CHAPTER VI

THE ARYA SAMAJ MOVEMENT

After the Brahma Samaj, another national movement, which arose in the second half of the 19th century, was the Arya Samaj. Though, like the Brahma Samaj, it was also primarily a socio-religious reform-movement working within the framework of Hinduism, but, in its tone, it was essentially militant, and, in spirit, truly national. Inspired by an unshakable faith in the ancient Hindu religion and culture, it knew no compromise with the alien religions — Islam and Christianity which had already exercised considerable influence on the minds of the Brahma Samaj leaders. It could not stand the idea of borrowing any ethical principle or form of worship from them. In fact, it assumed a militant attitude towards them by trying to bring their followers within the Hindu fold through conversion, which its followers termed as 'Sadhana'. Also, in its approach to the problem of reform, the Arya Samaj followed a different policy. Instead of seeking its inspiration from the culture and ideology of the West, as the Brahma Samaj had done, it pinned its faith in the ancient Aryan culture and religion of the land, as embodied in the Vedas. And it is this which lent the movement a distinct national character.

BACKGROUND

The Arya Samaj movement emerged at a very critical juncture in the history of India — at a time when the forces of denationalisation, unleashed by the English education, were running amuck in
the country, when the English-educated youth, hypnotised by the outward glamour of the Western culture had been completely thrown adrift from the moorings of their own native culture. Westernism, which demanded of its votaries to look down upon the civilisation of their own country, had become the fashion of the day. The result was that "the ancient learning was depressed, ancient custom was thrown aside, ancient religion was decried as an outworn superstition."¹ Instead, everything and anything Western was adored and readily accepted. Young products of the English schools and colleges indulged most recklessly in all sorts of sensuous and physical pleasures, in the name of modern liberalism. They were, in fact, "cutting their way through beef and ham and wading to liberalism through tumblers of beer."²

It was at such a decadent and dismal juncture in the history of Indian culture that the movement of Arya Samaj emerged as a great redeeming force, hearkening Indians back to the glorious traditions of the ancient Indian culture. It infused new hope and confidence among the people of the country - not only among the educated sections but also among the masses - thus rejuvenated Indian Nationalism which lay buried under the superficial glamour of an alien culture. The movement, in fact, ventilated quite clearly, for the first time, the nationalistic spirit of India and acted as precursor of India's regeneration in the years to come.

SWAMI DAYANANDA AND THE ORIGIN OF THE MOVEMENT

Behind the movement of Arya Samaj, which has exercised a powerful influence on the socio-religious life of Indian people for

¹ - Earl of Ronaldshay - The Heart of Aryavarta; p.45.
² - Hampton, H.V. - Biographical Studies in Modern Indian Education; p.108.
about last hundred years, stands the mighty personality of the
great Indian seer - Swami Dayananda. Though born in an orthodox
Brahmin family, he showed great independence of thought and the
symptoms of an iconoclastic idiosyncrasy right from his boyhood-
days. When he was in his fourteenth year, the well-known episode,
which raised a storm of scepticism in his mind, occurred. He
happened to see some rats crawling over the idol of Lord Shiva in
a temple, with the result that he could after that hardly believe
that the idol could be the real Great Deity, and this soon led him
to the conclusion that idol-worship was sheer orthodoxy and that
it could never lead man to the ultimate aim of realising the Al-
mighty. This little incident proved to be a turning point in his life,
for it actuated him to make up his mind, at the tender age of 14,
to fight against idolatry in his later life.

The death of his uncle and sister, whom he loved very
dearly, during his boyhood, was another crucial shock to him. It
set him thinking about the mysteries of life and death, and he
became determined to conquer death through Yoga. This gave him
further incentive to continue with his studies in ancient Indian
religion and philosophy, as propounded in Vedas and other Sanskrit
works of the old. His parents grew apprehensive and, to detract his
mind from these leanings, decided to get him married. But he ran
away from home before the marriage could take place, and later became
a Sanyasin, assuming the name - Swami Dayananda.

After wandering about for several years in search of truth
and knowledge, he, at last, on the bidding of his Guru - Virajananda
whom he had met at Aathura, decided upon the mission of his life,
namely to dedicate his life for the dissemination of truth by exposing
the falsehood of perverted Hinduism as propounded in Puranic litera-
ture and by rehabilitating the real Aryan religion, as laid down in
the Vedas. He came into contact with the leaders of the Brahma
Samaj, namely, Devendranath Tagore and Keshub Chunder Sen, in 1872,
but parted company with them soon, for they could not agree with him
in respect of his fundamental faith in the infallibility of Vedas
and the rebirth of souls. In one respect, however, his short contact
with them proved a boon to him, for it was on the advice of Keshub
Chunder Sen that he gave up lecturing in Sanskrit and adopted Hindi,
instead. This brought him into close contact with the masses and
made his teaching more widely effective. In 1874, he came into con-
tact with the leaders of the Prathana Samaj, but with them also he
could not pull on for long, as their views were, more or less, the
same as those of the Brahma Samaj leaders. Ultimately, therefore,
to give his reform-plans a concrete and definite shape, he decided
to start a new movement of his own; and this led him to establish
the Arya Samaj on April 10, 1875, in Bombay. Under his vigorous
leadership, the movement soon became a force to be reckoned with.
He devoted all his time and energy in organising its branches in
different parts of the country, particularly in Northern India where
the movement became most firmly rooted within a few decades of its
inception.

THE NATIONAL GENIUS OF SWAMI DAYANANDA

The most outstanding trait of Swami Dayanand's personality,
which endeared him to his countrymen, was his intense nationalism,
which found expression in his deep-rooted attachment to the culture,
religion and institutions of ancient India. Himself a great Sanskrit scholar, he had studied Vedas and other ancient scriptures intensively under the guidance of most learned scholars at Benares and other places. His faith in Aryan culture and Vedic religion was firm and deep. "Back to Vedas" became his militant slogan. He prized Aryan culture as the highest form of culture that mankind could aspire to attain, and believed that the Vedic religion was fit to be the religion of the world. He advocated the revival of the old ideal of 'Brahmacharya' and 'Sanyasa' and insisted upon the ancient rites of 'Upnayan' and 'Doma'. In a word, he stood for the revival of all the Vedic traditions and institutions which, to him, were the real gems in the stock of Indian culture.

Such was the bold and inspiring national genius of Swami Dayananda which illumined his efforts in all the fields in which he chose to work - in religion, in education and in social-reform. The stand taken by him was a bold departure from the then prevailing tendency and fashion to ape the West in all respects. There was something grand, something heroic in the crusade he launched upon to save ancient Indian religion and culture from the onslaughts of the Western civilization.

NATURE AND AIMS OF THE MOVEMENT

Although the Arya Samaj movement has done laudable work in the field of social reform, yet its chief aim has been the regeneration of Hinduism. Taking its stand on the supremacy of the Aryan culture and the infallibility of Vedas, it has been fighting for a cultural renaissance, to be brought about by reviving the ancient Vedic religion, ideals and institutions. It has been rightly
described as "a crusading and reforming movement from within, as well as a defensive organisation for protection against external attacks."¹ Its aim has, in fact, been twofold, firstly, to protect Hinduism from the attacks of Islam and Christianity, especially from the former, and secondly, to reform perverted Hinduism of the Pauranic age by reviving original Hinduism, as propounded in the Vedas.

