CHAPTE \ IV

Mahatma Gandhi is the pioneer not only in the field of politics and social reform, but also in the field of education. But his marvellous achievements in the other spheres of life have been so spectacular and his 'Experiments with Truth' and Ahimsa have been so overwhelming that humanity does not pay as much attention to his magnificent contribution to the theory, techniques and practice of education as it deserves. Mankind has paid scant attention to his outstanding achievements in the domain of education. "We have always thought of Gandhi as a holy saint who in some marvellous manner possessed the qualities of a rare statesman."

"The real measure of his greatness as a prince among educational thinkers is lost sight of like the wood in the trees." But it should be remembered that the most valuable legacy Gandhi has given to the posterity is as a great teacher of all times 'with the attitude of a learner which is the real spirit of education' and saint, a modern Isaiah inviting the people to tread the path of righteousness and prophet of their spiritual regeneration.

All great men have been founders of schools, either in the sense of having followers grouped together formally or informally around their preceptor's teaching, or in the sense of establishing a centre of learning. While Buddha and Jesus, Lao Tze and Confucius were founders of schools in the former sense,

2. V. S. Patel: The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, 1956, P. 10.
Socrates with his centre of learning in the busy market-place of Athens, Plato with his Academy, Aristotle with his peripatetic 'school' in ancient times and Pestalozzi and Montessori and Gandhiji the prophet with his Sevagram and Tagore the poet with his Santiniketan, trying hard to deepen the inherent human desire for perfection as against what passes gather up under the protest term "progress" in recent times, have been founders of schools in both senses of the term.

The institutions these great scholars established have been characteristically unique, perfectly genuine and pedagogically enriching. They have been concerned profoundly for the well-being of the "great orphan, humanity". Perhaps they have given us a formula for the preparing of a great educator, great pedagogue, a great man - profound concern for the well-being of the down trodden and sacrifice for the service of the underprivileged.

In the galaxy of great pedagogues and preachers who brought fresh and lively light in the domain of education, G-andhiji's place is unique. Like Pestalozzi and Montessori who became great and effective pedagogues because of their sensitivity to the conditions of the simple village folk in Switzerland and subnormal children in Italy respectively and their praise-worthy work on their behalf, Gandhiji was not only a great man, but an effective educator and one of the distinguishing traits of his greatness was his deep understanding and profound sensitivity to the miserable plight of the underprivileged sons and daughters.
the "Harijans". Green pointed out that Pestalozzi was the founder of modern educational theory and practice; and it may true so far as the educational system in the west is concerned. A careful and impartial study of the educational ideas of Gandhi will vividly show that Mahatma Gandhi has been the starting-point of the theory and practice of education in the East. Pestalozzi was called Father Pestalozzi and Gandhi also rightly and rightly and deserved the appellation, "Bapu" "the Father of the Nation".

It is said that education is an instrument, a weapon to make man polite to people, kind to mankind. If this definition is right, then Gandhi is the greatest educationist since the Buddha and Jesus Christ. Like the Buddha and Christ he is the greatest teacher of mankind, the noblest teacher of all time. The light of understanding and the brilliancy of wisdom which saints, prophets and sages who are the greatest educators of mankind, shower from the splendour of their being, shines far beyond the limits of their own time, place and space. Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest educator of modern age in this sense. But he was more than a saint, a prophet. He was the ardent worshipper of humanity; worshipped particularly the poor, unprivileged, suppressed, suffering and toiling masses and devoted time and energy for their welfare. He was neither a recluse deeply immersed in meditation in the pursuit of supreme knowledge nor a missionary filled to the brim with the zeal for saving the soul of humanity. He was above all a great and noble leader of the common man and his principal preoccupation was the search...
for scientific solutions for the practical problems of life, the eradication of inequality and inequity, the removal of suffering and misery and the betterment of the individual and society here and now, and not in a far-off future or in a distance existence beyond life. To this realism, acute observation and practical insight he added all the vitality of his moral personalit, and the force of personal saintliness. This beautiful and harmonious combination brought him nearer and endeared him more to the common men than has been possible for any political leader in the history of social thought. Such a noble leader became the greatest educationist of the country where more than 85 per cent of the people were illiterate and the rest who were educated under a foreign system of education were like the Hamlets who pondered over great thoughts, but did not strain themselves even an inch to give their thoughts and ideas a practical shape. They were suffering from "the eternal somnolence of the spirit engendered by the unrelieved darkness of the mind and the coarseness of a brute existence."\(^1\)

Gandhiji was the greatest revolutionary educational thinker of India, in the sense that he tried to bring into vogue a new social order, a spiritual society through his new scheme of education. Ordinarily the common tendency has been to identify his educational ideas with the popular Wardha Scheme. Though

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this scheme is an integral part of his educational programme, it does not include the whole of it. This was not the only scheme he experimented upon. He was not only a practical man, but an outstanding experimentalist to the core. Did he not name his autobiography 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'? He had conducted several experiments in the field of education too, of which the Wardha scheme is only a culmination. In his system, education is for life and through life and is intimately related to eternal values.

Gandhiji is an idealist in his educational system. His educational system is related to political philosophy — the evolution and establishment of an ideal society in which service unto man is service to God. His ideal has been universal brotherhood, which should be realized through ahimsa which means love to all and hatred to none. According to him the ultimate goal of man's life is the realization of God or Truth and all the activities of man, — social, political, economic, educational should be devoted to this ultimate purpose of the vision of God. With the avowed object of realizing his ideal spiritual social order as a stepping stone to the attainment of self-realisation and realization of God or Truth, Gandhiji had evolved his educational system as a dynamic side to his philosophy of life.

According to Gandhiji true education means "an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit". 

1. For Gandhiji there is no other God than Truth. He would declare Truth is God rather than God is Truth.
2. Harijan, 31-7-1937.
writes Shri Mahadev Desai, "Education, he has often explained must draw the whole man out of the boy and the girl, and no education could be sound that does not make useful citizens, whole men, of boys and girls".\(^1\) The personality of man is the whole man. It is the primary function of education, therefore, to help a harmonious development of all the four aspects of the human personality, viz., body, heart, head and spirit. "True education" says Gandhiji, "is that which draws out and stimulates the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of the children."\(^2\)

In his scheme, Gandhiji gives little importance to literacy. For him "literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is one of the means whereby man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education".\(^3\) Literacy does not cover the whole of education. Gandhiji opines that a sincere shepherd who possesses character is a much better person and a fitter citizen than the one who has been given the so-called literary training in a modern educational institution. Writes Shri K.C. Masahruwala, "In the Segaon Method literacy (that is, information on various matters through reading and writing, and capacity to follow logical or pseudologistical controversy) is not considered knowledge or even the medium of knowledge, but is regarded only as a symbolical representation both of knowledge and of accomplished ignorance."\(^4\)

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1. The Year Book of Education (1940), P. 441.
3. Harijan, 31-7-1937.
Gandhiji places greater emphasis on the personality of the educand than on the subjects to be taught and the instruments to be used. Like Rousseau he tried to win for the child its legitimate position in the educational scheme. Without any knowledge of Emil he has brought into vogue a philosophy of pedocentric education. Therein lies his greatness and originality.

After laying down the objectives definitely Gandhiji like an expert surgeon, proceeded to prescribe a suitable method for their realisation. Realising that the existing system of education was "not only wasteful but positively harmful" and most of the boys are lost to the parents and to the occupation to which they are born", Gandhiji thought that "the remedy lies in educating them by means of vocational or manual training". This is the core of Gandhi's educational system. "I would therefore begin", continues Gandhi, "the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training..... I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education. Only every handicraft has to be taught not merely mechanically as is done today, but scientifically; i.e., the child should know the why and wherefore of every process."

The essential feature of his system is that all subjects are to be taught through a productive vocation. All training is to be given mainly through the medium of and in correlation with an efficient and prosperous industry. Therefore the handicraft should be the

1. Gandhiji's Inaugural speech at Wardha, October 22, 1937.
2. Gandhiji: Inaugural address at All-India National Education Conference, Wardha, October 22, 1937.
3. Harijan, 31-7-1937.
centre of the method of giving education and is to be neither the necessary concomitant to the existing system nor the addition to the existing plethora of subjects. With Gandhiji it is an article of faith that education should revolve around the centre, viz., vocational and manual training which should form the basis for all syllabi. "This does not mean", clearly states Mahadev Desai, "supplementing literary with manual training, but making manual training the means of literary and intellectual training." Knowledge and wisdom come through work and work gets inspiration from knowledge. The life is made fruitful and worth-living by the experience of knowledge and work as one. Sat-Chit-Anand is the watchword of this education. "Sat is work, without which life cannot go on; Chit is knowledge, without which life lacks freedom; and without Anand life loses its flavour. True education binds Sat-Chit-Anand into one whole."2

As a true practical man, Gandhiji thought of education not merely in terms of the acquisition of knowledge or gathering of facts but in terms of activity. He prescribed handicraft as the source out of which experience and activity spring. The training woven round a suitable vocation will have both educational and economic value. The educational value lies in the development of the whole man through the handicraft, which process can be a guarantee against the lapsing of activity into mere frivolity. The economic value lies in its productive or self-supporting aspects which can be interpreted in two senses, viz., education which will help the

1. The Year Book of Education (1940), P. 441.
educated to be self-supporting in later life, and education which is in itself self-supporting. In the former sense, it will enable the student to be self-supporting after leaving the school by taking up a suitable job. Gandhi himself pointed out that "this education ought to be for them a kind of insurance against unemployment." He further elaborated the idea by saying that "round the special occupation", the mind, body, hand-writing, artistic sense of the boy should be trained so that "he will be the master of the craft he learns". The real meaning of "the term self-supporting is the one which is specially intended in connexion with ..... meeting the expenses of teachers' salaries through the manual and productive work of the children."  

Thus the two fundamental principles of Gandhi's education are that knowledge and training should be woven round a suitable handi-craft and that the craft selected should meet the expenses of the salaries of the teachers. Gandhi did not intend making the student or the school economically independent by means of a craft mechanically learnt. Instead he strove hard to give dignity to labour, emphasize the importance of modest and honest livelihood and change the characters and language through which education is imparted, for better.

The idea of self-supporting aspect of education brings in another essential feature of Gandhi's idea of education, viz., his

For him violence and education are ranged in opposite camps and he is convinced that true education can be imparted through non-violence only. "The idea of self-supporting education," says Shri Mahadev Desai, "cannot be divorced from the ideological background of non-violence, and unless we bear in mind that the new scheme is intended to bring into being a new age from which class and communal hatred is eliminated and exploitation is eschewed, we cannot make a success of it. We should, therefore, approach the task with firm faith in non-violence and in the faith that the new scheme is evolved by a mind that has conceived non-violence as the panacea for all ills." It should be noted that Gandhiji arrived at his theory of self-supporting education independently of any authoritative books on education.

Another important point in his scheme is the infusion of the sense of social responsibility. As against the unreal and artificial system of education the chief defect of which among the manifold ills was the lack of co-ordination between the various subjects, of intimate relationship between education and concrete life situations and of provision for the intelligent and active adjustment of the child to his environment, Gandhiji wanted all training to be carried on through life situations relating to a suitable craft and to social and physical environment, so that what the child learns would be assimilated into his expanding and growing activity. In the school of Gandhiji's imagination, there will be an active acquisition of knowledge and its intelligent use for the

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Educational Reconstruction, P.94.
understanding of and the better control of the social environment by the child. Thus this ideal school will not be a centre of passive absorption of knowledge given second-hand, but will be a reservoir of work, experimentation and discovery, because it adopts an activity curriculum.

