For the study of the great writers and thinkers of the past, historical imagination is the first necessity. Without mentally referring to the environment in which they lived, we cannot hope to penetrate below the inessential and temporary to the absolute and permanent value of their thought. The form in which men cast their speculations, no less than the ways in which they behave, is the result of the habits of thought and action which they find around them. In the words of Cole (1950), "Great men make, indeed, individual contributions to knowledge of their times but they can never transcend the age in which they live. The questions they try to answer will always be those which their contemporaries are asking. Their statement of the fundamental problems will always be relative to the traditional statements that have been handed down to them." Malik (1961) maintains that when they are stating what is most startlingly new, they will be most likely to put it in an old-fashioned form, and to use the inadequate ideas and formulae of tradition to express the deeper truths towards which they are feeling their way. They will be most the children of their age, when they are rising most above it.

Catlin (1964) explains that Tagore was also the child of his age. He was born in 1861, four years after the momentous year of 1857, when the Sepoy Mutiny had been
suppressed and the administration of the British territories in India had passed from the hands of the East India Company to the Crown.

Mani (1961) narrates that the history of the present system of schools, colleges and universities, which are maintained at public expense, dates from the time of the advent of the British rule in India and especially from the time of Lord Macaulay, the great historian, who was the most important among the personnel of the Government of India at that time. He conceived the scheme of making a class of brown Englishmen who would look out beyond the seas for inspiration, regard Britain as their spiritual home and look down upon the spiritual culture and tradition of their mother-country. He wanted to form a class who would be interpreters of the English and the millions they governed, a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and intellect.

Bright (1951) states that under the above system of education in Indian schools and colleges, great importance was given to English Literature and English History, while Indian Literature was shamefully neglected. Chatterjee (1950) tells that Indian History taught in schools, usually began with Clive and Warren Hastings who were described as the great heroes. But at the same time great heroes of India were not given their rightful place in the study of history in the Indian Curriculum. One thing, however, this system did accomplish — it brought together the different
people of the country speaking different languages through
the medium of English, which was made compulsory during
the British rule and through this foreign medium Science,
which is the greatest contribution that the West has to
offer to the East, became available to the Indian students.
But it was not an unmixed blessing, learning of English
brought up another caste - the English educated, a
separate class of intellectual elite. It had drawn up a
wall between one section of the people and another.
According to Sehanavis (1961) Tagore holds that these
barriers and walls are no longer good and therefore they
have to be pulled down.

Anand (1946) holds that the schools of his
time were never vitalizing. They never allowed freedom to
children, rather their freedom was completely crushed.
Children were compelled to go through a rigid routine even
if they disliked it. According to Das (1922) remarking
about the methods of teaching in his own school, Tagore
says, "We had to sit like specimens of some museums whilst
lessons were pelted at us from above like hailstorms on
flowers." Surely the prevailing system of schooling was
stiff, cramping and dead. He never liked it. It never
imparted spiritual education. It neglected the education
of the body. The foreign medium of instruction was another
glaring drawback in the system. It ignored self-activity,
direct experiences, and close contact between the teacher
and the taught. It had strict discipline based on punishment.
These things never appealed to the poetic genius of Tagore. He states in *Indian Literature* (1961), "I have no idea but one of the methods of punishment I still bear in mind. The boy who was unable to repeat his lesson was made to stand on a bench with arms extended." Instead, Tagore longed for home atmosphere, natural surroundings, creative work, freedom to children, community life, and spiritual education.

Further, in regard to higher education certain evils have become persistent. Most of the existing universities were merely examining bodies, with a large number of colleges and schools affiliated to them, excepting a few residential ones. The system of examination, as was well known, was also very strict, with the result that there were a large number of inevitable failures. The curriculum was very narrow and did not prepare students to meet life situations which were more important than mere passing examinations and becoming petty government officials or simply filling the posts of clerks in business and government offices.

Thus, one of the greatest faults of the Indian educational system had been that there was too much theory and too little of practice. Undue emphasis upon knowledge, purely for the sake of knowledge, though not by itself very bad, had produced a class of intellectual aristocrats who were satisfied with mere knowledge of things, ideas and persons, with the practical side of
this knowledge, they themselves were not very much concerned.
Education had been imparted through the foreign medium,
ill-suited the genius of the country. In this way
everything that was taught had no practical bearing.