For the achievement of the first aim, the Samaj has adopted the twofold militant policy of 'Shuddhi' and 'Sanghathan'. Shuddhi denotes that purification-ceremony by which non-Hindus are converted to Hinduism or Hindus who were converted to Islam and Christianity are reconverted to Hinduism. Sangathan means union and, as a programme of action, it is, therefore, indicative of the efforts of Arya Samaj to organise Hindus for self-defence, which is to be achieved not merely by fighting the enemy when he attacks but by attacking him in his own stronghold. Thus even the policy of Sangathan and self-defence, followed by the Arya Samaj, has a militant air about it. Rightly, therefore, it has been called as "the Church militant in the Hindu fold."²

As regards the second aim, it is sought to be achieved by devising a new system of education. Swami Dayanand and his followers realised full well that Vedic traditions cannot be revived only by speeches and propaganda, that for this a more positive programme of action was needed. In education they found such a positive programme of work and, therefore, took upon themselves the task of founding such schools and colleges in which the youth of the country could be trained in the Vedic atmosphere of the old. Swami Dayanand, throughout

¹ - J.L. Nehru : Discovery of India; p.290.
² - D.S. Sharma : Hinduism Through the Ages; p.104.
his stormy career, pleaded everywhere he went for the establishment of Sanskrit schools and for the teaching of Vedas in them. It was with this aim in view that some of his followers launched upon the policy of establishing Gurukulas.

SWAMI DAYANANDA ON EDUCATION

Although Swami Dayananda fully realised the vital role which education was destined to play in the regeneration of the cultural life of India, and also, therefore, advocated the establishment of such educational institutions where the youth of the country could be trained into the Vedic ideals and values of life, yet he himself did little practical work in the field of Indian Education. Almost all the educational work, associated with the name of the Arya Samaj Movement, was done by his those followers upon whom, after his death, the mantle of leadership fell.

All the same, Swami Dayananda left behind him his well thought-out views on the various aspects and problems of Indian education, and what his followers did was to build upon the educational theory and philosophy already propounded by him. In order to understand the spirit of the educational institutions founded by the Arya Samaj, we must, therefore, understand and appreciate the educational views of Swami Dayananda, which are laid down in great detail in his well-known treatise - Satyartha Praksha.

A I M

The moral aim of education was uppermost in the mind of Swami Dayananda. Fostering those ethical virtues in the students which would make a sound moral character was considered by him to be the most important aim of education. Morality, according to him, meant 'righteous action'. To quote him, "The end of saying, hearing,
preaching, reading or teaching is only this that one might do righteous actions ....... "1"

Elaborating his concept of morality further, Swami Dayananda lays down the following four determinants of 'righteous actions' or morality:–

1. The Vedas.
2. Smritis, which are in agreement with the Vedas, such as, Manusmriti.
3. The conduct of the righteous persons, which has come to us as tradition from the beginning of the universe, that is, conduct enjoined by God through the Vedas.
4. That which conforms to our conscience, for example, truthfulness.

According to Swami Dayananda, a sound moral character, to be formed through education, must remain within the framework of these determinants of righteous action.

**CURRICULUM AND THE SCHEME OF STUDIES**

The study of Vedas and allied Sanskrit literature constitutes the core of the curriculum, as envisaged by Swami Dayananda, for, he says, "..... those who read the Vedas do righteous deeds, practise yoga and thereby know God, stabilize themselves in God and attain the highest happiness of salvation." 2

The study of various subjects, included in the curriculum by Swami Dayananda, is arranged by him according to the following scheme:–

1 - Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya : The Light of Truth (English Translation of Dayanand's 'SATYARTH PRAJAPASH'); p.78.
2 - Ibid; p.103.
Children, first of all, should be taught Panini's Phonetics by parents and teachers, so that they may learn to pronounce letters correctly.

Science of knowledge and Grammar; duration - 3 years; books recommended - Shiksha of Rishi Yaska, Panini's Astadhyayi and Mahabhasya (Patanjali's great commentary on Panini's Sutras).

Mighantu and Mirukta (study of Vedic vocabulary and philosophy); duration - 6 to 8 months; book recommended - by Yaska.

Prosody (rules that govern poetry; duration - 4 months; book recommended - Pingal Shastra.

Manusmriti, Valmiki Ramayan, Vidurniti and Mahabharat (upto the Udyoga Chapter); duration - 1 year.

Six Shastras (Philosophy), namely, Purva Mimansa, Vaishe-seka, Nyaya-yoga, Sankhya and Vedanta; duration - 2 years; these Shastras should be read along with the commentaries of the sages (Rishis) and other excellent authors.

Four Vedas, namely, Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Yathurveda; duration - 6 years; along with their four Brahmanas, namely, Aitreya, Shatapatha, Sama and Gopatha.

Four Upvedas, namely, Ayurveda (the science of medicine), Dhanurveda (the science of government), Gandharvaveda (the science and art of music), and Arthaveda (the science and practice of industrial and mechanical arts and crafts.); duration - 2 years.

Jyotisha Shastra (Astronomy) - it should consist of Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Geography, Geology, and Astronomy; duration - 2 years.
All the above knowledge should be acquired within a total period of 20 or 21 years.

Besides this theoretical part of the curriculum, the students should also be given such practical religious training as recitation of Gayatrimantra with meaning, along with other items of daily prayer, performance of bathing, sipping and sprinkling water and breathing exercises, doing such daily rites as Sandhyopashna, Devayajna, and Homa, accompanied by the recitation of Mantras.

BRAHMCHARYA – AN INTEGRAL PART OF EDUCATION

Swami Dayananda held in very high esteem the ancient Indian institution of Brahmacharya and believed that without it no true education is possible. Adherence to Brahmacharya meant to him a simple and austere living, high thinking, practise of moral virtues and complete abstinence from sex. He, therefore, enjoined upon the students to avoid all intoxicants, meat, scents, garlands, medicines, spices, company of the opposite sex, the use of collyrium in the eyes, emotional outbursts of anger, jealousy, fear, greed and the like. It is only when the students led such an austere life, while living with their Guru away from the allurements of society and attachments of family that they could concentrate upon their studies and receive true education.

