SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After our long discussion on Tagore's philosophy of life and education and their relevance to current educational thoughts we have come to realize that the central point of Tagore's philosophy of life and education is the realization of bhuma (the Infinite) through the pursuit of love. His noble and religious heritage and liberal environment, on the one hand, and the influence of the Upanishads and the Gita, his deep acquaintance with the Vaishnava poems and the Bauls of Bengal, his experience of early childhood and visits to the most of the eastern and western countries, on the other, amongst many other factors, led Tagore to imbibe this philosophy. It preaches the truth that real peace and happiness lie in bhuma, immensity or infiniteness, no happiness lies in littleness. To quote his words, "Man's abiding happiness is not in getting anything but in giving himself up to what is greater than himself, to ideas which are larger than his individual life, the idea of his country, of humanity, of God. They make it easier for him to part with all that he has not excepting his life." He then wrote, "Buddha and Jesus, and all our
great prophets, represent such great ideas." Thus this philosophy is also the cream of the teachings of Lord Buddha and Jesus Christ.

The realization of bhuma or the self-surrender for the greater purpose for the cause of the country and of humanity at large is only possible through love. It is love for the mankind that leads man to martyrdom and makes civilization flourish. This realization again kills in man the excessive love of power and domination and greed for wealth. It thus not only brings peace and happiness to individual person, it also brings international peace and prosperity. So Tagore wanted the type of education that will help an individual attain his own full-fledged development and at the same time bring about the development of his own society where he grows up and contribute the best in him for the good of the world as a whole. He wanted that education which will not only bring one's own liberation from ignorance and poverty, poverty of mind and soul but which will make the human free from all sorts of narrowness that leads to destruction. Thus this is the central point of his philosophy of education.

It is natural, therefore, that the man who has such high philosophy of life and education can never be satisfied with that system of education which is very
shallow and totally unrelated to life and which only imprisons man within the four-walls of classroom cutting off all sorts of connection with the world around him, natural and human. The system of education that was prevalent during the time of Tagore, specially in the last half of the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century was purely anglicized and mercenary and had no connection with the tradition and culture of the country. By repeated invasions and cruel attacks of the foreigners beginning from the Huns down to the Mughals and the British rulers the centres of culture in India had been smashed to the ground. In place of Tanaavana, the forest colonies of great teachers, and the chakuspathia, the universities like Taxila, Nalanda, etc. had grown up the modern schools, colleges and universities on western lines on the soil of India. As a result, the high ideals of Indian education that elevated the mind and soul to achieve liberation from ignorance and narrowness were replaced by materialistic and mercenary ideals. A born poet and an artist as Tagore was, his child mind did not tolerate the lifeless, prosaic and inartistic system that was introduced in India by the British. Not only the ideals, but also the contents and even the medium had been thoroughly
changed by force by the British rulers. Indian boys were taught foreign subjects through foreign language. They were merely Indians by birth, but in all other matters, in dress, in manners and in speech they were, as if, the English. But there were some Indians who were exceptions and Tagore was such a virulent exception. He was an Indian to the core. Even though he was the grandson of Prince Dwarakanath who was out and out a follower of the English manners and customs, Tagore was the first person of his family who revolted against the artificial imitation of the western culture and the westernized system of education that simply aimed at making some clerks to run the British administration in India with a low administrative cost. Tagore was born in an atmosphere of the confluence of three revolutionary movements and was brought up in an atmosphere of freedom and had a keen sensitive mind. And as such Tagore freed himself from the clutches of the prevailing educational system even when he was only thirteen as it rudely summoned him away from the world around him. This bitter experience of his childhood haunted him up to the age of forty when he most unexpectedly started a school in Bengal. This school thus owes its origin to the memory of his school days and not to any theory of education. This is what Tagore said about the origin of
his school. He also remarked that the growth of his school corresponds to the growth of his life. It is, therefore, evident that Tagore's philosophy of life is incorporated into his philosophy of education.

We have observed before that Tagore's philosophy of life was shaped by the three main factors, namely, nature, man and Brahma and developed through three stages of his life at his ancestral residence in Calcutta, at his Zamindary at Silaidaha and lastly at the ashrama at Santiniketan. His faith in the teachings of the *Upanishads* led him to believe that the whole universe is pervaded by one Supreme spirit, and nature and man are the manifestations of that spirit. It is being revealed through myriad forms, colours and rhythms.