Since the education is connected with concrete life conditions and has a social purpose of bringing into being an ideal spiritual society, the ideal of citizenship is, naturally, a very important inherent feature of the scheme. In a democratic society, the very essential factor is the training for citizenship. Gandhiji had correctly anticipated that citizenship in modern India would become largely democratic in the social, economic and political life of the country. Therefore a completely new system of education which would train proper citizens by providing at least the minimum of education required for the reasonable and intelligent exercise of rights and duties of citizenship was a felt need. "Moreover, an intelligent citizen must be able to repay in the form of some useful service what he owes to society as a member of an organised civilised community."¹ Thus Gandhiji propounded a scheme of education which would make the future citizen fit for playing beautifully his role in society. If such a trained citizen were to discharge his duties faithfully as a loyal citizen, he should cultivate sound character opposite to a social being for which appropriate training must be provided in the educational institutions. Further, he will also be

¹ Varkey, op.cit., p.62.
expected to learn the art of discipline and self-government. The educational institution must give him an opportunity to exercise civic virtues. To be a worthy member of the democratic state, he will also have to cultivate toleration, love, breadth and depth of vision, sympathy and good neighbourliness.

Gandhiji wanted the educational system to be so contrived and shaped as to suit the genius of the people of the country. Attracted his attention in Europe during his travels was the fact that education was framed in accordance with the peculiar genius of the people. The same lesson was taught in three different countries in three different ways to suit the varying culture and genius of each. So also, he wanted to introduce a system of national education in India which would be appropriate to her genius. "National education to be truly national must reflect the national condition for the time being" and "true education must correspond to the surrounding circumstances or it is not a healthy growth." Emphasising that education must be appropriate to the surroundings he pointed out, "Every educationist, everyone who has had anything to do with the students, has realised that our educational system is faulty. It does not correspond to the requirements of the country. Certainly not to the requirements of pauper India. There is no correspondence between the education that is given and the home and the village life." In giving due emphasis to the need for close relationship between the two he had gone far ahead of the educational thought.

1. Young India: 12-3-1923.
2. Ibid.
Religion was an important factor in his life; nay "it is more than life". Therefore it was a great living force for him. "It is the permanent element in human nature". In his opinion, religion is related to all aspects of life. Just as politics cannot be divorced from religion, so also education is not to be separated from religion. In his scheme, a liberal education to all must include a reverent and intelligent study of other faiths. He regarded other religions of the world as false or inferior. He said, "I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religion the world. I believe that they are God-given." According to him, "culture of the mind must be subservient to the culture of heart" and that "religion is a matter of heart" and that should be the basis of all sound education. In his scheme, spiritual training is far more important than mere training of the intellect.

Gandhiji gives a rightful place to creative activities in his scheme of education. He laid special emphasis on vocation and industrial training. His intention was to develop the original and innate capacities of the children by means of creative practical activities. He stressed on the need for an intelligent and scientific approach to manual and industrial training which would be a far more valuable aid to the mind than an indifferent voracious reading of literature. It must be noted that the basic craft around which manual training was woven need not necessarily be spinning and weaving. He clearly pointed out that any kind of craft could be chosen which would be suitable to the special needs of the locality.

He accorded the greatest and the most important place to primary education which according to his conception, should be to the "Matriculationless English". He renamed what the Zaki Hussain Committee called Basic National Education as Rural National Education through village handicraft industries. He made clear meaning of this when he said: "Rural excludes the so-called hi or English Education. 'National' at present connotes truth or non-violence. And 'through village handicrafts' means that the farmers of the scheme expect the teachers to educate village children in their villages so as to draw out all their faculties through selected handicrafts in the atmosphere free from superimposed ideas and interference. Thus considered, the scheme is a revolt in the education of the village children. It is in no sense an importation from the west."

The greatest merit of Gandhiji's scheme of education lies in the fact that it is based on the fundamental facts of the so like psychology, sociology and biology. His educational thought has a sound psychological and social background. "Psychologically it is desirable, because it relieves the child from the tyranny of purely academic and theoretical instruction against which its nature is always making a healthy protest. It balances the intellectual and practical elements of experience and may be an instrument, of educating the body and the mind in co-ordination. The child acquires not the superficial literacy which implies without warrant, a capacity to read the printed page, but the more important capacity of using hand and intelligence for some..."
constructive purpose. This, if we may be permitted to use the expression, is 'the literacy of the whole personality' 1. And "socially considered, the introduction of such practical productive work in education, to be participated in by all the children of the nation, will tend to break down the existing barriers of prejudices between manual and intellectual workers, harmful alike for both. It will also cultivate in the only possible way a true sense of the dignity of labour and of human solidarity — an ethical and moral gain of incalculable significance."²

Gandhiji's aim of education, viz., the development of the whole man through crafts is justified by a sound consideration of biological facts also. For according to nature the only education is that which aims at the development of the individuality of the whole man. "The process we see shaping itself in the mind of a boy or a girl is only the highest aspect of a process that actually involves the whole being."³ If education is for fitting the child best for the type of the society in which he will have to live, it should first pay attention to a proper adjustment between the child and his environment. But man possesses the capacity to sail beyond the process of altering the reactions of his organic structure to fit the environment and he is also able to consciously change the environment in accordance with his best interests as well as those of the society in which he has his being. The biological aim in education, therefore, to fit man perfectly for a successful living under the conditions of a complex and dynamic civilization.

1. Educational Reconstruction, P. 121.
2. Ibid.
The outstanding contribution of Gandhiji for education in his great attempt to restore the importance of human hand to legitimate place in the scheme of education. He clearly under the fact that the human hand with its beautifully complex structure, its pliant fingers and opposite thumb has very great uses for man and under the guidance of the mind and the supervision of the senses the hand can help man greatly in his task of the manipulation of his environment and of the making of suitable adjustments. Kalkalkar aptly says, "Experience has taught us now that in order to develop the whole personality of the student education through manual work is essential. So far we have used the tongue and ear for the evolution of the mind and the heart. Eyes also have used more for cramming than observation. But now we should realize that the true development of the mind and the heart can only be through manual labour." 1

The greatness of Gandhiji as an educationist lies in his setting forth of not only one aim of education but different aims which are not exclusive of one another but come under one all-comprehensive and all-inclusive aim. At the outset his different aims appear to be a bundle of contradictions. But they are, in fact, only the different views he held from different standpoint in different places, at different times. Gandhiji has set for two sets of educational aims, viz., the immediate and the ultimate. His ideal of education was attainment of peace, freedom and bliss and not wealth and power.

1. Educational Reconstruction, 1.76.
He laid great stress on the self-supporting aspect in education, perhaps from the two points of view, one from the point of view of quickening the pace of literacy and bringing about universal literacy within as short a time as possible; secondly, from the point of view of teaching the children the dignity of labour and making them to regard manual training as an integral part of their intellectual growth and thus realise that it was patriotic to pay for their training through their labour. "Ind will not be only the means and medium of instruction," says Shri Madhavji, "but to the extent it is an inevitable condition of human life, it will also be an end of instruction." So that the boy will be to inculte in the pupil a sense of the dignity of all manual labour—even scavenging—and the duty of earning an honest livelihood by labour. 1 Gandhi considered a thorough industrial training to be necessary if students were to become self-reliant and self-supporting. 1 The core of his suggestion was that handicrafts should be taught not merely for productive work, but for development of the intellect of the pupils. The students thus trained well and fully equipped would not feel either fear or helpless in struggling with the world and never be in want of employment. He desired that each boy and girl should be "self-supporting after leaving school by finding an occupation—unl the product of the present system of aimless education. In words, the handiwork feature of the new education provides a solution to the problem of unemployment by training pupils to

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1. Harijan, 4-12-1937.
their bread and thus enabling them to be self-supporting after finish their school course.* This proves that Gandhiji did not ignore the 'bread-and-butter' aim of education, though it may be minor importance in his scheme of education. Those who advocate this aim maintain that the student should be able to earn his bread after finishing his education. Education must help provide the economic needs of one's life.

At the same time it must be noted that Gandhiji did not want every child to be a little bace mechanic, a boy-man, a wage-earner, but he wanted learning and earning to go together, and wanted every child to become a self-respecting citizen who would not be a parasite on the society to which he belongs. "The same method will aim at bringing about in the child, at as early an age as possible, the determination of the future career it should expect to pursue, and will arm him with at least one occupation which give him a wage enough for a healthy subsistence." 2

Gandhiji did not ignore the cultural aspects of education. In his speeches to the girls of the Kasturaba Balikashram, New Delhi on 22-4-1946 he said: "I attach far more importance to the cultural aspect of education than to the literacy. Culture is the foundation, the primary thing which the girls ought to get from here should show itself in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal behaviour, how you sit, how you walk, how you dress,

2. Harijan, 4-12-1937.
so that anybody might be able to see at a glance that you are products of this institution. Inner culture must be reflected in your speech, the way in which you treat visitors and guests, as you behave towards one another and your teachers and elders.1 According to Gandhiji, culture is an important aim in education. He thought that very often the vision of man would be blurred by dark clouds of pride and prejudice and so he might not be able to see things in their proper perspective. The function of education, therefore, should be not to add to the already existing dead weight clinging to the soul, but to remove them and free the soul from encumbrances, so that it may be able to follow its own inclination to soar upwards.

Thus freedom was his keynote in his education, just as it was in his politics. He considered fearlessness as the great virtue which could be developed by proper education. He regarded all knowledge and learning to be worthless, if it did not infuse courage and dispel fear from one's mind. He compared learning without courage to a waxen statue, beautiful to look at but hot to melt at the least touch of a hot substance. So Gandhiji regarded "Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye"—(Education is that which liberates) one of the most significant aims of education. It was the motto of the Gujarat Vidyanidhi which he founded in 1920. This educational freedom can be interpreted in more than one way. It may mean political freedom as well as spiritual freedom. By this Gandhiji meant freedom of speech and expression, freedom of thought and action.
might also have meant economic, political and intellectual freedom which is the essence of the freedom of the spirit which is the foundation of all great art. Gandhiji opined that spiritual freedom should be the important aim of education. He said, "The motto of the Gujarat Vidyapith is 'Sa vidya ya vimuktyaye'. It is that knowledge which is (to) leads to) salvation on the premise that the greater includes the less, national independence or material freedom is included in the spiritual. The knowledge gained in educational institutions must, therefore, at least to the way and lead to such freedom."¹

That one of the aims of education should be freedom is implicit in his answer to a question put to him by a student as to what one should do after finishing one's studies. His reply was "The ancient aphorism, 'education is that which liberates' as true today as it was before. Education here does not mean spiritual knowledge nor does liberation signify only spiritual liberation after death. Knowledge includes all training that useful for service of mankind and liberation means freedom from matter of servitude even in the present life. Servitude is of two kinds: slavery to domination from outside and to one's own artificial needs. The knowledge acquired in the pursuit of an ideal alone constitutes true study."²

Here literacy was not the aim of education, according to Gandhiji. The ordinary meaning of education is learning the

¹ Young India, 20-3-1930.
² K.K. Gandhi: To the Students, op.cit., p.288.
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RAs (Reading, writing and Arithmetic). Since Gandhiji thought more in terms of masses than in that of one single individual, paid particular attention to making education useful for all. This is why the utilitarian aspect predominates in his scheme. This does not mean that Gandhiji overlooked other aspects. In fact, he laid great emphasis on the education of the three Rs (Head, Heart, and Hand). His aim was the development of a harmonious and integrated personality, and a proper co-ordination of and harmo among the various faculties of body, mind and spirit respectively for an all-round development. It must be noted that Gandhiji used the term 'faculty' in the sense of power - physical, mental and spiritual. Because Gandhiji conceived of man as neither mere intellect, nor the gross animal body, nor the heart or soul alone, he aimed at an integrated personality, at making the whole man.