HIS DEMOCRATIC IDEALS OF EDUCATION

The educational views of Swami Dayananda manifest a clear democratic fervour. He believed that everybody, physically and mentally fit, is entitled to learn the Vedas; even Shudras are conceded by him the right to education. Education, according to him, should be given to all classes, and not only to Brahmanas, so that the class which is educated may not exploit the uneducated class
due to their ignorance and want of enlightenment. "When all classes are educated and trained, no body can introduce fraud or unrighteous hypocrisy."\(^1\) Besides, he also advocated a thoroughly democratic organisation of the school. "All should get", he said, "the same kinds of clothes, food and bedding, whether they be princes or of poor families. They should all lead a life of austerity."\(^2\)

ON FEMALE EDUCATION

Though Swami Dayananda was vehemently opposed to co-education, yet he championed the cause of women's education with great enthusiasm. He praised those parents who provided education both to their sons and daughters, and maintained that they were equally qualified to study the Vedas, for nowhere in the Vedas anything was written which explicitly or implicitly denied them the right to do so. Further, he pleaded that girls, in their period of study, have even the right to practise Brahmacarya and receive the same education as is given to the boys. For making home-life happy and smooth, both men and women should be educated. Women should especially learn such subjects as are likely to have a bearing on their later home-life, as wives and mothers. Hence they must pay special heed to the subjects like Dharma, Medicine, Mathematics, Arts and the like.

AN APPRAISAL OF HIS EDUCATIONAL IDEOLOGY

From this brief exposition of Swami Dayanand's educational views, it is clear that he was inspired by the Vedic ideals and traditions of education through and through, and that in the revival of these ideals, he thought, lay the real salvation of India.

\(^1\) Ganga Prasad Upadhaya: The Light of Truth (English Translation of Swami Dayanand's Satyarth Prakash; P.80

\(^2\) Ibid: p.57.
In pleading such a concept of education, he was - his critics point out - astonishingly oblivious of the materialistic conditions of modern society. True, but we should not forget that Swami Dayananda was an idealist first and anything else afterwards. His enthusiasm for the ancient Vedic culture and religion of India was perhaps too great to permit him to circumscribe himself by the realities of modern life. As an educationist, he was a dreamer, an impracticable visionary we may say so, if we like; but it can hardly be denied that his idealism did a great service to India, for it set the youth of the country, who were lost in the maze of Western culture, thinking, and gave them the first vital shock to bring their minds back to their own indigenous culture and institutions. This apart, the stress that he laid on the moral aim of education was in itself an eye-opener to those who, under the influence of English education and in the name of western liberalism, had grown completely oblivious of the traditional moral standards of Hindu society. Also keeping his democratic concept of education and advocacy for women's education in view, it would be unfair to brand him as a mere idealist or a reactionary, or as one who had no modern touch about him.

THE WORK DONE BY THE MOVEMENT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

The efforts of the Arya Samaj movement to reform Hindu religion on Vedic lines and to bring about a cultural renaissance in the country apart, it did laudable work in other fields also, especially in the field of education. In fact, it sought to harness education as one of the potential tools for the achievement of its religious and cultural aims. For this, a judiciously conceived system of National Education was considered to be indispensable by it.
It was clear to the leaders of the movement that for the achievement of their religious and cultural aims, the then-prevailing system of education would not do. A new system of national education, wedded to the ancient ideals and traditions, was, according to them, the most burning need of the country. The great importance attached to education by the leaders of the movement is also borne out by the fact that in the official creed of it, consisting of ten principles, the eighth principle lays down that ignorance must be dispelled and knowledge diffused. True to this principle, they have engaged themselves in educational work with great zest and have a fair amount of work to their credit in this field.

FOUNDERING OF THE DAYANANDA ANGLO-VEDIC HIGH SCHOOL (1883) - THE PRECURSOR OF THE D.A.V. MOVEMENT

Soon after the death of Swami Dayananda in 1883, the real educational work of the movement started. June 1, 1886 was a red letter day in the history of Indian education, for on that date was started the first independent educational institution in India - the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic School, Lahore, which was destined to become the precursor of that wide-spread D.A.V. movement in the field of education which brought into existence a large number of Dayananda Anglo-Vedic Schools and Colleges all over India - especially in the Punjab and other northern provinces.

The school was the first educational institution in the country with an entirely Indian management. Though some of the members of the D.A.V. College Trust and Management Society were officials, they held office in the Society in their personal capacity as ardent Arya Samajists, elected by fellow Arya Samajists. It was thus a truly public as distinct from official, officially sponsored or officially aided -
venture in the field of education. For its funds, it owed nothing to Government grants, princely generosity or aristocratic munificence. The sum of Rs. 21,000 which the Society had when it established the D.A.V. School, Lahore, came in the form of countless donations from Arya Samajists of limited means in the Punjab and elsewhere. The recurring cost of its maintenance was guaranteed by 'Atta' Fund and 'Raddi' Fund collections, besides small monthly cash subscriptions and annual donations collected on the occasion of its anniversary celebrations.

The moving spirit behind the D.A.V. High School, Lahore was a young enthusiast, Hansraj, who set an example to others by assuming office as its 'honorarv' Headmaster. His sacrifice was all the more appreciable because he came of a poor family which could hardly afford to let him remain as a parasite on the family's collective income. But the sense of earnest dedication with which he worked for the cause of education was so inspiring that it made people open their palms spontaneously to aid the school. This is exemplified by the enthusiasm shown by his elder brother, who, though the only earning member of the family and getting a meager salary of Rs. 80, as a Post Office employee, offered to donate Rs. 40 a month—half of his whole salary—to his younger brother. It was mainly due to his untiring efforts that within 3 years of its inception—(in 1886)—the school was raised to the status of a college.

THE NATURE AND AIMS OF THE D.A.V. MOVEMENT

The nature of the D.A.V. movement is revealed by the preamble of the D.A.V. College, Lahore, which is clearly indicative of the nationalistic motives of its founders and also ventilates their desire to make it the nucleus of a new system of education for the country.
This is borne out by the fact that it expresses its dissatisfaction with the then existing system of education by pointing out that, being based on the undemocratic 'filtration theory' of the official bureaucracy, it had produced an artificial division in society, by creating a separate class of those who, having received English education, had become so puffed up that they kept themselves completely aloof from the masses. It is further pointed out therein that the system was essentially denationalising in nature, for it was divorced from the traditional culture of the country and tended to promote an undue obsession for the Western civilization.

In contrast to this, the preamble of the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College manifests a distinct nationalist spirit. To understand this spirit, we have only to read the preamble which runs thus, "It will be conceded by all right-thinking individuals that to secure the best advantage in education it is necessary to make it national in tone and character. No doubt, the primary aim of education is to develop the mental faculties, and an educational system is judged by the results of its achievements. But, ...., this single criterion of education is far from being a true ideal of useful education...... In fact, the system of education should be so devised as to strengthen the ties which naturally bind individuals into a common nationality."\(^1\) This clearly shows that the founders of the College, in starting this College, were actuated by a spirit which was essentially nationalist.

As regards the aims of the College, they were laid down as follows:–

1. To encourage, improve and enforce the study of Hindi literature;

\(^1\) - Quoted by Lala Lajpat Rai: \textit{Arya Samaj}; p.181.
(2) To encourage and enforce the study of classical Sanskrit and of the Vedas.

(3) To encourage and enforce the study of English literature and Science, both theoretical and applied.

(4) To provide means for technical education.

(5) To see that teaching should be exclusively done by Indians.

(6) Not to seek monetary help from the Government.

(7) To impart free education.

