned with its physical aspect.

Tagore's advocacy for female education and female emancipation not only aimed at the sublimation of instincts and the purgation of emotions, it also aimed at the development of free and independent outlook that might enhance the national prosperity in addition to personal prosperity or happiness. Free mixing before marriage will not only facilitate the individual benefit by living as devoted wife or faithful husband for being a competent father or an ideal mother as Rousseau envisaged, it might help them grow up as the unprejudiced citizen of the country. So women's education, according to Tagore, not only aims at making the women good housewives, but it should also
foster some such independent outlook that might help them contribute much to the national development through participation in every sphere of life, - in politics, in administration and the like. His essay (in Bengali) entitled 'Stri Siksa' or 'the Education of Women' published in 1915 contains his views on the salient features of women's education. In this essay, although he admits that the curriculum in certain matters may be different for boys and girls, he rejects the common notion that the learning of the same subjects with men might tell upon their feminine grace. In another article entitled 'Woman' Tagore clearly said that men and women should be treated equally. Both of them have to play distinct role in the society. They are equal in their respective fields. In his words, "Women cannot be pushed back for good into the mere region of the decorative by man's aggressiveness of power. For she is not less necessary in civilization than man but possibly more so." Then he wrote that women should not be kept absorbed only in the domestic sphere of life. Co-operation of both the sexes is essential in every field. So he said, "The time has come when woman's responsibility has become greater than ever before, when her field of work has transcended the domestic sphere of life. The world with its insulted individuals has sent its appeal to her." Again, he held the view that if
woman be 'frivolous or very narrow in her outlook, she will miss her great mission', the mission of building up a new world or human society. In future civilization, the women, the feeble creatures must have their place and the bigger creatures, men must give way to them. In other words, the perfect co-operation of men and women will lead to the establishment of sweet homes and happy societies. So he made his institutions co-educational and gave the girl students of his institutions full freedom to develop desirable traits and broad outlook. We find that while Tagore insisted upon creating an enlightened womanhood with culture and high education as it was done in the past and making them free from domestic duties, Rousseau underestimated 'the intellectual calibre and worth of women folk' keeping them under strict control and confining them to the duties of housekeeping for pleasing men. This is apparent when he wrote, "Women of culture is to be avoided like a pestilence. She is the plague of her husband, her children, her servants, every body". Herein lies Tagore's credit and in respect of liberal view of women's education Tagore also surpasses Rousseau. In this respect Tagore's view almost coincides with Plato's.

In fine, we can say that in spite of many points of resemblance Tagore outdid Rousseau by virtue of his
synthetic approach, extensive experiments, extra-ordinary poetic faculty and breadth of vision. The universally accepted principles of 'total growth' or the growth of the 'whole man' by developing all the latent potentialities of child's mind and nature are fully reflected in Tagore's educational enterprise. The poet was also able to place before the child a full and consistent view of life, harmonizing different cultural ideals of the past and the present. He made education meaningful by creating a special atmosphere in his centre of learning, Rousseau's educational philosophy lacked all these widely acknowledged principles of modern educational thought.

Tagore and Pestalozzi

After we have discussed the points of similarity and difference in the educational theories of Tagore and Rousseau let us now proceed to find out how far Tagore was in agreement with Pestalozzi and how far he differed from the latter, in respect of educational creeds.

"The aim of all instruction", according to Pestalozzi "is, and can be, nothing but the development of human nature, by the harmonious cultivation of its powers and talents, and the promotion of manliness of life."
In other words, "The sole aim of education is the harmonious development of the powers and dispositions which make up personality." An important observation that he made regarding the harmonious development follows this, "The powers of man must be so cultivated that no one shall predominate at the expense of another, but each be excited to the true standard of activity, and this standard is the spiritual nature of man."  

Regarding the method of education Pestalozzi thought as follows: "I am trying to psychologise the instruction of mankind, I am trying to bring it into harmony with the nature of my mind, will be that of my circumstances and my relation to others. I start from no positive form of teaching." Thus we find that it was Pestalozzi who amongst the modern educators emphasized for the first time on the need of psychologizing instruction. This is, no doubt, a great development in the theory of education, and a mark of distinction as well.

Another important idea which he introduced in the field of educational experiment is the notion of Home-School. In his words, "The school ought really to stand in closest connection with the life of the home."  

Now it is quite evident that Pestalozzi attached
a great importance to a specially organized school or home and surroundings as Tagore did in creating congenial environment. Like Pestalozzi Tagore also emphasized on the need of the teacher, the only difference being the appointment of mother in Pestalozzi's scheme while Tagore advocated the appointment of a person who possesses the heart of a mother or an affectionate father.

As regards aim of education Pestalozzi emphasized on the harmonious development of all powers and talents. It also formed the cardinal point in Tagore's educational philosophy. Like Pestalozzi he did not want to make the development of one aspect of human nature at the cost of others. Still the difference which draws our attention is that Pestalozzi's insistence on the spiritual aspect is not so strong as it is in the scheme of Tagore and that of Froebel. In this respect Tagore is more in the company of Froebel than in the line of Pestalozzi.

With regard to method both of them stressed on the need of psychological principles, but the Pestalozzian method lacks the spontaneity and cheerfulness which Tagore introduced by adding various pleasant occupations like music, dance, painting, etc. with the general method. Tagore's method was more lucid and easily adoptable than the Pestalozzian method which was not scientific though
psychological Tagore's was both psychological and scientific as it neglected neither the aptitude of the child nor the application of science as much as it is required for the purpose of better effect.

Both of them highly appreciated the value of the influence of environment in the matter of forming the character of the children. Tagore even held such view that the surrounding atmosphere is more important than the formal rules. According to him, the active subconscious mind of the children like the tree gathers its food from the surrounding atmosphere. To quote his own words, "The atmosphere is a great deal more important than rules and methods, buildings, appliances, class-teachings and text-books." That is why, Tagore tried to create an atmosphere in his institution giving it the principal place in the programme of teaching. In this respect Tagore's view is almost identical with Pestalozzi's. In the opinion of Herbart, Pestalozzi's aim was the welfare of the people and his practical scheme of education was planned accordingly. On this point also Tagore had a great affinity with Pestalozzi. Though Tagore was born and brought-up in a highly aristocratic family, he thought deeply of the amelioration of the lot of the lowliest and the lost while he came in close contact with the poor peasants of his own
estate. His poetic heart at once responded to the call of the poor and the distressed for taking up some such measures that might redress their misery. The establishment of Sriniketan was purely motivated by the idea of welfare activities. His motive was to make the villages of Bengal the seat of happiness and beauty.

Tagore's credit, however, lies in the fact that he did not confine his programme only to setting up of elementary schools for educating the children of the poor for ameliorating their lot, but unlike Pestalozzi he also aimed at the improvement of the socio-economic condition of the neglected and the down-trodden through the development of agriculture and cottage industries along with the proper sanitation and health programmes. In other words, not only the eradication of illiteracy but also the removal of poverty from the life of the people was Tagore's aim. So Prof. Sarkar observes that 'Pestalozzi's attempt was almost like the Gandhiji's notion of Rama-raiwa where justice and good-will, peace and prosperity, will always prevail.' But such an ideal state of things is sure of being subjected to various limitations. Tagore's scheme was more practical and was thus free from such limitations and drawbacks. This flawless practical aspect of Tagore's scheme of reorientation of education may be
considered to be his surpassing and original contribution that excels all other previous schemes of psychologization of instruction and socialization of education advocated by Pestalozzi.

Tagore and Herbart

Since the time of Rousseau, it has been seen that the idea of all-round development of a child has been accepted as the sole aim of education. Pestalozzi clarified it and emphasized on "The natural, progressive and harmonious development of all the powers and capacities of the human being." The highest aim of education according to Herbart, is nothing but morality. He, however, regarded morality in a very wide sense and used it to mean "a happily integrated, virtuous personality." That is to say, Herbart's view of morality includes aesthetics. In other words, in his view it must include both ethics and aesthetics or both truth and beauty. As Tagore was a great votary of truth and beauty, he has a great resemblance to Herbart.

A noticeable feature of Herbart's educational doctrines was his upholding of the principle of 'appreception' which is defined as 'the power of association and
assimilation of ideas.' He like his predecessor, Pestalozzi, stressed the need of the science of mind or psychology but at the same time he felt the importance of philosophy for the perfection of education. He attached great importance to both science and metaphysics in the process of education. Herbert's view on the inclusion of philosophy in education is clearly expressed when he says that, "To teach completely how life is determined by its two rulers, Speculation and Taste, we must seek for a system of philosophy, the key-note of instruction." He then thought that instruction must not be dull and uninteresting; it must arouse interest in the child, otherwise it will fall flat upon the child's mind. The purpose of instruction must be to give the right direction to their thoughts and impulses and to incline these towards the morally good and the true. As interest is a concomitant factor of mental activity he attached much importance to it. He not only laid stress on the assimilation of ideas, but he also felt the need of correlation of studies. In these respects Tagore had a wonderful resemblance to Herbart, because like Herbart Tagore tried his best to create interest in his teaching processes by introducing interesting subjects and occupations. His experiment at Santiniketan has clearly shown us that he stressed much on the self-activity of the children and
spontaneity. Though he did not like formal methods, he accepted the psychological implication of preparation, presentation and application and other formal steps. His approach was, however, more practical and realistic and it is in this sense that he preferred teaching of history and geography or natural science by travelling or visiting the countrysides and places of interest or historic importance, community living through organisation of feasts and festivals, etc. The teaching of English literature through the medium of Bengali and with the help of Bengali literature and vice versa express the idea of correlation of studies.