Education, according to him must result in an integrated personality and "a proper and all-round development of the mind, therefore take place only when it proceeds pari passu with the education the physical and spiritual faculties of the child."¹ He rightly observed, "I hold that true education of the intellect can only through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs e.g. hands, feet, eyes, ears, nose, etc. In other words, an inte use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quiet way of developing his intellect. But unless the development mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lopsided a

¹Harijan: 17-4-1937.
²To the students, op.cit., P.42.
By spiritual training Ghandhiji meant education of the heart. He affirmed "mental training is nothing if it is not accompanied by true training of the heart." So culture of the heart must have predominance over that of the mind, for are not kind hearts more than crowns and coronets? Ghandhiji provided for this education of heart which consists in the awakening of man's deepest feelings of love, sympathy, fellowship, and aesthetic sense, through drawing, music and handicrafts and in refining his emotions and impulses. Just as Ghandhiji did not ignore the importance of developing a sound vigorous intellect by side with the heart, so also he did not minimise either the necessity of developing a fine, healthy body. He firmly believed that only through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs, true education of the head and heart could come. His method of physical education was as novel and wonderful as it was interesting and inspiring. He said, "I would therefore, give compulsory physical training through musical drill." His following observations clearly explain his views on the training of the body as a part of education, "Nor did I underrate the bull of the body. This they got in the course of their daily routine. For there were no servants on the farm, and all the work, from cooking down to scavenging was done by the inmates (of Tolstoy). There were many fruit trees to be looked after, and enough gas to be done as well. It was obligatory on all, young and old, were not engaged in the kitchen, to give some time to gardenin

2. Ibid. p21.
The children had the lion's share of this work which included digging pits, felling timber and lifting loads. This gave the ample exercise. They took delight in the work, and so they did not generally need any other exercise or games."¹ Gandhiji conceived of an integrated scheme of education which was all comprehensive in scope and included the various sciences and art as well, besides a craft round which everything else would have been woven. He observed, "supposing he is set to some useful occupation like spinning, carpentry, agriculture, etc., for his education and in that connection is given a thorough comprehension knowledge relating to the theory of the various operations that is to perform and the use and construction of the tools that he would be wielding, he would not only develop a fine, healthy but also a sound vigorous intellect that is not merely academic but firmly rooted in and is tested from day to day by experience. His intellectual education would not only include knowledge of mathematics and the various sciences that are useful for an intelligent and efficient exercise of his avocation. If, to this is a literature by way of recreation, it would give him a perfect, well balanced, all-round education, in which the intellect, the body, the spirit have full play and develop together into a natural harmonious whole."²

Though Gandhiji did not attach much importance to literature in his scheme of education and though he said that if education

¹. Autobiography, p. 408.
². To the Students, op. cit., pp. 43-44
synonymous with literacy, it could be put to good as well as to use like a surgeon's knife which could save as well as kill life; he did not neglect it in his scheme of education. He included literacy also though it was not the be-all and the end-all of education. His following words clear every one of the misconception that he did not include literacy in his scheme of education: my scheme of things, he said, "the hand will handle tools before it draws or traces the writing, the eyes will read the pictures of letters and words as they will know other things in life, the ears will catch the names and meanings of things and sentences. The whole training will be natural, responsive and therefore the quickest and the cheapest in the land. The children of my school will therefore read much more quickly than they will write. And when they write, they will not produce daubs as I do even now, (thanks to my teachers) but they will trace correct letters even as they will trace correct figures of the objects they may see. The schools of my conception ever come into being, I may make bold to say, that they will vie with the most advanced schools in quality as far as reading is concerned and even writing if it is common ground, that writing must be correct and not incorrect as it is in the vast majority of cases." 1 Thus it is obvious that Gandhiji aimed at perfection in education. Some educational thinkers advocated the aim of perfection of human nature. According to this view, all the abilities of man both innate and acquired, all his instincts, emotions and all his innate dispositions and all the

aspects of his physical, intellectual and spiritual life should be so perfected as to bring about a harmonious all-round development of all powers. The greatness of Gandhiji lies in the fact that he arrived at almost a similar conclusion independently of any thinker and unlike other thinkers, had suggested a concrete method through which perfection could be achieved. He said, "you have to train the boys in one occupation or another. Round this specific occupation you will train up his mind, his hand-writing, his a sense and so on." 1 He was of the opinion that handwriting was a necessary part of education. "... good hand-writing", he said, "is a necessary part of education. I am now of opinion that children should first be taught the art of drawing before learning how to write. Let the child learn his letters by observation of how he does different objects, such as flowers, birds, etc., and let him learn hand-writing only after he has learnt to draw objects. He will then write a beautifully formed hand." 2 Similarly modulation of the voice is as necessary as the training of the physical drill, handicrafts, drawing and music should go hand in hand in order to draw the best out of the boys and girls and create in them a real interest in their tuition. 3 Thus Gandhiji aimed at a perfect, well-balanced, all-round education in which the heart, the body and the soul would have free scope and full play and develop together into a natural harmonious whole. For the making of the whole man a proper and harmonious coördinat

all these is required and that "constitutes the true economics of education". Such an education would draw out the faculties of a student, in such a way as to enable him or her to solve correctly the problems of life in all departments.

Gandhiji believed firmly that character formation has been one of the foremost aims of education. He said, "... I had always given the first place to the culture of the heart or the building of character, and as I felt confident that moral training could be given to all alike, no matter how different their ages and their upbringing, I decided to live amongst them all the twenty-four of the day as their father. I regarded character-building as the proper foundation for their education and, if the foundation was firmly laid, I was sure that the children could learn all the other things themselves or with the assistance of friends." He was definitely of opinion that a mere knowledge of letters "does not make of us men. It does not enable us to do our duty." He held the view that character-building was independent of purely literary training and therefore, the latter by itself would not add an inch to the moral height of the people nor did it adequately supply their needs. Speaking about purely literary training he remarked, "It is not our Kamadhuk. In its place, it can be of use and it has its place when we have brought our senses and under subjection and put our ethics on a firm foundation. And then, if we feel inclined to receive that education, we may make good use of it. As

1. Harijan, 15-12-1938.
an ornament it is likely to sit well on us. It now follows that it is not necessary to make this education compulsory". ¹ He thought that our ancient school was enough and it was nobler and better than the existing primary education. For "character-building has the first place in it and that is primary education. A building erected on that foundation will last."² Gandhiji attached so much of importance to character-building as an aim in education that he was ready to relegate to a subordinate position or even sacrifice literary training which, in his opinion, lacked originality and naturalness and was practically of no use in after-life and became useless, and which, he went to the extent of calling an oboriginal system of education, if the choice were to be made between the two. "True education", he said, "does not consist in literary training, but in character-building. My reading of Emerson, Ruskin, Kazzini and the Upnishadas confirm such a belief."³ To the question, "what is your goal in education when India obtains freedom?", Gandhiji's prompt reply was "character-building. I would try to develop courage, strength, virtue, the ability to forget oneself in working towards great aims. This is more important than literacy. Academic learning is only a means to this greater end. That is why India's great lack of literacy, deplorable as it is, does not appeal to me nor make me feel that India is unfit for self-rule."⁴

Education had no value, according to Gandhiji, if it did not enable one to attain self-mastery and purity of heart. Thus purity of personal life was for Gandhiji an indispensable condition

².Ibid. P.4.
³.R.M. Patel: Gandhiji's Sadhans, P.114.
for building a sound education. 1 "students have to search within and look after their personal character" for, "what is education without character, and what is character without elementary personal purity?" 2 so the end of all knowledge must be the building up of character. 3 In his advice to the students of the Zahira College, Colombo, on 22-11-1927, Gandhiji said, "all the education you are receiving in this great college will be reduced to nothing, if it is not build on the foundation of a pure character." 4 Gandhiji aimed at purity in thought, speech and deed without which the students were lost even though they might become perfect, finished scholars. He regarded righteousness or good life as an essential aspect of character, at which education ought to aim. Addressing a gathering of college students he said, "Your education is absolutely worthless, if it is not built on a solid foundation of truth and purity," 5 and they must be able to distinguish truth from untruth. Thus Gandhiji aimed at discrimination as one of the tests of true education. He said, in a speech delivered before the students of the Shomaladas College, Thavmager, the students "........ should know only to discriminate between what should be received and what rejected. It is the duty of the teacher to teach his pupils discrimination. If we go on talking indiscriminately, we would be no better than machines. We are thinking, knowing beings and we must in this period distinguish truth from untruth, sweet from bitter language, clean from unclean things and so on." 6

1 To the Students, op.cit., P.106.  
2 Ibid.  
3 Ibid. P.107  
5 Ibid. p.122.  
6 Ibid. p.60.
The highest aim of education, according to Gandhi ji, is a knowledge of God leading to self-realization, the merging of finite with the Infinite. All other aims are subordinate to this supreme aim. They should be directed towards giving an initial insight into the higher life of the spirit and should be consecrated to service of a high impersonal spirit tending to a union ever more intimate with —

"our only true, deep buried selves

Being one with which we are one with the whole world."¹

With all these aims as the bases of educational activities, Gandhi ji regarded self-realization as the summum bonum of life education. In his autobiography Gandhi ji has clearly stated, before I undertook the education of the younger of the Tolstoy Farm I had realized that the training of the spirit was a thing in itself. To develop the spirit is to build character and to enable one to work towards a knowledge of God and self-realization. And I held that this was an essential part of the training of young and that all training without culture of the spirit was no use, and might be even harmful.²

He regarded the life of brahmachari "who is a searcher after God, one who conducts him so as to bring himself nearest to God in the least possible time" and that of a Sannyasi as spiritually similar.³ It is now of that Gandhi ji has put forth two sets of educational aims, viz. immediate and the ultimate. The former are manifold as they touch life at different points. Of all these aims those of

¹ Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Education, Politics, and War, P.98.
² Autobiography, P.413.
³ Young India, 8-9-1927.
⁴ Ibid, 29-1-1925.
character-building and spiritual freedom are the most significant as they serve to bridge the gulf between the life here and life hereafter. The ultimate aim is the knowledge of God and self-realization. The greatness of the educational thought of Gandhi lies in the fact that all the apparently contradictory ideals of education have been fused together in it in such a way as to show their interdependence with the ideal of self-realization which includes and embraces all the immediate and subordinate aims the apex of the whole systematic and pyramidal structure of his educational thought and presents a picture that has a harmonious and perfect architectural unity.

His aim of education is both individual and social. He was aiming at individual perfection and had the greatest regard for the individuality of every human being, he was also keenly aware of the interdependence of society and individual. His aim was not only all-round development of individual personality, but also bringing into existence a social order based on Truth and Non-violence. What Gandhi wanted to achieve was Unity in Diversity - a social order in which all individuals have to play their part for the good of the whole without losing their individual characters.