Johari (1936) describes that this prevailing
boorish, mechanical, unrealistic, loveless and exclusive
system of education dominated by foreign ideas and foreign
language, dissatisfied Tagore so much that he refused to
give his own children the stereotyped schooling and
started a home school for them at Shalinah. The last
two decades of the nineteenth century were marked by the
growth of socio-political consciousness in Tagore, and
the idea of the all-round regeneration of his country
through national self-determination. Prasadonathan (1943)
contends that individual efforts and sacrifice had been
powerfully exercising his mind throughout this period.
These thoughts took a more pronounced and concrete
shape in some revolutionary directions during the
following years.

Nordin (1942) holds that with the dawn of the
twentieth century, we enter not only into a new era of
time, but also into a new epoch in the life of Tagore.
It ushered in a period of 'unrest and change', as Thompson
(1961) puts it, of spiritual restlessness and transformation,
the roots of which can be traced back to the closing years
of the previous century. For sometime past, the poet had
become dissatisfied with his romantic life of imagination
and the sonatas, and had been yearning for a fuller life
of action and sacrifice. This conflict in his soul
found distinct expression in his poetical work, Citra, in the poem, Dhar Phreao More, and Caitali.

Narasimhan (1946) observes that it is under the stress of this conflict and in quest of a fuller and a more satisfying ideal of life that he turned to the ideals of Ancient India. The spirit of simplicity and purity, the ideals of sacrifice, renunciation and of constant communion with God in all actions, the profound philosophy of peace and harmony, which characterized Ancient Indian Wisdom, appealed to him intensely.

In Santi Niketan (1952) it is depicted that the forest life of Ancient India, as he could visualize and understand through Sanskrit Literature and Hindu Scriptures, with its ideal of simplicity, dignity, and discipline, sublimated through contact with wild nature and natural life, won his warm admiration and allegiance, and offered him the ideal pattern of atmosphere and traditions wherein to conduct the education of children.

Lekhotia (1961) brings home that having thus found the ideals after his heart, Tagore yearned for translating them into the actual field of action, for an active dedication of his entire life to a selfless cause that would call forth the best that was in him. As Thompson (1921), one of the earliest authorities on Tagore, has pointed out that he found no such noble field of action either in the business affairs of his estate or in the contemporary politics of 'application and supplication' to the alien rulers. Education, therefore, became obvious and natural alternative for the purpose.
It is the peculiar glory of great literature that it lasts longer than kings and dynasties. History bears witness to the power of the human spirit which endures longer than dynasties or creeds. The political world of Homer is dead while his song is living today. The splendour of Rome has vanished but the poetry of Virgil is yet vital. The dreams of Kalidas still move like the cry of a living voice, with their poignant sense of tears in human relations, while the Ujjain of which he was the ornament has left her memory to his keeping. The great medieval potentates are forgotten but the song of Dante is still cherished, and the Elizabethan age will be remembered as long as the English language lives on account of Shakespeare. When our lords and leaders pass into oblivion, Tagore will continue to enchant us by his music and poetry, for he is an Indian. In The Visva-Bharati quarters (Spring, 1953) it is said that the value of his work lies not in any tribal or national characteristics but in those elements of universality which appeal to the whole world. He has added to the sweetness of life, to the stature of civilization.

Brecht (1951) describes that India has produced prolific writers before but no other Indian writer in the modern period has contributed so much to advance literature and language as did Tagore. Anand (1945) pleads that no
a poet, ancient or modern, has been received during his life time with the honour and respect with which Dr. Tagore has been greeted, whether in the West or in the East, and there is scarcely any cultivated language into which some, at least of his works have not been translated. 

Krishnamurti (1961) contends that he wrote his first verse in his eighth year. A young cousin, six years older, insisted on his writing a poem, that all one had to do was to pour words into a fourteen-syllable mould and they would condense into verse. The lotus of poetry blossomed in no time in this fourteen-syllabled form and even the bees found a foot-hold on it.