Another striking characteristic of Herbartian pedagogy is his stress on character-building of the educand. He observes, "Character depends upon will, will upon desire, desire upon interest, and interest upon the circle of thought, and a strong character can be formed only by cultivating an extensive and coherent circle of thought." It then follows from the above observation that the formation of a strong character depends upon the cultivation of an extensive and coherent circle of thought. It again depends upon will directly and upon desire and interest indirectly. Will is 'action generated out of desire.' So he viewed that instruction not only aims at arousing interest but also it must be capable of organizing
will and desire and herein lies the true test of a perfect instruction which involves teachers in the process of education or their influence on the children. Thus we find that it was Herbart who for the first time endeavoured to connect instruction with the formation of character and formulation of psychological methods along with necessary assistance of teacher. He not only emphasized on the need of intellectual development but also on the moral development. These ideas have a great resemblance to Tagore's ideas as Tagore's idea was the development of the whole man, the unfoldment of the total personality through formation of character. In this respect Tagore excelled Herbart.

Tagore and Froebel

"Temperamentally Tagore had greater affinity with Pestalozzi with his large humanity, expansive soul and romantic zeal, and with Froebel with his profound love of Nature and the spiritual vision of unity amidst the diversities of creation, than with Herbart with his calm, logical and general disciplined approach to intellectual problems." This remark is made by Dr. H.B.Mukherjee. He also contends that Tagore's nearest counterpart was Froebel. In his own words, "Of all the western educators
since Rousseau, the nearest counter-part of Tagore was, perhaps, Froebel, because of the closest affinity of spirit between the two. Moreover, the Kindergarten schools, which had become a byword for progressive education throughout the world during the latter half of the nineteenth century had also penetrated into India, and Tagore must have been quite familiar with the main principles of the Froebelian movement through direct experience in India and in England as also through private studies. On the other hand, Prof. S.C. Sarkar observes that in spite of several marks of resemblance Tagore had many points of difference with Froebel. He says thus, "An influence on the poet either of Froebel's writings or of the Kindergarten system with which Tagore must have been more or less familiar, may, with justice, be admitted. But at the same time all who know the poet will at once bear testimony to the deep relationship between Tagore's educational theory and his earlier experiences and writings. It is indeed an undeniable fact that Tagore's philosophy was inseparably linked with the development of his own mind and spirit. Here also Tagore may be said to have been helped by a kindred soul to find his own thought with less efforts."

So we are now in a position to see in brief the
points of resemblance and difference between Tagore and Froebel and marks of Tagore's excellence at the same time. According to Froebel, "Education consists in leading man, as a thinking, intelligent being, growing into self-consciousness, to a pure and unsullied, conscious and free representation of the inner law of Divine unity and in teaching him ways and means thereto." He then writes, "The object of education", in his opinion, "is the realization of a faithful, pure, inviolate, and hence holy life." He then writes, "Education as a whole, by means of instruction and training, should bring to man's consciousness the fact that man and nature proceed from God and are conditioned by him that both have their being in God." 

Froebel like the three educators referred to above was Tagore's predecessor and like Herbart he was a philosopher. His philosophy was influenced by the idealism that was initiated by Kant and developed by Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. He applied his idealistic philosophy to education. His philosophy of life and education can be traced even from the very opening paragraph of 'The Education of Man', a notable book written by him on education which contains the salient points of his educational philosophy. It runs thus, "...... the whole world - the All, the Universe - is a single great organism in which an external
Uniformity manifests itself. This principle of uniformity expresses itself as much in external nature as in spirit. Life is the union of the spiritual with the material. Without mind or spirit matter is lifeless; it remains formless, it is mere chaos. Then he writes, 'God is the pre-supposition, the condition of their existence. Without God they would not exist. God is the one ground of all things. God is the all-comprehending, all-sustaining. God is the essential nature, the meaning of the world.'

Thus we find that Froebel's educational philosophy was mainly based on his faith in a spiritual reality which was the source of all existence. In this respect Froebel is akin to Tagore who held the view that the purpose of education is not only to 'give us information but to make our life in harmony with all existence.' According to Froebel, "To be wise is the highest aim of man, the most exalted achievement of human self-determination" and "the object of education is the realisation of a holy life." By education, he contends, "the divine essence of man should be unfolded, brought out, lifted into consciousness, and man himself raised into free, conscious obedience to the divine principle that lives in him and to a free representation of this principle in
This idea is also akin to Tagore as we have been earlier in the foregoing chapters that Tagore emphasized on the unfoldment of personality through self-realization and introspective vision of the Universal Man or the Supreme Person.

The difference which can at once be noticed is that Tagore not only accepted holy life but also he emphasized on a life of love and joy as not opposed to ordinary life. Regarding the idea of God there is also a marked difference between the two educators. We have referred to earlier, Prof. Sarkar explains the difference in the following way, "What Froebel calls God and sees as an abstract principle as unity, Tagore sees as the Universal Man, the Supreme Person. Tagore's universal is a fuller and nearer reality touching human life and mind at all points." In other words, Froebel's God was Nirguna Brahma while Tagore's was Saguna Brahma, to express in popular Indian terminology.

"Froebel gave pleasure and play the status almost of a universal principle. But how to harmonize this principle with the instincts and impulses of nature and mind, how again to make it yield results not only in the earliest stages of education but also in the later - practically throughout one's life - these are questions Froebel left
But it was Tagore who successfully solved the questions that were left by Froebel. His credit lies in harmonization and making education fit for the whole man. His education was meant for the man as a whole, for the whole life, not for any period or any part of it. He had a full and consistent life-view.

According to Froebel, play is the most characteristic activity of childhood, it is the most spiritual and the purest activity at this stage while work is the characteristic activity of boyhood. When the children are fond of imitating domestic activities, the pupils in their boyhood like to imitate the neighbourhood occupations. So Froebel laid much emphasis on such activities according to their age. In this respect Tagore had a wonderful resemblance to Froebel, because Tagore's educational programmes were full of such joyful activities, such as, organization of feasts and festivals, keeping of poultry, dairy, various beautiful birds and tiny beasts in his small garden, zoo and other different community programmes. Besides, Tagore like Froebel advocated the principle of joy and freedom in education.

The next important characteristic of his educational theories is his emphasis on the need of instruction. His emphasis on the manual work is also very
important. He said that—"Every child, boy, and the youth, whatever his condition or position in life, should devote daily at least one or two hours to some serious activity in the production of some definite external piece of work." He, however, regretted like Tagore that the domestic and scholastic education of our time leads children to indolence and laziness; a vast amount of human power thereby remains undeveloped and is lost. In course of our survey of Tagore's educational theories and practice we have seen it clearly that Tagore equally attached importance to the playful activities and manual work but his credit lies in making the activities artistic and beautiful. His programmes were fully activity-centred but free from drudgery. In other words, these were full of joy and delight. The programmes like drawing, painting, gardening, etc. that occupied a vital place in Tagore's educational system have a great relevance to Froebel's ideas.

As Froebel's name and fame are greatly associated with his epoch-making experiment with the children by founding the Kindergarten, Tagore's fame lies in his experiments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan. Tagore's originality is found to be most significant for making his programme international and complete for the whole
man while Froebel's programme stops with the child and the boy and does not proceed up to the man. Tagore's Visva-Bharati is a unique creation and stands unparalleled in the history of the world. It is an institution which is a seat of world culture including the study of both arts and science, agriculture and industry, there being no second of its kind.

**Tagore and Dewey**

Of the foreign educators Dewey and Montessori were Tagore's close contemporaries and of all the educators, both western and eastern, Tagore had the greatest resemblance to Dewey in the matter of both theory and practice. Prof. C. Sarkar observes, "Only two persons proved themselves equal to the task in this century, John Dewey and Tagore. Both of them not only made substantial contribution to educational thought and offered new programmes, but actually conducted experiments."¹ Prof. J.J. Findlay (in his book entitled "The Foundation of Education, Vol.II) says, "There are two great men in our epoch, John Dewey in the West and Rabinindranath Tagore in the East, whose wisdom not only illumines the general mind but also stooped to the level of children. ....... As Professor of
Philosophy and of Education in the Chicago University, the former founded an Experimental school in order to test out the validity of principles to which his philosophy had led him to give a tentative adherence. After successfully directing the schooling of some hundreds of children for eight years or so, the investigation was dropped.

"The school in the ashram at Bolpur has been conducted for thirty years or more, but only recently that its fame has extended in the West, for it is in the last few years that Tagore has come to be widely known and honoured in Europe."2 Thus we find that Prof. Findlay refers to certain points of difference and of resemblance between the two great educators of the present century. The first point of difference is that Dewey conducted experiments only for about eight years, while Tagore did it for thirty years or more. Secondly, Dewey was a professor while Tagore was a poet. Thirdly, the former dropped experiment after a certain period of time, while the latter carried it up to the last hour of his life.