His aim of education has a social basis. For Gandhi education is preparation for life. If it were to prepare one for life, education must enable him to face the problems of life boldly and there. Such a preparation can be achieved successfully through a good education and proper training. According to him such an education should enable the students to fight against
or other evils. He observed that "There is something radical wrong in the system of education which fails to arm boys and girls against social and other evils."\(^1\) As education had a social bearing for him he wanted it to be national and also within the easy reach of all. According to him, that education which we take no count of the poor, starving millions of India and devotes means for their relief was not national. He had set out his views on National Education before the public in 1921 so beautifully and so clearly "that one cannot resist the temptation of reproducing them fully in his own words: -

"In my opinion the existing system of education is deficient in three most important matters":

(1) It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture.

(2) It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand, confines itself simply to the head.

(3) It is imparted through a foreign medium.

"Almost from the commencement, the text-books deal, not with things the boys and girls have always to deal with in their homes but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is through the text-books, that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in his surroundings. The higher he goes, the farther he is away from his surroundings."\(^1\)

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\(^1\)To the Students, op.cit., P.245.
is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. His education is calculated to wean him from his traditional culture. And if the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalized, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply embedded in them to be altogether uprooted even by an education adverse to its growth.

"Secondly, whatever may be true of other countries, in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent of the population is agricultural and another ten per cent industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after-life. Indeed I hold that as the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to despise labour. There is no reason why a peasant's son after having gone to school should become useless as he does become as agricultural labourer. It is a sad thing that our school boys look upon manual labour with disfavour, if not contempt. Moreover, in India, if we expect, as we must, every boy and girl of school-going age to attend public schools, we have not the means to finance education in accordance with the existing style, nor are millions of parents able to pay the fees that are at present charged. Education to be universal must therefore be free. Therefore, our children must be made to pay in labour partly or wholly for all the education they receive."
"The introduction of manual training will serve a doubt purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the edu-
tion of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a liv-
such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralize the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour."¹ He recognised the "necessity of pursuing industrious training in order to make education directly self-supporting". Besides the economic motive, he held that education also must have the service motive behind it. He maintained that social serv-
should be an essential part of education. He observed, "while continuing his studies in the institution which he has joined, he should ever keep before him the ideal of service set forth by and use his studies with a view to serve that ideal, never for making money".³ According to Gandhiji, Education was not v
its name, if it failed to inculcate in the minds of the studen-
the spirit of true service and sacrifice. In a speech deliv-
before the students of the Prem Mahavidyalaya at Brindaban, Gandhiji said, "your education, if it is a vital thing, must have its fragrance in your surroundings. You must devote a certain portion of your time daily to serving the people around in a practical manner. You must, therefore, be prepared to take the spade, the broomstick and the basket. You must become volunteer scavengers of this holy place. That would be the richest part of your education, not learning by heart literary thesis."⁴ Ga

1. Young India, 1-9-1921.
2. Ibid, 2-8-1928.
3. Harijan, 10-3-1946.
4. Young India, 14-11-1929.
greatness consists in the fact that he synthesized the ideals of social service and individual freedom and developed. He made clear when he said, "I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to his present status by learning to adjust his individualism to requirements of social progress. Unrestricted individualism is law of the beast of the jungle. We have learnt to strike the balance between individual freedom and social restraint. Willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society, enriches both the individual and the society of which he is a member."  

The fact that Gandhiji had clearly understood the inter-relationship between the individual and society is borne out by his attitude towards education which was not one of mere acquisition of knowledge for one's own sake but he wanted it to be bequeathed to posterity. The fruits of knowledge must be shared by all in unison. According to him, sound education must be rooted in the culture and life of the soil. If it is to be so rooted, there must be a naturally continuous flow of the stream of the social and cultural life of the people. Any sudden break in such a continuity, any unex-pected stoppage of the flow would cause enormous ruin. Gandhiji rightly pointed out, "For that which should be remembered is this. The greatest visible evil of the present educational method, in its evidence of deeper defects, is that it has broken up the cont

of our existence. All sound education is meant to fit one
generation to take up the burden of the previous and to keep up
the life of the community without breach or disaster. The burden
of social life is continuous and if at any stage one generation
gets completely out of touch with the efforts of its predecessors
or in any wise gets ashamed of itself or its culture, it is lost."¹
Thus education should aim at the preservation of cultural heritage
and the enrichment of it for the sake of posterity. By laying
equal emphasis on the harmonious and all-round of individual perso­
nality as well as on the construction of a social order on the
foundation of Truth and non-violence where individuals would work
for the good of the whole, at the same time preserving and maintain­
ing their individuality, Gandhiji had brought a balance between the
individual and social aims in education. His uniqueness lies in
the fact that he succeeded in achieving the proper synthesis 'between
the thesis of the individual and the antithesis of society.'² The
essence of his thought is, therefore, that individuality develops
only in a social climate which can provide it with the inspiring
factors of common interests and common activities. He wanted to
transform the schools into communities where individuality was not
crushed down, but developed through healthy social contacts and
opportunities of service.

Gandhiji was a man of action. If he was not a practical
social thinker, he was nothing. Being an experimentalist and a

²Acharya Kripalani: The Latest Fad, P.77.
practical man to the core, Gandhiji practised what he preached and he preached what he thought. He started the experiment of his newly-formed theory of education in his own home, for he held that "the education that children naturally imbibe in a well-ordered household is impossible to obtain in hostels."¹ He did not regret for not having sent his children to public schools which imparted a kind of education which was purely literary and thereby academic, with no practical bias, introducing a gulf between the educated few on the one hand and the uneducated and illiterate people on the other and which, therefore, was unable to teach his children the simplicity and the spirit of service that they displayed later in their lives. He began to train his children under this discipline. They helped him in working the iron-wheel of a hand-mill for getting hand-ground flour and also cleansed the closet. "This proved a good training for the children. The result was that none of my sons developed any aversion for scavenger's work, and they naturally got a good grounding in general sanitation. There was hardly any illness in the home at Johannesburg, but whenever there was any, the nursing was willingly done by the children."² This important experiment of Gandhiji with the education of children taught them the first lessons in dignity of labour, voluntary discipline, self-help and general sanitation.

He was definitely aware of the fact that children could get good discipline and training only at the school of experience.

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¹ Autobiography, Ep. 245, 246.
² Ibid., P. 380.
and from constant contact with the parents and that there would prevail some degree of difference between the disciplined home education and ordinary school education and of the effects produced on children through changes introduced by parents in their lives. He said, "Had I been without a sense of self-respect and satisfied myself with having for my children, the education that other children could not get, I should have deprived them the object-lesson in liberty and self-respect that I gave them the cost of the literary training. And where a choice has to be made between liberty and learning, who will not say that the former has to be preferred a thousand times to the latter."  

Again words that "The youths whom I called out in 1920 from those cities of slavery— their schools and colleges— and whom I advised to it was far better to remain unlettered and break stones for the sake of liberty than to go in for a literary education in the of slaves with probably be able now to trace my advice to its source", show how greatly he valued liberty more than mere learning of an academic nature.  

The year 1904 marks a significant in the history of his educational experiments. One can discover cyclic regeneration of Gandhiji's ideals, like that of the mythical bird phoenix, from Phoenix to Tolstoy Farm, from Tolstoy to the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati and from the latter to Seva Sangh at Sevagram and then to the Sarvodaya Samaj after按时 assassination of Gandhiji.

2. Ibid., P. 248.
In the year 1904 Gandhi ji began a bold educational venture. He embarked upon an undertaking near Phoenix which had great educational significance. He made the Phoenix settlement an ideal school-cum-workshop, wherein both the theory and practice of learning went hand in hand. It was at this time that Gandhiji discovered the seeds of his future educational reconstruction of India. It was in Phoenix that Gandhiji formed his ideas and ideals of education which were later on to blossom into a perfectly beautiful and harmonious flower. There the children were given not only literary training but also practical instruction on agriculture and printing, cooking and gardening and on some other constructive work.

In 1911 Gandhi ji started an ashram in the Transvaal which he named 'Tolstoy Farm' after the Russian saint, Count Leo Tolstoy. This farm proved to be an ideal laboratory for his educational experiments. Prompted by an inner urge, he wanted to embark on a voyage of adventure, exploration and invention in the field of education and find out by experiment the true system of education. He did not like the idea of importing teachers from outside, since he believed firmly that only parents could impart true education to their children. He said, "only this much I knew - that under ideal conditions, true education could be imparted only by the parents and that then there should be the minimum of outside help, that Tolstoy Farm was a family, in which I occupied the place of the father, and that I should so far as possible shoulder the responsibility for the training of the young."¹ Here Gandhi

¹ Autobiography, P.407.
assumed the role of *pater familias* for the children who not only belonged to various religions but were all brought up in different conditions and environment. In their education Gandhiji attached the greatest importance to culture of the heart, character-building in education. The distinguishing features of the Farm were the greatest significance attached to culture of heart, body-building and last but not least vocational training. The children were taught some useful and manual vocation like basket-making, carpentry and cooking, etc. Gandhiji described the special features of the Farm thus, "On Tolstoy Farm we make it a rule that the youngsters should not be asked to do what the teachers did not do and, therefore, when they were asked to do any work there was always a teacher co-operating and actually working with them. Hence whatever the youngsters learnt, they learnt cheerfully. This shows how the teachers at the Farm set an example to others by their ideal conduct and practices - they practised what they preached.

Gandhiji appreciated the necessity of a literary trail in the education of the children. He gave three periods at most to it. Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati were all taught and tuition were given to the students through the vernaculars. English, Sanskrit were also taught to the Gujarati, Hindu students. A course of teaching several subjects, Gandhiji never felt the necessity of text-books at all. According to him the true text..."
of the student was the teacher himself. His approach to educational problems was psychological. In teaching he never used to read the book through from cover to cover, but used to give a short account of all that he had read in his own language which was much more easily understood by the students and even better remembered than what was read by them. He used to put them questions and elicit answers from them. Thus he was able to measure their power of understanding. He himself described the method of teaching thus, "children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes. I do not remember having read any book from cover to cover with my boys. But I gave them in my own language all that I had digested from my reading various books and I daresay that they are still carrying a recollection of it in their minds."\(^1\) He further explained, "It was laborious for them to remember what they learnt from books, but what I imparted to them from books by word of mouth, they could repeat with the greatest ease. Reading was a task for them, but listening to pleaseme gave pleasure, when I did not bore them by failure to make my subject interesting. And from the questions that my talks prompted them to put, I had a measure of their power of understanding".\(^2\) This shows clearly Gandhiji's wonderful power of understanding of the psychology of child learning.

At Tolstoy Farm the students got physical, mental and spiritual training. Gandhiji considered spiritual training to be

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\(^1\) Autobiography, p.412.  
\(^2\) Ibid, p.412.
the most important part of the education of the children in his
charge. He believed firmly that just as physical training was
to be given through physical exercises, and intellectual training
through the exercise of the intellect, so also spiritual training
was to be given only through the exercise of the spirit. Gandhiji
pointed out clearly the futility of the text-books in such a train­
ing. He said that the exercise of the spirit would entirely depend
on the life and character of the teacher. He wanted the teachers
to be primarily men of integrity, character and self-reliant, be
an eternal object-lesson to the students and to be absolutely
perfect and ideal in their conduct and character before their
undertaking the huge task of imparting moral training to others.
Gandhiji was such an ideal teacher who was largely able to affect
the spirit of the students by his way of living which was exemplary
in its character—plain living and high thinking. He pointed out
the true method by which a teacher could impart spiritual training
thus: "It is possible for a teacher living miles away to affect
the spirit of the pupils by his way of living. It would be idle
for me, if I were a liar, to teach boys to tell the truth. A
cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant and
a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value
of self-restraint." ¹

Gandhiji disliked the method of corporal punishment for
correcting the misconduct of the students. Instead he stressed
the importance of _ahimsa_ in education. He conducted an experi­
ment on bringing about good and bad students together.

