Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life…If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages in the world and encyclopedias are the Rishis.
Reared on the spiritual wisdom of the ages and the secular and scientific knowledge of the modern world, Vivekananda was a harbinger of renaissance. Though not an educationist or an educator in the academic sense of the word, Vivekananda was nothing but an inspired teacher of humanity. He did not build up or systematize any theory of education as a thinker or as a philosopher, yet his utterances and speeches contain a bearing on the subject of education for the regeneration of his compatriots. Pedagogy was not the profession that he adopted for his living, his initiation into the most ancient order of the monks, however, entrusted him with the sacred duty of educating the ignorant and the unlearned. As a patriot-saint, he learnt from his wanderings that a lack of education had led to the degradation of the masses. He pondered over education as a national issue and made a number of observations and spirited comments which are profound, revealing and stimulating.

Vivekananda’s comments on the scope and method of educating and training the people for the realization of the divinity inherent in the human soul are comprehensive and wide-ranging. He is not restricted to the parameters of any professional or academic training; he seems to be imparting education for life. What Vivekananda appears to be working for is the spiritual and moral enlightenment of the seeker after knowledge and his philosophic approach transcends the confines of time, place and race. It is their universality of implication and application that makes Vivekananda a spiritual teacher of humanity.

Vivekananda was eminently qualified, both by his calling and position, for the venerable status of a Guru in the ancient tradition of India. Gifted with a radiant mind, penetrating intellect, social consciousness, spiritual thrust and moral up-righteousness and practicing absolute renunciation, charity, service and detachment, Vivekananda employed education as a vehicle for effecting spiritual and social regeneration of the people. As a spiritual leader of the people, he sought to usher in a new era of hope and better life.

Vivekananda’s personal life was in itself a demonstration of the way how knowledge has first to be acquired and then disseminated. He stated, though a little paradoxically, the obvious truth that “no one can teach anybody”. Patiently working with a spirit of devotion, the learner has to discover knowledge. No amount of information stuffed or crammed into the passive recipient, would enkindle the eternal flame of learning and meet the demands of enquiry of the eager soul. Education initiates the process of discovery of knowledge within the mind and exists in the mind.
The suggestion of the teacher brings it out. The teacher may, thus, be compared to a gardener who helps the tender seedling sprout and grow into a plant. Vivekananda avers:

You cannot teach a child anymore than you can grow a plant…. You can take away the obstacles but knowledge comes out of its own nature.¹

Vivekananda is not referring to the attainment of knowledge as an academic pursuit. He is, it seems, speaking of spiritual realization. A man possesses knowledge to the extent of what he has “discovered” or “unveiled” in his spiritual quest. He is convinced that knowledge is inherent in man. Religion and for that matter education, simply is, “the manifestation of the perfection already in man. No knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside”². As a Vedantin, he held out that each soul is potentially divine and the goal is to manifest this divinity within. This is the ultimate end of both religion and education. According to Vivekananda:

Whatever a man knows should, in strict psychological language, be what he discovers or unveils. What a man ‘learns’ is what he discovers by taking the cover off his soul.³

Such a process does not completely exclude the cultivation of the intellect as mind, he admits, is a fit instrument for gaining knowledge. His primary emphasis, however, is on the cultivation of the soul which implies the awakening of the soul to the knowledge of the true self. Religion or spiritual realization is central to the educational philosophy of Vivekananda. His plan of education does have a secular ingredient but religion in the broadest sense forms the core of it. By religion he means, not the rituals and ceremonies, but the fundamental essentials of faith. It is the spirit of religion that he thinks to be an inescapable part of education. He observes:

I look upon religion as the innermost core of education. Mind, I do not mean my own or anybody else’s opinion about religion. The true eternal principles have to be held before people.⁴

Working for the total upliftment of man, Vivekananda expected the learner or the disciple to translate knowledge, secular and spiritual, into his personality. His being should reflect what he has gained in the realm of spirit and ideas. Vivekananda poignantly asserts, “The end of all education, all training, Vivekananda pointed out, should be man-making. The end and aim of all training is to make man grow”.⁵ Religion can richly contribute to the growth of human
personality. The development of the total personality, what he prefers to call “man-making”, is the central motif of the teachings of Vivekananda as he believes:

> It is man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want.\(^6\)

The purpose of education is to cultivate right relationship, not only between individuals, but also between the individual and society and that is why it is essential that education should, above all, help the individual to understand his own psychological process. Intelligence lies in understanding oneself and going above and beyond oneself; but there cannot be intelligence as long as there is fear. Fear perverts intelligence and is one of the causes of self-centred action. Discipline may suppress fear but does not eradicate it and the superficial knowledge which we receive in modern education only further conceals it. Vivekananda asservates:

> When we are young, fear is instilled into most of us both at home and at school. Neither parents nor teachers have the patience, the time or the wisdom to dispel the instinctive fears of childhood, which, as we grow up, dominate our attitude and judgment and create a great many problems. The right kind of education must take into consideration this question of fear, because fear warps our whole outlook on life. To be without fear is the beginning of wisdom and only the right kind of education can bring about the freedom from fear in which alone there is deep and creative intelligence.\(^7\)

Thus fear is an impediment in the progress of a person. Education helps one to counter fear and step ahead in the direction of spirituality. Vivekananda points out:

> Dogmas, mysteries and rituals are not conducive to a spiritual life. Religious education in the true sense is to encourage the child to understand his own relationship to people, to things and to nature. There is no existence without relationship; and without self-knowledge, all relationship, with the one and with the many, brings conflict and sorrow. Of course, to explain this fully to a child is impossible; but if the educator and the parents deeply grasp the full significance of relationship, then by their attitude, conduct and
speech they will surely be able to convey to the child, without too many words and explanations, the meaning of a spiritual life.\(^8\)

Vivekananda wanted education to play a positive role in the training of the mind. He lays emphasis on concentration and meditation as aids to education. Concentration leads to an awareness of deeper knowledge. Intuition is the result of study, concentration and analysis. Far from being a soulless and mechanical acquisition of information, education has to play its life-building, man-making and character-making role. Ideas have to be gathered from different sources but they should not come simply as a mass of undigested facts. These ideas have to be thoroughly grasped, worked out and assimilated. Such assimilation pre-supposes an awakened conscience, insight, courage and positive outlook. Education thus received will lead to a better civilization. The healthy development of one’s physique, a proper care of the mind and the cultivation of intellect coupled with the corresponding growth of moral and spiritual values is the purpose of education.

J.Krishnamurti also emphasized on right education comes with the transformation of ourselves. We must re-educate ourselves not to kill one another for any cause, however righteous, for any ideology, however promising it may appear to be for the future happiness of the world. We must learn to be compassionate, to be content with little and to seek the Supreme, for only then can there be the true salvation of mankind.

**5.1 Meaning of Education**

What was his conception of education? ‘The true education, however, is not yet conceived of among us,’ he remarked in the course of an interview. ‘And how would you define that?’ asked the interviewer. ‘I never define anything’, replied Vivekananda, still, it may be described as a development of faulty, not an accumulation of words; or as a training of individuals to live rightly and efficiently.’ It was all-round, man-making education that he aimed at. And he added, “I look upon religion as the innermost core of education.”\(^9\) He further says, “Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man.”\(^10\) His conclusion from these two axiomatic truths was:

The only duty of the teacher in both cases is to remove all obstructions from the way. Hands off! As I always say and everything will be right.\(^11\)
Certain ideas stand out clearly from these observances. The child must form for everyone the centre of all educational endeavour. His growth must be from within and not a process of external conditioning. With faith in the child’s innate goodness the teacher is to help it to grow according to its natural capacity. The teacher is not to infuse his own personality into the child’s education. Thus to Vivekananda was a form of worship of the divinity in the child. Ethical backsliding and cultural alienation both were noticed by Vivekananda in his times. He was fully aware of communal conflicts; but this did not deter him from making spirituality the keystone of his educational edifice; for, in his conception, spirituality was not a sectarian artificial appendage of man, but something more fundamentally human than the mere religious expressions. According to him, it was possible for all educationists to co-operate on the basis of that universal spirituality.

Vivekananda had firm faith in the Vedantic theory of the Atman, that all knowledge, whether secular or spiritual, is inherent in man. Education is the manifestation of that. No knowledge comes from outside. So in psychological language, ‘to learn’ is to discover. “All knowledge and power…comes from the human soul. They remain covered. When the covering is being slowly taken off, we say, “we are learning” and the advance of knowledge is made by the advance of this process of uncovering. The man from whom this veil is being lifted is the more knowing man; the man upon whom it lies thick is ignorant; and the man from whom it has entirely gone is all-knowing, omniscient…Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which brings it out.”

In the case of Newton, the falling of an apple was the suggestion which revived in his mind all previous links of thought and he could finally discover a new link among them, which is called the law of gravitation. Thus, according to Vivekananda, “Nature is a reflecting glass and all knowledge is this reflection of the within on this glass of nature. The soul is the source of all knowledge. Education helps in discovering and manifesting the knowledge which is pre-existing in the human soul through eternity. Such a conception of education has some resemblance to Pestalozzi’s definition of education as ‘the manifestation of the inherent faculties of man’.

From the standpoint of Vivekananda, all learning is self-learning. He says:

No one was ever really taught by another. Each of us has to teach himself.