The striking points of resemblance are, however, many. As for example, both of them were lovers of children, they kept school, their influence upon the future generation was very enormous, they were all known to the world
for their original contribution to the progress of mankind as a whole, and of the children in particular. A scholar like Prof. Findlay not only admired his programme but also dedicated his book to Rabindranath Tagore whom he designated with the appellation of Poet, Philosopher and Teacher of schoolboys of Bolpur. Through a long discussion Prof. Findlay tried to point out one thing that though there were some basic points of contrast between them owing to their birth in the opposite poles of the globe and the manner of living in their respective environments, Dewey in democracy and Tagore in aristocracy, and again on account of their inborn qualities of seeing things through different angles and expressing ideals and truth of life through different media, Dewey through barest logical arguments and Tagore through poetry and music, they had wonderful affinity regarding the notion of human life and development. In other words, though the western philosopher and the eastern seer followed different paths and adopted different means, they aimed at the same goal and their notion of life and education was the same. In the words of Prof. Findlay, Dewey found his way to the ideal through patient experiment and argument while Tagore did it through meditation and music. Other marks of resemblance are the rejection of the flash and glare of the modern world, adherence to the stark simplicity
for truth and justice, acquisition of adequate practical experience of child life, acceptance of the value of history and literature as essential to wholesome growth. Both of them again paid due honour to science and used it as a means to a greater end. The meaning and purpose of life is the same for both of them. They did not attach much importance to this or that subject or method for success in any field of life. The life they cherish is not the future life but the daily life we live and how to fulfil itself both in individual experience and in cooperation. In other words, they aimed at the success for the whole life and not for any particular aspect thereof. Thus we can say without any hesitation that both of them differ greatly from other educators in respect of theories or principles and methods of education. Many other points of difference and resemblance are also noted by Prof. Findlay in other passages. One of them runs, "...... while studies matter greatly, community life still more, the popular phrases on the lips of reformers, are in their speech too - freedom, activity, initiative, individuality, sociality, self-government, altruism; even interest and happiness but these are informed with fuller significance; with Tagore the environment, the ashram, stars and sky, friends and neighbours, are the means whereby an inner
happiness is fostered. Dewey seems to leave such influences to the subconscious; his means whereby the American boy and girl are to solve the riddle of life spring from impulses of curiosity and intelligence. Significance is found in relating the materials and tools of today with the unfurnished equipments of society in earlier epochs, pursuing the occupations presented in kitchen, garden and workshop, his children learned to enjoy the fellowship of their group, to be humane and considerate, without relating such sentiments either to the transcendental or to the sense of fellowship. 

It is clear from the passage quoted above that the two great educators had another important point of resemblance which distinguishes both of them from other reformers in the field of education in their interpretation of certain terms, e.g., freedom, individuality, sociability, etc. with fuller significance. One apparent point of difference is that while Tagore laid stress upon environment or the ashram, stars and sky, friends and neighbours as the means for fostering the inner happiness, Dewey attached importance to the subconscious whereby the boys and girls can solve the riddles of life that spring from impulses of curiosity and intelligence. They can have happiness and enjoy the fellowship of their group and
become humane and considerate by pursuing the occupations presented in kitchen, garden and workshop without relating such sentiments either to transcendental or to the sense of fellowship.

Prof. Sarkar also enumerates certain points of resemblance and difference between Tagore and Dewey. Of course, the points of resemblance are far greater than those of difference. Needless to say that in certain matters of theory and practice Tagore excels even Dewey, the unparallel educator of the west. Prof. Sarkar writes, "There is a striking resemblance between Dewey and Tagore in the sharp insight and discrimination that each evinces in selecting and using from the total contribution of forerunners just the right ideas and suggestion that he needed. And the manner in which they solve their problems and the types of solution they offer are also similar to a very great extent."  

Regarding the chief aim of education as total growth or the growth of the 'whole man' through the development of all the powers and potentialities of the child's mind and nature, and not of any single aspect of human personality at the cost of others, both Dewey and Tagore with their 'extra-ordinary mental capacity and breadth of
vision' accepted this all-inclusive view. Tagore's credit lies in the fact that he even widened this notion when he said that "the best function of education is to enable us to realise that to live as man is great, requiring profound philosophy for its ideal, poetry for its expression and heroism in its conduct."\(^5\) Dewey, on the other hand, remains satisfied in holding the view, "Since growth is the characteristic of life, education is all one with growing; it has no end beyond itself."\(^6\)

Another point of resemblance is in respect of their view regarding school organized as a special society and teacher as guide. Rousseau did not allow any thing or any body - society or teacher to stand between the child and nature. "Dewey and Tagore, however, found place for a specially organized social environment in the school and the expectation of both is that freedom of the individual will no more be hampered in this setting than by the natural requirements of mutuality and joint living."\(^7\) But still there exists difference between the two. "Without any jeopardy to this principle of freedom, Tagore has provided a position of great importance to the personality and creative self-giving of the Guru, the teacher. In Dewey's scheme of projects and activity programmes, however, the teacher is expected to retire to the background and take
steps to prevent an all too direct exposure of the pupils to his personal direction or influence. Tagore had "unbarred and thrown open both to pupils and teachers an inner region of freedom nothing corresponding to which existed in Dewey's scheme. Here Tagore's teacher appears in the role of the leader and the pioneer where chief specialisation is in the art of liberating individual initiative and enterprise and making the active use of the freedom principle joyous and fruitful in each case."

Then we may undoubtedly say that these are the marks of Tagore's excellence. Then Prof. Sarkar refers to two important aspects of Dewey's philosophy and Tagore's characteristic difference in this regard in spite of maximum resemblance and his own credit with regard to these conceptions.

First, he refers to Dewey's pragmatism. Though Dewey accepted Hegelian idealism in the early years of his career and designated his philosophy as experimental philosophy, he in the latter years was greatly influenced by James's pragmatism. Pragmatism generally means that knowledge of the world should be acquired with reference to practical interest and its fulfilment. Again, "Knowledge is always a means, never an end in itself; it is purely instrumental, hence the title of Dewey's philosophy—
Dewey, however, made his plan against the background of a very comprehensive life-view and his planning was thorough and practical. "The individual living within the setting of an intimate living and democratically organised social group as a whole growing in consciousness as a result of the impact of individual growth - this, in brief is how Dewey envisions the educational process. And within this setting his planning was amazingly thorough and practical."

Tagore also held such comprehensive view of life and things and his educational scheme included all the important points of Dewey's general philosophy and philosophy of education. In addition to the inclusion of all the major contributions made by Dewey to the field of education Tagore as a poet and a humanist placed humanism above all and the 'creed of humanism has a wider outlook than even pragmatism as it makes men, his needs and aspirations to be the central object of all activities, intellectual, practical and religious.' Herein lies Tagore's characteristic difference and excellence at the root of which exist Indian tradition and his personal experience.
We then come to the conclusion that the marks of resemblance existing between the two great educators clearly indicate the points of relevance between the views of the two outstanding personalities of the twentieth century. The marks of difference that exist between the philosophies of these two thinkers practically convince us of the superiority of Tagore's contribution to educational theory and practice.

Tagore and Montessori

Like Dewey Montessori was Tagore's contemporary and naturally therefore there might have exchange of views and ideals between Tagore and Montessori. The first point of similarity lies in the fact that both the educators founded institutions for experiment of their educational ideas. Tagore's school was established six years earlier than Montessori's Children's House (Casa dei Bambini) in Rome in 1907. Tagore's school was situated in a very neglected place of Bengal in India. But if Montessori's Children's House is said to have tolled 'the knell of class-teaching, Tagore's school tolled the knell of soulless confinement within four walls and introduced in its place the open-yard teaching. Nevertheless, Tagore started his experiments at the age of 40 years while
Montessori at the age of 37, that is to say, they all started experiments almost at the same time.

Despite exchange of ideals, Tagore was not influenced by her nor did he adopt anything from her directly. In the words of Dr. H.B. Mukherjee, "Though Tagore conducted ingenious sense-training, games and exercises at the Santiniketan school in its earliest days there is little evidence that any of Montessori's methods or apparatuses were used for the purpose."^1

'Freedom first, freedom second and freedom always' - this is the watch word of Montessori method", observes Prof. K.K. Mookerjee.2 This spirit also strikes the keynote of Tagore's educational theory and practice.

Montessori's pedagogical method was based on psychology in the true sense, and was not like that of Pestalozzi which ended in the mechanization of education or instruction. Hence Rusk observes, "Recognising the advance which Montessori had made, and her adaptation to the training of normal children of a procedure specially devised for deficient children, we may characterise her method as the psychological method. Pestalozzi had sought to psychologise education but, as in his day there existed no psychology of the school children, he
ended by mechanizing instruction, and the methods which were successful with him failed with teachers of a later age." Montessorian psychological method aimed at the normal expansion or development of the children with due regard to their interests and not to the necessities of curriculum. So she says, "By education must be understood the active help given to the normal expansion of the life of the child." For the development or normal expansion of life is needed perfect freedom. Freedom does not mean licence. It must consist in absolute obedience to the laws of development. In her own words, "The method of observation (that is, the psychological method) is established upon one fundamental base - the liberty of the pupils in their spontaneous manifestation." In this respect Tagore had a great resemblance to Montessori as he also like Montessori did not think freedom merely in the sense of licence. Montessori was the strongest advocate of auto-education or self-education and as such both instruction and environment, in her opinion, should be conducive to the development of the child life in a spontaneous way. So the task of the teacher in her system should be that of the directress. Rusk writes in this connection, "If a child fails to perform a task or to appreciate the truth of a principle, the teacher must not make him conscious of his error by
repeating the lesson, she must assume that the task has been presented prematurely and before again presenting the stimulus, await the manifestation of the symptoms which indicate that the need exists. Prof. K. K. Mukerjee describes the same idea in a clear form. It runs thus, "... the teacher in Montessori system is called the Directress whose function is just that of an 'observer' but not of a passive 'onlooker'. She is an 'active observer.' She is one who is to stand by refraining from fussy interference but ready to lend a hand whenever necessary. She is also to keep a minute record of each child's progress like a watchful mother. Froebelian teachers are similarly called 'benevolent superintendents.'