¹ Autobiography, p.414.
He considered it good discipline for the good children to be taught together with the bad ones, provided the experiment was conducted under the watchful care of the parents. He said that the good would lose nothing since if there was anything really it was bound to react on their bad companions. The good would freely mix with all kinds of children - socialization. This and other similar experiments convinced Gandhiji that "children wrapped up in cotton wool are not always proof against all temptation or contamination. It is true, however, that, when boys girls of all kinds of upbringing are kept and taught together parents and teachers are put to the severest test. They have constantly to be on the alert." 1

In India, after his return, Gandhiji founded the Saty Ashram on May 25, 1915 at Kochrab, Ahmedabad. Its object was for its members should strive hard constantly for the service of country without neglecting universal welfare. This ashram p to be really an experiment in social education. Gandhiji at time, was seriously concerned with the great social evil in I viz., untouchability. He was, therefore, interested in giving the inmates of the ashram a good and sound training in social education which was to be national in character. He made it point to admit any untouchable candidate as an inmate of the ashram if he was otherwise worthy. Thus this ashram had pr to be a wonderful educational experiment in social relationship.

In the ashram, Gandhiji attempted to impart such education as would be conducive to national welfare. In order that physical, intellectual and spiritual development might move side by side, Gandhiji tried his utmost to create an atmosphere of industry. While character-building was given the greatest importance in smallest detail, the letters were not given more than their due importance. Women were given special attention with a view to improving their status. They were provided with the same opportunities for self-culture as the men. The language of the prak was given the principal place in the Ashram and was made the medium of instruction. Languages other than Gujarati were also taught by direct method. Thus Gandhiji's experiment at this Ashram proved to be a wonderfully worthy attempt in National Education.

At Champaran Gandhiji was convinced that work of a permanent nature was impossible without proper village education. The pathetic ignorance of the villagers impressed upon him the urgent necessity of educating them properly, so that they might not allow themselves to be exploited by others. Since the idea of Humanism was dominant in his educational thought Gandhiji, moved by sympathy and therefore, decided to open primary schools in six villages. He issued a public appeal for voluntary teachers whose literary qualification was not so much essential as their moral fibre and there was a ready response. He explained to these teachers that they were expected to teach the children in villages not the mere rudiments of alphabets and numericals, formal grammar and the three R's so much as cleanliness and good
manners. This is a clear proof of the very high regard that Gandhiji always had for character and social and personal cleanliness. As Gandhiji had a first hand knowledge of the insanitary conditions of the villages, he decided to do as much sanitary work as possible and thus penetrate every department of their lives. For this he required the service of doctors. With his enthusiastic bond of teacher-volunteers and the services of an expert doctor, Gandhiji was able to launch a programme of civic education. He had the keen foresight of thinking in terms of the civic education of the villagers along national lines. He had thus anticipated even long ago the lives along with which the modern Community Development Projects and National Extension Services could be launched. Thus Gandhiji had not only been a great missionary, but also a great practical educational thinker who had set a noble example to the posterity in regard to the right lines along which Social education could proceed smoothly.

On the basis of these experiments Gandhiji arrived at the following conclusions in 1932 what is known as the Wardha Scheme was only a step forward—

1. Boys and girls should be taught together.

2. Their time should be spent on manual work under the supervision of a teacher. Manual work should be considered as part of education.

3. Work should be entrusted to each boy and girl after ascertaining his or her inclinations.

4. The child should know the why and the wherefore of every process.
5. General knowledge should be imparted to the child as soon as it is able to understand things. This knowledge should precede literary education.

6. The hand of the child should be trained to draw geometrical figure before he learns to write, that is good handwriting should be taught from the beginning.

7. The child should learn to read before he is able to write; i.e. he should learn to recognise letters as if they were pictures and then draw their figures.

8. By this method and by word of mouth, the child should acquire much knowledge before he is eight years old.

9. Children should not be compelled to learn anything.

10. The child should be interested in whatever he learns.

11. The process of teaching should be conducted in a play-way, for play is an essential part of education.

12. All education should be imparted through the mother tongue of the child.

13. Every Indian child should learn Hindi-Urdu (i.e. Hindustani) as a national language before his literary training commences.

14. Religious education should be deemed necessary. It should be given not through books but through the life of the teacher and by word of mouth.

15. The second stage of the child’s education begins when he is nine and lasts up to sixteen.

16. Co-education would be desirable even during this period, if it is practicable.
17. During this period, the Hindu child should learn Sanskrit and the Muslim Arabic.

18. Manual labour has a place in education during this period also. The time for literary training should increased according to need.

19. The child should learn some vocation as a preparation for his future life.

20. He should acquire a general knowledge of world History, Geography, Botany, Astronomy, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Algebra.

21. A boy or a girl of sixteen years should know sewing and cooking.

22. In the third stage which begins at sixteen and ends twenty-five, a young man or woman should receive education according to his or her desire and circumstances.

23. The education commencing at the age of nine should be self-supporting. The student, while he is learning, should be engaged in such a vocation that its produce may meet the expenses of the school.

24. Instruction should, no doubt, begin right from the start. But it may not be enough to meet the expenses during the initial years.

25. Teachers cannot possibly have big salaries, but they must get enough to maintain themselves. They should be animated by a spirit of service. We must have a character.

26. Puge and costly buildings are not necessary for education.

27. English can and should have a place in the syllabus as a language. Just as Hindi is our lingua franca, English is a language of international intercourse.
In 1935 Gandhiji made an important statement with regard to the technique of educating children. In the anti-untouchability campaign, attention was drawn to the education of the children of the untouchables. Gandhiji enunciated certain fundamental principles of elementary teaching which were so profound and so put that one cannot resist the temptation of reproducing the statement verbatim:

"On first admission their (the children's) bodies have to be minutely examined and thoroughly cleaned. Their clothes must have to be cleaned and patched. The first daily lesson, there will for some time consist of applied hygiene and sanitation as simple needlework.

"I should use no books probably for the whole of the first year. I should talk to them about things with which they are familiar and, doing so, correct their pronunciation and grammar and teach them new words. I should note all the new words they may learn from day to day so as to enable me to use them frequently as they have them fixed in their minds regularly.

"The teacher will not give discourse but adopt the conversational method. Through conversations he will give his pupils progressive instruction in history, geography and arithmetic. History will begin with that of our own times, and then, too, events and of persons nearest us, and geography will begin with that of the neighbourhood of the school. Arithmetic will begin
with the sums applicable to the pupils' homes. Having tried the
method myself, I know that infinitely more knowledge can be given
to the pupils through it, and without strain on them, than can
be given through the orthodox method, within a given time.

"Knowledge of the alphabet should be treated as a separate
subject altogether. The letters should be treated as pictures
which the children will first be taught to recognize and name.
Writing will follow as part of the drawing lesson. Instead of
making dots of their letters, pupils should be able to make perfect
copies of the models placed before them. They would not, therefore,
be called upon to draw the letters till they had acquired control
over their fingers and the pen.

"It is criminal to stunt the mental growth of a child by
letting him know only as much as he can get through a book which
he can incoherently read in a year. We do not realize that if a
child was cut off from the home life and was merely doomed to the
school, he would be a perfect dunce for several years. He picks
up information and language unconsciously through his home, not
in the school room. Hence do we experience the immense difference
between pupils belonging to cultured homes and those belonging to
uncouth homes, which are no homes in reality.

"In the schools I have visited, the school master is
expected to treat his occupation seriously and feel one with his
pupils. I know that, in putting the scheme into operation, the want of schoolmasters of the right type is the greatest difficulty. But we shall not get the right type till we have made the right beginning.

"I must postpone the consideration of the stage when we have to arm the pupils with books."

"These principles enunciated by Gandhi" says P.T. Mazumdar "are in conformity with the most advanced pedagogy of America—
physical examination, story-telling, the conversational method,
visual method of instruction, education rooted in social experi
and flowing back into social experience more enriched and vital.
And "the above statement on pedagogy alone is sufficient to ent
Gandhi to be considered the father of modern education in India.
While Gandhiji's views on methods of teaching were in conformit
the most advanced educational systems of the western world, the
end of education as visualized by him were in consonance with t
ideals of ancient Hindu school system.

With his rich experience extending over a period of for
years, Gandhiji finalized his scheme of new education in 1937.
new scheme was first heralded by him in the columns of the Hari

2. Ibid., p.80.
It was just about that time that the management of the Marwadi High School, renamed 'Navabharat Vidyalaya' at Wardha while celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the School, conceived of the idea of calling on that occasion a small conference to discuss the plan of education which Gandhiji had been propounding in the columns of his Harijan. Gandhiji approved of the idea and gladly consented to preside over the function. The All-India Educational Conference was held at Wardha on the 22nd and 23rd of October, 1937 under his presidency and the conference had unanimously passed the following resolutions on the second and last day of the session:

"(1) That...... free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale;

(2) That the medium of instruction be the mother tongue;

(3) That the Conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre round some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given, should as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child;

(4) That this Conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers".  

Another important feature of the Wardha Scheme is Gandhiji's cardinal creed of non-violence. Shri Mahadev Desai lucidly explained the cult of non-violence as applied to education by Gandhiji in his speech at Wardha Conference. — "The idea of

self-supporting education cannot be divorced from the ideologic background of non-violence, and unless we bear in mind that the new scheme is intended to bring into being a new age from which class and communal hatred is eliminated and exploitation is eschewed, we cannot make a success of it. We should, therefore approach the task with firm faith in non-violence and in the fact that the new scheme is evolved by a mind that has conceived non-violence as the panacea for all evils. Those who talk of Machine Age do not know of the dangers ahead of us, and labour under the illusion that socialisation tacked on to industrialism is the solution of all evils.¹

Still other important features of the Basic scheme as conceived by Gandhiji are the ideal of citizenship and the idea of a co-operative community. In these days of international tensions brought about by atom and hydrogen bombs, the necessity training children in citizenship becomes vitally important. The credit of Gandhiji lies in the fact that he had anticipated long ago the modern trends in education, viz., education for world citizenship. The Basic Education propounded by Gandhiji aims at giving the children who would be the citizens of the future a sense of dignity, personal worth and efficiency and strengthen in them the eagerness for self-improvement and social services a co-operative Community. It also contemplated the idea of a co-operative Community in which the motive of social service wo

¹. Educational Reconstruction, P. 94.
dominate all the activities of the children during their formative and plastic years and aimed at making them feel that they were directly and personally co-operating in the noble experiment of national educational reconstruction.