The universal humanism of the *Upanishads*, again instills in him the idea of spiritual unity of man. It constitutes the genesis of his philosophy of internationalism. His philosophy of nature and man was thus marked by the sense of spiritual unity. He interpreted nature as both the outer nature and the inner nature, the phenomenal nature and the human nature, and man as both the individual man and the universal man. God or Brahma to him is not something seated high in heaven, but He is*
within the soul of man and in the heart of nature. He is 'the man of heart' as the Bauls of Bengal knows Him to be. He is our friend and lover as the Vaishnava poets love and regard Him. He is, thus, very concrete and not an abstract idea as others thought Him to be.

The realization of this truth is the highest end of human life, the rarest life on this earth, because by realizing this truth man never remains hidden; he becomes fully revealed. Thus he attains Brahman-Bhishara. In other words, he attains his salvation. That is to say, self-realization leads to self-emancipation. He becomes one with Brahman or the Infinite. He, therefore, stressed much on 'being' rather than 'knowing' and 'doing'. This is, in brief, what constituted the central part of Tagore's philosophy of life.

As Tagore's philosophy of life was intimately related to his philosophy of education and was inseparable from it, all the factors that constituted his general philosophy had special bearing upon his philosophy of education. We shall make a brief reference here to some of these traits.

Nature occupied a very important place in Tagore's philosophy of education as it did in his philosophy of life. Tagore viewed nature as a precious source of profound joy and ecstatic delight and he was convinced of it from his
own experiences that he gained in his early childhood. From his short stay on the bank of the Ganges, his outings with his father to the Himalayas and Santiniketan he realized fully that nature has a very purifying and vitalizing influences on the sensitive and receptive mind of the young children. His profound studies of Sanskrit Literature again opened another horizon of knowledge about the universal spirit that permeats the whole universe. So he believed in the teaching of the Indian scriptures "Ekam evat tasya — Anantarupam Amritam Yad Vibhati." We have referred to it earlier. Then his deep acquaintance with English literature particularly with the Romantic poetry "initiated him into the wonderful diversities and mysteries of nature and its beauties." This view is expressed by Dr. A.K. Sen in his book entitled Prakritir Kavi Rabindranath Nath and by many other literary critics of Tagore, namely, Upendranath Bhattacharyya, Promothanath Bisi. Not that he had only gained romantic, cosmic and instinctive experiences from his direct touch with nature and his close contact with the nature of Sanskrit and English literatures but he also got a profound spiritual experience from nature in one fine morning. Tagore refers to this memorable incident of his life in both his poems and prose writings. That is why, Tagore tried his best.
to create an atmosphere and gave it the principal place in his programme of teaching. Because he believed that children have their active subconscious mind and the mind, like the tree, has the power to gather its food from the surrounding atmosphere. So the atmosphere for the children is more important than anything else.

In his opinion, it is more important than 'rules and methods, building, appliances, class-teaching and text books.'

Not withstanding the above factors that inspired him to attach so much importance to nature, there is another important factor which impelled him directly to start his experiment. It was his painful experience of his school days. In mechanical system of the present education within the colourless walls of class room and the heartless injecting of poisonous drugs of mercenary anglicized education by the teachers in the class room or the prison or gaol as he called it were the immediate causes that led him to establish his school in the lap of nature at Santiniketan which was far away from the madding crowd of the cities. So he himself said about it thus, "Education divorced from nature has brought untold harm to young children. The sense of isolation that is generated through such separation has caused great evil to mankind,
this misfortune has beset the world since a long time ago. That is why I thought a field had to be created which would facilitate contact with the world of Nature.\textsuperscript{5}

His advocacy for the importance of nature in education was expressed even by the very first educational writing - "Siksa Hernher" (Iapsy-Turveydom of Education) and more concretely by the essay like Siksa-Samasya (The problem of Education). It was his firm conviction that an institution to be ideal must be situated under the open sky and on the open field amidst the trees and plants away from human habitation. The reasons of such firm conviction may be enumerated as follows, - Firstly, there must be an atmosphere for 'developing the sensitiveness of soul' and secondly, for affording mind its freedom of sympathy.\textsuperscript{4} In the opinion of Tagore, "In educational organizations our reasoning faculties have to be nourished in order to allow our mind its freedom in the world of truth, our imagination for the world which belongs to art, and our sympathy for the world of human relationship. This last is more important than learning the geography of foreign lands."\textsuperscript{6}

The world of truth, art and human relationship represents the spiritual values like Truth, Beauty and Goodness respectively. If educational organizations are to nourish all these values, these must be situated in
the specially selected places.