Thus we find that Montessori had great resemblance to both Tagore and Froebel. Specially her idea on the task and vision of teacher is very much akin to those of Tagore. Both of them emphasized on the scientific and spiritual outlook of the teacher in addition to his affectionate heart of a beneficent superintendent. In the words of Montessori, "The vision of the teacher should be at once precise like that of the scientist and spiritual like that of a saint. The preparation for science and the preparation for sanctity should form a
new soul, for the attitude of the teacher should be at once positive, scientific and spiritual. ... The scientific laboratory, the field of Nature where the teacher will be initiated into 'the observation of the phenomena of the inner life' should be the school in which free children develop with the help of material designed to bring about development when she feels herself aflame with interest seeing the spiritual phenomena of the child and experiences a serene joy and an insatiable eagerness in observing them, then she will know that she is initiated. Then she will begin to become a teacher."8

Another mark of resemblance of Montessori to Tagore is to be traced in the matter of attaching importance to the place of environment in the educational programme. "As instruction should be adopted to the stage of development of the pupil, Montessori advocates that the environment should likewise be adjusted", observes Rusk,9 and quotes the following lines in support of his statement, "Give the child an environment in which everything is constituted in proportion to himself and let him live therein." In other words, "the environment should contain the means of auto-education." Like Tagore, the lover of freedom, Montessori observes, "Not only must the teacher be transformed, but the school environment
must be changed. The introduction of the 'material development' into an ordinary school cannot constitute the entire external renovation. The school should become the place where the child may live in freedom and this freedom must not be solely the intimate, spiritual liberty of internal growth. The entire organism of the child, from his physiological, vegetative part to his motor activity, ought to find in school the best condition for development."  

Then we find that Tagore's idea of setting up of his school at Santiniketan, a specially selected place for educational experiments, is totally in conformity with the idea of Montessori. Tagore was fully convinced that no renovation could be effected in the environment of a city like Calcutta or the like. That is why, he selected the place that was originally selected by his father for meditation. He also believed like Montessori that simply by introducing the materials of development in the ordinary schools an ideal environment for the entire development of the child can never be created. If it be so, Tagore might have started the school somewhere in Calcutta in stead of going to a barren place of Raipur where his Visva Bharati now stands with glory as a seat of international culture.
Tagore had also another striking point of resemblance to Montessori in the very conception of educational principles. Because the guiding principles of both Tagorean and Montessorian system, are joy, freedom, spontaneity and activity.

The main points of difference between the two outstanding educators are, however, twofold. First, while Tagore being a poet and an artist is the greatest votary of imagination which is according to him, the rare quality in man and it distinguishes man from lower animals and thereby proves Man's superiority over all and makes him the best of the creations. Montessori being a medical graduate is the strongest lover of practical activities and discards even the study of fairy tales which are according to her, not very useful to the children. As regards the importance of environment there is also a marked difference, Tagore's environment was nothing but nature which is not only the source of social and intellectual development but also at the same time conducive to the development of spirituality. This sense of spirituality in environment is lacking in Montessori system.

Another point of difference appears in the conception of teacher's part in the educational programme. Tagore's idea of an ideal teacher, not only contains the characteris-
tics that are to be present in the directress or in the benevolent superintendent, but it also contains the quality of the Guru or the revered preceptor of the old. They will not only be acquainted with the modern culture and the methods of modern psychology, but also they should possess some such qualities that are not to be found in common with other persons in the society. That is to say, they should have the qualities of Acharya who enjoys through renunciation and teaches others only through his own performance. It is he who is sanctified like a saint and learned man, like the wise of the old. It is he who not only helps the child for their physical and intellectual development but who also helps for their spiritual development.

There is another point of difference regarding the conception of school. According to Montessori, "School is the place where the social sentiment is developed; it is the child's society. The society of the child is the antithesis of the adult society where sociability implies a free and wellbred inter-change of courtesies and mutual aid ... in the society of the child it implies identity of physical attitudes and uniformity of collective actions together with a total disregard of all pleasant and courteous relations; mutual help which is a virtue in adult
society, is here considered the greatest fault, the worst offence against discipline.  On the other hand, school, according to Tagore, should be "an ashrama where men have gathered for the highest end of life in the peace of nature. . . . where nature's festivities of flowers and fruit have their joyous recognition from man; where the young and the old, the teacher and the student, sit at the same table to partake of their daily food and the food for their eternal life."  We have mentioned elsewhere that Tagore held the view that the children are not grown-ups. In this respect Tagore and Montessori preach the same idea. But the conception of school in the form of modernized ashrama or tapovana which Tagore held throughout the whole of his life is quite different from Montessori's conception of school.

Another point of difference is quite evident from the fact that while Montessori laid emphasis upon the individualization of instruction, Froebel on spiritualization and Dewey on the socialization, Tagore attached importance to all the three factors.

The last, not the least, point of difference may be said to lie in the method of teaching. While Montessori was in favour of using the didactic apparatuses specially designed for the purpose of training of
the senses, the gateways of knowledge, Froebel advocated the playway as the best method of teaching and as the best means of developing the power of imagination and put less emphasis on the training of the senses. Tagore, being a poet and an educator at the same time laid equal emphasis on the training of the senses and the developing of imagination through natural gifts and not the artificial gifts as suggested by the foreign educators. He was always against any system which tends to give rise to artificiality and sheer conventionalism. Herein lies the uniqueness and originality of Tagore in the matter of both principles and method of teaching. Thus by the comparative study of the principles and methods of education it is now quite explicit to us that Tagore excels all the foreign educators beginning from Rousseau down to Montessori and thereby can claim his originality as an outstanding educator of the twentieth century contributing mainly to the theory and practice of synthetic approach in education.

It would, however, be wrong to think that Tagore owed to none in respect of formulation of his educational thoughts and ideas. He might have been enchanted by Rousseau's theory of naturalization in education, Pestalozzi's psychologization of instruction, Herbart's
moralization of education. Tagore might have been influenced by the idea of Froebel's spiritualization of education, and by Spencer's individualization. He might be possibly impressed by Dewey's socialization and democratization, and Montessori's liberization and auto-education. Nevertheless, Tagore's claim to originality remains unimpaired. His original contribution lies in the synthesisization of all the theories of education and introduction of universalization in education as a new factor. His theory of internationalism and humanism through dynamic education is an innovation in the field of educational thought. His assertion or inclusion of aesthetic education as a means of spiritualized education is also another mark of original contribution. His ardent passion for connecting economic education with aesthetic education or realism with idealism or materialism with spiritualism or science with spirit is totally a new idea which neither his predecessors nor his contemporaries, western or Indian ventured to think. It is indeed a new idea for the new generation and to put it into practice. His main concern with the implementation of this new idea at his international institution, Visva-Bharati has proved him from both the points of theory and practice an unparalleled educator in the history of the world. Tagore thus, may undoubtedly be called the Herald of the
International ideal in education as the theory of universal humanism strikes the key-note of his poetry and other literary works as well as of his educational enterprises. His philosophy of life is based on the realization of the universal Man or Visva-devata. His philosophy of life and philosophy of education being interconnected and inseparable the ideal of internationalism and universal humanism naturally occupies the central place in his educational theory and practice. In the words of Prof. Humayun Kabir, 'Tagore lived and worked for the realization of Universal Man! His life and work including educational experiments are indeed marked by the spirit of universalism. The spirit of universal humanism again led him to the introduction of internationalism which is his original contribution in addition to his theory of synthesis or Samanyabaja. These ideas are purely new and are not to be found in the theories of other educators of the world and by virtue of these new thoughts he surpassed all the western educators and the eastern educators as well.
Vivekananda, Tagore and Sri Aurobindo — all three of them had great reverence to the principles and processes of the Gita and the Upanishads. The principles are, firstly, to gain an awareness of one's own self, secondly, to reach through this self awareness a sense of identity with the universe and thirdly, to see God in one's own self and to see everything in God. Three processes are also suggested for the acquisition of the said principles. These are, (1) Salutation and Submission (Pranipat), (2) Interrogation (Pariprasna) and (3) Service (Seva). It is again said that the truth of the self can be realized through enquiry (Jnana) the truth of the universe through work (Karma) and the truth of the highest through devotion (Bhakti). All the three persons referred to above tried to combine all the three principles and three processes for the development of the whole man. But this does not mean that they by doing this wanted to put education under the tutelage of religion. They, on the other hand, wanted to work in an unified way in consonance with Indian tradition including the third principle, the realization of God in man and man in God or the divinity of man and humanity of God, which is excluded in the system of education.
According to Vivekananda, education is 'the manifestation of perfection already in man' and religion is 'the manifestation of divinity already in man.' This shows how he related education with religion and what he wanted to achieve through education. But a systematic philosophy of education can never be expected from him as he was mainly concerned with the interpretation and propagation of Indian religion and culture. His educational thoughts that we gather from him come mainly from his thinking on religion and social problems. The fundamental points of his educational philosophy may be stated as follows, (1) Knowing is unveiling, (2) All knowledge is within, (3) Infinite power is in the soul, (4) Self education is the best education, (5) Free growth is an essential factor in education, (6) Assimilation of ideas (positive and not negative) should form the aim, (7) Character-building and man-making should be the sumnum of education.