The primary object of the College was thus designed to be the revival of the study of indigenous languages and literature, both classical (Sanskrit) and modern (Hindi), to provide moral and religious education and to work independently of Govt. control. All this, the founders believed, would make the college a model national institution, to be placed into the hands of the Indian teachers only.

One remarkable thing about the aims of the College is that it does not exclude from its purview the study of English literature and Western science. This is obviously indicative of the fact that the Arya Samajists were not hostile to the learning of English, and knowing of English culture through it; on the contrary, they were inclined to appreciate it. The only thing they disliked and resented in this connection was the neglect of the indigenous languages and literatures, which they sought to promote, while not completely ruling out English language and literature from their scheme of education. The predominant place given to the study of indigenous languages and literatures by them gave their scheme of education a nationalistic colour.
Being the first institution of its kind, which made a bold departure from the official system of education, on national lines, the College had to face many difficulties and hardships in the beginning. But the spirit of self-help and confidence with which the work was commenced stood it in good stead; and after a few years, it became one of the leading educational institutions of the country. Its fame spread slowly but steadily and students came flocking to it in large numbers from distant parts of the country.

The College, besides itself doing laudable work in the educational field, gave birth to one of the greatest educational movements of India - the D.A.V. movement which, as already stated, resulted in the establishment of a large number of D.A.V. Schools and colleges all over the country, especially in the Punjab and Northern India.

The movement survived the tremendous shock of the partition, and today the D.A.V. College Trust and Management Society, with its headquarters at Delhi, has 17 Colleges, 3 Polytechnics and more than 80 Higher Secondary and High Schools under its management.

Inspired by the motive of promoting the study of English and Western sciences under the protective wings of the Indian cultural traditions, the D.A.V. movement has invariably been a significant experiment in the field of modern Indian education. It has created a healthy tradition of independent thought and action, which thought for its members the proud name of 'rebels' at the hands of the alien bureaucracy, has continued to inspire private efforts wedded to nationalist ideology - in the field of education.
EMERGENCE OF THE GURUKULA PARTY LED BY SWAMI SHRADHANANDA

For about a decade, the Anglo-Vedic College of Lahore seemed to work well, for it was supported by all the workers of the Arya Samaj. But ere long a schism appeared within the Samaj regarding the educational policy followed by it so far. This schism was caused due to the dissatisfaction expressed by a section of the Samaj with the educational scheme and pattern of the D.A.V. College, Lahore. Swami Shraddhananda (then Mahatma Munshi Ram) was the leader of this group. He strongly felt that the system of education followed in the Anglo-Vedic College was not adequately consonant with the principles and ideals of education laid down by Swami Dayananda, its affiliation to the University of Lahore, which was an official university, robbed it of its academic independence, for it had to follow the same curriculum as prescribed by the University, and had to show greater concern for the percentage of results than for the quality of education. He, therefore, felt that it could never be the nucleus of a true national system of education, based on pure Vedic ideal and traditions. He, on the other hand, believed that, to establish a national system of education on sound lines, the Vedic ideals, as propounded by Swami Dayananda, should be adhered to, without any compromise with the alien system. The party led by him thus represented the more orthodox section of the Samaj, as it was obsessed with the principles and ideals of the great seer, Swami Dayananda, both in letter and spirit.

With this aim in view, the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of the Punjab (the Representative Assembly of the Arya Samaj) passed a resolution in November, 1896, to the effect that a Gurukula should
be established to put the Vedic ideals of education into practice in their true sense. This was the genesis of the movement, led by this orthodox section of the Arya Samaj, for reviving the ancient Gurukula system of education. It "owes its inception to the vision of Rishi Dayananda, the modern Indian seer, to which Swami Shraddhananda, the Arya Samajist martyr, gave a concrete practical shape."

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VARIOUS GURUKULAS

The passing of the above resolution by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of the Punjab gave a new turn to the educational policy of the Arya Samaj, for it marked the beginning of the Gurukula movement, and resulted in the foundation of a number of Gurukulas in different parts of the country.

THE AIMS AND OBJECTS OF GURUKULAS

The aims and objects, laid down by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of the Punjab, in respect of the Gurukula which it resolved to establish are representative of the aims and objects of Gurukulas in general, and as such we mention them below:

(1) To revive the long forgotten system of Brahmacharya and make it the basis of education.

(2) To provide an opportunity for the natural development of the physical, mental and spiritual faculties of students by rearing them in a favourable environment, away from the pernicious influences of city-life.

(3) To develop a strong character in the students and to foster in their minds a love for their indigenous culture, for plain living and high thinking, and for knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

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1 - Chamupati: The Gurukula University; p.7.
(4) To create between the teachers and the taught relations of love like those between a father and a son.

(5) To assign to Vedic and Sanskrit literatures, as well as to the mother-tongue (Hindi), a place worthy of their importance in the scheme of education.

(6) To make possible the study of the ancient Indian branches of learning with that of the English language and modern science.

(7) To purge the scheme of education of the defects of the prevalent examination-ridden system.

(8) To give education free of any charge.

(9) To institute research into ancient Indian history and to teach history from a national point of view.¹

THE KANORI GURUKULA

The first Gurukula, that was founded for the achievement of the above educational aims and objects, was the Kanori Gurukula. It was established in 1902 at Kanori - a village situated opposite to Hardwar on the banks of the Ganges. It started only with 34 students, divided into 4 classes, under four teachers. Due to the great damage caused to its buildings by the Ganges flood of 1924, it was shifted in 1930 to its present site on the banks of the Ganges canal at a distance of about three miles from Haridwar, near the northern banks of Ganges. It, however, continued to be known by the name of Gurukula Kanori, as before.

The management of the Gurukula remained upto 1921 into the hands of a local Governor, under the general supervision of

¹ - The Prospectus of the Gurukula University (1944); p.2.
the Executive Committee of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of the Punjab.
In the same year, it was, however, converted into a university, with a special Governing Body and the various councils necessary for a university.

The Gurukula University of Kangri has the following four departments:

1. The Brahmacharya Ashrama: This provides education of the school-standard and has three sections, namely, primary, middle, and secondary, with ten classes in all. Students below six or above eight in age are not admitted. Only those students are admitted whose Vedarambh Sanskar (a religious ceremony initiating a person into the studies of Vedas) has been performed. The parents or guardians are required to give an undertaking to the effect that they would not marry or betroth their wards before they are at least 25 years of age. The study of Hindi, Sanskrit and Vedas constitute the compulsory part of its curriculum and great stress is laid on religious and moral training. English and Science are introduced from the 5th class.

2. The Arts College: It was started in the year 1908; it provides for the teaching of (i) the Vedic Literature, (ii) Darsana (Philosophy), (iii) Sanskrit literature, (iv) English literature, (v) Arya Bhasha (Hindi Language and Literature), and (vi) Arya Siddhanta (Comparative study of religions) as compulsory subjects; and (i) Western Philosophy, (ii) Economics and Politics, (iii) Chemistry and (iv) History as optional subjects, of which the students have to offer at least one.
(3) The Divinity or the Veda College: The aim of this department is to train preachers for the Arya Samaj. The curriculum is the same as in the arts college; the only difference, however, is that it lays greater stress on the teaching of subjects like philosophy, Comparative Theology, astronomy, as a part of the Vedic studies.