So Tagore said, "I tried my best to develop in the children of my school the freshness of their feeling for nature, a sensitiveness of soul in their relationships with their human surroundings." Because he realized deeply that "children with the freshness of their senses come directly to the intimacy of this world. This is the first great gift they have. They must accept it naked and simple and must never again lose their power of immediate communication with it."

Tagore attached so much importance to nature mainly because it meets the physical needs by the nourishment of body, the intellectual needs by the development of mind and the spiritual needs by the expansion of sympathy and the elevation of the soul. It gives man both cosmic and spiritual consciousness. It strengthens the body by its fresh air and light, broadens the mind by its vitalizing and purifying influences and emancipates the soul by its spiritualizing impact. So Tagore repeatedly said that not merely the education of the senses, not only the education of the intellect but the education of sympathy also must be given the foremost place in our educational institutions. And this education can not be obtained in the schools and colleges in the cities but it can be found in
the "Tapovanam". This is how he justifies that if our aim is to develop the complete man our educational institutions must be situated in the lap of nature. As he was fully convinced of it by his personal experience and by the study of Sanskrit literature, he founded his institution at Santiniketan. Besides, he realized again that the elevating and emancipating influence of nature on man's spirit generates the feeling of universal brotherhood and he was led by the idea that love of Nature intrinsically leads to the love of Man.

Tagore believed again that it is only in the nature that the religious education could be operated fully through the close contact with Nature and maintained that it is in nature that the spirit of joy and love can free play. This idea is expressed in the essay in Bengali Dharma Siksa.

Living in the heart of Nature during the period of learning has also an important effect on the teachers to lead a simple life and to give due reverence to the ideal of simplicity. Needless to point out that simplicity breeds or begets purity. Simplicity in the manner of living brings purity of mind and salvation of soul. By living a sophisticated life in the artificial societies man loses purity of mind and heart. That is why, Tagore
insisted so much on living a simple life in the heart of nature and observing the rules of Brahmacarya in his ashrama.

Next to Nature comes man. Man and society where man lives and grows up had also occupied an important place in his philosophy of education. The love of man that was original in him during his stay at Silaidaha appeared to be most developed in his literary works particularly in his dramas and novels and most spectacularly in his programmes of village reconstruction at Sriniketan.

We have mentioned elsewhere in the chapter on Tagore's philosophy of life that Tagore in his books entitled "The Religion of Man" and "Man" has expressed clearly that to know what man is, and to be one with Brahma or 'I Am He', form the supreme end of human life.

So he in his educational programmes made such atmosphere that the individual man was able to realize the universal man in him. This was possible only because of the spiritual consciousness in the individual man. He, therefore, intently wanted that "the introspective vision of the universal soul which one Eastern devotee realizes in the solitude of his mind could be united with this spirit of its outward expression in service." There we
find that he like Gandhi and Vivekananda emphasized on the importance of the service to humanity. He also believed that 'service to man is service to God.' That is why, he included social services in his educational programmes. Not that it simply aimed at the amelioration of the lot of the lowliest and the lost, but it also aimed at the arousing of the sense of spiritual kinship of man of the whole universe. Besides, he fully realized that God is not in the solitude, or within the closed door of the temple; He is with the lowliest and the lost. He is there where 'the tiller is tilling the land, and the path-maker is breaking stones'. He is with 'the drawers of woods and the hewers of coal.' Deliverance lies in serving the poorest and the lowliest. It does not lie in worshipping and telling of beads. Thus it is quite evident from the foregoing discussion that Tagore's scheme of social service is motivated by two fold aim. Firstly, it aimed at ameliorating the lot of the poorest and the lowliest providing them with various amenities of life that they lacked so long, and secondly, it aimed at the heightening of the sense of morality and fellow-feeling and thereby fostering the espirit-decrops in the children. These developments in them automatically paved the way of the realization of the inherent spirituality in them. This realization again makes them fully
revealed. Thus the social consciousness leads to spiritual consciousness and the both unitedly brings about the emancipation of soul. Tagore's educational programmes in the heart of nature giving due importance to natural instincts and impulses of the children and attaching equal importance to the social service and spiritual upliftment had checked the injurious growth of individuality without giving the scope of sharpening the ego and produced a better balanced personality for a progressive society.