Samanta (1948) explains that Rabindranath Tagore has been universally recognized as one of the greatest lyric poets of all times. His standing as a short story writer, novelist, dramatist and musician is also unquestioned. Radhakrishnan (1961) ascertains that Tagore is our great national poet in line with Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa. He assures that it is the nature of all great poetry to last longer than dynasties and kings. Sivow (1961) considers that genius of Tagore was not limited to poetry alone. His creative faculty was endless. He has written numerous volumes of poems, novels, short-stories, essays on literature, religion, art, politics, education etc. He has enriched the world of literature beyond all estimation. The Bengali as a language has drawn the attention of the world entirely due to his
genius. Fertile imagination and restless talent of Tagore continually sought new paths of expression. This quality, reflective of his total personality, is consonant with his basic life philosophy. The personality of the poet became increasingly rational as his life advanced and intensified in religious experience. He spoke several times of the initial experience, at the age of twenty-one, while living on Sudder Street in Calcutta, which introduced him to a cosmic experience of all embracing love, his closeness to the villages and the folk people, to children and to nature, were contexts for heightening his experiences throughout his life.

Narasimhan (1946) emphasises that Tagore's career as a practical-educator, from the date of his birth to that of his death, therefore, lends itself to a natural and logical division into three broad stages: The Pre-Santiniketan Period (1861-1900), the Santiniketan Period (1901-1918), and the Visva-Bharati Period (1918-1941). The above divisions, however, should never be taken as clear-cut and inflexible, for the stages overlap one another in many respects, and there are certain streams of thought common to all of them, beginning since pretty early years and lasting till the very end. The demarcations adopted are, nevertheless, valid and significant, because the three different stages do possess some pronounced features, to distinguish them from one another. It may even be
argued that the foundation of Santiniketan and the Visva-Bharati were two great landmarks not only in Tagore's career as an educator, but in his life as a whole, the two events having marked according to Tagore's own admission, the two momentous spiritual revolutions in his life.

Majumdar (1968) recalls that division of history into the ancient, mediæval and modern periods is as arbitrary as the characterization of human beings as child, adolescent, young and old. One stage shades into another as imperceptibly as a bud blossoms out into a flower. A person who is young today grows old tomorrow. Similar is the case with the marking of epochs of literary activity of a great writer like Tagore. But such a division inspite of its artificiality is helpful in focusing the attentions of readers on some characteristic features of a particular period. Pillai (1917) also supports that Tagore's writings reflect his surroundings, currently dominant ideas and problems, which exercised his mind at different periods of his life.

9.3 EDUCATIONAL WRITINGS: 1892 TO 1898

The very first writing of Tagore (1892) directly and specifically on an educational subject was SIKSAI HEPHAI. The importance of this well-known writing lies not only in the fact that it was the first educational writing of Tagore, reflecting most of his earlier experiences and contemporary thinking, but also that it forcefully enunciated some of his fundamental educational thoughts which have featured repeatedly in his later
writings. It powerfully reflects his own juvenile experiences of the misery and torture of little children under the prevailing system of education confined within dreary school walls and encumbered with subjects of study in which they found neither joy nor interest. It stresses with remarkable insight and sympathy the essential need of free and happy movements of young children in the open, outside their habitual restrictions, for the purpose of healthy development.

In the Editorial columns of Sadhana under the general title, PRABANGA KALPHA, Tagore (1893) continued the discussion of the central thesis of Siksar-Herpher, namely, the supreme importance of the mother-tongue in the life and education of people. It is a remarkable document as a well reasoned and persuasive apology for the place of the mother-tongue in the scheme of education, and is even more important than Siksar Herpher from this point of view. Here Tagore deals, perhaps for the first time, with the problem of the teaching and cultivation of science. He makes the significant point that scientific studies can take root in a country only when they spread among the masses, and to make science accessible to the general populace, it is essential to pave the way for the cultivation of science through mother-tongue. Tagore also stresses the need of building an adequate scientific terminology in Bengali and appeals to the Association and the distinguished scientists of the country to
address themselves to this urgent task and co-operate with the Vangiya Sahitya Parishad in its efforts in that direction.

EDUCATIONAL WRITINGS : 1904 to 1918

The first writing of Tagore (1904) directly on an educational theme during this period is UNIVERSITY BILL. It is specially significant because it is perhaps the first occasion when Tagore has made a clear case for self-determination, explicitly in the educational context. His arguments, however, are on the same lines as those advanced in support of his philosophy of self-determination in general, mainly based on his fundamental distrust of the motives and intentions of foreign rulers. CHATRADER PRATI BAMBHASAN is an address by Tagore (1905) delivered at the classic theatre in Calcutta, under the auspices of the 'Vangiya Sahitya Parishad', to a gathering of students who had come from different parts of Bengal as candidates for the Matriculation Examination. Welcoming the spirit of self-respect and independence gradually awakening in all spheres of national life, Tagore asks the students to correlate their education with real life situations.