The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal
teacher to work to understand things. Then things would be made clearer to us by our own power of perception and thought and we shall realize them in our souls.\textsuperscript{14}

This belief of Vivekananda has won support from the modern progressive educational thinking. According to John Dewey, “Knowledge is not like certain readymade garment which can exchange hands. Learning results in experience. But experience includes an active and a passive element peculiarly, combined. On the active hand, experience is trying, on the passive, it is undergoing. When we experience something we act on it, we do something with it, then we suffer or undergo the consequences.”\textsuperscript{15} The two words ‘trying’ and ‘undergoing’ imply that all learning is really self-learning.

Vivekananda’s view of the teaching process is also in keeping with the Vedantic view of the soul and has resemblance to that of Froebel, the famous mystic educational philosopher of the West. Both of these two compare the child to a plant. Just as the banyan-seed contains the potentiality of developing into a big banyan-tree, in the same way, in the protoplasmic cell lies coiled up the gigantic intellect. Just as the plant grows according to its own nature, so does the child. Just as we have only to provide the plant with the body-building material and protection, which the plant will use, assimilate and grow by itself, so in the education of the child, we have only to remove the obstacles in his way and provide scope for his growth, so that the latent tendencies in him may not die due to lack of opportunity. Hence Vivekananda says, “You cannot teach a child any more than you can grow a plant. The plant develops its own nature”\textsuperscript{16} He adds further:

You can supply the growing seed with the materials for the making up of its body, bringing to it the earth, the water, the air that it wants (and there your work stops). It will take all that it wants by its own nature. It will assimilate and grow by its own nature.\textsuperscript{17}

From this statement it is plainly obvious that the child educates himself. The teacher’s function is merely to awaken the knowledge inherent in him and to guide him, so that he may apply his intellect to the proper use of his hands, legs, ears and eyes. Thus according to Vivekananda, the function of a teacher is negative and not positive. The task of a teacher, according to Vivekananda, is to, “loosen the soil a little, so that it may come out easily. Put a
Rousseau in his book *Emile* also advocates the negative function of education and is against any kind of interference with the operations of Nature. Vivekananda stresses that teaching must be modified according to the needs of the pupil, because past lives mould his tendencies and the teacher should keep in view the individual tendencies. Special inclinations should be encouraged and not even the most hopeless is to be discouraged. Only ‘positive ideas’ are to be inculcated in the minds of children. ‘Negative ideas’, like telling them that they would never learn anything or that they are fools, only weaken them. They need to be encouraged with kind words, Vivekananda asserts, “If you can give them positive ideas, people will grow up to be men and learn to stand on their own legs. In language and literature, in poetry and arts, in everything, we must point out not the mistakes that people are making in their thoughts and actions, but the way in which they will be able to do these things better,” is the advice of Vivekananda.

5.2 Defects of The Existing System

The system of education in the times of Vivekananda suffered from many defects which hampered national growth. To Vivekananda’s critical eyes, the system of education of those days was anti-national in character, impractical in attitude and unmindful of the fundamental facts of human nature. ‘In these modern days’, he says, “There is a greater impetus towards higher education on the European lines…The foreign conqueror is not there to do good to us; he wants money…So these educational institutions of foreigners are simply to get a lot of useful practical slaves for a little money – to turn out a lot of clerks, postmasters, telegraph operators and so on. Such an education did not make the Indians practical in the scientific or technological sense, nor did it solve the problem of poverty. ‘What is the goal of your education?’ He asks, his answer is that it helps one to become a clerk or a roguish lawyer, or, at the most, a deputy magistrate and then, he flares up, “Fie upon you. Is this education? … What good will it do you or the country at large? Open your eyes and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharata, proverbial for its wealth! Will your education fulfill this want? Never. His solution was, “with the help of Western science set yourselves to dig the earth and produce foodstuffs – not by means of mean servitude of others – but by discovering new avenues to production, by your own exertions aided by Western science.”
Another defect of the prevailing system was that it was not broad-based, but catered only to the needs of a few men at the top. The masses were entirely neglected and along with them the women, though India’s hope lay in educating these two classes, rather than the upper ten thousand. The education imparted by the present university system reaches one or two percent of the masses only. And even those who get that do not succeed in their endeavours of doing any good to their country. Vivekananda poignantly asserts, “No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for.” He was aware of the fear in the minds of the upper-classes all over the world that once the masses became educated, they would cease to be simply hewers of wood and drawers of water. But such cynicism he dismissed with the very pertinent question, “Who constitute society – the millions, or you I and a few others of the upper classes?” He further observes, “Who feels for them? They cannot find the light or education… Let these people be your God – think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly.” Thus Vivekananda laid stress on mass education in India.

The second defect of educational system of India was that the education imparted in the schools was negative; it denationalized the alumni and cut them from their cultural and spiritual moorings. In fact, this was a goal deliberately aimed at by the foreign rules, as expressly stated by Macaulay:

> We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and intellect.

Macaulay left out religion, perhaps because the hybrid products of this foreign education could have no real love for their own religion. Thus it was no exaggeration when Vivekananda wrote, “The school boy learns nothing, but has everything of his broken down. Want of ‘Shraddha’ is the result.” Elaborating this idea, he said, “A negative education or any training that is based on negation is worse than death. The child is taken to school and first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing that his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books are lies! By the time he is sixteen, he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless.” The result of this as noted by him, was that fifty years of such training had not produced any genius worth mentioning.
The whole effect of this system of education has been summed up by Vivekananda in one beautiful paragraph:

We have had a negative education all along from our boyhood. We have only learnt that we are no bodies. Seldom are we given to understand that great men were ever born in our country. Nothing positive has been taught to us. We do not even know how to use our hands and feet. We master all the facts and figures concerning the ancestors of the English, but we are sadly unmindful about our own. We have learnt only weakness. Being a conquered race, we have brought ourselves to believe that we are weak and have no independence in anything. So how can it be but that the ‘Shraddha’ is lost? 28

Each word here was not only true to fact, but also very bold for one to utter in the beginning of 1898, when the Indian nation remained still stupefied by the splendour of everything Western and awed by the brute force of the British Lion.

Vivekananda, of course, admitted that the prevalent system of education was not wholly bad. But its negative nature out weighed all its good features. The rectification lay in a system of national education to be formulated and conducted by Indians themselves. It was a sign of imbecility to rely on the foreign rulers to deliver the goods for us. Vivekananda suggests, “We must have a hold on the spiritual and secular education of the nation. Do you understand that? You must dream it, you must talk it, you must think it and you must work it out.” 29

Another defect mentioned by Vivekananda was that the aim of education was not man-making, but rather turning him into a working machine by cramming and polishing the outside. He asks in disgust, “What use in polishing up the outside when there is no inside?” 30 Cramming cannot certainly turn a child into a genius. It cannot impart to him that bold thinking, fearless enterprise, personal magnetism and leadership through which a whole society can be galvanized. True education, according to Vivekananda, is the training by which the current and expression of the will are brought under control. He wants us to consider, “is that education as a result of which the will being continuously choked by force through generations, is well-nigh killed out; under whose sway even the old ideas are disappearing one by one; is that education which is slowly making man a machine?” 31 Vivekananda emphasizes the role of free will and intelligence
in education. In his opinion, it is better even to go wrong, impelled by one's free will and intelligence than to be good as automation.

5.3 True Education

The Vedanta philosophy points out, that as each individual is divine by nature the aim of education should be the manifestation of this inherent divine nature of man. The goal of true education and the aim of life both must be the same. Hence, criticizing the modern system of education, Vivekananda said:

Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested all your life...If education is identical with information, the libraries are the greatest sages in the world and encyclopedias are the Rishis.32

The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion, is worthless. So Vivekananda emphatically pleads, “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet.”33 He adds further, “The ideal of all education, all training, should be this man-making.... The end and aim of all training is to make the man grow.”34 Again he says, “The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education.”35 Along with this Vivekananda also emphasized, “What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean meeting death ‘face to face’”36 He emphasized on man-making religion and man-making education.

Unlike scholasticism, Rabindra Nath Tagore also discards mere pedantry as the aim of education. To him, "Education is not a painful hospital treatment. It is an adventure. So there must be enough of freedom. Young brains should not be stuffed with mere information"37 Dr. Radhakrishnan is of the view, "Education does not impose upon us something which is alien to our nature, rather it will help us to realize what we have
already in us. It will enable us to make real the highest potentialities of self... The true aim of education should be the production of individuals, harmonious in character and creative in spirit." According to Tagore, "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence." He is also of the view, "We must make the purpose of our education nothing short of the highest purpose of man, the fullest growth and freedom of soul."

But in modern era the educational system is defective. It becomes burden on the minds of students as well as parents following this educational system; students would become informative rather than creative. Vivekananda aimed at an education that made a whole man, a man fit to discharge his social and economic obligations and an education to lift the individual to a level of spiritual kinship with the rest of the world. The system of education, according to him must aim at providing opportunities for material prosperity at the lowest level and for self-realization at the highest. By self-realization, he meant unfolding the capacities latent in man and a realization of his innate possibilities. It was again the business of good education to inspire the students with hope and courage and Vivekananda wanted such a function to be performed by a sound educational system. He noticed that the universities then (and even today) were lacking in essential qualities that make men and women good soldiers in life. Pessimism and a consequent fear of work were eating into the vitals of the nation. Hence he repeatedly emphasized that the true aim of education is man-making and a sound system of education must have room for man's constant communion with the rest of mankind, on the one hand and with nature on the other. He felt that nature was spirit in matter. Her form was material, but her content was spiritual. Man's self-realization was possible only when he felt himself one with the universe. This can only be achieved through a comprehensive system of education. In Vivekananda's philosophy of life, there is no isolation, no hatred and no delimiting of man's ever-widening spiritual frontiers of kinship. This social amity and fraternity were not considered to be the ultimate aim of our educational system, as he considered social relation to be not an end in itself, but to be a means to the salvation of the human soul. A true education must aim at and help the individual ultimately to be a `total man'-a man with an `integrated personality'.