His aim was to impart such education in such an atmosphere that will liberate man from ignorance, from superstition and from poverty, poverty of mind and heart or from narrowness. Because he believed that true happiness and real peace and prosperity are lying in immensity, in greatness of mind and heart and never in narrowness of mind and heart. As it is true in case of an individual man, it is equally true in case of nations. He thought or rather dreamed the pupils of his institutions should be the examples of simplicity in manners and customs including dress and food habits; of purity in thoughts and actions keeping themselves above all sorts of dishonesty and narrow outlooks; and placing themselves above all forms of corruptions and other social crimes; of humility and amiability in conduct and speech having sweet dealing with others without offending anybody by rough behaviour.
and uncourteous talk. They should be the examples of sincerity and truthfulness. They should be the followers of truth, beauty and goodness in life. Their living must be simple and austere as much as practicable and their thinking must be as magnanimous and sanctified as possible. This is what is meant by Tagore by education for fulness or education for complete manhood. By complete manhood, Tagore understood, that an individual must be physically sound, mentally alert and accomplished and spiritually elevated. Nevertheless, he must be socially adjusted and emotionally well-balanced. He must be educated in such a way that he might represent the true culture and tradition of the country where he was born and brought up and at the same time extend the spirit of cooperation and friendship to the world as a whole and work for the spiritual unity of mankind. He must work for all such things that are great, good and beautiful. Man, the crown of creation, is not born upon this universe to seek only for his own happiness as the lower animals like dogs and jackals do or eat, drink and multiply their race; he is here on this earth to think and work for the good of others, for the peace and prosperity of the world as a whole. He is here to live and die for humanity. This is what is felt and done by all the great martyrs of the world. This was the case with Christ and Lord Buddha.
This was, we can say, what our Gandhi, Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and Tagore felt and did; they all represented India in their characteristic ways all over the world. Not that they only felt and worked for India and her people but they also worked for humanity at large. They were Indian by birth, Indian by manners and customs but they were universal in their outlook and thoughts. They worked and devoted their times to the good of humanity. Education must aim at producing such personalities.

Now we can refer to Tagore's idea of the man who was in the centre of his educational programmes, and who was entrusted with the great task of producing the desirable products of society. He was guru and not an ordinary professional teachers as we find him in our present schools and colleges. Such teacher was in the centre of Tagoreana. In his opinion, 'he was not a machine, he was a man.' By his active endeavour he wants to inspire the children and helps them grow up into a complete manhood by self-realization and self-expression. His aim was not limited in imparting formal lessons, it was extended to other nobler activities. He actively helps them by his own life and work to develop physically, mentally and spiritually. His life and activities were intimately connected with those of the disciples who resided with him. Thus a cordial relationship developed amongst them. This was exactly
What Tagore wanted to follow or rather introduced in his school at Santiniketan. In short, Tagore wanted such teachers who would be the disinterested seekers of truth and beauty and the devoted workers of goodness. It is only by such band of teachers that real man-making and character-building education can be made effective. Not only it depends upon the purifying and vitalizing influence of nature but also it depends upon the sincerity and wholehearted devotion of the teachers. In other words, he wanted human teacher and not mere ‘purveyors of book lore in whom the paper god of the bookshop has been made vocal.’ In his view, a teacher must be actively human because ‘his main concern is to help humanity to realize its goal and his duty is to baptise the heart and mind of his disciple with the living waters of his own penance.’ He believed that the most important medium of instruction is ‘the interdependent unconstrained relationship between the teacher and the taught.’ So he said that ‘the value of the most important element of education lies in immediate contact and not in the subject of study, in paraphernalia or in methods.’ He not only laid much stress on physical proximity but he also stressed on affinity of hearts. He held the view that ‘the born teacher is the man in whom the primal child responds readily to the call of children.’ Love and affection
are other important factors that a true teacher should possess. He must have patience and forebearance. Another important truth that Tagore emphasized is that 'a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself.' He must have 'living traffic with his knowledge'. Because his duty is to inspire and not to load the minds of the children by readymade lessons. Tagore's aim was to relate learning with life or to effect a reconciliation between our education and our daily lives. "The real object of an endeavour", he says, "should be to realise truth in our inner nature and then to manifest it in the outer world—not for the sake of expediency, nor for gaining honour, but for emancipating man's spirit from its obscurity. The ideal revelation of soul must be expressed, through all our education and through all our work." A teacher must realize this great truth and the importance of his duty and act accordingly. A teacher failing to appreciate it spoil the younger generation and is quite unfit for the task. He must be a man first and then a teacher.