(4) The Medical or Ayurvedic College: Founded in 1922; its aim is to revive the ancient Ayurvedic Science of Medicine, with certain modifications in the light of the knowledge of modern medical sciences, especially the Allopathy. The course extends over 5 years, and provides for the teaching of Naturopathy also.

THE BRINDABAN GURUKULA

To give the Gurukula movement a further fillip, another Gurukula was founded at Secunderabad in 1902, but later - in 1911 - it was shifted to Brindaban, near Kathura. It is managed by the U.P. Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Like the Kangri Gurukula, it has also developed into a full-fledged university. Its working and details are also, more or less, on the pattern of the Kangri Gurukula. The degrees awarded by both are the same, that is, after a course of 14 years is awarded the graduation degree of Shatakya and two years later is awarded the post-graduate degree of Vachaspati. In both, the medium of instruction is Hindi and special stress is laid on the teaching of Hindi culture and Sanskrit literature.

THE GURUKULAS FOR GIRLS

It goes to the credit of the democratic and progressive spirit of the Gurukula movement that it did not remain indifferent to the problem of female education. The leaders of the movement believe in the practicability of bringing the females within the Gurukula fold,
with certain modifications in respect of its courses and routine; and hence they started the following Gurukulas for girls:—

(i) The Kanya Gurukula of Dehradun.

(ii) The Arya Kanya Mahavidyalaya of Baroda.

(iii) Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Saeni, (Aligarh).

All these three institutions have been organised and are run on more or less identical lines. The same educational ideals and principles, as laid down by Swami Dayananda, are followed by all of them. Strict Brahmacharya, forbidding marriage before the age of 16, is enjoined upon the students, and they are made to live a simple and austere life. Although Hindi, Sanskrit and Vedas are taught compulsorily, but the curriculum is so devised as to meet the special needs and requirements of the fair sex. Hence subjects like Child Psychology, Hygiene, Economics and Arts are included in the curriculum. The Baroda Arya Kanya Mahavidyalaya is, however, an exception, in as much as it attaches greater importance to physical training.

THE GURUKULA SYSTEM AS THE CHIEF CONTRIBUTION OF THE MOVEMENT TO INDIAN EDUCATION

The Arya Samaj started its educational work in an eclectic spirit, trying to fuse the best in the Eastern and the Western cultures together. The first monument of this spirit was the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College of Lahore. This eclectic approach was, however, liked by the orthodox sections of the Arya Samaj who wanted to implement the educational ideology of their great leader - Rishi Dayananda - without making the least compromise with any other system or ideology.
Hence, under the leadership of Swami Shraddhananda, they decided to start a new set of educational institutions which they planned as to approximate to the Vedic conception of education as closely as possible. To these institutions they gave the name of ‘Gurukulas’.

Although the old policy followed by the College-party continued to have its influence on the subsequent work of the Samaj in the educational field, bringing into existence a considerable number of Anglo-Vedic High Schools, Higher Secondary schools and Intermediate and Graduate and post-graduate Colleges, run very much on the pattern of their official counterparts, yet the fact remains that the most unique and notable contribution of the movement to Indian education is the Gurukula system which sought to implement the Vedic traditions and ideals of education in a truly national spirit. To appreciate the contribution of the Arya Samaj Movement to Indian Education we must, therefore, appreciate this Gurukula system of education and its contribution in the educational field.

THE GURUKULA SYSTEM AND THE MODERN PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION

According to the general consensus of modern pedagogical thought, there are five philosophies of education, namely, (i) Idealism, (ii) Naturalism, (iii) Humanism, (iv) Supernaturalism, and (v) Pragmatism. We shall try to assess the Gurukula system in the light of each one of them:

(i) The Gurukula System and the Idealistic Philosophy:

The aim of education, looked at from the view-point of the idealistic philosophy of education, is self-realisation. Spiritu

-ism is, therefore, the hallmark of this philosophy. The Gurukula
system is inseparably wedded to this idealistic principle of education; its faith in the spiritual self of the individual, as ultimate reality, constitutes the key-note of the whole system. As the Gurukula system strives to reproduce the Vedic conception of education, its idealism is essentially the same as that contained in the Vedas and its allied literature, especially the Upanishads. Following the Vedic and Upanishadic idealistic traditions, the Gurukula system is permeated with the belief that the spirit (chaitanya) in the individual human being is a part or particle of the same eternal spirit (Brahma) which is responsible for the creation, preservation and destruction of the Universe. Self-realisation, which means the realisation of the true nature of this inner spirit, is, according to the Vedic philosophy, the only aim of education worthy of being pursued, for it leads to the realisation of the 'Brahma' (the eternal spirit) which means the attainment of the final state of eternal bliss and happiness.

The Gurukula system, based on such an idealistic philosophy, strives to achieve the aim of self-realisation. Following are the principal ways by which it tries to achieve this aim:—

(a) by putting the child in close and continual contact with nature. It is with this view that the Gurukulas are established in forest-surroundings. The nature is supposed to cooperate with teachers in their efforts to help the students to achieve the aim of self-realisation in a most living manner, for it represents to them the embodiment of that mysterious Divine Being with whom they are to attain a sense of unity.

(b) By taking the child in seclusion from the evil influences of society: The Gurukulas are situated at a safe distance
from cities and towns with a definite purpose. This purpose is to keep the students away from the disturbing and corrupting influences of society. Self-realisation is a difficult process which requires high concentration and a strong will-power - these can be had only in the forest surroundings, away from the hubbub and temptations of town or city life.

(c) By providing a strict religious routine: The religious routine enjoined upon every student by the Gurukula is an important factor in self-realisation. Every student is required to recite the Sandhya prayers twice a day. "The habit of falling back twice a day upon one's self does one incalculable good. It affords an opportunity of introspection, of study of self."\(^1\)

(ii) The Gurukula System and the Naturalistic Philosophy

The naturalistic elements in the Gurukula system are two-fold, namely, (a) The inherent goodness of man: faith of the Gurukula in the inherent goodness of man is a natural outcome of the Vedic philosophy, according to which the individual human-being is a part of the Eternal and Divine Being, and because he is all-good, its part, that is, the individual human-being, must also be good.

(b) Distrust of Society: that man is born good and is later corrupted due to the evil influences of society is an article of faith with the advocates of the Gurukula system. The education of the child is, therefore, sought to be carried on away from towns and cities, which are more often than not the worst places of social crimes and corruption. Till the end of the adolescent period, which constitutes the most formative part of human life, the child should be kept away

\(^1\) - Champaati: The Aryan Ideal of Education, pp. 5-6.
from society. The Gurukula system, therefore, practises the ancient tradition of forest-colleges.