Like Tagore Vivekananda was also conscious of the defects of the prevailing system of education and so he revolted against the soul-killing and parrot-making negative type of education. According to him, "Knowledge is inherent in man, no knowledge comes from outside, it is all inside. What we say a man knows, should, in strict
psychological language, be what he 'discovers' or 'unveils': what a man learns is what he really discovers by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge."¹ Thus we find, knowing is nothing but unveiling or discovering. Again he believed that all knowledge secular or spiritual exists in the human mind. Then he said, "All knowledge comes from the human soul. Man manifests knowledge, discovers it within himself, which is pre-existing, through eternity."² According to him, the infinite power is in the soul of man whether he knows it or not. Its manifestation is only a question of being conscious of it. ... The light Divine within is obscured in most people."³ Ignorance, impurity and selfishness stand in the way of being conscious of it. It becomes transparent as glass as soon as the obscuring medium becomes less dense. A child, he believed, grows like a plant and educates itself. So the task of the teachers, in his opinion, lies in awakening or arousing all knowledge implicit in a child. It is not, therefore, desirable that undue domination is exercised by the parents or the teachers upon the boys. Because it hampers the free growth. So he says, "That system which aims at educating our boys in the same manner as that of the man who battered his ass, being advised that it could thereby be turned into a horse, should be abolished."³
He held the view that negative thoughts weaken men. So he opined that positive should always be given to the children. He therefore writes, "In language and literature, in poetry and arts, in everything we must point out not the mistakes that people are making in their thoughts and actions, but the way in which they will be able to do these things better. The teaching must be modified according to the needs of the taughts." Teaching should be taken as service to humanity and worship to God. The children are the children of the Lord. So by serving the children we can worship God. Because he held the view that 'every soul is the soul of God.' So look upon everyone as God.' He is before you in many forms, where else do you look for Him? This idea is also held by both Tagore and Gandhi.

Another important point of relevance may be observed when Vivekananda said that "education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. ...... If education is identical with information the libraries would be the greatest sages in the world and encyclopaedias.the Rishis." He himself asked,
"What is the goal of your education? Either a clerkship or being a lawyer, or at the most a Deputy Magistrate, which is another form of clerkship - isn't that all? ..... The education that does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life which does not bring out strength of character a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion is it worth the name? ..... Then what type of education did he want? Or what should be the goal of education? He wrote ... "We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect, is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet. What we need is to study, independent of foreign control, different branches of the knowledge that is our own and with it the English language and western science. We need technical education and all else that will develop industries, so that men instead of seeking for service may earn enough to provide for themselves and save against a rainy day.

"The end of all education, all training, should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education." The following remarks are perhaps the sum total of all his thoughts on.
religion and education, which at once imply the relation of both the matters. These are as follows: "It is man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want." Thus it is explicit that Vivekananda wanted such education which will form character and make man in true sense by developing physical, mental and moral aspect of man. Not that it will aim at the development of the three aspects referred to above it will at the same develop the economic aspect that may help a man stand on his own feet and earn his livelihood independently. These ideas bear great relevance to Tagore's ideas and philosophy. Again Vivekananda held the view that 'religion is the innermost core of education.' 'Religion is not in doctrines or dogmas, nor in intellectual argumentation. It is being and becoming. It is realisation.' It is the source of infinite strength. In his opinion, strength is goodness and weakness is sin. Because selfishness comes from weakness. Fearlessness is then essential for building up of character. The Upanishads teach us it by its declaration through the word 'Abhih'. Freedom from ignorance (avidya) is wanted always. Freedom - physical, mental and spiritual - is the watchword of the Upanishads. So Vivekananda said that religion should be the foundation on which the
These ideas, in short, underlie Swamiji's philosophy of education which like other great educators follows as a corollary from his philosophy of life. Like Tagore he was deeply imbued with the teachings of the Vedanta. His definition of education as manifestation of perfection, aim of education as man-making and character-building method as concentration and continence or Brahmacharya and the use of mother-tongue as the medium of instruction and other related matters bear close resemblance to those of Tagore. Vivekananda like Tagore wanted the development of the whole man. He not only wanted to develop the 'muscles of iron, nerves of steel and gigantic wills', he also wanted 'man-making religion, man-making theories and man-making education.' His theories of self-education, free-growth, positive education, service to humanity, assimilation, application of western science, extension of technical education, reverence for Indian tradition and culture, cultivation of shradha and faith in one's self, self-confidence, self-supportedness, etc. have a very clear relevance to those of Tagore. Not only the philosophy of education and other theories of education adumbrated
by both the educators have a close relation, but also there exists a wonderful connectedness between their philosophies of life mainly in respect of their faith in the teaching of Vedanta oneness (Ekam evad witiyam) which led them to make humanism and spiritualism as the basis of education. The idea of spiritual humanism as the cream of the Vedanta philosophy led them to the idea of universal brotherhood under the universal fatherhood of God. This culminated in humanitarianism and internationalism in education. These are no doubt, the original contribution of Tagore and Vivekananda to education. On this unique point both of them are opener of a new horizon in the field of education. Herein lies their close resemblance of new ideas. Still there are differences. It lies in the fact that Tagore was a poet educator while Vivekananda a religious preacher and Gandhiji a social reformer. While Swamiji aimed at the spiritual regeneration through education, Gandhiji at political and economic emancipation, Tagore endeavoured for a thorough social transformation through harmonization of divergent actions. In this respect his credit stands unchallenged.

Prof. K.K. Mookerjee assesses their difference in the following way: "Poetry, prophetism and politics were principally the three different spheres of activities of the three great personalities, Tagore, Vivekananda and
Gandhiji respectively. Hence it is but natural that there may be some differences in the educational schemes and doctrines propounded by them. But the difference is not great. Tagore was virtually a poet and an internationalist and he felt that nationalism without a universal outlook is meaningless and a menace to civilization. To him, life without a sense of beauty are burdensome and irksome. At Santiniketan and Sriniketan Tagore invested all his genius and resources, and there was the transformation of a poet into a teacher. Vivekananda was mainly a prophet and a humanist who concentrated all his energy on bringing about social and spiritual regeneration and eventually realised that this can only be achieved through education. So in him we find a transition from a prophet to an educationist. Gandhiji was chiefly a politician and a social reformer. To him, political freedom carries no meaning without economic emancipation which again unthinkable without a national system of education. Hence it is no wonder that Gandhiji underwent a transition from non-co-operation to the 'spinning wheel' and then to Basic Education. Whatever their difference may be in their thought and action they are all humanitarian to the core. They devoted their lives to the service of Narayana. They regarded Daridra (the poor) as Narayana (God), because they believed
'Sarvam khalvidam Brahman'. Their aim was the same while their approach differed. Tagore believed that this realisation comes through love, freedom and joy (anandarupam-amritam), Vivekananda advocated service (seva) and Gandhiji propagated non-violence (ahimsa) for the attainment of supreme knowledge or the ultimate truth. They all wanted such education that liberates. (Sa vidya ya vimuktaye). All of them advocated the maxim that only the humble devotees can acquire real knowledge (Sardhavan lavate jnanam). In the words of Swamiji, "The loss of Shraddha has brought in all evils among us and is bringing in more and more." So shraddha (faith and respect) for oneself as well for others including teachers and parents is the main factor in education. Another point of relevance lies in their ideas regarding the function of the teacher or Guru. They all believed that all of our potentialities or perfection and knowledge are inherent in man; nothing comes from outside. It only requires awakening. The task of awakening is the task of the teachers. To quote from Vivekananda, "Within man is all knowledge, and it requires only an awakening, and that much is the work of the teacher. We have only to do so much for the boys that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, and eyes."
No doubt, this is a highly psychological theory that has been advocated by many educators and psychologists. Indian view of awakening is not only limited to the acquisition of the material knowledge (Aparavidya) but also it is extended to that of the spiritual knowledge (Paravidya), which can liberate man for ever from ignorance (Avidya). So our preceptors are accorded a very high estimate. Gurus have, therefore, been compared with Param Brahma. So every ritual is preceded by the salutation to Gurus, the text of which is as follows: "Om akhandamandalakaram vyaptam yena cara caram, tat padam darśitam yena tasmaišri gurave namah; Aññam timirandhaysya, jnananjana shalakaya, cakshura-umilitem yena tasmaishri gurave namah; Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Gurudeva Maheswara; Gurudeva Param Brahma tasmaishri gurave namah."

The quoted incantation means that 'we bow to that preceptor who by means of his spiritual vision has enabled us to see the feet of God who parvades the whole universe; and who by means of his stick of knowledge has opened our eyes covered with ignorance; and who by giving us the knowledge of Brahma has unfettered us from the bondage of material life'. This incantation shows how much the teachers are revered by the people and at the same time it focusses the exceptional worthiness of the teachers who
by virtue of their own qualities had been able to draw honour and respect from their disciples and the general public. The lives and the thoughts of all the Indian educators and thinkers were greatly moved by the teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita which may be called to contain all the fundamental theories of the Vedanta. Not that they were simply moved by these ideas, they had also greatly endeavoured to take up rigorous steps for implementing the ideas into practice in their respective fields of experiments. On this point Tagore and Vivekananda had wonderful resemblance. Needless to mention that all the eminent Indians beginning from Gandhi and Tagore down to Radhakrishnan had reverently followed the principles laid down in the Gita and the Upanishads and devoted their lives to the propagation of these ideas in India and abroad by interpretation and reinterpretation in their own characteristic ways. And herein lies their credit and eminence. No one ignoring the precious treasure contained in our holy scriptures can be as great as the said immortal sons of India. Simply by imitating the theories of the foreigners, whatever magnumeous these might be no Indian can achieve eminence in any field. So vigorous study of Indian tradition and culture is the first and foremost need of the day. It is a matter of great achievement of Tagore, Vivekananda and Gandhiji that they all have showed us the way which the
later generation should follow for the regeneration of India. They are all unanimous on this point that without the study of the past our future can never be brighter and so study of the Indian culture in comparison with other cultures must have a predominant place in the curriculum.