Vivekananda stressed that the real aim of education is to realize the Upanisad's saying: 'Tat-Twamasi'. Socrates, in the phrase `know thyself' emphasizes the first word `know'. He
simply thought that right knowledge will automatically lead to right conduct. 'Knowledge', he affirmed, 'is virtue,' meaning thereby that a person who has knowledge will shun vice and follow the path of virtue. On the contrary, Vivekananda laid emphasis on the word-'Thyself'. He asked the individual to realise that `he is That' i.e. `He is Brahman'. Hence the only aim of education, according to him, is to let the man realise this fundamental truth.

Plato in his book *The Republic*, which is supposed to be the first systematic European treatise on educational theory, elaborates that the sole aim of education is the pursuit of knowledge and practice of virtue in life. The object of education is to turn the eye which the soul already possesses to the light. The whole function of education is not to put knowledge into the soul, but to bring out the best things that are latent in the soul and to do so by directing it to the right objects. The problem of education, then, is to give it the right surrounding. This idea of Plato is very much similar to that of Vivekananda, when he says, "All knowledge is inherent in man. Education is the manifestation of that knowledge.... No knowledge comes from outside, it is all inside."\(^{41}\) To Plato it is not ordinary knowledge, not even ethical knowledge, but the highest metaphysical knowledge of the `Good' (some interpret it as the idea of God) which is true knowledge. In Platonic pyramidal hierarchy of ideas--the idea of `good' is conceived at the apex. Hence, according to Plato, a teacher who leads his students to the attainment of this knowledge will automatically integrate their personality and guide them along the path of right conduct. This idea of Plato is again very similar to Vivekananda's when he says that a teacher must be a man who has drunk deep the spiritual nectar of the scriptures. He must be inspired by the fire of spiritualism. He observes, "The teacher who deals too much in words and allows the mind to be carried away by the force of words loses the spirit of the scriptures ......"\(^{42}\)

Again like Vivekananda, Plato analyses the inner nature of man into vegetative, impulsive and rational elements and points out that the major objective of higher education is the attainment of harmony among these three elements. In the true sense, to Plato, any sound scheme of education must aim at the development of individuality. But in spite of the best elements in the educational theory of Plato, one finds that it is one-sided. He makes the difference between slaves and free citizens of ancient Greece. He attaches the greatest importance to the development of the individuality of the wise ruler who was to be the friend, philosopher and guide of the masses. On the contrary, Vivekananda consistently emphasizes the education of the masses and equal treatment to all. The fact remains that to Plato self-knowledge was the final
goal of education and self-discipline was the most effective means for reaching that goal. It seems as if at the time of Plato and Aristotle, there was intellectual intercourse between India and Greece and Plato was influenced considerably by the Vedantic philosophy. After the death of Plato, Aristotle, a shrewd observer of human nature, is responsible for dragging the Platonic ideas down from their super sensuous heights to the mundane level and thus destroying the objective and absolute nature values. Similarly by advocating a relativistic and sociological approach to ethical studies, he destroyed individuality and distorted the cardinal virtues.

The behaviourists of the twentieth century are also not aware of the dominant role which the effective aspect of the mind plays in moulding personality. Their thinking of the educational level is shaped in terms of the stimulus-response formula. But without emotional integration, pursuit of cognitive and activistic values will be barren of results in the educational realm. Today we find utter chaotic conditions in the field of education all over the world. What is the cause of this failure? The tragedy of the situation is that the Western thinkers have a vision of what is abiding and true in the realm of education, but they distrust that vision and allow this inspiration to dissolve into nothing. The scale of educational values to them is dominated not by self-control, but by self-enjoyment and self-possession. Their outlook in the field of education is positivistic and deterministic. The virus of science has poisoned the life-blood of European civilization. Its effects began to be seen only in the empirical period of European thought. The philosophical structure of Locke which is based on pseudo-psychology has all the defects and limitations of realism, naturalism and idealism rolled into one. Working out the full implications of this scientific philosophy, Hume landed himself in bewilderment and confusion. Agnosticism, skepticism and atheism were the logical consequences of the scientific trend inaugurated by Locke. And so far as the educational potentialities of these new scientific ideas are concerned, they are practically nil. The tragedy with the European educationists has been that they looked for inspiration where they should not have and where they should have, they did not. In the opinion of Vivekananda, Kant was the first German philosopher who, in his book ‘Critique of Practical Reason’, pointed out that reason is limited and who himself claimed that he was responsible for a second Copernican revolution in European philosophy. But none paid full attention to his philosophy. It was he who first spoke of democratic education and emphasized that man should never be treated as a means, but always as an end in himself. In the second place, Kant said that there is nothing intrinsically good in the world, except the good will. There
is nothing greater than man in the world and in man there is nothing greater than good will. Here is individuality raised to the highest philosophic level. And, out of these Kantian principles, an educational theory of abiding value can be built up.

Vivekananda has rightly pointed out that individuality is not in the body as conceived by the Western thinkers. It is in the soul of man. Hence the main aim of true education according to him is to manifest this individuality in man. He is against all kinds of compulsion in teaching. He says, "That system which aims at educating our boys in the same manner as that of the man who battered his ass, being advised that it could thereby be turned into a horse, should be abolished." Vivekananda's approach is that compulsion and force are the two very potent enemies of education, because compulsion creates obstinacy and defiance, while domination gives rise to insubordination and force results ultimately in indiscipline. Hence education should be imparted through love. Vivekananda, further pointing out the impact of compulsion, says, "If you do not allow one to become a lion, he will become a fox." Plato speaks about the liberating spirit in education. He says, "The elements of instruction should be presented to the mind in childhood, but not with any compulsion, for a freeman should be a freeman too in the acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge which is acquired under compulsion has no hold on the mind. Therefore, do not use compulsion ..."

Vivekananda is against constant hammering by the parents. He also points out, "Do you not find that where parents are constantly taxing their children to: read and write, telling them that they will never learn anything and calling them fools and so forth, the latter do actually turn out to be so in many cases." Vivekananda advises further, "We should give positive ideas, negative thoughts only weaken men." He is also of the view, "Children should be given full liberty to grow."

J.Krishnamurti is also of the view that education is not merely acquiring knowledge, gathering and correlating facts; it is to see the significance of life as a whole. But the whole cannot be approached through the part--which is what governments, organized religions and authoritarian parties are attempting to do.

The function of education is to create human beings who are integrated and therefore intelligent. We may take degrees and be mechanically efficient without being
intelligent. Intelligence is not mere information; it is not derived from books nor does it consist of clever self-defensive responses and aggressive assertions. One who has not studied may be more intelligent than the learned. We have made examinations and degrees the criterion of intelligence and have developed cunning minds that avoid vital human issues. Intelligence is the capacity to perceive the essential, the what is; and to awaken this capacity, in oneself and in others, is education.

Education should help us to discover lasting values so that we do not merely cling to formulas or repeat slogans; it should help us to break down our national and social barriers, instead of emphasizing them, for they breed antagonism between man and man. Unfortunately, the present system of education is making us subservient, mechanical and deeply thoughtless; though it awakens us intellectually, inwardly it leaves us incomplete, stultified and uncreative.

Without an integrated understanding of life, our individual and collective problems will only deepen and extend. The purpose of education is not to produce mere scholars, technicians and job hunters, but integrated men and women who are free of fear; for only between such human beings can there be enduring peace.

It is through the understanding of ourselves that fear comes to an end. If the individual is to grapple with life from moment to moment, if he is to face its intricacies, its miseries and sudden demands, he must be infinitely pliable and therefore free of theories and particular patterns of thought.

Education should not encourage the individual to conform to society or to be negatively harmonious with it, but help him to discover the true values which come with unbiased investigation and self-awareness. When there is no self-knowledge, self-expression becomes self-assertion, with all its aggressive and ambitious conflicts. Education should awaken the capacity to be self-aware and not merely indulge in gratifying self-expression.

5.4 Media of Education

Vivekananda, as a true Vedantist suggests certain means to be adopted for imparting true education in India. Though Vivekananda perceived that Sanskrit provided
the basic frame for the expression and preservation of all the fundamental truths and values of the Indian heritage; all the Vedas and Upanisads are written in that language; it is the language which has attained the level of perfection; yet he knew it well that it is a difficult language and realizing this difficulty he says, “I have been studying this language all my life and yet every new book is new to me.” From this he guessed, “How much more difficult would it then be for people who never had time to study the language thoroughly.” But this difficulty cannot be removed until, “…the whole of our nation are good Sanskrit scholars.” Vivekananda's approach was practical. Hence he says:

The ideas must be taught in the language of the people; at the same time, Sanskrit education must go on along with it, because the very sound of Sanskrit words gives a prestige and a power and a strength to the race.

Vivekananda further pointed out that the attempts of Ramanuja and of Chaitanya and of Kabir to raise the lower classes of India show that marvellous result were attained during the lifetime of those great prophets; yet the later failures have to be explained, in terms of the causes responsible for the failure of their achievements to extend beyond their life-times. Explaining the cause of failure, he says:

They raised the lower classes, they had all the wish that these should come up, but they did not apply their energies to the spreading of the Sanskrit language among the masses. Even the great Buddha made one false step when he stopped the Sanskrit language from being studied by the masses. He wanted rapid and immediate results and translated and preached in the language of the day Pali. He spoke in the language of the people and the people understood him. That was great it spread the ideas quickly and made them reach far and wide but along with that Sanskrit ought to have spread.