'Resolution On Educational Policy', declared by Lord Curzon's Government had made some policy statements specially relating to Primary Education, which raised a storm of protest in Bengal. In the article PRIMARY SIKA, Tagore (1905) criticized the proposed
policy of educating rural folks in four main rural
dialects in four different zones in Bengal because such
an education would not be considered respectable enough
even by the peasants themselves. The article, ITIHAS KATHA,
is a document of considerable utterances of Tagore (1905)
on the importance and method of teaching history. On the
importance of historical knowledge Tagore writes that if
we think closely, we shall see that the great disparity
in knowledge between the educated and uneducated in our
country lies in the knowledge of history. It is the most
lamentable ignorance for men not to know what man has
done or can do in this world. In another article SVADHI
SVADHI, Tagore (1905) discusses the problem of the
education of the vast masses of people in the country,
stating at the outset that the prosperity of a country
depends on the proper education of the common people. He
postulates the aim of such education in Rabindra Rasamviali
that their education will have to be so devised from the
beginning that they may understand clearly what is meant
by public welfare and may also be practically equipped
in all respects for earning their livelihood.

In the next article, SIKSA SIKSA, Tagore
(1906) also pleads for educational self determination
from a different angle. Taking the cue from an article
in the English Weekly, The Speaker, on the proposed
reforms in Irish education, Tagore points out some deep
parallelism between the modern educational history of
Ireland and India. The only way to introduce lasting reforms
was first of all to place education in the hands of the
people of the country. He warns at the end in Siksa that if
we fail in this, we shall lose our bread, our health, our
intellect and our character. Tagore (1906) happily strike
a much firmer ground in the next article, SIKSA SAMASYA. The
outstanding importance of the essay lies in the fact that
it gives, for the first time, a clear indication of Tagore's
basic difference with the educational policy of the N.C.F.,
and presents a fairly definite and comprehensive exposition
of Tagore's own constructive plan for a truly national system
of education which shaped his educational activity for some
years to come and postulates, for the first time, among other
points, some fundamental aspects of his educational philosophy.

The last article in the important series contributed
to Vanga Darpan around the year of the National Education
Movement, of Tagore (1906), is ABARAN. If Siksa Serpher may
be regarded as the first major plea for education in the
mother tongue, University Bill for educational self determi-
ation, and Siksa Samasya for residential education and
education in nature, Abaran may be considered as the first
major writing enunciating the principles of naturalism in
education. The article has two broad divisions: covering of
the body and covering of the mind, and pleads in respective
sections for a naturalistic education of both.

The next article of Tagore (1907), SAHITYA
SAMYILAN, is an address primarily of a literary interest. It
has been included in Siksa because it contains some observations bearing on general as well as current educational problems. In its invitation to the youth of the country to serve the motherland and the mother-tongue through the collection of various materials from different regions of the country, and its emphasis on the need of gathering knowledge from direct sources through independent efforts, the article reiterates the essential points made in Chatrader Prati Sambhasan and Abaran. The next important writing of Tagore (1910) of this period, that appeared after an interval of about four years is the well known essay, TAROVAN. It contains Tagore’s interpretation of the spirit of the forest and its messages, based on the description of the forest life as found in the epics and the classics of Sanskrit literature. From this point of view, it is a masterly discourse on education in nature and is, as such, a valuable supplement to Siksa Samaya.

The article, HINDU VISVAVIDyalay, of Tagore (1911) written in the wake of the proposal of the establishment of the Benares Hindu University and the Aligarh Muslim University specially for the Hindus and the Muslims respectively, discusses the problem of communal education in the largest context of communalism. He advocates here the cause of what may be called communalism. CHARMSIKSA is the first and by far the most comprehensive and valuable discourse by Tagore (1912) on the important problem of religious education. Initially requested to express his
views on a desirable system of religious education under the auspices of the Brahma Samaj, Tagore discusses in the article the fundamental problem of religious education in general. A letter entitled SIKSAVIDHI written to Dhirendra Mohan Sen from Chelford when the post was in England, is another writing of considerable significance; for it is perhaps the only writing of Tagore (1912) exclusively devoted to the problem of the philosophy of educational method, in some of its fundamental aspects as well as in the context of the existing socio-political and educational conditions in India.

