

¶Here is something for Filipino educators  
to think about—

## THE SCHOOLS GHANDI PLANS

THE story of British efforts toward educating the people of India makes sorry reading. In the 1820's, the Governor of Madras, Sir Thomas Munro, estimated "the portion of the whole population who receive school education to be nearer one-third than one-fourth of the whole." Compare this percentage of literacy with the present one of 10 to 15 per cent! The native schools of 100 years ago, to be sure, imparted indigenous education only.

In the thirties of the last century the controversy between the Orientalists and the Anglicists was decided in favor of the latter. In 1835 Macaulay penned his note on education which made English the language of superior education in India and the promotion of European literature and science the chief aim of Indian education.

*Anglicism in education worked havoc on India.* The British rulers, despite their pious protestations, set out to produce educated Hindese who would be English in taste, temperament, and outlook, and who would serve as subordinate clerks in the government serv-

ice. On the one hand, Anglicism created a slave psychology through constant glorification of England and deprecation of India; on the other hand, through lessons in English constitutional history, it developed an ardent sense of nationalism.

The budget for the Department of Education is dependent on receipts from liquor and opium, a situation which has given rise to much dissatisfaction among the people. To rid education of the taint, Mahatma Gandhi advocates making Hindese education self-supporting by integrating it around a trade or skilled craft chosen by the pupil.

In October, 1937, Gandhi submitted four propositions to a conference of leading educators held at Wardha:

1. The present system of education with its emphasis on English should be revised.

2. A seven-year schooling program imparting "general knowledge," less English, plus a vocation, should be substituted in its place.

3. For the all-round development of the pupils all training should so far as possible be given through a profit-yielding

vocation, the State to guarantee employment in the vocations learned and to buy the pupil's manufactures at prices fixed by the State itself.

4. "Higher education" in the arts and sciences should be left to private enterprise.

The conference accepted the Mahatma's propositions and appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Dr. Zakir Husain to embody these suggestions into a working program. The report of the Zakir Husain Committee—the so-called Wardha Scheme of Education—sets forth four fundamental pedagogical tenets.

1. The artificial distinctions between primary, middle, and high schools shall be abolished, and education shall be conceived as a continuous, growing process without compartmental divisions.

2. The period of education shall be from the seventh to the fourteenth year for boys and girls alike.

3. All learning shall be integrated around a basic craft or set of crafts, depending on the aptitudes of the children and the needs of society.

4. The child as an apprentice shall, during the seven years of study, render enough goods and services to offset most if not all the cost of his education.

The Committee suggested a school day of five hours and 30 minutes, divided into the following periods:

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Hrs.</i>	<i>Min.</i>
1. The basic craft ...	3	20
2. Music, drawing, arithmetic .....	—	40
3. Mother tongue ....	—	40
4. Social studies and general science ...	—	30
5. Physical training ..	—	10
6. Recess .....	—	10

The present compartmentalized system of education conceives elementary schooling as a preparation for secondary schooling, which itself is conceived as preparation for college. As a matter of fact, the majority of students do not go to high school, and of those who do the majority do not go to college. What happens to students who quit school in the primary or elementary grades? Are they in position to function as intelligent citizens? Decidedly not. The Wardha Scheme, by concentrating its attention on the first years of school, is calculated to turn out better men and women than does the present academic set-up.

In organizing instruction around a basic craft the Wardha Scheme embodies the outstanding pedagogical discovery of the twentieth century. I would like to make one modification—I would not say, "All learning shall be integrated around a basic *craft*"; but rath-

er, "All learning shall be organized, coordinated, and integrated around a dominant *interest*." And the dominant interest in India as elsewhere is just twofold: the promotion of livelihood including the standard of living in the comprehensive sense of the term and the inculcation of civic responsibility. This way of formulating the problem removes the taint of crass materialism without lessening the emphasis on the learning of a craft or skill as an instrument for the promotion of livelihood.

The Wardha Scheme has raised a veritable hornets' nest of controversy. I would say it is substantially sound, even though the curriculum drawn up by the Zakir Husain Committee needs a great deal of re-vamping.

The catch is—are there competent teachers? I am afraid India's first job shall have to be

to not educate the child but the adult—the teachers and parents.

Furthermore, athletics, dancing, recreation must be emphasized much more in India than elsewhere to offset the Hindese people's tendency to withdrawal and seriousness. Nor may the study of English be entirely eliminated.

Impoverished India may yet make a revolutionary contribution to educational theory and practice. In his endeavors to serve the underprivileged of India Ghandi has been led to enunciate the most revolutionary part of his pedagogy. Yes, self-support shall be the acid test of the reality of our education. The adult has to do socially useful work. Why should we, then discourage the child from doing socially useful work in his formative years? The principle is thoroughly sound.—*Haridas T. Muzumdar, condensed from The Social Frontier.*

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### *Tit for Tat*

A LADY who had employed a Chinese cook asked him his name.

"Me name San Toy Lee," he said.

"Ah, your name is too long," the lady replied, "I will call you John."

"All Light," responded John. "What's your name?"

"Mrs. Charlotte Anne Hemingway," she said.

"Your name too long," remarked John. "I call you Cholly."—*Long Lines.*