From the above, it is clear that the naturalism of the Gurukula system is very similar to the Naturalism of the well-known French thinker - Rousseau, for his educational theory and practice, as propounded in his classic 'Emile', is based on these two important philosophic tenets, namely, (i) Man is born good, and (ii) it is the society which corrupts him. He also, therefore, advocated the education of the child in the midst of nature, away from society. Notwithstanding this basic similarity, there is one notable difference between the Naturalism of the two. whereas Rousseau is not willing to trust the child to the teacher, the Gurukula system considers the teacher to be an indispensible factor in the educational process, as will be discussed later.

(iii) The Gurukula System and the Humanistic Philosophy:

The revivalistic aim of the Gurukula system has essentially a humanistic basis which is "in some respects akin to the humanistic movement that spread over Europe in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries." This analogy is correct to a considerable extent, for the Gurukula system is concerned primarily with the revival of the ancient language, and literature of India, along with the ideals and culture they embody, just as the European Humanistic movement sought to revive the study of the classical languages and literatures. This revivalistic aim of the Gurukula system is clearly stated in the prospectus of 1927,

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thus, "The Gurukula aims at turning out a body of students who
approach Sanskrit classics and the Vedas through the only right
method of approach, namely, through the systematic and sympathetic
study of the Anas and Upangas under right conditions, and who will,
therefore, it is hoped, he able to throw open the treasures of ancient
eternal truth - the Vedic ideal and ideals, to all mankind." 1

Humanism, as a philosophy of education, lays stress on the
study of human feelings, thoughts, and emotions; it never allows to
get itself lost in a mere scholasticism of form and outward expression.
In other words, it cares more for the content of education than for a
mere formal study of certain subjects. It liberates the mind, instead
of only training it in the pedantic pursuit of certain set forms and
ideals. Looked at from this viewpoint, the Gurukula system is essen-
tially a humanistic one, for it seeks to open to the student the
treasures of human thought and ideas as contained in the ancient
scriptures and philosophy. It may, of course, be said, that the
humanism of the Gurukula system is narrow, for it is confined to
the study of human thought and ideas as contained only in the Vedic
literature and the Eastern Philosophy. This is true, but we should
not forget that it is entirely a matter of faith. The Gurukula school
of educational thought believes that it is only the knowledge contained
in them which can bring about real happiness to mankind, by enabling
every individual human being to attain the ultimate ideal of becoming
conscious of being one with the eternal spirit or the Divine Being
(Brahma). Thus even the idealism of the Gurukula system has a vital
humanistic touch about it, for it is designed to lead the individual

1. From Inside, (7 47); pp. 40-41.
to a state of bliss and happiness which alone it considers to be real and ultimate.

(iv) The Gurukula System and the Supernaturalistic philosophy:

The dominating philosophy of the Gurukula system is supernaturalism, for it is concerned with religious and spiritual matters most. Its chief objective is to reveal supernatural truths to the mankind, for example, knowledge regarding God, the real nature of the Universe, the spiritual aspect of human personality, the relationship between God and man, and so on and so forth.

That the Gurukula system is supernaturalistic to the core is clearly indicated by the fact that it lays greatest emphasis on the following three elements of supernatural life:

(a) The Element of Faith: There are two articles of faith which permeate the entire educational process of the Gurukula system, namely, (i) God is all-Knowledge and all-Truth and the Fountain-head of all true and real knowledge, and (ii) the vehicle of such true and perfect knowledge, emanating from God, are the Vedas - they are the books of true knowledge and it is the paramount duty of every Aryan to read or hear them read, to teach and read them to others."

(b) The Element of Worship: another important feature of the Gurukula system which lends it a supernatural colour is the emphasis it lays on the performance of certain religious rituals and ceremonies. The students have to perform such religious worship as Sandhya and Anihsotra daily - morning and evening. The former is the silent repetition and meditation of a number of Sanskrit verses from

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1 - Lala Lajpat Rai: The Arya Samaj; p.102.
the Vedas; the latter is a fire oblation made by the students in groups under the guidance of the teacher. Emphasis on such works of worship is with a view to bring about divine illumination to the worshippers, so that they may put themselves into communion with the Divine Being and thus get that knowledge about the mysteries of Universe, Nature, Life and Death, which no objective science, howsoever advanced, can successfully explain.

(c) The Element of Asceticism: Another important supernatural element in the Gurukula system is the austere and ascetic life which the students are called upon to lead during their period of study. This principle of ascetic living is termed as Brahmacharya by the protagonists of the Gurukula system according to which discipline and self-restraint, simple-living and high-thinking, purity of thought and action and, above all, complete abstinence from sex, are enjoined upon the students - boys or girls. As to the reason why this ascetic type of living is insisted upon, it is not far to seek. For spiritual pursuits, high concentration and strong will are indispensable, and these can be had only through such a living. A life of physical comforts, pleasures and indulgence fritters away the energy of the individual and shatters his concentration and will-power, and hence they can never lead to the attainment of the higher spiritual ideals of life which are the primary concern of the Gurukula system.

(v) The Gurukula System and the Pragmatic Philosophy:

A keen sense of social realism, which seeks to prepare the child for efficient and successful living in the society, is the hallmark of the Pragmatic philosophy of education. Since the Gurukula system is predominantly supernaturalistic and idealistic, it may well appear idle to look for Pragmatic elements in it.
A deeper probe into the Gurukula system would, however, reveal to us the fact that its advocates were not completely unaware of the social realities of life nor did they seem to be indifferent to the future social needs of the child. True, they laid great stress on the study of Sanskrit literature and ancient Scriptures, and stood for the revival of Vedic ideals and institutions, but this did not actuate them to rule out the teaching of more practical and modern subjects. Being aware of the practical needs of life, the Gurukula curriculum, therefore, makes necessary provision for the teaching of English literature and modern sciences. What the system, in fact, wants is that while the child is prepared for his future life by studying sciences and learning practical subjects, he should be firmly grounded in the literatures, languages, philosophy and culture of his own land, especially of the ancient times.

THE GURUKULA LIFE AND ROUTINE

What lends uniqueness to a Gurukula institution is not only its secluded location in the forest-surrounded gharas but also the type of life lived and routine followed in it. The keynotes of the Gurukula life and routine are such austerity, hardihood and endurance, as befit a brahmachari. The school-routine starts early in the morning, i.e. 4 a.m. (5 a.m. for the youngest boys) and ends at 10 p.m. (9 p.m. for the youngest boys). During the greater part of this period of about 18 hours, the students are engaged in strenuous study, work and play. The food that is given is of a very simple type, consisting of Chapatis, dal, a vegetable, and curd. The beds are wooden platforms. The dress is very simple, made of coarse cloth, mostly khaddar, and the footwear
is wooden sandals. The students are required to do plenty of manual labour-work, such as maintaining the school and hostel gardens, cleaning their rooms, and washing their clothes. In a word, the Gurukula life is devoid of any trace of comfort, indulgence and vanity; it is, on the contrary, a life of utmost simplicity, abstinence and purity. And it is for this reason that it has been described as a "new type of monasticism".1

The other two notable features of the Gurukula life and routine are:

(i) Complete Absence of Sex: Sex is conspicuous by its absence in the Gurukula system. The guardians, at the time of admission, have to give the following undertakings in this respect:

(a) That, if before the completion of the 24 years of age, the said Brahmachari is betrothed or married, the Gurukula authorities will expel him from the institution.

