One of the main criticisms of education heard today is the lag in the application of new theories and research findings to actual classroom practices. Often one reads about the slow spread, acceptance, and application of educational research and innovations in classroom practice. The gap between theory and practice in education is a characteristic frequently remarked and commonly regretted. How to close the gap is the problem of curriculum improvement. It has been felt that some way must be found to ensure that the findings of research are actively utilised in the classroom so that they would affect those for whom they have been intended, that is, the students who are learning.

What the high school course is, depends largely upon the training and viewpoint of teachers and administrators. Perhaps there is no other subject in the high school about which there are greater differences of opinion than geography. To some, it is a study of location and the listing of products; to others, the accumulation of statistical data and the memorizing of unrelated facts. To a few, it is a study of relationships, or an opportunity to explain and interpret present human activities. And still there is another group, very few indeed, to whom geography is the inter-relationship of one world region with another, or the interplay of political forces adjusted by man's activities to various environments.

Conclusion
It is time that those who are responsible for school curricula seriously consider just what geographic thinking is; what it includes and what it does. It is time that they evaluate their geography textbooks in terms of the geographic thinking this instruction stimulates.

Many high school geography courses are based on out-moded textbooks selected by teachers and others who lack the technique of geographic thinking. Many high school geography courses make little or no contribution to geographic thinking since few who formulate these courses are acquainted with such thinking or concerned with its development. Under such circumstances, students become mere memorizers of facts rather than fact users and interpreters. They become the geographic illiterate of which there are too many.

There is no doubt that for high school purposes, geography should be primarily regional and should concentrate on the simpler man-land relationships. And although geographers generally agree that the study of regions is an essential part of their discipline, the variety of ways they use the term frequently leads to confusion. This situation becomes particularly critical for teachers attempting to utilize the writings of the geographic profession in developing their curricula in spite of the fact that nomenclature for the various types, categories, and sizes of regions has been established.

The study of geography through regions has awakened the subject from the deep slumber into which it had fallen. It is through the region that new...
life has been given to the dead bones of geography. And so the subject has become an art by which regions are described and delineated, and this has become the accepted technique for studying geographical materials at all levels of education.

Findings

I. The aims of geography teaching in the United States are practically indistinguishable from those common in Indian schools. In both countries some of the major objectives are:

(a) to gain a knowledge of geographical facts that will enable youth to give intelligent consideration of current problems,
(b) to understand how the varied problems of peoples are related to differences in environment,
(c) to have an open-minded attitude toward problems, achievements, and possible future developments of other regions and their peoples,
(d) to develop a growing power to appreciate the economic and cultural interdependence of regions and peoples,
(e) that the training employed should make possible the profitable use of leisure and develop in the individual a sympathetic understanding of the problems which are due to man's adjustment of his environment,
(f) to prepare youth for collective living,
(g) to make youth realize that far beyond the confines of their own country, they are linked by economic, social, spiritual bonds,
(h) to prepare fruitful grounds for international understanding.
2. Geography holds a large place in the life and education of the Indian people. The geographical background of ancient Indian history, religion, the monsoon climate, and farming as the occupation of most Indian people, connections with former rulers, dependence on the import of food in recent years, the present foreign trade, association with the Commonwealth countries since Independence, affinity with neighbour nations, etc., leads to a more than casual interest in the study of typical regions beyond the boundaries of the homeland, and gives a point of view regarding other parts of the world. In contrast, the United States, with its continental area, its former isolationist point of view, its self-sufficiency in food and raw materials for industry, concentration in home markets, its lack of uniformity and continuity in school programmes, its limited number of trained teachers in geography, its lack of required geography in the high schools, and above all, its so-called fusion with other sciences under the term 'Social Studies', has largely contributed to the neglect of the subject in school curriculum. Unlike India, there is in the United States a lack of inherited stock of local geographical and historical lore which makes geography more vivid and trains students in the habit of thinking geographically from an early age.

3. Geography appears to be in a much better position in Indian education relatively than in the United States. While both countries have
given the subject an assured place in the lower levels of education, and it is offered in almost every year of the elementary school. Courses are available in nearly every large university or college. For the United States, however, the gap appears to be in the secondary schools. Very few American high schools have curricula which give continuity of study such as in found in almost all, if not all, the secondary schools of India. Educational literature generally indicates that a student who has passed through the Indian school system has a greater fund of essential geographical lore than one who has spent the same number of years in the American school. In the United States, some geography is offered with one or more courses in the subject which are usually elective while in India geography is required for all students in the high school.