LAKSYA O SIKSA is another letter written from Chelford a few days later. Tagore (1912) postulates at the outset the significant truism that the aims and ideals in the life of a nation should first be clearly apprehended and formulated before its educational system is determined. Here he explains that what we want to be and what we want to learn are inseparably connected together. The next writing of Tagore (1915) SIKSA BAHAN was inspired through a letter written by a lady Smt. Lila Mitra. Although Tagore had numerous occasions in later years to express his views on education of the women in various contexts, this is the first and perhaps the only writing by him exclusively devoted to the discussion of the problem on some of its fundamental aspects. SIKSA BAHAN is a very important writing, because like Siksa Herpher and Siksa Sanasaya, it is the first major exposition of one fundamental aspect of
Tagore's (1915) educational philosophy, which inspired many writings on the same theme on nature.

The next article CHATRA BASAN TANTRA of Tagore (1916) has a two-fold significance. It is, on the one hand, a major statement by Tagore on the problem of student discipline viewed in the light of the psychology of adolescence and on the other hand is one of his earliest apologies for the need of East-West union in the field of education and culture. The article was provoked by a contemporary incident when a section of English missionary teachers in Bengal advised stern disciplinary measures against some Indian students who had assaulted an English professor of the Calcutta Presidency College for his passing some insulting remarks which had hurt their patriotic sentiments.

The article, MY SCHOOL is one of the Lectures delivered by Tagore (1916) in America. It is a writing of first-rate importance not only because of its great wealth of thought and style but also because it is the first, and perhaps the most comprehensive writing by Tagore about his school at Santiniketan. Just as in Sisem Samayana we have the first elaborate statement of the fundamental educational principles and plan inspiring and guiding Tagore's thought and activity, during that period, similarly in MY School we have those ideals re-stated and re-interpret but we also have a somewhat full reference to the genesis and development of his institution as well as the general
life and activities therein.

Tagore’s (1917) last writing of this period deserving notice is TOTA KABANDI. Though an allegorical story, it is of considerable educational significance, representing as it does, with relentless satire, some of Tagore’s major educational theories developed so far.

EDUCATIONAL WRITINGS : 1919 to 1941

The Educational writings of Tagore produced over the long stretch of twenty three years under review make a rich and voluminous literature. The number of books, pamphlets, essays, addresses and letters would easily exceed a hundred. More than half the number either directly deal with or have a direct reference to the aims, ideals, history and the activities of Visva-Bharati. The rest range over a wide variety of subjects.

The very first writing of Tagore (1919) on the Visva-Bharati theme is published by the society for the promotion of National Education entitled ‘THE CENTRE OF INDIAN CULTURE’. It is also his first major statement on the Visva-Bharati idea as it was at its initial stages and was delivered at Salem in South India, before a gathering of students and writers. Here, as earlier in Siksasamasya, in the characteristic tradition of the National Education Movement period, Tagore criticizes the alien character of the existing educational system in India and pleads for a truly national system of education after the genius and tradition of the country.
The next writing of Tagore (1919) is a small article entitled VISVA-BHARATI. It is virtually a reproduction and a partial translation in Bengali of the introductory section of 'The Centre of Indian Culture, and emphasizes the three main points formulated there, namely: I. India should consolidate her own culture in order to contribute to world-culture II. She should invite her scholars to different education centres in order to pursue and produce knowledge in an atmosphere of free and independent enquiry. III. Her educational centres should be organically related to every aspect of the life of her people, which they should constantly enrich through their superior knowledge and intelligence. In an address ABHANIK SANGHA, Tagore (1919) again refers to the conflict that had existed in his mind as also in the working of the institution produced by the efforts to strike a compromise between his own educational ideals and the demands of the Matriculation Syllabus.

The shifting of emphasis from nationalism to internationalism has become more pronounced in the next major writing in AN EASTERN UNIVERSITY which is one of the lectures delivered during Tagore's (1921) foreign tour and later collected in CREATIVE UNITY. Tagore points out that an analysis of the changed conditions of the modern age as also his experiences of his foreign tour convinced him that the West not only needed but in some quarter desired to meet the East, and this meeting should
be made possible through international co-operation in
and through the field of learning and culture. Thus,
Visva-Bharati, instead of remaining a centre of Indian
culture only, is intended to become, as the title of the
article also indicates 'An Eastern University'.