(b) In case the marriage is solemnised after the completion of his studies, but before the attainment of the age of 24, the Brahmachari will be liable to the forfeiture of all diplomas or certificates granted to him by the Gurukula.

(ii) The Element of Religion in it: The spirit of religion permeates the entire atmosphere and routine of a Gurukula institution. The students are made to perform regularly various religious rites, without any exception, as a part and parcel of their daily routine, apart from their Vedic studies. Recitation of the Gayatri Mantra and other mantras, and performance of Sandhya and Homa constitute a part of the daily routine of all Brahmacharies. The religious

atmosphere of the Gurukula gives it a positive spiritual tone, which has something elevating, something inspiring in it.

CRITICISMS OF THE SYSTEM

Although the Gurukula system has won sufficient applause by the educationists, who, impressed by its unique features, are, more often than not, inclined to acclaim it as a bold and novel experiment in the field of education, yet they have not failed to point out certain serious defects in the system. We may examine some of the outstanding criticisms usually levelled against the Gurukula system, as follows:

Firstly, the system is said to be reactionary in tone and temper, for being revivalist in nature, it is obsessed with the aim of merely reproducing the ancient ideals and institutions of India in the modern times. This, the critics maintain, is neither feasible nor desirable, for the conditions of the present-day world are different from those existing in the ancient times. That there is weight in this criticism is clear from the apologetic reply which the protagonists of the system give to it, "I admit that a system so old cannot be reproduced in its entirety in the 20th century, but, then Gurukula is not such a rigid system; it is the spirit, and, remember, spirit is eternal."¹

Secondly, the system is described as unrealistic, for it does not prepare the child for life. This criticism arises from the modern concept of school, according to which the school should be a 'miniature society, that is, it should reflect the life-problems

¹ - Satyanarayana: Fundamental Principles of the Gurukula System; p.6
and ideals of the society in which the child has to spend his life in future, as an adult. It is only when the school is organised on such realistic lines that it can prepare the child for his future life. The Gurukula system, the critics point out, is devoid of this element of social realism, for it believes in seclusion and utmost austerity. Such a seclusion, it is asserted by them, harms rather helps the child's normal social development, as it does not represent the environment in which he is going to live when he leaves school and enters life. There is, however, the other side of the picture, as well, for it can be said in answer to this criticism that the aim of this 'seclusion' is to secure an environment in which the child would be safe from the temptations and evils of the outer world, resulting in a high degree of concentration on studies. In fact, the controversy amounts to choosing lesser of the two evils, namely, throwing the child to the vertex of those unhealthy influences from which it is difficult to save the child while he lives in the society, or rearing him in an unrealistic social environment, with reference to the conditions actually existing in the society outside.

Thirdly, the Gurukula attitude to sex is said to be unnatural. Critics point out that this is a serious drawback of the system. The normal home-life, they say, pre-supposes the presence of the members of the opposite sex, for example, mother and sisters; and from this point of view, the home-atmosphere of the Gurukula system is not a normal one. To this also the advocates of the Gurukula system give their own answer, "we keep the girl out of the way of the boy and vice versa because the sight of the one gives rise to erotic dreams in the mind of the other which disturb his or her mental peace, so necessary
for the harmonious development of the adolescent man and woman."¹

There may be some justification in this, but there can be no denying
the fact that complete sex-seclusion for such a long period of time
is unnatural and is, as such, prone to create serious emotional mal-
adjustment in later life.

Lastly, it is pointed out by the critics that the system
is pedagogically unsound, for it overemphasizes the role of the
teacher in the educational process. According to the principles
of modern pedagogy, the teacher should be there only to guide and
encourage the students; he should not dominate or dictate; initiative
in the learning process should be placed into the hands of the child
and he should be allowed the greatest measure of freedom. This is not
so in the Gurukula system, for there "the child, as soon as he steps
into the threshold of the temple of learning, must surrender himself,
body, mind and soul, to the care of the teacher."² As regards the
cogency of this criticism, it is true that the teacher is accorded
a very important role in the educational system of the Gurukula, but
what is remarkable in this connection is that it does not in any
way mean suppression of the child or his domination by the teacher.
He, on the other hand, makes his presence felt only for the good
of the child, always acting as his best friend, philosopher and
guide. This criticism, in fact, is based on a poor understanding of
the real nature of relationship existing between the teacher and
the taught in a Gurukula.

¹ - Chamupati: The Aryan Ideal of Education; p.7.
² - Satyavrata: op.cit.; p.2.
A SUMMARY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE GURUKULA SYSTEM

No doubt, the Gurukula system has its own weaknesses, as pointed out above, but there can be no denying the fact that it represents a new and novel experiment in the field of Indian education. It marks a bold departure from the official system of education, introduced in the country by the British, and strives to pave the way for a system of education which would be the embodiment of Indian culture and genius in the true sense. When Swami Dayananda put forward his educational ideology, based on the ancient Vedic ideals, no body seemed to take him seriously; he was considered to be only 'an angel beating his wings in the void'. And when Mahatma Munshi Ram (later known as Swami Shraddhananda) started his work of establishing Gurukulas on the pattern laid down by Rishi Dayananda, people, submerged under the current of Western education and culture, considered him no better than a dreaming crank!

Such a cold and sceptic attitude toward the Gurukula experiment on the part of those who had been hypnotised by the Western system of education, did not, however, discourage or deter him and his followers. The Gurukula Kaneri, founded by him, had to face difficulties for some time in the beginning, but the spirit of self-help and determination of its workers was ultimately rewarded, for the institution became the centre of attraction for people far and wide within a few years of its establishment. It became the starting point of a new movement, known as the Gurukula movement, in the field of Indian education, bringing in its wake a number of Gurukula institutions - both for boys and girls - especially in northern India.
what lends charm to the Gurukula movement is that it has something new, something vital and refreshing about it. It is inspired by high moral and spiritual ideals and has such unique features which distinguish it more clearly from the contemporary system of education. We have already seen how the leaders of the movement have tried to put these ideals and principles into actual practice by starting a number of Gurukula institutions. The real contribution of the movement does not, however, lie in the founding of these institutions, but in the following high ideals and unique principles which it has sought to experiment with. To assess the contribution of the Gurukula system, we must, therefore, understand and appreciate the following principles and ideals of education it stands for:

1. Emphasis on the formation of character having a religious bias: The special attention which is given to the study of the Sanskrit language and literature in a Gurukula, particularly to the religious literature such as Vedas, Upanishads, Smritis and the like, is calculated to achieve the aim of giving a religious bias to the personality of the student. Great stress is laid on the teaching of religion, because it is considered to be the bed-rock of those high ethical qualities which go to form a sound moral character. The study of Vedic literature is made compulsory not merely for the sake of study, but because it helps in determining right conduct. "Those who are desirous of knowing righteousness should ascertain it from the Vedas. What is righteous and what is not cannot be rightly determined without the help of the Vedas."¹ Knowing and practising righteous conduct thus becomes the

1 - Swami Dayananda: Satyartha Prakash; p.79 (Translation by Ganga Prasad Upadhyay)
primary aim of the Gurukula system. This emphasis on the development of moral and religious aspects of human personality, with a view to forming a high moral character, was calculated to act as an eye-opener for the Indian people who, dazzled by the glamour of western materialism, had become quite lukewarm to the higher values of life.