Then we find that Tagore conceived of such an education as should be related to nature, life and society and the living contact of the teacher who is better than any other agency should be at the centre of the educational programme. Such a teacher, of course, should not be an
ordinary professional teacher, he should be a human in whom all the desirable human values have been developed. In other words, he should be the guru of the Tonavana.

The aim of education, according to Tagore, was not to produce a good clerk or an efficient farmer; an able administrator or a legislator; a renowned scientist or a technician, it is to develop complete manhood. By complete manhood Tagore understood a 'whole' man, a balanced personality. Like a full bloomed lotus a man should exhale and exhibit all the best elements that are in him. He must express 'sweetness and light' that he essentially contains within himself as a spirit. He must be physically developed, mentally alert and well-equipped, emotionally well balanced, morally sound and perfect and spiritually elevated even if he is a very humble man of the society. It does not matter if he is a farmer or a clerk, or a shoe-maker or a trader; a teacher or a lawyer, a doctor or a writer, a scientist or a technician. Whatever profession he might belong to he must be physically, mentally, morally and spiritually developed, and only then a peaceful and prosperous society can grow up. Other scholars might differ on this point. But we think that Tagore had thought that the greed of power and lust for wealth will disappear, man will live in the society without
doing any harm to his fellow being, nations will develop without jeopardising the peace and prosperity of the neighbouring nations if every man attains complete manhood. Then only international goodwill and friendly relationship will be established and it will in its turn bring about the international cooperation and coordination, peaceful coexistence and disarmament. That is why, Tagore put so much emphasis on the achievement of complete manhood through well-organized educational programmes.

In order to introduce the congenial educational atmosphere he wanted to keep the educational programmes totally free from foreign influences of methods and medium.

His methods were based on the principles of freedom and joy, love and affection, artistic outlook and creative activity, cultivation of national tradition and international culture. His medium was purely national and even regional. He advocated the immediate introduction of mother-tongue as medium of instruction from the elementary school right up to the university stage.

We have already observed that Tagore was not a psychologist; but he was a poet and by his poetic vision he came to realize that children have a very active subconscious mind and it exerts a great influence in shaping
the future of a man. He, therefore, wanted to utilize this powerful force for creating a desirable human personality through creative and constructive activities. He watched and experienced that the children's mind develops gradually through the close contact of nature and man and attains completeness or fulness through various struggles. Human nature contains many volcanic elements and if it is not properly channelized it might destroy the society; but if it is carefully controlled it might contribute a lot for the good of humanity at large. Whenever the sense of truth, beauty and goodness awakens in man, self-realization automatically comes to him and then he very naturally attains self-emancipation. Then the blind impulses can no more rise up their heads and misdirect a man from his true path, that is, his individual self surrenders to the universal self. And this is the time when a man is said to have been fully revealed by attaining complete manhood. This is the long awaiting moment of his salvation or spiritual exaltation. This is the stage of his soul-consciousness or the consciousness of his infiniteness. Tagore was, we think, the votary of this type of complete manhood. His ideal of humanity that he pleaded throughout his life was free from all sorts of narrowness and servility.