They all believed that Indians can only be great only through Indian ways and means. Tagore was great as a poet only because he propagated Indian ideas through his poems. His poems are indeed imbued with the spirit of the *Upanishads*. Vivekananda's speeches and writings are full of such ideas that constitute the essence of the *Vedanta* while Gandhiji's life is thoroughly marked by the teachings of the *Gita*. Of all the *yogas* of the *Gita* which is practically the epitome of the *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta* all the three persons referred to above followed one or more than one of the four yogas, namely, *Karmayoga*, *Jnanayoga*, *Bhaktiyoga* and *Rajyoga*, and held the view that the ultimate aim of life and education, that is, salvation of soul, may be achieved by following any one of the four yogas or all of the four at a time. They all believed that *karma* (work) without *jnan* (knowledge) and *jnan* without *bhakti* (devotion) is meaningless. We may now say without hesitation that whatever difference might be there in their
thoughts and actions they all owed much to the teachings of the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* for their experiment in the practical field of different spheres including education, and their philosophy of life and education was greatly shaped by these teachings.

**Tagore And Gandhi**

Next to Vivekananda we shall take up Gandhi for consideration of his educational views in relation to Tagore's educational ideas. Of the eminent Indian educators Gandhi occupies an important place. As an originator of the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education his name will be written in the letters of gold in the history of Indian educational experiments. Gandhi and Tagore were close contemporaries as Gandhi was born in 1869 and Tagore in 1861. Their emergence as eminent educators was not known to the world; they were primarily known to the world as politician and poet. No doubt, Gandhi distinguished himself in the field of politics and Tagore in the field of literary works. But it is true at the same time that by dint of their extensive experiments in education in the latter half of their life they had made themselves eminent as great educators.

The main idea behind Gandhi's philosophy of
education was that life is practical and productive and as such education must be related to life. Education contemplated by his Basic Education scheme aims at giving basic knowledge and skills to the children. Needless to point out that Gandhi's emergence as educator mainly lies in the formulation of the Basic Education Scheme. It is said, "Gandhi's contribution consists in the life philosophy, the social outlook he seeks to impart through craftwork, the spirit, the mental temper he wants to inculcate. He makes craft work the pivot of his educational system, as he made charkha the pivot of the national struggle for independence. Education, as he conceived it, is no less a struggle for freedom - freedom from ignorance, inefficiency, insecurity, oppression, exploitation, injustice. Education for its own sake has obviously no appeal to Gandhi."

As regards the main purpose of education according to Gandhi, it is said that "the dominating purpose of Gandhi's scheme of education is to ensure the production of character on a mass scale, a character which may develop individual possibilities freely only within the limits of one supreme ideal which it must accept and strive to realise in co-operation with brothers of the same faith."
We find clearly that the main purpose of Gandhi-ji's scheme of education is character-building. He believed that it is only possible through craft work. Education, according to him, means 'the drawing out of the best in man; body, mind and spirit.' He emphasized on the harmonious development of physical, mental and spiritual aspects of man. But Gandhi being a politician stressed much on the social aspect of man while Tagore being a poet emphasized on the aesthetic aspect of man. The principal feature of Basic Education was craft centric but Tagore's philosophy implies child-centric education. Here lies the difference between the educational philosophy of the two great Indian educators. A comparative study of Gandhi-ji's system of education and that of Tagore clearly shows that 'each of them seeks to make his educational system the vehicle of his philosophy of life.' It is said, "Gandhiji's truth and non-violence are akin to, almost identical with Tagore's message of love and universal brotherhood, but still they are clearly marked off as two distinct attitudes towards life. Whereas Gandhiji concentrates on the eternal problem of evil and evolves a philosophy of action something like a simplified version of 'Karmayoga' suited to the needs and abilities of each and every man, Tagore centres his philosophy on the joy
of life, the eternal Ananda of realisation and expression which does not exclude action. Gandhiji establishes the everyday reality of life in his system and saves his education from the danger of escapism in any form, he gives it a grip over the student mind which has so long been the dream of all educationists. Tagore presents reality in its largest perspective yet attained by man and saves education from the danger of all narrow limitations of place, time and people.\(^3\)

Though the educational philosophy of both the educators lacks some elements in strict sense of philosophy, these can never belittle their glories as educators. Tagore's philosophy of education may not put so much emphasis on the social aspect as it was done by Gandhiji and again Gandhiji's educational philosophy may not lay much stress on the aesthetic side and cultivation of art, as an integral part of education, may not get so much importance in Gandhian system as it was being done in Tagore's educational system, but it would not be true to think that there is any inherent contradiction in the schemes envisaged by Tagore and Gandhiji. We can rather say like Prof. S.C. Sarkar that incorporation of relevant ideas in a scheme that lack them will make the schemes more vigorous and make them free from lacuna, if any. And by such
incorporation we can make the system more beneficial to the society specially when the country is groping in the dark to find out a system that will be best suited to the need of the time.

Tagore's Visva-Bharati and Sriniketan and Gandhiji's Wardha Scheme are the two precious monuments in the field of reorganization of Indian education. The unification of the salient and desirable factors of both the systems may in large way give us a good guidance in respect of structure and curricula. Prof. Sarkar observes that Gandhiji's education starts with mistaken assumption. He writes thus, "The central purpose of Gandhiji's scheme being what it is, it can not hope to achieve the fulfilment of a larger purpose as a by-product. Tagore chooses a centre which is universal and all-encompassing. The motive force he provides is love, akin to, but wider in implication than ahimsa."  

Though the Wardha Scheme is supposed to be mainly concerned with Gandhiji's educational philosophy, it is not his entire philosophy of education. It is, however, the culmination of his system as is Visva-Bharati in case of Tagore. When Gandhiji defines education as an all-round drawing out of the best in child
and man—body mind and spirit he like Tagore aims at the harmonious development of man and not of any one aspect at the cost of others. But the essential feature of Gandhian philosophy of education is that a suitable handicraft should form the centre and basis of all education. In other words, he wanted to make education craft-centred and life-supporting by putting much emphasis on the dignity of labour and manual training. This idea has a great relation with Tagore's idea of practical education that he experimented at Sriniketan but it differs in the matter of aesthetic appreciation. That is to say, Tagore laid emphasis on the creative and artistic aspects whereas Gandhiji put his emphasis mainly on the economic aspects. Tagore's scheme is in no sense less activity-centred. It is evident when he writes, "There is a close and inseparable connection between the faculties of mind and the body. Each gains strength by co-operating with the other. If the education of the body does not proceed along with the education of the mind, the latter can not gather strength. We should know that the great task of our educational effort in our institution is to provide for the education of the mind and all the senses through various activities." Then we find that both of them held almost the
The harmonious development of body, mind and spirit and not any one of them at the cost of others, formed the nucleus of the educational philosophy of both the educators. This should be the aim of education in the opinion of both the educators. Means, according to them, should be the man and not the books, and methods should be liberal and joyous and not rigid or rigorous. Freedom should be the main basis. Thus in the words of Prof. Sarkar the similarities between them amount almost to a blood relationship. Differences whatever are there are not completely irreconcilable. The greatest point of resemblance lies perhaps in their advocacy of mother-tongue. Both of them were the uncompromising champion of the use of mother-tongue as the medium of education. They thought that the foreign language stands in the way of the development of mother-tongue as well as of the development of the nation. Gandhiji boldly announced — "The foreign medium has caused brain fog, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the families or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is
the great tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our vernaculars."

Like Tagore Gandhiji also thought that the mother-tongue is just like the mother's milk. In his own words, "I must cling to my mother tongue as to my mother's breast, in spite of its shortcomings. It can alone give me the life-giving milk." 

We find that both the great Indian educators had close relationship in the matter of thinking on the educational problems of India and chalking out means of their solution. Prof. Sarkar remarks that "Gandhiji can hardly be called a thorough-bred educationist. His contribution was rather a sort of lightening flash of genius and it would be a wrong to find in him any systematic educational thought." But we can say that Tagore was a thorough-bred educationist unlike Gandhiji and he had a profound educational philosophy which is not inferior to any other educational philosophy. His extensive experiments both in the field of general and technical and agricultural education can excell Gandhiji's experiments at Wardha or Sabarmati Ashrama.

In another matter, namely, in observance of the teachings of the Upanishads in shaping the lives and the educational ideals of Indians, Gandhiji is not as
thorough as Tagore. Of course, Gandhiji's life was greatly influenced by the teachings of the Gita that contains the essence of whatever there is in the Vedas and the Upanishads. There is also another eminent Indian who thought much of the reorientation of Indian education and whose life and activities were greatly influenced by the teachings of the Gita, the Upanishads and the Vedas. He may now be taken up for our discussion. He is Sri Aurobindo. Since many of his ideas and thoughts on education are relevant for our purpose, it would be proper, in the fitness of things, to devote a few pages to a brief discussion of his educational philosophy in relation to Tagore's.

Tagore and Sri Aurobindo

Sri Aurobindo comes last in the galaxy of great Indians of the Mid-Twentieth century. He was born in 1872 and died in 1950. So he was also a Tagore's contemporary and naturally he had come in contact with the lives and activities of the three educators referred to above. Anyway, his life from the very childhood was influenced by western culture and education. But his inward trend for oriental culture completely transformed him into a different being when he returned to India and decided to
He came to prominence when he took an active part in the political movement as a revolutionary leader. During this time he had come into close contact with many prominent leaders, namely, Gandhiji, C.R. Das and others. But his original trend of mind did not find any satisfaction in it. So he turned towards the other field which is quite apart from the political sphere. This is the field of Integral Yoga. It marked a new phase in the history of Indian philosophy and culture. So we are here to find out the marks of relevance between a Kavi (poet) and a Yogi (spiritualist). A poet generally sees things through beauty and art while a yogi tries to see through yoga or yogic analysis.