2. Its profound Idealism: The Gurukula system, as already pointed out, is inspired primarily by the higher values of life, such as self-realisation, knowledge of God and his relationship with Man and Universe, Truth, as revealed through the Vedas, and the like. These constitute the most vital parts of the routine of study and work followed in a Gurukula institution. This idealism of the Gurukula system was obviously a sharp contrast to the sordid materialism and colourless secularism of the then-prevailing system of education, and is truly representative of the traditional Indian culture, whose keynote has been spiritual idealism.

3. Strict Adherence to the Principle of Brahmacharya:
This is a most remarkable feature of the Gurukula system; it stands for an austere living, for simple living and high thinking. It is incumbent upon the students to keep themselves aloof from the temptations of any kind of physical comfort or pleasure, to be content with the bare necessities of life and to devote themselves single-mindedly to their work and study, as students. The principle of Brahmacharya was also an ancient principle which the founders of the Gurukula system sought to revive, for they believed that it is an essential condition for concentration and deep study, required of boys and girls during the period of their education. Strict adherence to this principle unmistakably lends the atmosphere of
a Gurukula a distinguishing note. The ideal of Brahmacarya has a lesson to give to the students in general, in India, for one of the reasons for poor educational standards of today is lack of concentration and seriousness on the part of students in their studies, due mainly to the various worldly temptations and allurements of physical pleasure which cause them so much emotional disturbance and mental distraction.

4. Emphasis on the study of Sanskrit and Hindi language and literature: In this respect, the Gurukula system was so different from the then-prevailing official system of education, which promoted the study of English language and literature at the cost of the indigenous classical languages and vernaculars. The great seer - Rishi Dayananda - and his followers were fully aware of the denationalising effects of the all-out teaching of English, and the emphasis that they, therefore, placed on the teaching of Hindi and Sanskrit, was meant to be a happy corrective to this baneful feature of the English system of education, from the national point of view.

5. Adoption of Hindi as the medium of instruction: Swami Dayananda felt strongly on the issue of medium of instruction; he condemned root and branch the practice of imparting education through the medium of English, as was the fashion of the day, and was never willing to make a compromise on this point. He was clearly of the opinion that instruction through a foreign language is positively harmful. He, on the other hand, laid emphasis on Hindi being made the medium of instruction. He felt, as most of the educationists feel today, that the foreign language, as a medium of instruction, was a
handicap, a dead weight, which retarded the growth of the Indian boys' mind. Following the policy thus laid down by him, Hindi continued to be used as the medium of instruction in all the Gurukulas. The Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya was the first educational institution in India to adopt Hindi as medium of instruction for modern sciences up to the University standard and to produce literature concerning them in the mother-tongue. The pre-eminent success with which it has done this, has become a living example for other institutions of higher education which have been labouring under the notion that it is not possible to do without English at the higher stages of education, particularly in the field of scientific studies.

6. Very close and intimate relationship between the teachers and the taught: The place of the teacher in the Gurukula system is of pivotal importance. He is the friend, philosopher and guide of the students in all respects. The child, as soon as he is admitted into a Gurukula institution, is left to the care and guidance of the Guru for an all-sided development of his personality. The Guru is supposed to protect him from all evils and lead him to the ultimate goal of self-realisation. It is, however, remarkable that despite this importance attached to the teacher in the educational process, as carried on in a Gurukula institution, the teacher never poses himself as a dictator to the child; his relationship with his students is rather of the type existing between the father and his sons. He is, therefore, full of sympathy, love and affection for them. He may chide them sometimes, but this he does in all good sense and with all sincere intentions. To bring about the desired close contact between the teacher and the students, the Gurukula is maintained as a
residential institution and over-crowding is sought to be avoided - this is a feature of the system which, by the general consensus of opinion, deserves to be incorporated into the general educational system of the country, for it is felt that, besides exercising a wholesome effect on the personality of the child, it would also raise the standards of education which are miserably low now-a-days.

CONCLUSION

The Gurukula system - with all these high ideals and distinguishing features - represents the reaction of the Indian mind to the problem of education. It is, in fact, the first attempt to introduce, in explicit terms, the theory and practice of a national system of education in India. It is, indeed, not fair to belittle the importance of the Gurukula movement by saying that it is a reactionary and dogmatic movement whose only aim is the revival of Indian culture. It is, rather, far more than this. "The Gurukula student holds in his hands the keys of both ancient and modern cultures. He sticks to India's individuality as a guarded treasure, but does not shun the additions to it which modern science and culture offer to the heritage of the past. So, there takes place the inevitable inter-play of cultures which is not only desirable but which is calculated to evolve a new Indian culture suited to our times."† This is a very cogent and correct description of the real nature and aim of the Gurukula system, for it brings home to us the fact that the system is essentially synthetic in character - it is neither dogmatic nor narrow, as it is often wrongly understood to be. It is note-

worthy here that the revolt of the Gurukula system was not against the English culture that was already accepted as having finally come to stay in the country, but against the lack of promotion of the indigenous culture in schools and colleges. The task before it was not to oust the Western culture from this land but to reinstate Indian culture side by side with it, in a genuine eclectic spirit. In a word, it sought to establish a system of education which would, on the one hand, be national by being wedded to the spirit and genius of India, as embodied in her ancient educational ideals and traditions, and would on the other, take in the good and useful aspects and points of the Western culture.

Started as the first torch-light of nationalism, when there was darkness all round, the Gurukula movement has stood the test of time during the last 58 years. This is, no doubt, a clear proof of its inherent vitality and strength—a fact which has been admitted even by such outstanding educationists of the country as Dr. Radha Krishnan, who, delivering the 55th Convocation Address at Gurukula Kangri on 10th April, 1955, said, "Several principles which are not now being adopted by educational institutions were first of all formulated in this Gurukula. You wanted to have a residential University, you avoided over-crowding, you believed in the inspiration of ancient culture of this country, and you adopted the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction. These are principles which educationists of to-day want to adopt. We are accusing colleges for taking more students than they can accommodate, leading to indiscipline, not fostering any close and intimate union between teachers and pupils. .... When teachers cease to be respected, when authority
is not listened to, that means the beginning of the decline of a country. But if teachers are to be respected, they must get to know the pupils closely and intimately." ¹ This is, no doubt, a most befitting tribute to the work and contribution of the Gurukula Movement, started and nurtured by the Arya Samaj, to Indian Education.

¹ - Quoted by Prof. Indra Vidyavachaspati: "Gurukula Contribution to the Present Educational System" (Published in Educational India; Decr. 1955; p. 189.)