His method was naturally devised accordingly.
The stereotyped methods were quite useless to him. He gave principal place to the creation of atmosphere in the programme of teaching and not to the application of artificial appliances. He believed more in the soul of man than the text books and appliances. Man, nature and atmosphere were thus the three fundamental factors of his methodology. Appreciation of beauty through the pursuit of artistic activities was not contrary to his method. It was never a rigid and dull academic process to him. He made the methods most interesting to the children by introducing the elements of joy and freedom and by arranging classes in the open air and amidst the sights and sounds of nature.

Thus we can say that Tagore's aim of education was derived from his philosophy of life. It was to develop the complete manhood and the attainment of complete manhood becomes possible or feasible only when a man achieves his physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development and not one or two at the cost of the others. A man by education, according to Tagore, should attain both individual and social exaltation, both personal salvation and universal emancipation. His aim of education, in other words, is to lead a man "from
falsehood to truth, from darkness to light and from death to immortality." 'Asato ma satgomaya, tamasa ma yatirgomaya, mrityo amritam gomaya'. His method was joyous and liberal and his medium was the mother tongue.

This magnanimous aim that was deduced from his high philosophy of life has a great relevance to the thoughts of his contemporary and former educators of India and abroad. In the opinion of Dr. H. B. Mukherjee, "while Tagore's conception of a total education for complete manhood was, in its broad aspects, neither new nor original, it was quite in line with the highest educational thought from the earliest to the modern times." He, however, like Prof. S.C. Sarkar admits that 'in spite of a fundamental similarity' there are fundamental differences among them due to their individual make-up and outlook as well as their concept of education and philosophy of life. We also find that Tagore's concept of education derived from the philosophy of transcendental humanism which is the essence of his philosophy of life is fundamentally different from Rousseau's 'natural education' or "education according to nature", Pestalozzi's non-spiritual progressive aim in education, Spencer's concept of 'complete
living', Herbart's 'moral life' and Froebel's 'holy life'. Tagore's aim of education was to enable a man to make his life "in harmony with all existence".

Dr. H. B. Mukherjee, therefore, concluded that "this all-embracing character of his philosophy of life inspired his thought and action and had given Tagore's conception of education a uniqueness at once different from all similar concepts known to educational thought."

None but Froebel comes closer to Tagore in the matter of fostering God-consciousness through education. But while the idea of God is an abstract principle to Froebel, it is the Universal Man, the Supreme Person to Tagore. +The latter's God, in the opinion of Prof. S.C. Sarkar, 'is a fuller and nearer reality touching human life and mind at all points.' According to Prof. Sarkar, therein lies unique contribution of Tagore. Thus we find that in respect of this point of relevance also Tagore surpasses his foreign contemporaries and predecessors. His point is, of course, supported by his Indian contemporaries like Gandhi, Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo. It has, of late, been seconded by the Indian education commissions of the post Independence Age, namely Radhakrishnan Commission and Kothari Commission.
As to the inclusion of human agency Tagore's idea bears great relevance to that of all other Indian and foreign educators only except Rousseau who allowed no intermediary between nature and the child.

Then we find that relevance as regards the aim of education as the development of total personality or complete manhood is tenable from all points of view.

As regards making the methods most interesting or exhilarating and joyous, spontaneous and natural Tagore's attempt has great relevance to the methods advocated by all the western educators beginning from the time of Rousseau down that of Dewey and Montessori. But his originality is found in respect of introducing the elements of art and music, dance and drama amongst other things advocated and experimented by others. He did not like to introduce any artificial didactic apparatus as Montessori did in her school. He attached greater importance to man than to formal methods and appliances. Sir John Adams advocating the modern tendency of relaxing the rigidity of methods and introducing the aesthetic elements in education objected to the excessive dependence on the use of apparatus in Froebelian
and Montessorian methods. The best means of developing human minds in the most natural way is to make education musical because the rhythmical harmony goes a long way to make man free from all sorts of artificialities and corruptions. Prof. Kilpatrick strongly advocated the inclusion of aesthetic education. But as Tagore's concept of beauty is inseparable from the concept of truth and goodness it surpassed all other educational thinkers who advocated the cause of aesthetic education. The greatest contribution and the most surpassing merit are, therefore, found in Tagore's life-long pursuit of beauty associated with truth and goodness and in his endeavour to introduce it in the lifeless mercenary system of Indian education. Another factor that gave him pre-eminence in the field of education is the introduction of the universal humanism or internationalism in education. It was deduced from the idea of goodness to humanity. This trend is purely a product of the twentieth century and naturally, therefore, the educators of the earlier centuries specially before the World Wars had to miss this internationalistic tendency. Of the educators of the present age some of them like Dewey and others are more inclined to the democratic trend. It is only Tagore who for the first time in the world made
the movement for international understanding more prominent in education and gave a concrete shape by the establishment of "Visva-Bharati" "where the world makes its home in a single nest" as he did early for bringing back naturalism in education at Santiniketan. In other words, Tagore surpasses all his Indian and foreign educators by his extra-ordinary poetic genius by bringing back the spirit of naturalism in education, introducing the elements of aesthetic culture and fostering the spirit of universal humanism and international understanding in education and experimenting everything in his own educational institutions. His Indian contemporaries like Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo, though took the drive in the above directions, had not been able to put everything into practice as forcefully as Tagore had been able to do. It was due to his own originality supported by his hereditary and other environmental amenities and Indo-European associations. He had achieved such spectacular success that made him immortal in literary and educational fields.