During the Quit India Movement the Basic Education was out of the picture. Yet, "it is noteworthy to note that the force of the storm and the thundering of the gathering clouds could extinguish the lamp lighted out by Gandhiji. Though its light was bedimmed for a short while, it began to shine with greater brilliance on the release of Gandhiji from jail. He came out of jail with a new vision of Nai Talim."¹

Gandhiji defined Nai Talim as "Education for life. The field of 'Nai Talim', said Gandhiji, "extends from the moment a child is conceived in the mother's womb to the moment of death. According to Gandhiji, education is all comprehensive and it embraces the whole of life, leaving no aspect of life untouchable. Thus education is both 'for' and 'through' life. He said, "Education covers the entire field of life, there is nothing in life, however small, which is not the concern of education."² Illuminating redefinition of Basic Education as 'co-extensive life' indicates an important stage in the evolution of Gandhiji's educational thought. He wanted to extend the scope of Basic Education.

¹K.S. Patel, op.cit., p.147.
²V.K. Gandhi: Basic National Education, Wardha, P.V.
³Ibid. P.V.
Education so as to 'include the education of everybody at every stage of life.' The Third All-India Basic Education Conference which Gandhiji opened at Sevagram in 1945 had mainly dealt with the idea of working out Gandhiji's New Conception of Basic Education into a practical educational programme. It thoroughly examined all the aspects of the programme and analysed it into following four parts corresponding to the four stages of life:

The first stage is the education of the community as a whole and of its every individual member for a clean, healthy, happy and self-reliant life. It is adult education or education of men and women in all stages of life.

The second stage is that of pre-basic education or the education of children under seven for an healthy development of their faculties.

The third stage is that of Basic Education or educatic of boys and girls from seven to fourteen.

The fourth stage is that of post-basic education or the education of adolescents who have completed Basic Education. is to be conceived as the educational nurture of adolescent of youth from the fifteenth to the eighteenth year of life. Basic education may be described as 'education for self-suffic

post-basic education should be planned as 'education through self-sufficiency.' The educational community which at this stage should be residential, possibly taking the form of a 'school village,' should provide opportunity for a great range of productive activities which will both support the community and afford the basis of sound and well-organised knowledge. The post-basic school should lead on naturally either to the responsibilities of adult family life in one or the other of normal productive occupations of humanity, or (in the case of those with strong natural bent and aptitude) to some forms of professional training in a university.¹

Though Gandhi had mainly thought in terms of education for every class and age, his main interest was in education of children. When the experimental Basic Education system for children from seven to fourteen which was started in 1937 at Sewagram, had finished the first stage of seven years, Gandhi, as a logical sequel, extended the second principles of Basic education to the education of the whole man from the womb to the tomb. Gandhi considered education "not in a parochial sense of a classroom process, but in its broad and true sense of a life-long process which begins with the beginning and ends with the end of life, going on constantly and uncensingly."² This education, he said, in order to develop to the maximum extent the latent capacities of the child had to be centred round a village craft which

¹Basic National Education - K.K. Gandhi, Wardha, P.X.
²M.S. Patel, op.cit., P.47.
had to be such a simple one as to be easily manipulated by the child and which when learnt by the child would set problems to him and bring out in that connection his thought, character and also his artistic sense. Its essence was to be self-support and self-help. Such a scheme of education would take into consideration the organic oneness and wholeness of the child as an individual and give the physical, mental and spiritual training in such an integrated and correlated manner as to develop best a harmonious and well-balanced personality. The manual work which has been the core of Gandhian Thought on education, balanced, from the psychological viewpoint, 'the intellectual and practical elements of experience and may be made an instrument of educating body and mind in coordination. From the sociological point of view, it will conduce to a true sense of the dignity of labour and of human solidarity, which would be an ethical and moral gain of incalculable significance. It will develop in the children the qualities of cooperation, brotherhood and service, which would make for a peaceful life in society, minimizing all possible causes of friction. From the economic point of view, the Gandhian scheme of education gives greater reality to the educational process by making it economically remunerative and developing in the children qualities of self-reliance and independence."¹ "Education thus conceived becomes co-extensive with life itself with cleanliness and health, with citizenship, work and worship, play and recreation, all this not as separate subjects of the syllabus but as interrelated processes for the development of a harmonious and balanced life."²

²Basic National Education, op.cit., P.V.
The ultimate aim behind Basic Education was the achievement not only of a balanced individual life, but also of a balanced, harmonious and just social order. "Since Gandhi was a man of the masses, he had no regard for things which the masses could not practice. Therefore his method of Basic Education was more or less a technique for awakening the inherent strength in the common man, not for his own redemption only but for that of mankind as a whole and for putting each individual in charge of his own destiny. In fact Nai Talim became for Gandhi an instrument for realizing his ideal for bringing about a peaceful, happy and contented life for the teeming millions by an education of the whole personality of man through the intelligent practice of a socially useful work."¹

It is noteworthy that Gandhiji had also given much thought to such problems in education as, the linguistic problem, education of women, sex education, religious education, adult education and higher education.

Gandhiji loved his mother tongue deeply. His love was so profound and also his knowledge of the evils of the foreign medium of instruction was so accurate that he went to the extent of saying that no one who was indifferent to his mother-tongue could claim to be a true lover of his country and that instruction through a foreign medium would be a national tragedy and the children who received knowledge through an alien medium would be...

deprived of their birthright and the foreign medium meant an undue strain on their young minds. For it had robbed them of all their originality, stunting their healthy growth and isolating them from the joys of their homes. That was why Gandhiji always favoured and encouraged education only through the vernaculars.

He rightly observed, 'we never master the English language; with some exceptions it has not been possible for us to do so, we can never express ourselves so clearly as we can in our own mother-tongue. How dare we a rub out of our memory all the years of our infancy? But that is precisely what we do when we commence our higher life, as we call it, through the medium of a foreign tongue. This creates a breach in our life, for bringing which we shall have to pay dearly and heavily.'¹ Gandhiji had a clear knowledge about the tremendous wastage of time and labour involved in learning a foreign language. He pointed out "Just consider for one moment what an unequal race our lads have to run with every English lad. I had the privilege of a close conversation with some Roona professors. They assured me that every Indian youth, because he reached his knowledge through the English language, lost at least six precious years of life. Multiply that by the number of students turned out by our schools and colleges and find out for yourselves how many thousand years have been lost to the nation."²

Therefore while making a strong plea for making the vernacular the medium of instruction, he also accorded it to the rightful place in education. He said, "India has to flourish in

¹. M. K. Gandhi: To the Students, 1949, P. 43.
her own climate and scenery, and her own literature, even though all the three may be inferior to the English climate, scenery and literature. We and our children must build on our own heritage. If we borrow another, we impoverish our own. We can never grow on foreign victuals. I want the nation to have the treasures contained in that language, and for that matter the other languages of the world, through its own vernaculars."

It must also be noted that Gandhiji did not altogether ignore the importance of the English language. Infact, the very columns of Sarojan in which he expressed his wonderful and noble thoughts in beautiful English prove that he was a lover of English language. He never said that no one should learn English. While replying to a charge levelled against him, he remarked, "English is a language of international commerce, it is the language of diplomacy and it contains many a rich literary treasure, it gives us an introduction to western thought and culture. For a few of us, therefore, a knowledge of English is necessary. They can carry on the departments of national commerce and international diplomacy and for giving the nation the best of western literature, thought and science. That would be the legitimate use of English." what he was against was the usurpation of the dearest place in our hearts by English and the dethronement of our mother tongues. "It is an unnatural place due to our unequal relations with Englishmen. The highest

2.M.K. Gandhi: To the Students, P.53.
development of the Indian mind must be possible without a
knowledge of English. It is doing violence to the manhood and
specifically the womanhood of India to encourage our boys and girls
to think that an early entry into the best society is impossible
without a knowledge of English. It is too humiliating a thought
to be bearable."

He made himself clear when he said with regard to the place of English in his scheme of education, "I love
the English tongue in its own place but I am its inveterate
opponent, if it usurp a place which does not belong to it. English
today is admittedly the world language. I would therefore accord
it a place as a second, optional language, not in the school, but
in the University Course. That can only be for a select few not
for the millions. Today when have not the means to introduce even
free compulsory primary education, how can we make provision for
teaching English?"

To those who argued that it would be
impossible to impart technical education through the mother tongue,
he replied that they were not aware of the rich treasure of
expressions and idioms that lay buried in the native dialects of
the villages of India. He said, "Russia has achieved all her
scientific progress without English. It is our mental slavery
that makes us feel that we cannot do without English. I can never
subscribe to that defeatist creed."

Gandhiji had decided opinions with regard to the national
language of India. He laid down the following conditions as the

1. Young India, July 12, 1920
3. Ibid.
test of national language -

"(1) For the official class it should be easy to learn.

(2) The religious, commercial and political activity throughout India should be possible in that language.

(3) It should be the speech of the majority of the inhabitants of India.

(4) For the whole country it should be easy to learn.

(5) In considering the question, weight ought not to be put upon momentary or short lived conditions."¹

According to Gandhiji, Hindi satisfied these conditions and therefore, it alone could become a national language. It is noteworthy that Gandhiji laid correct emphasis on the need of a common language, not in supercession of the regional languages but in addition to them. He held the view that the vernaculars provided the strong and sure foundation on which the edifice of the national language should be built and maintained. His following words make clear his breadth of outlook, "It is now my opinion that in all Indian curricula of higher education, there should be a place for Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and English, besides of course the vernacular."²

With regard to the knotty problem of the script Gandhiji said that Devanagari should be the common script, as it was the

¹J.M.K. Gandhi, op.cit., P.55.
²Ibid. I.54.
script known to the most of the people of India. He declared, "If I could have my view, I would make the learning of Devanagari script and Urdu script, in addition to the established provincial script, compulsory in all Indian provinces and I would print in Devanagari chief books in the different vernaculars with a literal translation in Hindustani." He also pointed out that the replacing of the Devanagari Script by the Roman script would be a fatal blunder like the jumping into the fire out of the frying pan. To those who suggested the adoption of the Roman script as the most satisfactory solution, he replied that its sole merit is its convenience for printing and typing purposes. But that is nothing compared to the strain its learning would put upon millions. It can be of no help to the millions who have to read their own literature either in their own provincial script, or in Devanagari."

To sum up, though Gandhiji loved English language, he did not want to make it either our lingua franca or the medium of instruction. Instead he favoured Hindustani written in either Devanagari or Urdu Script to become the national language of India. It should become a compulsory subject in the school curriculum. But it would not, however, be the medium of instruction in the non-Hindi speaking areas where respective vernaculars would be the media of instruction at all stages of education.

1. M.K. Gandhi, op.cit., P.63;
With regard to the education of women, Gandhi held the view that though men and women were of equal rank, they were not identical, that men and women had their distinct contributions to make for the good of entire humanity and hence they had their specific capacities, as well as specific spheres of activities in which they could distinguish themselves and therefore men were particularly better fitted for distinguishing themselves in outward activities than women and therefore, for him, it would be suitable that he should have a greater knowledge thereof and on the other hand, women ought to have more knowledge of domestic affairs. That means that education of man must be distinct from that of woman and therefore the same education would not be of much benefit to both. There might be certain common knowledge or subjects which ought to be shared equally by both man and woman. But when it came to the question of specialization, Gandhiji’s services to the women of India were really great. He sympathised with the deplorable state of affairs of women. He attributed the cause of illiteracy among women not merely laziness as in the case of men, but also to the terribly inhuman injustice done to women by men. So he strove hard to emancipate her from her bondage and restore her to her original position. How could this be done? Through giving adequate training so that women could discharge their responsibilities properly.
With regard to the vexed problem of co-education, Gandhijli's approach is typically Gandhian in the sense that it is unorthodox and original. He conducted experiments on it. Nevertheless he was not certain whether or not, co-education would be a success in India. He said, "....... co-education is still in an experimental stage and we cannot definitely say one way or the other as to its results." In the absence of any conclusive evidence based on personal experience and experiment, Gandhiji could not help approaching the subject with an open mind. He could not give us his ultimate views on co-education, because he would not hurriedly arrive at a conclusion without a thorough examination of all the aspects of a problem and would not accept anything, that was not based on personal experience. Approaching the problem with an open mind, he provisionally laid down that there should be co-education up to the age of eight, that, as far as possible, boys and girls should be taught together up to the age of sixteen and that after sixteen, the boys and girls should study together. He said, "....... personally I have an open mind. I think that there are just as valid reasons for as against co-education. And I would not oppose the experiment wherever it is made."  