This difference in the programme of geography instruction becomes most apparent when freshmen entering American colleges or universities with no training in geography since leaving grade school, are required to take geography courses. With but a few exceptions, every student in a secondary school in India is required to take several years of continuous training in the subject and is therefore better equipped to take further courses in depth in the subject at the college level, if he so chooses.

1. World Geography takes first place in the high schools of both countries.

5. Economic Geography takes second place especially for students of Commerce.

6. With the development of the Regional Concept, geography continues to
receive, both in the United States and India, its due recognition as a distinct science having its own point of view and its own techniques, that is, its methods of observing, measuring, and bringing together elements of many kinds in order to find an original explanation for the phenomena under study. And so the trend in secondary school geography in both countries is essentially by way of the Regional Approach for instructional purposes, with man as the base of this study.

At the onset, this regional study was oriented toward a single element in the landscape. Later, there was greater emphasis on political units in an effort to develop regions which depicted the entire physical and cultural landscape, thus formulating all-purpose regions. This was partly the result of a desire to have statistical evidence to support the generalizations that were made.

7. In organizing the content of geography for the high schools, both countries have employed a standardized outline. This outline is still adopted in the writing of textbooks. The topical outline includes area, topography, climate, soils, plant and animal life, and human activities. This procedure is still adopted in geographical description.

With the shifting of emphasis from descriptive to interpretative geography, the outline organization has been retained but the tendency is to consider life responses and to attempt to evaluate all the physical factors that have influenced these responses.

8. It is generally recognized that education in India is largely a product
of British influence. So a systematic analysis of the world into regions of the type as set forth by Prof. Herbertson of England, is the usual device for teaching in the Indian high schools. This provides an easy method of learning the fundamental facts of World Geography. In the United States, the world is divided into a great variety of regions for teaching purposes, the most common being 'Culture' regions.

9. It is accepted without question that although each subject has its own field and its characteristic method of thinking, especially in the high school curriculum, the boundary between the subjects is not a mathematical line but a broad zone in which there is much that is common to all. Geography, as a science, above all others can, under a skilful teacher, become a magnificent instrument for the training of citizens and for developing those attitudes that are necessary for collective living. But in reality it is losing its identity under what is termed as Social Studies in the American high school curriculum. In India, on the other hand, the subject has become too academic, and, as a consequence,

10. The classroom procedure adopted is the assignment-study-recite technique as opposed to the Dalton Plan for self study or the Problem Method of teaching in the United States. The Indian pattern is due in large measure to the pressure of external examinations.
Both countries lay too much emphasis on textbook material. The books of the American schools, however, are better planned, are more attractive and much better illustrated. No two authors have the same method of approach in discussing the topics. The content is arranged into units around central themes and the subject is treated more as social science. Along the lines of developing initiative and self independence in problem solving, and in encouraging wide use of reference materials, there is available to the students an abundance of geographical materials in the form of readers, additional textbooks, supplementary reading materials, encyclopedias, books of travel, periodicals, etc. The average American teacher has a better classroom situation provided to him than his Indian counterpart in that the former has many audio-visual aids like maps, atlases, movies, slides, etc., at his disposal provided by the audio-visual department of the school system.

The kind of exercises provided at the end of each chapter in Indian books differs markedly from that provided in American books. Indian authors ask frequently questions which require factual information and whose answers involve written paragraphs and short essays. American authors provide a battery of objective type of questions at the end of the chapter or unit, as well as some discussion questions and projects involving the activity principle.
The use of projects and problem solving techniques is characteristic of American textbooks.

13. There is not much practical (laboratory) and field work from the geographical standpoint by the high school students of both countries. Only in some of the school systems of the richer communities of both countries is there at least one out-door field trip during the school year. The geography syllabus for the external examinations like the School Leaving Certificate (former Senior Cambridge) examination includes some practical geography and so the teachers of these schools prepare their students for this examination by getting them acquainted with map reading, interpretation of topographical sheets, and other requirements. American schools lay emphasis in making community study the core of all instruction. This calls for observations of the natural environment and of the activities of the people with some attempts to discover the relationship between them. This procedure though not purely geographical, provides meaningful experiences and is associated with a body of accurate information.

14. Teacher preparation in the subject appears to be poor in both countries, though for those in India, there are better training facilities in the Teacher Training Colleges in both Content and Methodology. The stronger position which geography holds in college and university education and the increase in trained teachers
that are coming out of the training colleges of the Indian schools is a step in the right direction from the point of view of high school geography.