"Sri Aurobindo is inseparable in the field of acute analysis and fullest exposition of educational principles and problems. What is most gratifying is that the truths that Tagore discovered by means of extra-ordinary mental powers and intuition and put into practice have, each and every one of them, been confirmed by Sri Aurobindo's system of thoughts. The only difference is that Sri Aurobindo offers an amount of subtle and analytical thought and discussion of certain higher and more difficult processes necessary for his integral yoga which one does not find in Tagore. This is because Tagore's scheme
of education, though it would be wrong to suppose it to be intended for all, is meant, however, for that sizeable section of the society which is more or less culturally conscious and receptive. But the education given at Pondichery is accessible only to persons endowed with the highest capacity for spiritual realisation.  

As with other great educators, we will also find here that Sri Aurobindo's educational philosophy follows as a corollary from his philosophy of life. His philosophy of life is marked by the synthetic vision which the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* stated and the *Bhagavad-Gita* restated. Like Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo held the view that the Supreme is at once the One and the Many; He is simultaneously immanent and transcendent, He is at once personal and impersonal; and yet He is beyond all these formulations.

On this point Sri Aurobindo is not only akin to Vivekananda, he comes very close to Tagore. For Tagore also held the same view and was influenced by the *Vedantic* philosophy and by the latest theory of evolution. His poetic expression runs thus, "It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers." This theory of evolution has close
affinity with that of Bergson. So Prof. Sarkar rightly points out that "All our three educators were influenced by the western ideas of evolution. One can find in the Hindu scriptures the doctrine of rebirth. In the Gita there is a vivid description of how the soul enters into a new body even as one puts on a new dress and how one, thwarted in yoga in one life, finds in the next more favourable circumstances for the pursuit of his object. Here can be found a clear indication of the manner in which the individual person journeys through successive births towards his own perfection."

He like Tagore held the view that man is the brightest production in the universe. But unlike Tagore he said that man is simply the present term of this evolution; he is not the ultimate term. In truth there is no reason, according to him, why evolution should cease with man and not produce a subsequent type. The next step in the ascent or evolution may be the creation of something higher than the mental. This may be, in the view of Sri Aurobindo, the Super mind. He held the view that on the crest of an evolutionary wave man has to yield place to a new type of being. That new type, according to Sri Aurobindo, will be evolved in man rather than out of man. Because it is in man there is a divine urge to
aim higher, to surpass himself. On this point Tagore's ideas have great relevance to Sri Aurobindo's. Because Tagore was of the opinion that man is not contented with what he is. He thus advocated the appearance of a new consciousness and the subsequent transformation of human nature. He aimed at the spiritual transformation and divine living as all parts of human life are divine. Both individual and collective soul are meant for divine fulfilment.

Sri Aurobindo's idea of Psychic being, the notion of the evolving self and the Transcendental Person can be traced from the poems and other writings of Tagore. The latter's consciousness of a Being whom he says Jivan Devata who is not seizable by Reason, but who can be realized by means of intuition has a close resemblance to Sri Aurobindo's Psychic Being.

Thus we find that Sri Aurobindo's concept of education is synthetic like that of Tagore as he takes into account the mind and the soul. He has not only taken up the individual mind and the soul, but also he includes the universal and national mind and soul. He at the same time aims at the universal transformation through education without losing sight of 'man's highest object' which,
according to him, is 'the awakening and development of his spiritual being.' The central aim of education, according to him, is not mere acquisition of the information; it must be 'the building of the powers of the human mind and spirit.' In his own words, "The acquiring of various kind of information is only end and not the chief of the means and necessities of education; its central aim is the building of the powers of the human mind and spirit, it is the formation or as I would prefer to view it, the evoking of knowledge, character, culture, that at least if no more." On this point, Sri Aurobindo has a striking resemblance to Tagore as the latter was also against giving information. Like Gandhiji Sri Aurobindo stressed the drawing out of the best in man. So he wrote, "Every one has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of perfection and strength, - The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use." This is again synonymous with Swamiji's definition that 'education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.'

Sri Aurobindo's theory of education is known as 'Integral Education'. Because he advocated a new trend and
that was integration. In his words, "An altogether new trend in education has to be set up - a synthetic trend - that is, of integration. That does not mean only intellectual co-ordination, as is often understood by it. It really means a approach of will, that of accepting all and trying to harmonize them. It implies infusing all education with the joy of wholeness, of harmony, of creation." 

Tagore advocated the same idea. His education for the whole man or complete manhood has thus a striking resemblance to Sri Aurobindo's idea of integral education. His integral approach was as follows: "Education to be complete must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being; the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Usually, these phases of education succeed each other in a chronological order following the growth of the individual. This, however, does not mean that one should replace another but that all must continue completing each other till the end of the life." 

We have mentioned elsewhere that Tagore also wanted harmonious development of all the faculties of man and not any one at the cost of others. He wanted also the development of the body, mind and soul. He did not want to follow any system that will
accentuate a break between the intellectual, physical
and the spiritual life. The points of relevance are
also found here. But one thing is perhaps not mentioned
before by any other thinker. That is the 'psychic'.
'Psychic' means 'belonging to the soul or psyche'. The
Mother says that "the truth we seek is made of four major
aspects: Love, Knowledge, Power and Beauty. These four
attributes of the Truth will spontaneously express them­selves in our being. The psychic will be the vehicle of
ture and pure love, the mind that of infallible knowledge,
the vital will manifest an invincible power and strength
and the body will be the expression of a perfect beauty
and a perfect harmony."7

We have so long tried to explain, in brief, the
comprehensive views of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother as
regards the conception and aim of education in relation
to the conception and aim of human life that is to say,
the philosophy of life and the philosophy of education.
Now we shall see Sri Aurobindo's ideas regarding method
and medium of teaching and their resemblance to Tagore's.
In any scheme of teaching two factors are mainly involved—
the teacher and the taught, though the third factor, the
reading and writing materials, comes next. According to
Sri Aurobindo, "The first principle of true teaching is
that nothing can be taught. The teacher is not an ins-
tructor or task-master, he is a helper and a guide. His
business is to suggest and not to impose. He does not
actually train the pupil's mind, he only shows him how to
perfect his instrument of knowledge and helps and encou-
rages him in the process. He does not impart knowledge to
him. He shows him how to acquire knowledge for himself.
He does not call forth the knowledge that is within. He
only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated
to rise to the surface. — Child or man, boy or girl,
there is only one sound principle of good teaching. Diffe-
rence of age only serves to diminish or increase the amount
of help and guidance necessary; it does not change its
nature.® Then we find that Sri Aurobindo enunciated a
very sound principle of good teaching. By the first
principle, he, however, does not mean that teaching alto-
gether is to be dispensed with. The idea is that the
teacher should not impart his knowledge to the child. He
must show the child how to learn by himself, help him in
devising his own methods of learning and of organising the
knowledge which he gathers or discovers. Not collection
of facts or information but discovery is the main thing.
Again the child finds interest and joy in active and
creative process that leads to discovery. There shall be
no difference of sex, the only difference of age is to be taken into consideration and the amount of help and guidance is to be increased or diminished accordingly. Sri Aurobindo then agrees with Tagore and Vivekananda on this point. Tagore's cardinal principles were freedom and joy. Self-education or unveiling or discovery are the main concerns of both Tagore and Vivekananda. Needless to say, these principles are today being widely applied in the field of education by the different educators of the world in some form or other.

The second principle, according to Sri Aurobindo, "is that the mind has to be consulted in its own growth, the idea of hammering the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher is a barbarous and ignorant superstition. It is he himself who must be induced to expand in accordance with his own nature. There can be no greater error than for the parent to arrange beforehand that his son shall develop particular qualities, capacities, ideas, virtues, or be prepared for a prearranged career. To force the nature to abandon its own dharma is to do it permanent harm, mutilate its growth and deface its perfection. It is a selfish tyranny over a human soul and a wound to the nation, --- Every one has in him something divine, something his own, a chance of perfection and strength in however small
a sphere which god offers him to take or refuse. The task is to find it, develop it and use it. The chief aim of education should be to help the growing soul to draw out that in itself which is best and make it perfect for a noble use."9 Here we find that like other educators specially like Rousseau and Tagore Sri Aurobindo held the view that the teaching must give due respect to the child's nature and its own dharma. Because the child's mind grows in accordance with its own law of growth. So its growth must be spontaneous and free from any restriction or from any special motive of others. As the chief aim of education is to draw out the best in man or to help manifest perfection already in him, it must be done in a spontaneous and joyful method. The teacher is to discover the true needs and interests of the child. The following observation of Tagore have a striking points of relevance to Sri Aurobindo's above idea. These are as follows: "We all know children are lovers of the dust, their whole body and mind thirst for sunlight and air as flowers do. They are never in a mood to refuse the constant invitations to establish direct communication which come to their senses from the universe.

"But unfortunately for children their parents,
in pursuit of their profession, in conformity to their special traditions, live in their own peculiar world of habits. Much of this cannot be helped. For men have to specialize driven by circumstances and by need of social uniformity. But our childhood is the period when we have or ought to have more freedom from the necessity of specialization into the narrow bounds of social and professional conventionalism.¹⁰

According to Sri Aurobindo, "The third principle of education is to work from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be."¹¹ This is also based on sound psychological principle of methodology. This is a well-known method. But he goes farther as this is based on his philosophy that "the past is our foundation, the present our material, the future our aim and summit. Each must have its due and natural place in a national system of education."¹² Thus Sri Aurobindo not only limited his method proceeding from the known to the unknown, from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the concrete to the abstract, from the near to the far, but also he extended it from 'which is to that what shall be', that is, from the present to the future, from 'the things that are' to 'the things that are to come.' Then he thereby clearly suggests to develop the power of intuition
by which man can extend his vision from the material world to the spiritual world and from the material life to the divine life. On this point Tagore's view was also the same though he only put it in a slightly different language, "We must make the purpose of our education nothing short of the highest purpose of man, the fullest growth and freedom of soul. Only let us have access to the life that goes beyond death and rises above all circumstances; let us find our God, let us live for that ultimate truth which emancipates us from the bondage of the dust and gives us the wealth, not of things but of inner light, not of power but of love."¹³

Such a broad aim of education can never be achieved by any formal method. So Tagore said, "I for my part believe in the principle of life, in the soul of man, more than in methods."¹⁴ The thing is the same with Sri Aurobindo who even goes beyond it and thinks not only of transformation but thinks of transfiguration by education and he therefore devised methods accordingly.