The result of neglecting Sanskrit was that knowledge came but without either prestige or culture. It is culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge. Vivekananda emphatically asserts, “You can put a mass of knowledge into the world, but that will not do it much good. Culture must come into the blood.” From this statement of Vivekananda it can safely be concluded that Sanskrit and prestige of India go together.
Vivekananda advocated the full development of the various *vernaculam* in the country but on the firm basis of Sanskrit—the mother of all. Speaking on the direction of the growth of the Bengali language, for instance, he says, “In coining or translating technical terms in Bengali, one must, however, use all Sanskrit words for them and an attempt should be made to coin new words. For this purpose if a collection is made from a Sanskrit dictionary of all those technical terms, then it will help greatly the constitution of the *Bengali language.*”

Vivekananda was against the inclusion of too many subjects into the curriculum. Pointing out the mistake of his times, he says, “Our pedagogues are making parrots of our boys and ruining their brains by cramming a lot of subjects into them.” He wants all those subjects to be included in the curriculum which are necessary for a successful adjustment in the world. He poignantly observes, “What we need, you know, is to study, independent of foreign control, different branches of the knowledge that is our own and with it the English language and Western science we need technical education and all else that may develop industries, so that men, instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for themselves and save something against a rainy day.”

Vivekananda gives very practical suggestions regarding the curriculum. He recommends the study of the English language and Western sciences. He also realized the need for technical education, because the material prosperity of a nation depends on the development of its industries. He wanted the material progress of our country along with her spiritual life.

5.5 Method of Education

Vivekananda stressed the need of good parentage. He believed that moral and spiritual children can be expected only when the parents are good. He says, “It is the pre-natal influence that gives the impetus to the child for good or evil... Education and all other things come afterwards – are a mere bagatelle.”

Vivekananda, thus, emphasizes the moral goodness of parents for a morally and ethically sound offspring. He emphatically asseverates, “The human mind has infinite power and potentiality. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on a particular subject-matter of study. The chemist in his laboratory concentrates all the energies of his mind on one point and fixes upon it his undivided attention. As a result, he finds the secret. The astronomer concentrates all his energies on the study of movements of heavenly bodies and
projects his mind through the telescope on stars, the Sun, the Moon and other bodies so as to achieve his goal. Nature is ready to reveal her secret: we have to learn how to handle her. The cobbler will do his job better if his mind is more concentrated. Likewise, the cook will prepare a better meal if his mind is concentrated. It is necessary that while we learn how to concentrate our mind on a particular object, we should, at the same time, cultivate detachment. That is to say, we should be able to withdraw the mind from one object and place it on another. It is not unintelligent acquisition of facts but concentration of mind which is the most important thing in education.”

According to Vivekananda concentration of mind is the only method by which knowledge can be acquired. It is the very essence of education. To achieve success in any field, this is the only method. It distinguishes man from animals. From the lowest man to the highest Yogi, all use this method to attain their desired end. The power of concentration being the key to the treasure-house of knowledge, the question arises as to how to acquire it. Its difficulties being obvious, since innumerable impulses and thoughts enter the mind and disturb it. It is the practice of meditation which leads to mental concentration. Vivekananda is convinced that the very essence of education lies not in the collection of facts, but in the concentration of mind. He says:

If I had to do my education over again....I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment and then with a proper instrument, I could collect facts at will.

The power of concentration can be acquired through the observance of Brahmacharya which implies chastity in thought, word and deed. It is a source of great intellectual and spiritual power. Unchaste imagination is as bad as unchaste action. He asserts:

By observing of strict Brahmacharya all learning can be mastered in a very short time, one acquires unfailing memory of what one knows or learns.
The chaste brain has tremendous energy and gigantic will power. Without chastity there can be no spiritual strength.

Thus chastity and spirituality are closely interlinked and both play an instrumental role in strengthening learning. Vivekananda further observes, “It is essential to teach a child the dignity of the human individual. Many students go astray because they have no faith in themselves. It is Sraddha or faith in one’s dignity and power to do good that makes a man noble. He who looks
upon himself as powerless, ignoble, sinful and imperfect is a miserable person indeed. He can do neither any good to himself nor to the world does he live in. We cannot afford to forget that we are children of Eternity; we are sparks of the Divine Fire. And this faith gives us infinite strength and indomitable energy. India’s degeneration has been largely due to the lack of confidence and sense of dignity in her children.”

Like concentration, faith in one’s own self is also essential. If one thinks oneself weak, one will become weak Vivekananda says:

This Shraddha must enter into you. Whatever of material power you see manifested by the Western races is the outcome of this Shraddha, because they believe in their muscles and if you believe in your spirit, how much more will it work.

Vivekananda emphasizes that our children should be taught from the time of their birth-'this life-saving, great, ennobling, grand doctrine--to have faith in themselves. It was this ‘faith in themselves’ in the hearts of our ancestors that gave birth to our glorious ancient civilization.

Character is strengthening of the will and will have infinite power. The character of a man is but the sum total of his tendencies and dispositions. Vivekananda rightly asserts, “Every movement of my body, every idea that occurs in my mind and every deed that I do leaves an impression of my mind. And a man’s character is determined by the sum total of these impressions. When the tendencies are more or less settled, they form habit. Great care is, therefore, necessary to ensure that a student does not form any bad habit. The only remedy for bad habits is counter-habits. All the bad habits that have formed a part of one’s character can be controlled only by cultivating good habits. It is necessary to bear in mind that education does not consist in collection of information but in cultivation of good conduct. Let the student go on doing good deeds, thinking holy thoughts and keeping company of noble souls, he is sure to develop good habits. In moulding the character of a person, good and evil have their parts to play. In most cases, suffering has been a better teacher than happiness. The aim of a student should not, therefore, be avoidance of evil and suffering but conquering evil and suffering through will-force.”
In Vivekananda's scheme of education, personal contact of the pupils with their Gurus played a very important role. In his opinion, for true education, it is essential that the child should live from his very childhood with one whose character is a blazing fire and should have before him a living example of the highest teaching. The ancient system of education in India differed considerably from the modern system. The disciple was not required to pay anything to the Guru because knowledge was accepted as so sacred that no man ought to sell it.

The teacher and the taught should be possessed of certain ideal qualities. The taught should have purity in thought, word and deed. He should have “…a real love for knowledge and a spirit of perseverance.” He should have faith in his guru, but not a blind faith. He must exercise his critical faculty too. The teacher, on the other hand, should know “the spirit of the scriptures.” Vivekananda observes, “He must be perfectly pure and then alone comes the value of his word,” and he can exert his influence on the taught. Vivekananda is of the opinion, "The teacher must not teach with any ulterior selfish motive for money, name or fame.” His work must be simply out of pure love for the students. Vivekananda believes, "Any selfish motive will immediately destroy the conveying medium." Dr. Radhakrishnan in his book *Freedom and Culture* is also of the same view that teaching is a "glorious spiritual adventure" and the teacher is a 'spiritual leader'. Dewey also regards the teacher as "a Prophet of the true God" and his function is to liberate the soul so that it may follow its native impulse to soar upwards. According to Tagore the teacher who has not lost the child in himself is absolutely unfit for the great work of educating children. It is true that the lamp which itself does not burn cannot kindle another lamp. Those who do not feel real joy in their work are unfit for the work of teaching.

**5.6 Field of Education**

Giving his own ideas of the type of education he would prefer, Vivekananda said, “The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful is called education.” Education should pay more attention to the laws and methods of development of personality. This is the great secret of training that the Indian religious systems and specially Yoga, discovered. Through Yoga a man can control his will power which plays a significant role in the formation of character.
The right type of education can be imparted only when the student lives in communion with Nature. The Mundaka Upanishad speaks of two types of knowledge: one, the supreme, para and the other ordinary, phenomenal, relative, apara. All the temporal knowledge, sciences, literature and arts including the knowledge contained in the sacred Vedas was relegated by the Upanishads to the category of the ordinary or apara knowledge. That alone is para or supreme knowledge which helps destroy spiritual blindness and reveal the ever-present spiritual reality behind man and nature. The story of Satyakama is a case in point. Satyakama attained supreme knowledge when he lived in communion with Nature.

To Vivekananda religion is the innermost core of education. He elucidates, “A man cannot become a surgeon merely by studying books; similarly, the mere study of scriptures cannot make us religious. By simply looking at a map, one cannot satisfy one's curiosity to see a particular country. In the same way, by simply reading religious books, one cannot understand religion or realize God. One should experience religious truths for oneself. As maps can, no doubt, arouse our curiosity for more perfect knowledge, so do sacred books about religion.” He adds further, “Temples and churches, books and forms are simply the kindergartens of religions, to make the spiritual child strong enough to take higher steps.” Vivekananda emphasizes, “True religion is not in doctrines, in dogmas, nor in intellectual argumentation; it is being and becoming; it is realisation.” Such realization is possible through the heart alone. Vivekananda points out, “It is the heart which takes one to the highest plane, which intellect can never reach; it goes beyond intellect and reaches to what is called inspiration.” Hence the heart should be cultivated. The modern system of education is purely intellectual; it makes men extremely selfish and heartless.