Of the various methods and plans devised since the age of Froebel who is well known for the Kindergarten system (1837), Tagore's Method had closer relevance to the Kindergarten System in respect of philosophy of
education and to the Project Method of Dewey or rather of Dr. Kilpatrick in respect of activity. It has also great resemblance to Montessori's Method in the matter of 'tolling the knell of class-teaching' and sense training, and more or less to other methods like the Decroly Method, the Winnetka Method and the Dulton Plan etc. as Tagore's methods were based on the principle of joy and freedom, self-activity and 'learning by doing', 'learning by living' and 'learning by travelling'. It differs from others in respect of its insistence on the spiritual aspect and aesthetic culture. It was based on both the materialistic and aesthetic view of life and on both the principles of synthesis between realism and idealism, materialism and spiritualism or science and spirit. His curricula and methods attached greater importance to human elements and spiritual values and aimed at the self-realization and self-emancipation. Herein lies his originality and surpassing merit.

We have mentioned in the preceding chapters that Tagore's educational ideas and experiments have close relevance to the modern trends in the modern education after the World Wars. The most challenging trend in the modern education after the World Wars is the
equalization of educational opportunities for all sorts of people irrespective of castes and creeds and socio-economic status. From the psychological standpoint the paido-centricism may be noted as another important trend in education. The attempt of relating life to productivity and ‘siksa to sharamo’, education to diligence, and arousing the spirit of international co-operation and peaceful co-existence are the latest tendencies in education all over the world. The most pressing problems that India is endeavouring to solve through the re-orientation of education are the eradication of illiteracy and liquidation of poverty. The Indian Education Commissions after Independence have insisted much on these two points amongst many other things. The Indian Commissions at the same time put equal emphasis on the spiritual side and building up of good characters. Needless to point out here that Tagore’s ideas and experiments escaped none of the trends and tendencies that have drawn the attention of all the nations great and small today in a most persistent manner. His experiments in general education through pursuit of world culture and in rural reconstruction through the revival of the decaying cottage and village industries and dissemination of education among the illiterate mass aimed at incorporating all the modern
trends and tendencies in education. This had been possible only for him by his extensive visits to the different countries of the world. His ideas had a wonderful relevance to the educational experiments that had been undertaken by the highly developed countries of the world, namely, Russia and America. His originality is traced thus from his experiments in the field of education that he had undertaken in the diverse spheres of human activities in a more sustained way than from the theories that he had postulated. In other words, he did many important things in many important fields than what he said or focussed through his writings while his contemporaries and predecessors piled up books after books containing various plans and theories. Tagore conducted vigorous experiments one after another beginning from the elementary stage right up to the university stage and from the general education to the technical and vocational education. He made many things but spoke very little about them. He was not fond of making empty theories. His poetic genius was in many points purely suggestive. The future generation has the greatest responsibility to explore the ideas or the theories that yet remain unexplored under his extensive experiments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan. Tagore's surpassing
pre-eminence, we think, lies in his being a practical educator than being simply a theoretician like Rousseau and others. He made a wonderful synthesis between the ideas that underlie the activities at Santiniketan and Sriniketan and the two opposite poles of human life. The former stands for spiritual and aesthetic culture, while the latter symbolizes the spirit of strict materialism and day-to-day life culture i.e. agriculture, pisciculture, horticulture and the like. His theories and experiments being again based on the principle of democracy and internationalism or universal humanism eliminates all sorts of narrowness and parochialism and thus surpass all the theories and experiments that had been propounded and undertaken up to the seventies of the present century. His unique contribution lies in making a harmonious blending between the Western culture and education and the Indian culture and education, in employing the western genius in his different programmes, in collecting the best elements from foreign sources and in utilizing them successfully on the Indian soil. It lies in synthesizing the heterogeneous elements of human nature and human society for the noblest purpose and in creating the finest products by the touch of his poetic genius and artistic outlook. It consists in postulating the