The next article of Tagore (1923) THE VISVA-
BHARATI IDEAL, was contributed to a monograph in English,
entitled Visva-Bharati, under the joint authorship of
Tagore and C.F.Andrews. It is the most lucid, systematic
and comprehensive of all accounts of the institution
written by Tagore. In the address, entitled VISVA-BHARATI,
Tagore (1923) stresses the mission of the institution
from a fresh view point. Wealth carries with it the rights
and the duties of inviting others to share it; again, the
possession of truth carries with it the responsibility of
proclaiming and disseminating it in the world at large. So
the wealth of truth imposes a double responsibility. He
declares that Visva-Bharati has taken upon herself the
task of carrying to the whole world India's 'Treasure of
Light'.

The SCHOOLMASTER, a lecture delivered by Tagore
(1924) in Japan some weeks later, reflects some of the
thoughts of the earlier talk in China and particularly
elaborates the philosophy of naturalistic education to
which these it may be regarded as one of the most valuable
contributions by Tagore. The very word, 'Schoolmaster' is
used as it were, as an exact foil of the word, 'Nature',
and appears to be intended to represent ideas contrary, in every respect, to the concept of naturalistic education.

We strike a fresh theme in the address printed under the caption, ALOCHANA, a Discourse, in which Tagore (1925) discusses at length some fundamental aspects of the ideals and activities of the institution, with special reference to the conduct of its inmates in minute practical details. Tagore puts forward his familiar plea for education in nature as the first essential step to realize the above aim.

The paper, A POET'S SCHOOL, must have been written and read during Tagore's (1926) foreign tour. It is the most important document giving us, as rarely elsewhere, in superb language, a profoundly penetrating and elaborate analysis of (psycho-analysis to quote the language of the poet) his mental background which acted as the genesis of his institution. As such, it is also another writing of first-rate importance on the place of nature in life and education.

In the next address, entitled SRINIKETAN, Tagore (1927) deals, as it appears from the title, with the institution, Sriniketan, which was founded as a wing of Visva-Bharati on February 6, 1922. Dwelling on the aims and objectives of Sriniketan, Tagore observes that under the British rule the Indian Society had lost its former vitality as well as the traditional responsibility for general social welfare. In the address, DESH KAJ, delivered as the tenth anniversary address at Sriniketan,
Tagore (1932) exhorts the villagers to conquer moha (inertia) and bhaya (fear), the two archenemies of human nature, which have particularly bedevilled our village life in modern times and pleads for the principle of self-determination. The address by Tagore (1932) at the annual meeting of the Visva-Bharati Society. Like most other anniversary addresses it contains a retrospective account of the genesis and growth of the institution and lays special emphasis on some aims and ideals inspiring it.

In the address, entitled TO THE STUDENTS, given to the students of the Asram, Tagore (1935) deals in remarkable detail, as in Alochana, with some of the essential considerations which in his opinion, should guide the educational activities of the institution. The various points touched by Tagore may be grouped under three heads, namely, physical education, intellectual education and character training. Another address of Tagore (1935) entitled CHATRADE PRATI, was delivered at a meeting of the Visva-Bharati Sammilan, It is mainly a plea for the cultivation of the intellect as distinguished from the emotion.

The address, entitled VIWA-BHARATI VIHYATAN is another anniversary address by Tagore (1935) in the usual vein of retrospection and reaffirmation of the central ideals of the institution. Tagore reiterates here that it was the joy of creation rather than the objective of social betterment that had motivated him to undertake
this educational venture, he recounts how during the early days of the institution he endeavoured to introduce joy into the learning of the children through reciting before them the RAMAYANA AND MAHABHARATA, inventing various games for them and himself participating in them, writing plays and songs for them, devising numerous ways to entertain the dark evenings of that solitary place.

In his annual address at the institution, entitled VISHVA-BHARATI, Tagore (1939) stresses the spirit of sadhana and fullness of life as their fundamental aim. He starts with the proposition that the true function of a centre of education is to create the field for unselfish devotion to knowledge and truth, which is deep-seated urge in human nature. The main value of such centres lies not so much in the actual work produced, as in the development of the soul of the seekers, which indirectly serves to elevate the tone and spirit of the country as a whole.