The first requisite, in order to become truly spiritual is to make our body strong, for physical weakness is the source of 'one-third of our miseries'. Vivekananda's advice to the youth of the country is, “First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of the Gita.” Vivekananda emphasized goodness and he says, ‘Strength is goodness and weakness is sin’. 'Infinite strength is religion'. Strength can be attained by following the philosophy of the Upanishads. It is the only scripture in the world where the word ‘abhaya’ (fearless) is mentioned again and again and this adjective is applied either to God or to man. The Upanisads are a great mine of strength and their watchword--the physical, mental and spiritual freedom of all the oppressed. To
Vivekananda anything that makes us weak physically, mentally and spiritually should be rejected.

The method that is helpful in religious education `is to introduce the worship of the great saints'. But in the present context of the country, the character of Hanuman, who represents the ideal of service and leonine courage, should be held as the ideal; and Sri Krishna, the teacher of the Gita and Sakti, should be worshipped. The vridavana aspect of Sri Krishna should be kept aside for the time being, because it will not help in the regeneration of the country. Effeminate forms of music like Kirtana etc. should be stopped at once and the people should accustom themselves to listen to the dhrupad style of music. Vivekananda vibrantly asserts, “Through the thunder-roll of the dignified vedic hymns, life is to be brought back into the country. In everything, the austere spirit of heroic manhood is to be revived...Never lose heart. In eating, dressing, or lying, in singing or playing, in enjoyment or disease, always manifests the highest moral courage.” He further elucidates, “Never allow weakness to overtake your mind. Remember Mahavira, remember the Divine Mother. And you will see that all weakness, all cowardice will vanish at once.” He wants that the students should have moral as well as physical courage.

In Vivekananda's scheme of regeneration of India, upliftment of the masses and women through education find the central place. To him their upliftment was a crying need. In mass education, Vivekananda was concerned with the development of the individual in society. He was, in this regard, quite consistent with his social interpretation of the Vedanta. He wanted to make the Indian nation strong and vigorous. He rightly thought that it is through general education alone, a nation could be elevated. He says, "strength must come to the nation through education.” According to Vivekananda India's future is linked up with the upliftment of the masses through education. He says, “The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land ... among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it ... by spreading education among the masses.” Education is bound to bring about revolutionary changes in India. Moreover, it is education that makes the difference between nation and nation. The whole difference between the West and the East is in this. They are nations, we are not, i.e. civilization, education here (in the West) is general, it penetrates into the masses. Education broadens the outlook and intellectual understanding.
generates sympathy, thus leading to greater national cohesion. By education has been roused the Brahmin, the faith in one's self in the West, while through ignorance that power has been covered up in the East. To gain national faith power, co-operation and integration, the masses have to be educated. He was fully convinced that in Western countries the people have risen to their present social and economic awareness only through education. In India, also, if the people's lot is to be improved, it is education that can answer the need of the moment.

Vivekananda felt that the one sin that India committed was the neglect of the masses. He felt that the days of upper classes were gone. He visualized the day, soon to come when the toiling masses would come to the fore and a new India, with fresh vigour and vitality, would emerge out of the peasants' cottage; out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. His conviction in the upliftment of the masses was so strong that it dominated his mind. He remarked that unless steps were taken to bring about political consciousness among the masses, unless active participation by the masses was obtained, no agitation would succeed. The masses, as described by him were `a sleeping leviathan'. Roused to action, they could do wonders.

Vivekananda realized the need for mass education but also the fact that even free education would not attract them. For the poverty in India is such that the poor boys would rather go to help their fathers in the fields, or otherwise try to make a living than come to the school. Today also the same situation still persists. Government provide so many facilities to the students such as midday meal and low fee structure, yet parents are not interested to send their children to schools because they wanted their children to help them in their work. In this situation, Vivekananda's solution is novel. He says, "If the mountain does not come to Mahomed, Mahomad must go to the mountain." Hence he suggests that teachers should go to the houses of the poor and teach the children there without requiring them to stay away from work and thereby preventing them from making the contributions they would otherwise make to the family exchequer. Vivekananda entrusts this task of educating the masses to his brother monks. He says, “If some of them can be organised as teachers of secular things also, they will go from place to place, door to door, not only preaching, but teaching also.” As a practical man, he realizes that in any attempt to educate the masses the use of books or any expensive aid has to be altogether dispensed with or reduced to a minimum. That is why Vivekananda advocates the use of globes,
maps and charts rather than books. Through these he says, “They can teach a great deal of
geography and astronomy to the ignorant. By telling stories about different nations, they can give
the poor a hundred times more information through the ear than they get in a lifetime through
books.”

Vivekananda also felt the need for an organization and possibly the thought of starting
the Ramakrishna Mission for educational and other philanthropic work first took shape in his
mind at this moment, though of course there is no indication of it. But it is a fact that he wanted
to train a band of teachers, both men and women in monasteries, convents and theological
colleges who would devote their life in selfless service for the spread of education among the
masses. By leading the purest of lives, they would show to others how secular life can be
spiritualized and the intellectual outlook can be combined with the spirituality inside. He
recommended for his monastic order all kinds of work-educational, moral and intellectual that
helped the masses. But education occupied a special place in his conception of neo-monasticism.
He wanted the monks and nuns to take the lead in orientating the educational system to suit
modern needs, for they are still the recognized leaders of Hindu society.

Vivekananda repeatedly emphasized that India would advance in proportion to the spread
of education and the development of intelligence among the masses. Vivekananda's concept of
mass education is a strong case for development of courage, fearlessness and physical stamina to
face the problems of life. It should also endow us with a synthesizing outlook and consciousness
of the fundamental unity of man. That is the need of the hour. In his last analysis, education
should go to the common man with the world of gifts it has to offer, namely, the gift of
spirituality, the gift of secular knowledge and the gift of food. That is the living image of
Vivekananda's concept of mass education.

In trying to define the national ideal and suggesting remedies for social evils,
Vivekananda's attention was naturally drawn to the plight of women. He wanted their progress,
for the progress of a nation depends upon the progress of its Women. Expressing his views about
the imperative need for respect of women in India he says, “All nations have attained greatness
by paying proper respect to the women.” Manu says, "Where women are respected, there the
gods delight; and where they are not, there all works and efforts come to naught." He further
explains, "There is no hope of rise for that family or country where there is no estimation of women, where they live in sadness."\textsuperscript{85}

Again Vivekananda wrote, “Can you better the condition of your women? Then there will be hope for your well-being. Otherwise you remain as backward as you are now.”\textsuperscript{86} He was of the view that the uplift of the women, the awakening of the masses, must come first. In it lies the real good of the nation, if the women are raised, then their children will, by their noble actions ‘glorify the name of the country.’ Vivekananda studied the problem of women’s education a little more in detail, perhaps because this was totally neglected in those days and their intellectual uplift, according to his belief, was the ‘sine qua non’ for India's progress. The contrast with the educated women of the West might also have urged him to think seriously about their betterment. But however keen he may have been about this intellectual advancement of Indian womanhood, in one thing he was uncompromising, “the women were to solve their own problems including that of education, men’s part being only to help them from a distance.”\textsuperscript{87} It is out of such a paramount consideration that he brought Sister Nivedita from the West and trained her as a Hindu woman to organize women's education in India. Later on Sister Christine, another of his Western disciples devoted herself to precisely this task. His views are very radical and relevant but man’s role should be more than just helping from the distance. men should understand the need that their counterpart, that is, women should be educated and free to make society a better society.

In his scheme of women's education, the nuns living in convents, were to play a dominant part; for in their lives would be combined all that was best in the ideal of Indian womanhood – self-sacrifice, modesty, meditativeness, spirituality–with all that is best in the West – intellectual attainment, practicality, boldness, freedom and self-confidence. The educational edifice for the girls, more than that for the boys, had to be built around some temple. Their curriculum had to provide ample scope for worship, prayer, meditation, cultivation of the arts and sciences and essential household duties. Vivekananda poignantly asserts, “Religion, arts, science, housekeeping, cooking, sewing, hygiene – the simple essential points in these subjects ought to be taught to our women. It is not good to let them touch novels and fiction.”\textsuperscript{88} He would not, however, be satisfied with mere rituals. He also observes, “Their education must be an eye-opener in all
matters. Ideal characters must always be presented before the view of the girls to imbue them with a devotion to lofty principles of selflessness.\textsuperscript{89} Here Vivekananda sounds like Plato – a strict idealist.

In this connection, he wants that the noble example of Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Lilavati, Khana and Mira should be brought home to their minds and they should be inspired to mould their own lives, in the light of these. Along with other things they should acquire the spirit of valour and heroism. In the present day it has become necessary for them also to learn self-defense. Vivekananda rightly asserts, "See how grand the Queen of Jhansi was! With such an education women will solve their own problems."\textsuperscript{90} From our point of view his ideas here are not very radical his view that women should be free to make progress in life is contradicted by his view that they should be taught all the traditional things. Men and women should share the job of housekeeping and cooking so that women can learn science and art, otherwise they don’t have time for such things.