It adds to the credit of Gandhiji that he gave great attention to the problem of sex education. In this respect he had gone far ahead of his times by his mature thinking and deliberation.

1. Harijan, 16-7-1938
2. Ibid.
about this very important aspect in education. He would divide sexual science into two kinds, that which is used for overcoming or controlling sexual passion and that which is utilized for stimulating it.¹ Gandhiji said that the instruction in controlling or overcoming sexual passion should be the very important part of a child's education and that as that science which stimulates it has been harmful, it should be thoroughly shunned. According to Gandhiji the primary object of sex education should be the conquest and sublimation of the sex passion. "Such education should automatically serve to bring home to children the essential distinction between man and beast to make them realize that it is man's special privilege and pride to be gifted with the faculties of head and heart both; that he is a thinking no less than a feeling animal, as the derivation of the word 'Manushya' shows and to renounce the sovereignty of reason over the blind instincts is to renounce a man's estate. In man reason quickens and guides the feeling, in brute the soul lies ever dormant. To awaken the heart is to awaken the dormant soul, to awaken reason, and to inculcate the distinction between good and evil."² He also said, "I am strongly in favour of teaching young boys and girls the significance and right use of their generative organs. And in my own way I have tried to impart this knowledge to young children of both sexes, for whose training I was responsible."³ Gandhiji understood well that science of sex is one of the most useful and one of the most neglected of all sciences and the imparting of

¹Harijan, 21-11-1936.
³Ibid., 21-11-1936.
sex-education in the right manner would satisfy the curiosity of the children and lay a strong and solid foundation of their personality in early years.

As to the question who should teach the true science of sex, Gandhiji's reply was "clearly, he who has attained mastery over his passions. To teach astronomy and kindred sciences. We have teachers who have gone through a course of training in them and are masters of their art. Even so must we have as teachers of sexual science, i.e., the science of sex control, those who have studied it and have acquired mastery over self. Even a lofty utterance that has not the backing of sincerity and experience will be inert and lifeless and will utterly fail to penetrate and quicken the hearts of men, while the speech that springs from self-realisation and genuine experience is always fruitful."¹

It goes to the credit of Gandhiji that he thoroughly understood the importance of sex education in life and accorded it the rightful place in the curriculum.

With regard to the problem of religious education also, Gandhiji's approach is both scientific, original and convincing. According to him, the ultimate aim of education is self-realisation. Though he was alive to the difficulties of religious education in India where not only most religions of the world had been existing but even there were so many denominations in the same religion, he understood well that the neglect of religious education would

¹. M.K. Gandhi, To The Students, P. 253.
destroy the very moral fibre of the society. "But if India not to declare spiritual bankruptcy, religious instruction of youth must be held to be as necessary as secular instruction.

He held the view "that knowledge of religious books is no equivalent for that religion." Therefore the aim of religious instruction should be the cultivation of "the true religious spirit" - the noble spirit of Universal love and brotherhood. He suggested that "the evils of religious instruction vanish with the evolution of the true religious spirit. To stop religious instruction is like letting a field lie fallow grow weeds for want of the tiller's knowledge of the proper care of the field." Therefore, "the fundamental basis of religious education should be instruction in the universal essentials of religion and a training in the fundamental virtues of Truth and Ahimsa, which make for purity of heart and purity of living. The great religions of the world, however much they may differ absolutely one on this fundamental that no man or woman with impure heart can possibly appear before the great white throne. A rigorous practice of the fundamental virtues, therefore, is the solid foundation of spirituality." To Gandhi, religious Truth and Ahimsa were interchangeable terms. Religious education should help the student not only in a constant search after truth but also in a firm and steadfast clinging to and observance of truth.

1. Young India, 23-8-1927.
2. Ibid, 25-8-1927.
3. Ibid, 14-10-1926.
And with regard to the principle of *ahimsa* in education, Gandhi said, "*Ahimsa* in relation to the life of a student is quite apart from these questions of high politics. *Ahimsa* in education must have an obvious bearing on the mutual relation the students. Where the whole atmosphere is redolent with the pure fragrance of *ahimsa*, boys and girls studying together will live like brothers and sisters in freedom and yet in self-imposed restraint; the students will be bound to the teachers in ties of filial love, mutual respect and mutual trust. This pure atmosphere will of itself be a continual object-lesson in *ahimsa*. Students brought up in such an atmosphere will always distinguish themselves by their charity and breadth of view and a special talent for service. Social evils will cease to present any difficulty to them, the very intensity of love being enough to burn out those evils. For instance the very idea of child-marriage will appear repugnant to them. They will not even of penalizing the parents of brides by demanding dowries from them, and how dare they after marriage regard their wives as chattels simply a means of gratifying their lust. How will a young man brought up in such an environment of *ahimsa* ever think of filling the brother of his own or a different faith. At any rate no one will think of calling himself a votary of *ahimsa* and do all any one of these things."  

Speaking about the value of *ahimsa* in education he said, in the hands of the educationist *ahimsa* "ought to take the form of the purest love ever fresh, an ever"
gushing spring of life expressing itself in every act. Ill-will cannot stand in its presence. The sun of ahimsa carries all the hosts of darkness such as hatred, anger and malice before himself. Ahimsa in education shines clear and far and cannot be hidden ever as the sun cannot be hidden by any means.

He made a strong plea for religious education. Nevertheless he omitted it from the Wardha Scheme. In the Basic Scheme there was no room for sectional religious training and because he wanted to teach the students practical religion, viz., the religion of self-help, he had not laid much stress on mere religious instruction. What he deliberately omitted in this scheme was religious instruction the sense of denominational religion. A mere consideration of the miseries and troubles which human beings were made to suffer in all ages and in all countries by sects will make clear the wisdom of Gandhiji’s policy.

Regarding the question whether religious education should become a part of the school syllabus as approved by the state, he said that he did not believe in state religion. Religious instruction cannot be given by the state in the schools under control without undermining its secular features. “Unless there is a State religion, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to provide religious instruction as it would mean providing for denomination. Such instruction is best given at home. The state should allow enough time for every child to receive such

1. To the Students - P. 160.
instruction at home or otherwise. It is also conceivable th
the State should provide facilities for private tuition by th
denominations which may wish to instruct their children at as
provided that such instruction is paid for by such denominati
As Gandhiji aimed at freedom in religion as also in politics,
would not always welcome State interference in matters religi
He would not even encourage State aid to religious bodi
does not mean that the State schools should not give ethica
teaching, on the contrary, the teaching of fundamental ethics
to all religions, was, according to him, undoubtedly a functi
the State. 2

According to Gandhiji, a curriculum of religious inst
should include a study of the tenets of religions other than
own. For that purpose he wanted the students to be trained
cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the do
of various great faiths of the world in a spirit of great re

catholicity, broadminded tolerance. If that task was done
properly, Gandhiji hoped that such a training would help the
students by giving them not only a spiritual assurance but a
better appreciation of their own religion. He pointed out
study of other religions besides one's own would give not on
firm grasp of the rock-bottom unity of all religions but al
a glimpse of that universal, and absolute truth which lay b
the dust and mist of divergent faiths and creeds. He also
explained in clear terms that there was no ground for the fe

1. Harijan, 16-7-1938.
2. Ibid., 23-3-1947.
a reverent study of other religions would weaken or shaken on faith, one's respect in one's own religion. On the other hand, such a study and appreciation of other religions would mean an extension of the regard that one has for one's own religion to other religions. Thus Gandhi strongly advocated the teaching of equal regard for all religions. For without it there would be no prospect of real unity among all the various communities. Clearly pointed out that if the children belonging to the different faiths were taught that their religion was superior to every other or that it was the only true religion, that step would be fatal to the healthy growth of a friendly spirit among them. If that spirit were to pervade the nation, the necessary corollary would be that either there should be separate schools for every sect or freedom to teach the younger generation the hatred towards other faiths, to decry every other or the very mention of religion be wholly prohibited. Such a state of affairs, if allowed to continue, would bring in dangerous consequences. So Gandhi advised that while studying all other great faiths one must keep before one's mind the rule that one should study all faiths through the writings of the unbiased, known votaries of the respective faiths and not through a translation of them made by the prejudiced, hostile critics. For in his opinion, 'fundamental principles of ethics are common to all religions. These should certainly be taught to the children and that should be regarded as adequate religious instruction so far as the schools under the Wardha scheme are concerned.'

1. Educational Reconstruction, P. 130.
How to impart religious training? Gandhiji himself conducted the experiment in the Tolstoy Farm making the children memorize and recite hymns and reading to them from books on religious training. "I have experimented," he said, "with quite a number of boys in order to understand how best to impart religious instruction and whilst I found that book instruction was some of an aid, by itself it was useless. Religious instruction, discovered, was imparted by teachers living the religion themselves. I have found that boys imbibe more from the teachers' own lives than they do from the books that they read to them, or the lectures that they deliver to them with their lips. I have discovered my great joy that boys and girls have unconsciously a faculty of penetration whereby they read the thoughts of their teachers. Thus the personal character of the teacher, according to Gandhiji, is far more influential in the religious education than mere learning or preaching.

Gandhiji's approach to the vexed problem of religious education is remarkable for its vitality, freshness and suited to our cultural heritage. His greatness lies in the fact that he had divinized a kind of religious education which was not only best suited to the people of different denominations, but coupled with the teaching of history and literature in such a way as to ensure that every child is made to understand that the great truths enshrined in one's own sacred text-books are also to be discovered in the sacred books of others, that the message a:

spirit of one's great teacher and leader are also echoed and reflected in the message and spirit of other great souls in ages and climes and is also given a working knowledge of the teachings of the founders of all the great religions, a correct introduction to the world's great religious books, a tolerant and sympathetic understanding and appreciation of the religious traditions and practices other than one's own enable the children to find parallel texts from various, divergent scriptures, and a sense of common citizenship with all other Indians through common worship of one Father though by different names and through different rites\(^1\) - how can such a deep and noble knowledge could do anything but strengthen and confirm faith in these noble things?

Similarly, Gandhiji's contribution to social or adult education has been remarkable. He was always thinking more the masses in education than the mere individual. He was very sorry to see the mass ignorance more than mass illiteracy. He wanted to drive out this ignorance through the carefully selected teachers with an equally carefully formulated syllabus according to which the adult villager's mind should be educated. He said that the spread of literacy would help to drive out illiteracy. But it should go hand in hand with the spread of useful knowledge which the adults could use daily.

According to Gandhiji, complete adult education should touch the life of the villager at all points - the hygienic, hygienic.