The last writing of Tagore (1941) on the Vichva-Bharati theme, from the point of view of the date of publication, is the second part of ABZANER KIP U. VIKAS, a booklet which came out about a month before the death of the poet. It is a remarkable piece. It contains little of the high seriousness of theoretical discussions on the aims and ideals of the institution or of the poignant pathos of sad memories of the struggles and vicissitudes through which it had to pass and which characterizes
Tagore's writings on educational problems during the Visva-Bharati Period apart from those directly on the Visva-Bharati theme, also constitute a rich and varied literature. The first writing in this group chronologically is TATHYA SAMGRAHA where Tagore (1919) reiterates his criticism of bookish knowledge and stresses the importance of collecting information and knowledge from direct sources. In IMERJI BEKHA, as the title shows, Tagore (1919) deals with the problem of the teaching and learning English. Here Tagore shows considerable interest from the point of view of the psychology and method of teaching a foreign language.

In MAISURER KATHA, Tagore (1919) reiterates his regret, already expressed in 'The Centre of Indian Culture', two months earlier, that the Indian Universities have all been modelled after the European pattern. When he paid a visit to the newly founded University of Mysore, he was disappointed to find that it was as much a pure imitation of the western model as any other Indian University. In the end, the poet expresses the hope that one day Mysore University would be the meeting ground of the learning of India and West.

UDYOG SIKSHA is a plea for training in the practical arts, leading to a general mental alertness and the education of the mind in self-reliance. Tagore (1919)
mentions here that provision has been made in the Aasram from time to time, for developing skill in manual work and observation through direct acquaintance with various objects e.g. how to milk a multani cow, how to attend to a vegetable garden, how to work modern type of even etc.

SABDOTTSAV is Tagore's (1919) commentary on his play of the same title, which was written and staged in 1909. It has significance for us as an expression of Tagore's Philosophy of Nature and his Philosophy of Union. The source of all creative impulses, Tagore says, lies in union, in the realization of the bond of unity among the diversities of life. There is in men, Tagore continues, an innate yearning for union with the Infinite which is not possible unless through union with nature. That is why for the highest creative activity union with nature is essential.

KALAVIDYA is another article by Tagore (1919) which elaborates a theme already introduced in 'The Centre of Indian Culture', namely, the importance of the cultivation of fine arts in education and in the national life, at large. In modern times, Tagore says, the human mind in conflict with the machine, is becoming overshadowed by the latter, specially in the aesthetic sphere of our life.

IN DHARMA SIKHA, Tagore (1919) expresses his views on the nature of religious education that a National School should impart. Answering the question 'what is a National School', Tagore says that there are many religious
communities in India, and the Indian nation is the unified entity of these communities. Hence, that alone can be called a national school where through the unified powers of knowledge acquired through education, all these diverse communities may realize their fundamental mental unity.

YASHTI: This occupies an interesting place among Tagore's (1921) writings of this period, it focuses attention exclusively on this problem of the need of cultural union between East and the West which mainly characterized his educational philosophy and activities of the Visva-Bharati period. As such, the article possesses as fundamental a significance as the expression of a major point of view as 'Yukta Vamsa', 'The Centre of Indian Culture' or 'In Western University'.

YATRI, an article is an extract from two letters from the book 'Yatri'. Here, Tagore (1925) makes some interesting comments on the missionary educational institutions in India. For over, missionary charity proceeds on the whole, out of narrow religious hankering after welfare in the other world, and barring exceptions, it has not been a product of spontaneous selfless fellow feeling.

DHANAPRAKASH contains a discussion of Tagore (1937) on religious education made in response to a query from two American ladies on the subject. Tagore states at the outset that the question is not a new one, but the problem has become increasingly difficult in modern times because of the distinctions and artificialities of
modern life.

CITY AND VILLAGE, the paper written by Tagore (1920) is more precisely a socioeconomic discourse rather than an educational treatise, and in the former description, it may be regarded as a major writing of this period. The paper is, on the whole, a forceful plea, in superb diction, for the revival of the harmonious relationship between the city and the village, which existed in earlier times but gradually declined in the modern age.

OKONANI JAPAN, is an article in which Tagore (1929) writes about the value of meditation for the development of individual and national character on the basis of his experience in the course of his Japanese tours, describing how the cultivation of meditation on a national scale has influenced various aspects of the life of the Japanese Nation.

RUSSIA-S CITH, is a collection of fourteen letters and an epilogue, written by Tagore (1931) to different persons on his experiences of his Russia tour conducted during September 11 to September 25, 1930. While the book possesses considerable value as a forceful exposition of some of the most fundamental aspects of Tagore's Socio-political philosophy, its direct interest for us lies in the objects that impressed Tagore from the educational point of view, as also in his comments thereon.