Implications

These findings involve a number of implications which are of special interest to those who are concerned with the geography curriculum in the secondary schools of both countries, as well as to those who are concerned with the writing of textbooks and allied materials, and above all, to the teachers of these schools. Some of the implications are:

I. There is more need for a comparative study of American and Indian handbooks, and perhaps those of other nations at both the secondary and college or university level. Only a couple of such handbooks published by UNESCO on the teaching of geography are included in this study.

More studies of this type would constitute further exploration of the similarities and differences to be found in American and Indian treatises on the content and methodology of geography. Studies such as these in education and especially in curricula are virtually indispensable to the projection of plans for improvement or even to the investigation of a special facet of its cultural or social significance. Comparative studies of educational curricula and methods
when studied cross-nationally or cross-culturally make available the needed information in its most illuminating form.

2. There is need for a further study of the objectives of education in both countries as well as the methods of teaching the subject at the secondary level. Such studies would involve a desirable stock taking of the theory and practice in education of both countries; they would involve a healthful evaluation of the respective viewpoints; and they might lead to beneficial modifications of classroom procedure.

3. There is need for geography textbooks for Indian schools on the pattern of those of the United States especially in regard to the arrangement of the content, illustrations, maps, and discussion questions. Most Indian textbooks are based on the assumption that there is only one kind of region, the physiographic region, for teaching purposes. The authors may be aware that there are varieties of regions which the teacher may utilize in his classroom procedures. But the texts of these Indian authors indicate that they believe in the worthiness of any but the formal kind. The desirable geography text for secondary schools would logically be one that gives the facts about the different varieties in delineating the regions of the countries taught and the objectives to be fulfilled.

4. The geography course in the American high school should be articulated with that of the elementary and junior high on one side and college
or university on the other. In other words, there should be continuity of the program and geography should be required instead of elective in the high school curriculum. Geography instruction in the Indian high schools should be more humanized.

5. Compared with India, the American educational programme has the advantage of a school system that is elastic, and a mentality that is accustomed to long distances, as also varied adjustments to environment. It would therefore be not too difficult to adapt to the changes involved in giving geography its rightful position in the high school curriculum. Indian schools could profit much from the aids, materials, slides and movies used in teaching the subject in the American school systems.

6. Regional courses in high school geography for both countries should provide sufficient studies in regional contrast giving examples of societies in different stages of economic development, with regions having close interests and a general knowledge of the regions of the world.

7. Both countries should in their regional studies the phases of general geography which are required to elucidate the subject in hand. One must know the 'Grammar' of geography in order to apply the Regional Concept. Part of general geography belongs to mapping, climate study, physiography, etc., and this should be followed by a study of the
the inter-regional relationships as conditioned by the adjustments of the groups living within the respective regions.

8. In any science where there are principles to be understood and applied, effective teaching is in large part by the *telling* method, that is, there must be oral exposition by the teacher associated with the auditory attention of the students. To secure this obviously the teacher must be such a master of the subject that he is able to add much to the material of the text and to organize it in a way adapted to the needs of the class. Hence less dependence on the textbook, more oral teaching, skilled reviews, sketches to illumine difficult points, quick summaries, the use of illustrations gleaned from the locality, unyielding standards of accuracy and precision, and finally testing for understanding rather than for memoriter performance should be some things to remember for schools of both countries if new life is to be put in the geography classrooms.

Changes in curriculum move like a pendulum. The pendulum of geography which has swung many times has become a society-centred discipline possibly growing in importance at the secondary level. The teaching of geography is experiencing a rather noticeable process of evolution. The trend in the evolution of scientific geography is in harmony with the trend in the evolution of geography method.

Throughout the centuries, geography has been considered to be vital for the training of citizens. Programmes of geographic study for each nation should be related to the national background and adapted to the material
and spiritual heritage of the nation concerned, carefully avoiding a transfer of a foreign programme ' in toto'. For many of the details, however, these programmes would acknowledge indebtedness to older lands. They would include a careful study of the home region to bring to the student an explanation of the culture within which he lives. What is needed is a teaching plan somewhat independent of textbooks and one which is founded upon the Regional Concept. Geography, through the Regional Concept fosters a point of view and a type of outlook never more needed than in the present critical stage of human development since it can help to realize the ideal of unity in diversity and secure not only national aims but international cooperation and understanding.