Vivekananda further insists that some of the women should be trained in the ideals of renunciation, so that they will take up the vow of lifelong virginity, fired with the strength of that virtue of chastity which is innate in their life-blood, from hoary antiquity. Along with that they should be taught sciences and other things which would be of benefit, not only to them but to others as well and knowing this they would easily learn these things and feel pleasure in doing so. Vivekananda is of the opinion, “Our motherland requires for her well-being some of her children to become such pure souled \textit{brahmacharini}s."\textsuperscript{91}

\textbf{5.7 Education–An Altruistic Activity}

Education is always an altruistic activity. To Vivekananda, it becomes really meaningful and worthwhile when it changes each “I” to an ardent “We” in order to be truly social. It is not an easy task. The education of self-preparation for self-surrender to the greater cause of we-ness is always challenging. It welcomes three factors. First, the constraints of the little self is to be overcome not by force external but by the one internal which may be identified as the education of discipline. In this regard, one must be a hard task master within oneself, being, of course, guided by experiences in real life situations. Second, whatever experience one encounters should be looked upon in terms of crystallization of the self consciously and continually, least anything detrimental to enrichment of the spirit of altruism must not, under any circumstances, be ignored.
or affected. Third, the call of the Supreme Self awaiting sincere response and dedication even at the cost of all personal interests of petty pleasure and satisfaction must be adhered to with earnest and untiring devotion and poignancy of perfection. Therefore, the “I-We” sphere of the mental ukas e is controlled and replaced by a new education for inner illumination which is the starting point of education for social awareness.

Vivekananda makes inroads to inner awareness for the advancement of social sensibilities in a very distinct, categorical and positive way. He delves deep into the three fundamental forces of nature viz. Sattva or equilibrium, Rajas or activity and Tamas or inactivity or darkness. These are the three forces which require proper social synchronization in the education of every human being.

As he characteristically elucidates:

In every man there are these three forces. Sometimes Tamas prevails. We become lazy, we cannot move. We are inactive, bound down by certain ideas or by mere dullness. At other times activity prevails and at still other times that calm balancing of both. Again, in different men, one of these forces is generally predominant. The characteristic of one man is inactivity, dullness and laziness; that of another, activity, power, manifestation of energy; and in still another we find the sweetness, calmness and gentleness, which are due to the balancing of both action and inaction. So in all creation – in animals, plants and men- we find the more or less typical manifestation of all these different forces.  

Karma-Yoga has specially to deal with these three factors, by teaching what they are and how to employ them; it helps us to do our work better. Human society is a graded organization. Vivekananda asserts, “We all know about morality and we all know about duty, but at the same time we find that in different countries the significance of morality varies greatly. What is regarded as moral in one country may in another be considered perfectly immoral. For instance, in one country cousins may marry; in another, it is thought to be very immoral; in one, men may marry their sisters-in-law; in another, it is regarded as immoral; in one country people may marry only once; in another, many times; and so forth. Similarly, in all other departments of morality,
we find the standard varies greatly—yet we have the idea that there must be a universal standard of morality”93

So it is with duty. The idea of duty varies much among different nations. He clearly points out, “In one country, if a man does not do certain things, people will say he has acted wrongly; while if he does those very things in another country, people will say that he did not act rightly – and yet we know that there must be some universal idea of duty. In the same way, one class of society thinks that certain things are among its duty, while another class thinks quite the opposite and would be horrified if it had to do those things. Two ways are left open to us – the way of the ignorant, who think that there is only one way to truth and that all the rest are wrong and the way of the wise, who admit that, according to our mental constitution or the different planes of existence in which we are, duty and morality may vary. The important thing is to know that these are gradations of duty and of morality -- that the duty of one state of life, in one set of circumstances, will not and cannot be that of another.”94

The lesson of love as the social outcome of vibrant education that Vivekananda has introduced has its most significant role in transforming our world as a beautiful social platform of awareness. This requires elimination of personal interest, where education serves as a guide to nurture the components of the social self-the self that is always prepared to sacrifice personal interest. Hatred, ill-feeling towards others in the society will, then, be replaced by the spirit of togetherness under the sincere bond of social enlightenment. Vivekananda adroitly highlights on this synchronized spirit of education and social consciousness and rightly said, “People never stop to think that those who bestowed the least thought on their own individualities have been the greatest workers in the world. Then alone a man loves when he finds that the object of his love is not any low, little, mortal thing. Then alone a man loves when he finds that the object of his love is not a clod on earth, but it is the veritable God Himself. The wife will love the husband the more when she thinks that the husband is God Himself. The husband will love the wife the more when he knows that the wife is God Herself. The mother will love the children more who thinks that the children are God themselves. That man will love his greatest enemy who knows that very enemy is God Himself. That man will love a holy man who knows that the holy man is God Himself and that very man will also love the unh holiest of men because he knows the background of that unh holiest of men is He, the Lord. Such a man becomes a world-mover for whom his little self is dead and God stands in its place. The whole universe will become transfigured to him.
That which is painful and miserable will all vanish; struggles will all depart and go. Instead of being a prison-house, where we everyday struggle and fight and compete for a morsel of bread, this universe will then be to us a playground. Beautiful will be this universe then! Such a man alone has the right to stand up and say, “How beautiful is this world!” he alone has the right to say that it is all good. This will be the great good to the world resulting from such realisation, that instead of this world going on with all its friction and clashing, if all mankind today realise only a bit of that great truth, the aspect of the whole world will be changed and, in place of fighting and quarrelling, there would be a reign of peace. This indecent and brutal hurry which forces us to go ahead of everyone else will then vanish from the world. With it will vanish all struggles, with it will vanish all hate, with it will vanish all jealousy and all evil will vanish away for ever. Gods will live then upon this earth. This very earth will then become heaven and what evil can there be when gods are playing with gods, when gods are working with gods and gods are loving gods? That is the great utility of divine realization. Everything that you see in society will be changed and transfigured then. No more will you think of man as evil; and that is the first great gain. No more will you stand up and sneeringly cast a glance at a poor man or woman who has made a mistake. No more, ladies, you look down with contempt upon the poor woman who walks the street in the night, because you will see even there God Himself. No more will you think of jealousy and punishments. They will all vanish; and love, the great ideal of love, will be so powerful that no whip and cord will be necessary to guide mankind aright.”

The education of the masses as Vivekananda emphasises, denotes how social transformation can be geared towards the right direction of perfection. There cannot be any monopolisation in education and intelligence. Dissemination of education is the only solution for eliminating social evils. The more we would be concerned with the spirit of education for all, the more will be our dividends in social transparencies.

In a letter addressed to Shrimati Sarala Ghosal, Editor, Bharati, from Darjeeling on 24 April, 1897, Vivekananda writes, “From the day when education and culture etc. began to spread gradually from patricians to plebeians, grew the distinction between the modern civilization as of Western countries and the ancient civilization as of India Egypt, Rome, etc. I see it before my eyes; a nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses. The chief cause of India’s ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority, among a handful of men. If we are
to rise again, we shall have to do it in the same way, i.e. by spreading education among the masses.”

Even education for spiritual development demands cultivation among the masses and should not be limited to the isolated and advantaged few. Accordingly, the masses in the entire society should be imparted the education of their spiritual development. Care should be taken to see that all lessons on spiritual excellence should be oriented towards better ascent of the society in all directions of human endeavour. It should also cater to the needs of eliminating all inconsistencies in spiritual exercise through education of tolerance and sympathy which act as pillars to the success of unambiguous and crystallized spiritual development. When Vivekananda takes recourse to the study of Sanskrit for this purpose of perfection in socio-spiritual education, he has at least three-fold end-in-view of education. First, as a social being, every person undergoing spiritual exercise in education would be able to think seriously of the well-being of the society first in lieu of thinking and learning for self-satisfaction and self-fulfillment only. Second, the spirit of the society as a platform of conjoint spiritual exercise in education for decent living becomes meaningful and evident. Third, the tradition, culture and heritage of the ancient socio-spiritual glory and advancement in education serve as a strong foundation of education of the society, by the society and for the society. But, as these necessitate proper and easily accessible language of communication in the most functional and arresting way, the task of the teacher is to take recourse to simplicity of understanding and appreciation through the mother tongue. Vivekananda’s own words, “My idea is first of all to bring out the gems of spirituality that are stored up in our books and in the possession of a few only, hidden, as it were, in monasteries and in forests – to bring them out; to bring the knowledge out of them, not only from the hands where it is hidden, but from the still more inaccessible chest, the language in which it is preserved, the incrustation of centuries of Sanskrit words. In one word, I want to make them popular. I want to bring out these ideas and let them be the common property of all, of every man in India, whether he knows the Sanskrit language or not. The great difficulty in the way is the Sanskrit language – the glorious language of ours; and this difficulty cannot be removed until -- if it is possible – the whole of our nation are good Sanskrit scholars. You will understand the difficulty when I tell you that I have been studying this language all my life and yet every new book is new to me. How much more difficult would it then be for people who never had time to study the language thoroughly! Therefore the ideas must be taught in the
language of people; at the same time, Sanskrit education must go on along with it, because the very sound of Sanskrit words gives a prestige and a power and strength to the race. The attempts of the great Ramanuja and of Chaitanya and of Kabir to raise the lower classes of India show that marvellous results were attained during the lifetime of those great prophets; yet the later failures will have to be explained and cause shown why the effect of their teachings stopped within a century of the passing away of these great Masters. The secret is here. They raised the lower classes; they had all the wish that these should come up, but they did not apply their energies to the spreading of the Sanskrit language among the masses.

That knowledge without culture among the masses makes education meaningless and a failure necessitates the right organisation and dissemination with the introduction of mother tongue. At the same time, quickness in learning results only when the hoipolloi are honoured with mass participation in education. As Vivekananda explains:

Knowledge came, but the prestige was not there, culture was not there. It is culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge. You can put a mass of knowledge into the world, but that will not do it much good. There must be culture into the blood. We all know in modern times of nations which have masses of knowledge, but what of them? They are like tigers; they are like savages, because culture is not there. Knowledge is only skin-deep, as civilization is and a little scratch brings out the old savage. Such things happen; this is the danger. Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas; they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses.