Courage, confidence, control, co-operation and consciousness coupled with concentration and continence are such noble virtues that are to be the essential traits of a true teacher and only such teachers will be employed
in teaching. All the Indian educators agree with one another almost equally on this point and owe to the ideal way of living and teaching of the gurus of the ancient time. All of them preferred the ashramic way of life and education. So all of them namely, Tagore, Gandhiji and Sri Aurobindo established ashramas and patterned education on ashramic lines and tried to harmonise in their own characteristic way spirituality with the material world.

As regards the medium of instruction Sri Aurobindo's ideas have also great relevance to those of Tagore. Like Tagore and other eminent Indians Sri Aurobindo held the view that "the mother tongue is the proper medium of education and therefore the first energies of the child should be directed to the thorough mastering of the medium." Because by mastering of his own language any body can master another language very easily.

Another point of relevance is found in respect of moral and religious education. Sri Aurobindo held the view that "the education of the intellect divorced from the perfection of the moral and emotional nature is injurious to human progress. To neglect moral and religious education altogether is to corrupt the race. As in the education of the mind, so in the education of the
heart, the best way is to put the child into the right road to his own perfection and encourage him to follow it, watching, helping, suggesting but not interfering." Then he wrote, "Religion has to be believed, not learned as a creed. No religious teaching is of any value unless it is lived and the use of various kinds of 'sadhana', spiritual training and exercise is the only effective preparation for religious living. The ritual of prayer, homage, ceremony is craved for by many minds as an essential preparation. And, if not made an end in itself is a great help to spiritual progress; if it is withheld, some other form of meditation, devotion or religious duty must be put in its place. Otherwise, religious teaching is of little use and would almost be better ungiven." Another observation is worth quoting here. It runs thus, "The essence of religion, to live for God, for humanity, for country, for others and for oneself in these, must be made the ideal in every school."17

These observations clearly reveal Sri Aurobindo's view regarding the religion and teaching of religion in school and thus bear a great relevance to Tagore's ideas. He thought almost in the same line.

As regards moral training Sri Aurobindo like
Tagore stressed much on the value of suggestion by personal example and discarded imposition by rules and regulation. So he said, "The first rule of moral training is to suggest and invite, not command or impose. The best method of suggestion is by personal example, daily converse and the books read from day to day. These books should contain, for the younger students, the lofty examples of the past given, not as moral lesson, but as things of supreme human interest, and for the elder students, the great thoughts of great souls, ...... This is a kind of good company 'satsanga', ...... It can not, however, have full force unless the young life is given an opportunity, within its limited sphere, of embodying in action the moral impulses which rise within it - the moral temper we desire in the young."

It is doubtful whether the teachers of schools and colleges of today are capable of such functions. But it was doubtless that the Gurus of the old Indian system were the fittest persons in this respect, Tagore also referred to the same system.

So long we have discussed, in brief, the points of relevance between Sri Aurobindo and Tagore regarding theories on different aspects of education. As Sri Aurobindo made an experiment of his ideas at his ashrama, we should
see if there exist any relevance in the matter of practice.

As Tagore established Visva-Bharati in order to translate his ideas into practice so also Sri Aurobindo set up an International Institution for the same purpose, but his success was not up to his expectation. The aim of this International Centre of Education is "to help individuals to become conscious of the fundamental genius of the nation to which they belong and at the same time to put them in contact with the modes of living of other nations so that they may know and respect equally the true spirit of all the countries upon earth." The aim and objects of Tagore's Visva-Bharati which is also an international institution were, inter alia, "to study the mind of man in its realisation of different aspects of truth from diverse point of view — to seek to realise in a common fellowship of study the meeting of the East and the West, and thus ultimately to strengthen the fundamental conditions of world peace through the establishment of true communication of ideas between the two hemispheres." The aims and objects of both the institutions were almost the same. The institutions established by both the educators aimed, in short, at the individual, national and international understanding. Tagore's institutions not only aimed at the material
progress, it also aimed at the 'spiritual freedom and final perfection.' In his own words, "Its aim lies in imparting life-breath to the complete man, who is intellectual as well economic, bound by social bonds, but aspiring towards spiritual freedom and final perfection."20

Referring to the international character of Sri Aurobindo's centre of education P.B. Saint Hilaire, the Director of the centre writes thus, "The centre of Education is international in practice and not only in name. This is in accordance with Sri Aurobindo's conception that unity manifests in diversity without losing its unifying oneness. The students and the teachers are from all parts of India and from many countries abroad, without any distinction of sex, race, creed or caste."21

Though the aims and objects of their international institutions were almost the same, the activities and their implementations differ in certain respects. Tagore's credit lies in the fact that he not only established an international institution like Visva-Bharati that represents India where she has her wealth of mind which is for all and that acknowledges India's obligation to offer to others the hospitality of her best culture
and India's right to accept from others their best, but he also set up an institution for rural reconstruction like Sriniketan, the aim of which was 'to win the friendship and affection of the villagers by taking a real interest in all that concerns their life and welfare, and by making a lively effort to assist them in solving their most pressing problems, 'in other words, to make a happy, contented and humane life in villages.

Thus in respect of practice and experiment in the field of education and in the study of culture, both eastern and western, and in crafts and agriculture, in the spheres of intellectual and the spiritual study as well as in the spheres of physical, social and economic study Tagore can undoubtedly claim originality and thus he surpasses Sri Aurobindo. It is in this sense that the last two factors (socio-economic factors) are not so elaborately stressed by Sri Aurobindo.

From the standpoint of theory, Tagore's credit lies in his attempt of synthesizing the conflicting orders of truth, e.g. Idealism, Naturalism and Pragmatism and even Humanism, Supernaturalism and Realism in addition to the above three orders. Like Sri Aurobindo's Integral Yoga which is his original contribution. Tagore also
enunciated a new Yoga which he called himself Annada-Yoga. It is Tagore's original contribution according to Prof. S.C. Sarkar who says that "The integral approach of Tagore to this world of experience has helped him to avoid the conflicts one finds among the different schools of educational philosophy in the West, namely, Idealism, Naturalism and Pragmatism" and that all the features of different approaches can not be synthesized without this Yoga or by any intellectual process only.

In the words of Tagore, "The Sadhana which India has accepted is the union, Yoga, of the mind and the spirit with the entire universe, that is full, integral yoga. Not only a union through the understanding but also one through inner perception. The Gita has said - the senses are supposed to be paramount but the mind is superior to them, the understanding is higher than the mind and what stands beyond even the understanding is indeed He. To realize by intuitive perception this best of all is the sadhana of India. Consequently if we decide that the chief aim of the education of Indians should be an initiation into the sadhana of India, then we must bear clearly in our mind that we shall have to provide not only education through the senses and the intellect but also that through intuition to which we must
Thus from the standpoint of both theory and practice Tagore and Sri Aurobindo had many points of resemblance. They were both poets but as a poet Tagore's fame was so high that Sri Aurobindo can hardly arrive at that summit; they were both nationalist but Tagore did not take so much active part as Sri Aurobindo did; they were again all 
guru and guides of mankind but while Sri Aurobindo was a spiritual 
guru, Tagore was best known as 
Kavi-guru and while the former was a worshipper of truth, the latter was a worshipper of beauty and beauty is truth to him. Sri Aurobindo again was a Yogi and a Rishi and advocated Rajyoga for the achievement of the ultimate aim or total perfection, on the other hand, Tagore was an admixture of the two and simplified the ways of yogic living into joyful one incorporating therein all the basic principles of yoga. While the inmates of the Pondicherry Ashrama had to follow strict yogic principles in their daily life, the ashramites of Santiniketan did not adhere to any rigorous principles there but their lives were highly discipled with some such influence of nature and man that it may be called yogic without following directly the rules of any yoga. They followed, in other words, the principles of Ananda-Yoga. As the word
'Yoga' coming from the Sanskrit origin means union. The purpose of **Ananda-yoga** was to facilitate the path of union between the man and the Supreme Man or the **Jivam-devata** and the **Visva-devata** through joy, beauty and love. Sri Aurobindo's **ashrama** was to a great extent, a monastery while Tagore's was an idealised home, a modernised monastery.

Both of them were philosopher-educators having their basis on the Indian Philosophy, specially on the **Vedanta**, the **Gita** and the **Upanishads** and they had again the direct vision of the Supreme person which the foreign educators did not possess. So both of them were unanimous on one point that education is the potent instrument through which transformation of nature, elevation of senses and realization of the self and the soul and the Supreme Being are possible but in accordance with their own characteristic thinking they differ in respect of process of attainment. Tagore by his original contribution of **Ananda-yoga** thus claims to surpass Sri Aurobindo who favoured **Raaj-yoga**; and Gandhiji who supported **Karma-yoga** and again Swami Ji who recommended **Jnana-yoga** and **Bhakti-yoga**. Tagore's credit lies in making a synthesis of all the yogas. His is the **Jnana-Karma-Bhakti-Ananda-yoga**.
His main idea was Ananda. Jnana through Ananda, Karma through Ananda and Bhakti through Ananda which is opposed to Bhakti through Bhuti (fear). His idea of perfection through joy and beauty is thus an innovation.