The next writing of Tagore (1933), SIKSAR VIKIRAN, largely concentrates on one of the main propositions set forth in the previous lecture, namely education is real
and fruitful only when it is diffused among the vast masses of the country, thereby bringing about a living contact between the elite and the rank and file of the nation. This can be possible, he holds, only through the agency of the literature in the mother-tongue of the people.

USA IVN AND YASU ALAM, is a Bengali translation of the lecture at Ceylon Rotary Club on May 10, 1934. It contains Tagore's (1934) usual indictment of the modern educational system of India as mainly based on the traditions of the universities in ancient India.

In ABINDO KISHER, Tagore (1935) stresses the importance of the development of self-reliance and practical skill as against dependence on machine and material. Tagore, at the outset, postulates the fundamental principle that education, while recognizing the need of worldly training, should mainly stress the superiority of the spirit and the inner powers of the self. True education, he asserts, develops the power of self-reliance and the ability to do without materials and the machine.

USA IVN AND YASU ALAM, is a paper read by Tagore (1935) at the Bengal Education Week Conference held at Calcutta, under the auspices of the New Education Fellowship, from February 2, 1936. Tagore revets in it, with renewed force and vigour, to his favourite theme of relating education to the genius and the people of the country and resorting to the medium of the mother-tongue for the purpose, in order to impart to education the process of naturalization and
assimilation in the soil of their land. The general theme of the article as also its arguments, analogies and, even the language at places, strongly resembles those of some of his former writings, of Sisar Bahar and Sisar Vikran in particular. Tagore himself refers to this point at the beginning and also in the course of the article, and frankly states that the repetition is not only natural but necessary because not only does one repeatedly feel the spot that pains constantly but he is doubtful whether his previous appeals in this direction have really gone home with his countrymen.

AGRAMER SIKHA, is Tagore's (1936) admirable piece of composition, with short luminous sentences pregnant with deep thought and suffused with fine feelings, deals, as the title indicates, with the essential characteristics of residential education in an 'Aram', important place to 'Guru', and 'Education while living in nature and in the company of Nature'.

Tagore's (1941) CONVOCATION ADDRESS TO GURU-KUL KANGRI may rightly be regarded as his last public utterance on education. Significantly enough, this last writing of the Visva-Bharati Period has the same central theme as in the Centre of Indian Culture—namely the realization of the unity of India and her responsibility in the present world crises. It shows how strongly and deeply Tagore felt on this foremost problem which faced our national life on the eve of India's independence from
foreign rule, and with what unerring and prophetic vision
he harped on it whenever the proper occasion arose.

**Conclusion**

Prakashanathan (1943) believes that Tagore's
literary life extended over sixty years and he reminds
one of Victor Hugo in the copiousness and variety of his
work. He wrote over one thousand poems, nearly two dozen
plays and playlets, eight novels, eight or more volumes
of short stories, more than two thousand songs, of which
he wrote both the words and the music, and a mass of prose
on literary, social, religious, political and other topics.
Added to these, his English translations, his paintings,
his travels and lecture-tours in Asia, America and Europe,
and his activities as educationist, as social and
religious reformer and as politician judged by quantity
alone, the life work of a Titan.

Fordia (1942) maintains that when we take up
Tagore's works, we at once remember Dryden's famous
statement made in a different context, 'Here is God's Plenty'.
He seems to have been a master of all forms—lyrical,
narrative or heroic. But the major portion of his work is
lyrical and everything he wrote, even his prose, bears
the impress of strong personal feeling and the musical
abandon of his lyric expression.

Sarasijnan (1946) sums up that Tagore's
educational thoughts are not found formulated in any one
or more systematic treatises like Rousseau's (1712-1779)
Failes, or Locke's (1632-1704) Thoughts Concerning Education, or Frecbels's (1782-1852) Education of Man, or Spencer's (1820-1903) Education. They are scattered in a large number of independent essays, numerous speeches and letters, only a fraction of which has been collected in books and pamphlets, the rest being either available in the pages of old journals and periodicals or lying in obscurity. To construct a coherent and unified pattern out of this mass of diffuse material is no easy task.

Moreover, Tagore's treatment of his themes had been generally so little pedantic and so much suffused with poetic abstractions and fine emotions that to work out an objective, rational or educational philosophy out of it— all constitutes a baffling effort. He had also traversed such wide range of educational problems that to do equal justice to all of them seems well-nigh impossible.