\(^1\)cf. Akam sat Viprah bahudha vadanthe.
social, the economic and the political. The hygiene would include sanitation and eradication of disease. The social side must deal with the task of persuading the people to give up bad customs and bad habits—such as untouchability, infant marriage, immoral drink and drug evil and various local superstitions. To end the economic distress, the education of the adult must be imp
through a craft. If the arts and crafts were practised scientifically, that is, with the knowledge of the why and how of every process involved, they would lead to the highest development of the mind. Gandhiji rightly insisted that education should come with some life activity and continue through life activity throughout life. Such an education would not only eradicate the economic distress, but also help the village adults to lead better, fuller and richer life both as individuals and as members of the community. Adult education should study the political grievance of the villagers and teach them the dignity of freedom, self-reliance and self-reliance in everything.

Gandhiji evolved a new system of education which would immediately lead to an efficient pursuit of the village instead of being a distraction from it. Finding that the peasant could not afford to lay aside his struggle for bread, he said that every struggle should be made the medium of education. He would come the apathy of the villagers by approaching him from his point of view and beginning with his immediate interests. The two things of fundamental concern to the peasant are food and clothing. Therefore Gandhi began by making these two the pivots of education and thereby winning for his educational system the aid of powerful...
psychological and basic urges. By teaching them to tackle these problems in a scientific manner, entering into the why and wherefore of every process involved therein, Gandhi hoped to develop in the millions the scientific spirit, which was bound to affect their attitude to all aspects of life, resulting in its all-round improvement, without any outside financial help.¹ His conception of adult or social education was of an all-inclusive character. It began with the filling of bellies and ended with the establishment of a world order based on the principles of equality, brotherhood and peace, through non-violent means. So far as the individual was concerned, he felt that he had the right to receive education 'from the moment of conception to the moment of death'.²

He also wanted adult education to be such as to infuse a sense of new power in the village adult and make him understand his latent strength and ability to solve his own problems. It also should build up character. Gandhi believed that if there was an example of good character before the adults, they would build up their own character feeling the moral strength in good character. Hence he said that adult education should create an atmosphere of confidence, enterprise, honesty and enthusiasm spurring the individuals to action. He laid great emphasis on the values of co-operation and co-ordination which ought to be learnt through self-organisation and individual sharing of responsibilities.

¹Dev Prakash Nayyar: Building for Peace or Gandhi's Ideas on Social (Adult) Education, P.6.
²Ibid., P.31.
Gandhiji’s contribution to adult education was unique. Paying a tribute to Gandhiji as a great social educationist professor T.K.N. Menon said, "Gandhiji’s teachings of Truth and Non-violence with all the corollaries attached to these two fundamentals and his own practice of the same from the most spectacular adult-education experiment the world has ever witnessed. The Ashrams at Sabarmati and sevagram that he established, his life in these historic places, the training that he imparted to hundred and thousands there, the inspiration and learning that visitors to the places from all over the country and also abroad received are all brilliant achievements in the field of adult education." ¹

Gandhiji also wanted to revolutionise the higher education and relate it to national necessities. He wanted to re-orient collegiate education and to connect it, originally with the Indian scene. He wanted to abolish the prevailing system which enslaved the students and to remodel it on new lines suitable to national requirements. The central point of his argument was that University Education should be an extension and continuation of the Basic Education Course. According to him, the objective of collegiate education should be to produce true savants of the people who would live, and die for the freedom of their country.

He did not favour the idea of students going abroad for higher studies. He said, "I have never been an advocate of our students going abroad. My experience tells me that such, on

return, find themselves, to be square pegs in round holes. That experience is the richest and contributes most to the growth which springs from the soil. What they learnt in alien nations were not of much use to them because their knowledge were not adaptable to Indian conditions. It needed further education. Gandhi ji also definitely stated that collegiate or higher education should entirely in the hands of private individuals and not the state. For he wanted to invest universities with greater powers than now and to extend their province to the whole of the field of education.

It does not mean that Gandhi ji was not favourable to higher education. What he opposed was the prevailing system of education. The fact that he did not underrate the importance of higher education, particularly in the technical subjects become clear from the following observations of Gandhi ji - "under my scheme there will be more and better libraries, more and better laboratories, and more and better research institutes. Under it we should have an army of chemists, engineers and other experts who will be real servants of the nation and answer the varied and growing requirements of a people who are becoming increasingly conscious of their rights and wants. And all these experts will speak, not a foreign language but the language of the people. The knowledge gained by them will be the common property of the people. They will be truly original work instead of mere imitation. And the cost will be evenly and justly distributed. " Thus university education should be directly based on realities and given through the foreign medium.

2. Towards New Education – M.K. Gandhi, P. 77
He also did not want to spend huge amounts of money on mere imposing buildings for universities. It was his belief that "a university never needs a pile of majestic buildings; treasures or gold and silver. What it does need most of all is the intelligent backing of public opinion. It should have a large reservoir of teachers to draw upon. Its founders should be far-seeing." He wanted universities to be broad-based on strong foundation of popular will and support so that everything would go from bottom upward and hence would last, and the important function of the universities should be to bring about an integration and synthesis of different streams of Indian culture and thereby strengthen national unity.

Thus Gandhiji's contribution to the field of education is so remarkable that it ensures him an abiding place among leading educationists of the world. His educational theory evolved out of his wide, long and rich experience of the political, social and economic life of the country was 'new, original, epoch-making and revolutionary'. As a keen student of men and matter, he realized at an early stage that education was the sovereign remedy for all the evils and ills with which India had been afflicted for centuries. Therefore he attempted at revolutionising Indian educational thought and restoring the true national mind and dignity which had been suppressed by starting national systems of education. Becoming found in education the means of his country's salvation, he

ventured to make bold experiments in education, thereby making known to the world that India had something rich and beautiful to contribute to others. His view of education was also to evolve the whole man in man, whom God has created in His own image. Hence education has encompassed the whole vista of man's life and earth from the womb to the tomb. And the greatness of Gandhi as an educationist consists not merely in the fact that he gave the world a scientifically sound educational theory but in the way in which he proved its utility and efficacy on an unprecedented scale.

It is very interesting to note that Sorokin also is concerned with the reform of the prevailing educational system. He has pointed out the defects of the contemporary school system. He says that the modern educational institutions of our society have failed to develop "character and a sense of all especially in the high schools and colleges." They have concentrated their attention mainly on the training of the intellect, leaving aside the other vital aspects of man's life. This is only in literary training neglecting the training of the other important faculties and impulses of man, has not been of any use in the development of an healthy personality. Even on the school and college levels, education is defective. The minds of the students are, says Sorokin, "filled with a host of pseudoscientific, mostly animalistic theories of man, his culture and values, embracing God and religion, ethics, marriage, pro

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and what not. "Traditional" values are corroded by the acids of so-called scientific criticism. The distinction between right and wrong is shattered by a barrage of positivistic, materialistic relativistic, and mechanistic artillery. Students are "liberated" from their "superstitions and prejudices", without having these replaced by any genuine set of real values. For these are substituted pitiful odds and ends of debunking, semi-nihilistic, and degrading sensate ideologies. The result is a sort of moral trauma. A pervading attitude of nihilism and cynicism divests students of their moral armament, making them sophisticated flotsam and jetsam or else rampant egoists, ambitious fighters free from the restraint of ethical conventions, religious "superstitions", and other "superstitions", devotees of the cult of unlimited power and success, followers of the principle that "everything is permitted if you can get away with it."\(^1\)

Though Sorokin uses very strong language, there is truth in his remark that there is no intimate correlation between education on the one hand, and altruism, morality, ethical ennoblement and social service on the other. This imbalance has only served to generate selfish and destructive rather than altruistic or creative forces in individual and social life.

Like Gandhiji Sorokin also lays great emphasis on the point that education should aim at love (which is \textit{ahimsa} in Gandhian terminology). It should establish a carefully elaborated system for developing altruism in the students. It should

\(^1\)I.P.A. Sorokin: Reconstruction of Humanity, 1958, Pp. 138-139.
also instill in them a set of universal and absolute norms and values based on tolerance and broadmindedness and free from superstition, ignorance and fanaticism. This function is as important as intellectual training. Thus by laying great emphasis on the importance of religious education, Sorokin echoes the ideas of Gandhiji.

Sorokin also has pointed out that "intellectual training must be reconstructed in the interest of developing logical thinking and a passionate search for the truth rather than of cramming the mind with fragments of this or that knowledge or of imparting a superficial acquaintance with the fashionable intellectual currents of the day".¹ When he says that education must aim at building the character of the students and also at instilling in them a love for truth and giving them a useful and profound knowledge he almost echoes the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi. Like Gandhiji he is also against over-specialisation and compartmentalisation of knowledge. He is also of the opinion that education should interest itself in bringing about all-round, healthy development of individual personality and in creating a social order where love, altruism and peace reign supreme. He is not unfavourable to specialisation. But specialisation of any subject must be supplemented by a broad-based general education making students the inheritors, users, trustees and guardians of the imperishable values of human culture in all its fields. He also opines that true education is that which imparts true wisdom.

For true wisdom alone is infinitely more practical in the long run than most of the so-called 'practical' theories of our age which being short-sighted cannot help the students much. Education must imbue the students with a sense of true wisdom, deep and profound knowledge and breadth of outlook. It also must point out the inadequacy of the mentality of modern science to interpret men and values endocrinologically, behaviouristically, psycho-analytically and mechanistically. "Any science, at any moment of its historical existence, contains not only truth but also much that is half-truth, sham-truth, and plain error. This has been especially true of the social and psychological disciplines, for the complexity of mental and social phenomena allows many a fallacy to be taken for the last word of science, operationally defined, empirically tested, and precisely measured." ¹ Sorokin says that the two great obstacles which prevent modern sociology and psychology from escaping themselves from hidebound orthodoxy are 'quantophrenia' and 'Testomania'. The former leads to the sham manifestation of non-scalar qualitative data and the latter leads to a strongly sceptical attitude towards the scientific nature of the tests conducted. Sorokin says that the creative renaissance of our disciplines leading them out of the blind alley onto the royal road requires a basic reconstruction of the prevalent conceptions of these disciplines to which task education should address itself.

Education should aim at stimulating creative genius. Like Gandhiji Sorokin also stresses the importance of freedom in

Footnote:
¹ A. Sorokin: Pasts and Futures in Modern Sociology and related Sciences, 1958, see Preface, p. v.
education. He says, "Cultivation of the conventional needs to be supplemented by a strong stimulation of creative genius. Standardized requirements for students (especially for university students) must be freed from their rigidity, permitting the maximum of freedom for young scholars) in developing their particular aptitudes." Education should help the students to concentrate more on the essence, or substance of the phenomena studied than on mere techniques. It should also strive hard to correct and replace the cult of misleading precision by the true search for approximate validity. He says, "Obsession with techniques must be supplanted by a deep insight into the essence, or substance, of the phenomena studied. The cult of misleading precision should be corrected by the quest for approximate validity."2

Thus true education is that which concentrates on depth and breadth of insight, on the free initiative of original, creative genius, on instilling in the students a passionate yearning for truth, love, and true wisdom. A system of education which inspires human heart with a love for truth, human conduct with love and human intellect with a true wisdom will indeed promote creative peace. Such an education, opines Sorokin like Gandhiji, would bring about an all-round development of human personality and create a noble and harmonious social order, giving vitality to the altruistic and constructive forces which make for peace, genius, and happiness.

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2. Ibid., P.141.