theory of freedom, fulness and fraternity in education for the complete manhood and propelling or propagating the principle of universal humanism. His greatest merit is traceable from his endeavour to introduce dance and drama in education that were strictly confined to a certain class of people whose social status was not very high and to include art and music in curriculum that were deemed to be antagonistic to the study of other academic subjects and detrimental to the mental health of the pupils. Inclusion of daily prayer at the beginning and at the end of the daily activities and meditation for a few minutes for the development of spiritual side in man is his original contribution. It is needless to say, his original contributions are lying at the root of his surpassing pre-eminence inspite of many points of resemblance to the views of others. The greatest point of relevance is found in relating education to diligence, mental culture to physical culture, in other words, Siksa to Shramo which is the watchword of the present century in the matter of re-orientation of education. It is also found in his attempt to spread education among the common folk by establishing Loka-Siksa Samsad which is to-day being much popular through introducing correspondence courses and open universities. Thus we find what Tagore thought and did even before half a century has wonderful relevance even to the latest trends and tendencies in education prevalent all over the world of today.
This has also a great impact upon the modern plannings in education. According to Prof. L.J. Lewis of the University of London Institute of Education, the most current trends in educational thought and practice are (i) the shifting of emphasis from the quantitative improvement to the qualitative issues, (ii) the stimulating and vigorous pursuit of the application of technology to education, and (iii) the development of socio-economic studies in education. Tagore's all-embracing aim of education escaped none of them.

The concept of the teacher as a creator of learning situation and not as an 'imparer of knowledge', the emphasis on the pupil as a positive learner with insistence upon 'learning by doing' as a corollary and emphasis on professional training, and research studies and investigations are also pointed out by Prof. Lewis as the latest trends. If it be so, we find that Tagore's educational thoughts and experiments that have been mentioned by us in the earlier chapters laid great emphasis on all the current trends as enumerated by Prof. Lewis.

Thus we can safely conclude that Tagore's comprehensive outlook and poetic insight coupled with his prophetic vision comprised some such things that are being conceived of to-day afresh and considered to be
highly essential. The most modern concept of 'life-centric' education owes its origin to Tagore's ideas and experiments at Sriniketan and especially at Siksha-Satra. It was Tagore who even before Gandhiji endeavoured to relate education to the life and to the basic needs of the people like food, clothing and shelters, etc. Nevertheless, we can confidently say that the idea of 'work-education' and 'social service' that is gaining greater importance as the sound educational theory and being valued much at present echoes Tagore's educational ideas and experiments at Santiniketan and Sriniketan. Herein lies Tagore's greatness and originality. This establishes his pre-eminence over all other educators and educational thinkers of the past and the present.

Tagore's educational thoughts and experiments undertaken by him at Santiniketan and Sriniketan have won for him the name and fame of an eminent Philosopher-Educator and also distinguished him as one of the most outstanding teachers that the world has ever produced. The world to-day will not only recognize him as the Poet-Prophet, but also honour him for ever as a great educational philosopher. Tagore's synoptic view of life, all-embracing concept of education and seminal ideas have
been and will be tremendously influential in the life and thought of many generations of people in different parts of the World. The world will long remember Tagore for the signal contribution of universal humanism to the field of educational thought. He will hold the unique position as a precursor of the movement of international understanding, the most significant trend in modern educational thought. His Visva-Bharati stands for the ideal of universal humanism and international understanding and will proclaim his greatness for ever.