The quest for the real nature of man has its ultimate success in understanding the limitations of knowledge that fails to be free from egoism. Vivekananda always encourages the pursuit of education that teaches the lesson of self-abnegation and welcomes altruism under any circumstances. Therefore, the ultimate goal of education for social welfare is to rise above selfishness and prepare for any form of sacrifice which leads to social goodness. While explaining the true identity of knowledge in education, Vivekananda exquisitely unfolds this truth in the following words:
Knowledge is a limitation, knowledge is objectifying. He is the eternal subject of anything, the eternal witness in this universe, your own Self. Knowledge is, as it were, a lower step, degeneration. One idea stands out as the centre of all ethical systems, expressed in various forms, namely, doing good to others. The guiding motive of mankind should be charity towards men, charity towards all animals. But these are all various expressions of that eternal truth that “I am the universe; this universe is one”. Or else, where is the reason? Why should I do good to my fellowmen? Why should I do good to others? What compels me? It is sympathy, the feeling of sameness everywhere.99

The hardest hearts feel sympathy for other beings sometimes. Even the man who gets frightened if he is told that this assumed individuality is really a delusion that it is ignoble to try to cling to this apparent individuality; that very man will tell you that extreme of self-abnegation is the centre of all morality. And what is perfect self-abnegation? It means the abnegation of this apparent Self, the abnegation of all selfishness. This idea of “me and mine”-- Ahamkara and Mamata – is the result of past superstition and the more this present self passes away, the more the real Self becomes manifest. This is true self-abnegation, the centre, the basis, the gist of all moral teaching; and whether man knows it or not, the whole world is slowly going towards it, practising it more or less. Only, the vast majority of mankind is doing it unconsciously. Vivekananda propounds, “Let them do it consciously. Let them make the sacrifice, knowing that this “me and mine” is not the real Self, but only a limitation. But one glimpse of that infinite reality which is behind-but one spark of that infinite fire that is the All – represents the present man; the Infinite is his true nature.”100

The development of an individual by means of introducing education for the welfare of others is the touchstone of social advancement. Vivekananda goes a step further in incorporating the components of integrity, sympathy and love – the three milestones of education for social consciousness. The creation of educational institutions for exercise of these essential components of human development can alone guarantee a nation’s progress.

All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly. Each individual
has to work out his own salvation; there is no other way and so also with nations. Again, the
great institutions of every nation are the conditions of its very existence and cannot be
transformed by the mould of any other race. Until higher institutions have been evolved, any
attempt to break the old ones will be disastrous. Growth is always gradual.

It is very easy to point out the defects of institutions, all being more or less imperfect, but
he is the real benefactor of humanity who helps the individual to overcome the imperfections
under whatever institutions he may live. The individuals being raised, the nation and its
institutions are bound to rise. But customs and laws are ignored by the virtuous and unwritten but
mightier laws of love, sympathy and integrity take their place. Happy is the nation which can rise
to the necessity of but few law books and needs no longer to bother its head about this or that
institution. He admits, “Good men rise beyond all laws and will help their fellows to rise under
whatever conditions they live.”101

Education for regeneration of India as Vivekananda has visualized and practiced must be
rooted to the masses. Unless education of the masses is prioritized, the dream of a socially
enlightened India will always remain unfulfilled.

In an interview with the representative of the Madras Times in February 1897, he has
invaluably disclosed his intention on this point:

I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses and that is
one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any
avail until the masses of India are once more well educated, well fed and
well cared for. They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in
return they get kicks. They are practically our slaves. If we want to
regenerate India, we must work for them. I want to start two central
institutions at first – one at Madras and the other at Calcutta – for training
young men as preachers. I have funds for starting the Calcutta one. English
people will find funds for my purpose.102

He further elucidates, “My faith is in the younger generation, the modern generation, out
of them will come my workers. They will work out the whole problem, like lions. I have
formulated the idea and I have given my life to it. If I do not achieve success, some better one
will come after me to work it out and I shall be content to struggle.”103
5.8 Social Unison and Social Advancement

The education of love as Vivekananda observes, is the fundamental driving force for social unison and social advancement. It serves as a law of life that indicates hope for a better society to live in peace and prosperity. It becomes more than education in the ordinary meaning of life that is always afraid of struggle, destruction and death. Vivekananda advises us not to be dwarfed by constraints but, on the other hand, accept all social challenges with strong determination and undaunted resolution for love and goodness, welfare and benevolence for the poor and downtrodden, the ignored and despised in the society. His vibrant message to Alasinga Perumal on 19 November, 1894 from New York in this connection is very significant:

Nothing else is necessary but these – love, sincerity and patience. What is life but expansion and love? Therefore all love is life, it is the only law of life; all selfishness is death and this is true here or hereafter. It is life to do good, it is death not to do good to others. Ninety per cent of human brutes you see are dead, are ghosts – for none lives, my boys, but he who loves. Feel, my children, feel; feel for the poor, the ignorant, the downtrodden; feel till the heart stops and the brain reels and you think you will go mad – then pour the soul out at the feet of the Lord and then will come power, help and indomitable energy. Struggle, struggle was my motto for the last ten years. Struggle, I still say. When it was all dark, I used to say, struggle; when light is breaking in, I still say, struggle. Be not afraid, my children. Look not up in that attitude of fear towards that infinite starry vault as if it would crush you. Wait! In a few hours more, the whole of it will be under your feet. Wait, money does not pay, nor name; fame does not pay, nor learning. It is love that pays; it is character that cleaves its way through adamantine walls of difficulties.104

For the lesson of education to be truly social, love, indeed, is the most assured and dependable component. Vivekananda refers to the children of Japan who have the natural and instinctive love for dolls and, as such, they never break their dolls. Why do they love even an inanimate thing like a doll? The reason is clear and worth emulation. They love dolls because they do believe that their love would make these animated. Unless this living spirit of love for
the people of the society is a vibrant lesson in practice in the sphere of education, the purpose of education for an enlightened and humane society is bound to be crushingly defeated. Vivekananda deliberates upon the matter in a very pointed and crystallized way. He says, “Everyone has the power to judge of good and evil, but he is the hero who undaunted by the waves of samsara-- which is full of errors, delusions and miseries -- with one hand wipes the tears and with the other, unshaken, shows the path of deliverance. On the one hand there is the conservative society, like a mass of inert matter; on the other, the restless, impatient, fire-darting reformer; the way to good lies between the two. I heard in Japan that it was the belief of the girls of that country that their dolls would be animated if they were loved with all their heart. The Japanese girl never breaks her doll. O you of great fortune! I too believe that India will awake again if anyone could love with all his heart the people of the country--bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, their discretion totally lost, downtrodden, ever starved, quarrelsome and envious. Then only will Indian awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance. I have experienced even in my insignificant life that good motives, sincerity and infinite love can conquer the world. One single soul possessed of these virtues can destroy the dark designs of hypocrites and brutes.”

That education has an inherent relationship with the welfare of the society is not only based on theories but in practice also for anyone who believes in the philosophy of love as a compulsory component of altruism. Vivekananda adds something more for education that strives for a genuine involvement with the society. His concern is to uphold education as a means for coming closest to the society where our sincere dutifulness indicates our progress in education. The four necessary factors associated with the success of education as an instrument for social development are an endearing and sincere attitude to everyone in the society, a strong belief in the divine power inherent all the time in the every human being, which guides and accelerates love and service to the society, elimination of hatred and control and calmness in involvement. Vivekananda characteristically upholds these factors as follows, “First, we have to bear in mind that we are all debtors to the world and the world does not owe us anything. It is a great privilege for all of us to be allowed to do anything for the world. In helping the world we really help ourselves. The second point is that there is a God in this universe. It is not true that this universe
is drifting and stands in need of help from you and me. God is every present therein, He is undying and eternally active and infinitely watchful. When the whole universe sleeps, He sleeps not; He is working incessantly; all the changes and manifestations are His. Thirdly, we ought not to hate anyone. This world will always continue to be a mixture of good and evil. Our duty is to sympathize with the weak and to love even the wrong-doer. The world is a grand moral gymnasium wherein we have all to take exercise so as to become stronger and stronger spiritually. Fourthly, we ought not to be fanatics of any kind, because fanaticism is opposed to love. You hear fanatics glibly saying, “I do not hate the sinner. I hate the sin, “but I am prepared to go any distance to see the face of that man who can really make a distinction between the sin and the sinner. It is easy to say so. If we can distinguish well between quality and substance, we may become perfect men. It is not easy to do this. And further, the calmer we are and the less disturbed our selves, the more shall we love and the better will our work be.”

The concept of love through education for social synchronization is entirely dependent on that of freedom. Unless the infinite spirit of every human being is taken into account in our education, love fails to manifest in our contemplation and action. That everyone is an embodiment of knowledge can hardly be reality without endearing knowledge in the hearth and warmth of love which serves as the centre of human enlightenment in extending every little “I” in the vast social milieu.

