

BOOK: In Search of Our Nationalistic Roots for a philosophy of Education

Compilations from words of Swami Prabhananda of The Ram Krishna Mission

Every education system is a living reality whose goals, structure and contents are influenced by socio-economic and cultural sources and also by the systems inherent dynamics.

We need to consider the **goals of education** conceived in relation to society and to individual, and also as general indicators of the relevance of its contents as a set of principles and criteria. **We need to discuss the dynamics, the factors and constraints that will in all be probability act in the future.** Also education needs to address the challenges posed by the worlds present problems.

International curriculum on development of education, 1972 observed in part, “Serious anomalies appeared where the educational system has been setup only recently, and copied from foreign models, usually the case in developing countries. They have now become aware of these defects and these models are adopted neither to their needs nor to their problems (p.xix) this is no doubt one of our major problems.

As regards the education introduced by **British Government in India, Lord Curzon** in his 17 Feb 1900 convocation address said, “We teach you in your Indian Colleges, and we examine you in the Indian Universities upon subjects not merely conveyed to you in a foreign language, but representing foreign ideas and modes of thought.” It was un-national, de-national in outlook, character and consequences. Unfortunately it lasted only for a century.

Lala Lajpat Rai, one of those persons who raise a cry for “National Education” pointed out, “The Mohammedan College at Aligarh, The Arya College at Lahore, The Hindu College at Banaras, **all embodied the ‘national’ ideals of their founders, limited and sectarian** as they were at that time. Each professed to provide its own kind of national education. (Great books on Indian Edu., Vol 11, Page 17).

Criticizing such approach, **Sister Nivedita** in her scheme of national education saying, “One class of people derive all their mental sustenance from one set of ideas, and bulk of the population from something else, this unity, though certainly present, cannot easily be made effective (C.W of Nivedita, IV, p330)

Though Indian national outlook did never obstruct the leader’s global vision, ‘nation’ as a political unit was a new concept in the Indian context. Some may contest the relevance of nation and nationalism in context of modern trend of Internationalism, globalization, new world order etc. Such critics should comprehend the **distinction between political unity and real unity**. Empires have exhibited political unity but many of them did not show to have in them the real unity. Indian nation is a living spirit and soul. The nation-soul revealed in Indian-ness or Indian consciousness, is a perennial source of creative activity. **In India, national unity has always been held complementary to the world unity and peace.**

The concept of Indian ness may be viable one. **There are some perennial values, unique to people of this land of India**, which stood India in good stead throughout its long history and also there are other important temporal values. These values need special attention.

Swami Vivekananda presented a glorious vision of New India and wanted to achieve it through education. He strongly believed right kind of education was panacea of all evils. He pleaded for Man Making Education which must have its root in deep down into fertile soil of our ancient culture to draw sustenance form its rich reserve. Then the education plant will sprout its shoots up towards the sun; spread its branches and green foliage nourished by the water of science and technology and free air of human aspirations of today.