Admittedly, Vivekananda delivers a unique definition of love from the above-mentioned perspective:

All are our fellow passengers, our fellow travelers – all life, plants, animals; not only my brother man, but my brother brute, my brother plant; not only my brother the good, but my brother the evil, my brother the spiritual and my brother the wicked. They are all going to the same goal. All are in the same stream, each is hurrying towards that infinite freedom. We cannot stay the course, none can stay it, none can go back, however he may try; he will be driven forward and in the end he will attain to freedom. Creation means the struggle to get back to freedom, the centre of our being, whence we have been thrown off, as it were. The very fact that we are here, shows that we
are going towards the centre and the manifestation of the attraction towards the centre is what we call love.\textsuperscript{107}

The lesson of feeling for others as the education of service to the society is the education par excellence. Vivekananda strongly advocates the education of how to be a true social worker uninterruptedly and selflessly without being disappointed or elated by failure or success. As a matter of fact, his elucidation of a pursuer and devotee to work – a Karma Yogi- upholds the lesson of non-attachment to one of his disciples and he says, “When man has perforce to do some work, Karma-Yoga enjoins on him to do it in such a way as will bring freedom through the realisation of the Atman. As to your objection that none will be induced to work – the answer is, that whatever work you do has some motive behind it; but when by the long performance of work, one notices that one work merely leads to another, through a round of births and re-births, then the awakened discrimination of man naturally begins to question itself, Where is the end to this interminable chain of work? It is then that he appreciates the full import of the words of the Lord in the Gita:

\textit{Inscrutable is the course of work. Therefore when the aspirant finds that work with motive brings no happiness, then he renounces action. But man is so constituted that to him the performance of work is a necessity, so what work would he take up? He takes up some unselfish work, but gives up all desire for its fruits. For he has known then that in those fruits of work lie countless seeds of future birth and deaths. Therefore the knower of Brahman renounces all actions. Although to outward appearances he engages himself in some work, he has no attachment to it. Such men have been described in the scripture as Karma-Yogins.\textsuperscript{108}}

The education of service to the society, therefore, leads one to have a firm faith in being a selfless worker. In such a striving, the only lesson to be learnt is how to sacrifice whatever stands for personal interest and how to conquer over all constraints even by embracing death heroically. This is man-making education. This is education that fondles and respects we-feeling and we-loving. As Vivekananda poignantly says, “We must die, that is certain; let us die then for a good cause. Let all our actions – eating, drinking and everything that we do – tend towards the sacrifice of our self. You nourish your own body by eating. What good is there in doing that if
you do not hold it as a sacrifice to the well-being of others? You nourish your minds by reading books. There is no good in doing that unless you hold it also as a sacrifice to the whole world. For the whole world is one; you are rated a very significant part of it and therefore it is right for you that you should serve your millions of brothers rather than aggrandise this little self.

You must not merely learn what the Rishis taught. Those Rishis are gone and their opinions are also gone with them. You must be Rishis yourselves. You are also men as much as the greatest men that were ever born—even our Incarnations. What can mere book-learning do? What can meditation do even? What can the Mantras and Tantras do? You must stand on your own feet. You must have this new method—the method of man-making. The true man is he who is strong as strength itself and yet possesses a woman’s heart. You must feel for the millions of beings around you and yet you must be strong and inflexible and you must also possess obedience; though it may seem a little paradoxical—you must possess these apparently conflicting virtues.”

How to bring education to the helpless masses? How to enlighten those people in the society by means of education of warmth, sympathy and cooperation? Vivekananda reminds us of the winds of change in education brought forth by the modern age of mutual understanding and appreciation, where every society must be allowed to enjoy breadth of vision and fullness in education. In explaining the real role of education for social development, he significantly observes that the education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring the strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion—is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one’s own legs. The education that you are receiving now in schools and colleges is only making you a race of dyspeptics. You are working like machines merely and living a jelly-fish existence.

In his own vibrant words, “The peasants, the shoemakers, the sweepers and such other lower classes in India have much greater capacity for work and self-reliance than you. They have been silently working through long ages and producing the entire wealth of the land, without a word of complaint. Very soon they will get above you in position. Gradually capital is drifting into their hands and they are not so much troubled with wants as you are. Modern education has changed your fashion, but new avenues of wealth lie yet undiscovered for want of the inventive
genius. You have so long oppressed these forbearing masses; now is the time for their retribution. And you will become extinct in your vain search for employment, making it the be-all and end-all of your life.”

Unless the task of spreading education among the masses is taken in right earnest, the role of education for social synchronization becomes an object failure. What should be strategies for the education of the masses? What are the fundamental and vulnerable areas of interest in this regard? Vivekananda has a very distinct and positive suggestion for the education of the masses in the trans-national backdrop of education for social regeneration:

Engrossed in the struggle for existence, they [the masses] had not the opportunity for the awakening of knowledge. They have so long worked uniformly like machines guided by human intelligence and the clever educated sections have taken the substantial part of the fruits of their labour. In every country this has been the case. But times have changed. The lower classes are gradually awakening to this fact and making a united front against this, determined to exact their legitimate dues. The masses of Europe and America have been the first to awaken and have already begun the fight. Signs of this awakening have shown themselves in India, too, as is evident from the number of strikes among the lower classes nowadays. The upper classes will no longer be able to repress the lower, try they ever so much. The well-being of the higher classes now lies in helping the lower to get to their legitimate rights. 111

Education should not be like swallowing a bitter pill, but a creative participation in moulding one's own character. Book learning and gathering of facts is not true education. Such education does neither teach us the aim and purpose of a worthy life, nor does it help in the growth of altruistic qualities. Hence, Vivekananda is correct in his assessment that education should not be merely informative or fact-finding and individualistic, but nationalistic and altruistic. True education is learning and grasping the truth about various things and then translating them in one's own life. His theory of education strives to overcome the defects of the empiricist and rationalistic theories. The empirical view does not take into account the rational constitution of man's mind and its innate tendencies which play a great role in shaping objective
knowledge to subjective patterns and therefore, it is unable to explain the variations from man to man in the understanding of objective truths. A rationalistic approach, on the other hand, has man's inherent ideas alone as its key and therefore, cannot help towards the expansion of man's knowledge. But Vivekananda's critical theory achieves the ends of both these theories, while eliminating their defects. It keeps the door open for an expansion of knowledge by showing that objective truths, viewed in a subjective manner, differentiate them only in degree and not in kind. Vivekananda had always stressed the value and importance of introducing the true spirit of the Vedic system of education and wanted to see the youth of the country trained not only intellectually, but morally too. The principles of training of mind and brahmacharya, advocated by him, are an echo of his Master. A sense of co-operation and sacrifice, which were sorely wanting in India, were to be coupled with the individual training on the intellectual and moral plane. Thus Vivekananda wanted to see the youth of the country blossom physically, intellectually and morally, by giving them a comprehensive education on the individual and collective level.

From Vivekananda's standpoint the importance of education in making or marring the destiny of a nation can hardly be overemphasized. Great is the power of education in forming the character and opinion of the people especially the future citizens of a country. Hence, our educational policies and our educational ideas should be true to the genius of our land and its age-old cultural traditions and ideals.

Today, however, the field of education presents many difficulties and numerous problems which defy on easy solution: for example, problems like the growing student indiscipline, lowering of standard in all branches of learning, commercialization and prevalence of malpractices in the sacred temple of Minerva, the evils of an examination system which leaves much to be desired, the thorny problem of the medium of instruction and so on and so forth. The reason for all these problems seems to be that those who cry themselves hoarse over the evils, themselves contribute most of them. But surely adding fuel to the fire will not extinguish it. James Allen rightly says: `Frequently the man of passion is most eager to put others right ; but the man of wisdom puts himself right. If one is anxious to reform the world, let him begin by reforming himself. This is again the same idea of self-education as preached by Vivekananda. From Vivekananda's theory of education it is evident that education is indeed a bilateral affair between the teacher and the taught and both should exert themselves to play their role well. If the teacher takes his job seriously and becomes a real intellectual light to his
students, if he kindles the real fire of knowledge in them and inspires real love for his subject of teaching, if he helps them in doing their own thinking instead of making them mere carbon-copies of his thinking which itself may well be, in most cases if not all, second-hand and a pale imitation of others thinking, if he puts before them by his own shining example the high ideal of virtue, becoming a man of learning and wisdom, there could be no reason why most of the students should not make a new beginning in their educational career and open a new profitable chapter in their lives.

But it may well prove a pious wish in the absence of a proper atmosphere and incentive for the teachers to acquire and impart knowledge. Care should be taken to see that the teachers are made free from financial worries, are provided with the necessary material and leisure for study and are not overburdened with work.

So far as the problem of student discipline is concerned, care must be taken that in place of an externally imposed discipline, they should learn to cultivate self-discipline. Real discipline comes from within; it springs from one's own will. Such a discipline is an asset in life. So also, inspite of the exigencies of examinations, it should not be impossible for them to cultivate spontaneous and ardent love for knowledge. The importance of having a well-defined and well-formulated ideal can hardly be exaggerated. Every civilized and cultured nation takes care to do so. It is, therefore, necessary to re-define and re-formulate our national ideal of education. But, unfortunately, we have neglected this important aspect of education in the post-independence period. We simply continued the ideal set by an alien government, the only aim of which was to perpetuate its strangle-hold on us. For this, it created the steel-frame of bureaucracy and the capable I.C.S. cadre to run the government which was in no way responsible to the people. But this ideal is utterly unsuited to our new democratic set-up in which the administrators are expected to be at the service of the people. The Indian national ideal of education is: ‘Sa vidya ya vimuktaye’ that is education which leads to liberation, as defined by Vivekananda. The ideal education has been appropriately termed ‘integral education’ by Sri Aurobindo. An integral education takes into account the entire complexity of a man's nature. ‘Education, to be complete, must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being; the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual ... All must continue, completing each other, till the end of life. 'Hence, Vivekananda said, ‘Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making education.’
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