



*An Ounce of Action is Better
than Tons of Speech*

Price -/60

A Challenge to Gandhi Centenary Workers.

Gandhiji was a worker and not a talker. He revolutionised India through his self-sacrifice and work. He was an ordinary man who became a Mahatma through the development of his personality. Man develops to his highest stature when there is no conflict in his thought, word and deed. He rose to his height through his service to country and his fellowmen. Therefore it is very essential for those who participate in the centenary celebrations to work out his ideas into action by their personal sacrifice and thus develop their personalities as well. If they cannot sacrifice they must not talk and promote hypocrisy and deception. Further their talk disturbs ordinary people and involves them into difficulties. I have been a victim of such talk.

Gandhiji believed that India could be brought back to peace and prosperity through his way of education. He appointed an education committee with Dr. Zakir Husain, the present President of India as Chairman, and Sri E. W. Aryanayakam a Ceylonese, as Secretary, to study this education through work and formulate a detailed scheme. He was so immersed in it and he once said that if he were to be born again he would like to be a Basic teacher and a Harijan.

A high sounding resolution to experiment in Ceylon Gandhiji's educational ideal was passed unanimously at the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the All Ceylon Union of Teachers in Kandy in 1945. The tall talk indulged in by some of the Union stalwarts—some of whom are happily still with us—led me into a venture which has cost me the best part of my life and all my hard earned money during that period. When I made an attempt to translate their resolution into action they turned deaf ears to my appeal. Further my activities were thwarted by official red tapism.

I am not in the least discouraged. In fact I have acquired more experience and strength to carry on the work from where I have left. Please come one and all to help me continue my work which remains unfinished. Gandhiji is no more with us. The light is gone. Therefore we

must have institutions which would please his heart if he were to visit us again. Such an institution is our Gurukulam and Wardha Experimental school at Karainagar. I am telling this with all humility. I have a right to appeal to all well wishers as I have thrown myself into the work heart and soul. Accept this challenge and help me to revive the school and Gurukulam. Otherwise in this year of Gandhi centenary you will allow an institution which had the personal blessings of Gandhiji and his revered Secretary Sri E. W. Aryanayagam to die. Here is the story of the venture.

The first serious attempt in Ceylon to study the Principles involved in Wardha (Basic) Education was probably by the Kandy Educational conference of 1945 presided over by the Honourable Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, the Minister of education and Dr Ian Sandeman, the Director of Education. At this conference Sri E. W. Aryanayagam, the Secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh (The All India Basic Education Society) and Srimathi Asha Devi of Sevagram, expounded the idea at the invitation of the All Ceylon Union Teachers. It may be stated here that they came to Ceylon with the blessings and approval of Gandhiji himself. The deliberations resulted in a unanimous resolution to experiment the Wardha Scheme in Ceylon and many ministers and educationists from all over the island attended the meeting. Since then there has been an increasing appreciation in Ceylon of the contribution which "learning by doing" has to make to an educational system which continues to be excessively academic and bookish.

At the time of the conference I was in Sevagram the headquarters of Gandhiji where I had gone to have a personal experience of his life and teaching. I saw the Wardha scheme in its proper perspective during my short stay in his ashram. I found that this scheme of education would be a boon to Ceylon.

While returning from Sevagram I met Sri. E. W. Aryanayagam and Srimati Asha Devi in Madras on their way back from this Kandy Jubilee Celebrations. He gave me the details of the conference and directed me to meet in person those personalities who had actively participated in the conference. After my return I contacted some of them as directed by Nayakamji and told them of

my impression about the scheme. I received their encouragement. Later I discussed this with the teachers and the management of the J/Karaitivu West Tamil Mixed School, Karainagar. They readily agreed to experiment this scheme in their school if the government allowed them to do so. The teachers promised to go for training to India one by one every year and the management agreed to pilot the school into a full fledged Wardha school by stages with my direction and guidance. I trusted them and took necessary action to convert this school into a Wardha school.

Soon after I was invited by Sri. G. Ramachandran of Sevagram to participate in their first Wardha Training Camp at Tiruchengod in Tamil Nad. This camp made my conviction in the Wardha Education still deeper. I got there the affection and love of the eminent Gandhian economist Dr. J. C. Kumarappa. I extended an invitation to him to visit Ceylon. He readily accepted it; and to my great surprise I received a letter from him after a month to arrange a conference in my village.

A conference was organised at Karainagar for three days to discuss problems of economic development. I contacted several leaders to preside over the conference. Everyone excused himself with lame excuses as Dr. J. C. Kumarappa was considered an anti-British man. As a last resort I requested Dr. S. K. Bunker, President, Jaffna College, to preside over these deliberations. He readily consented being a non-citizen from an independent country, America.

The conference was well attended. Most of the participants were staying with us all the three days. After hearing his speeches many were anxious to hear him and discuss problems leading to economic independence. A lecture tour was arranged all over Ceylon. The Hon'ble Mr. D. S. Senanayakka invited him to address his Board of ministers and their secretaries. In the course of his address he asked the ministers whether Ceylon was going to eat tea leaves and to clothe itself with rubber sheets. He stressed that real independence is economic independence; and that therefore priority should be given to food crops. He was of the view that in the matter of food, Ceylon should seek to attain self-sufficiency. Thereby only Ceylon

would enjoy real independence. I am sure that this message must be ringing in the ears of the present Prime Minister. I accompanied Kumarappaji during Ceylon tour. Thus I came to be introduced to the public of Ceylon. Thereby my efforts to organise the Wardha scheme of education became easier. Really speaking the seed of Wardha Education was sown in Ceylon by Dr. J. C. Kumarappa.

In 1946 I interviewed the Director of Education Dr. Sandeman and got full pay study leave to Mr. A. Sadacharam of the J/Karaitivu West Tamil School to go for Wardha Training in India.

It was proposed to have an educational conference and the opening of Wardha experiment in 1948 with the blessings of Gandhiji. He was very happy over this work in Ceylon. Unfortunately his assassination made us to postpone them. In march 1949, a Wardha Education Conference was organised at Karainagar under the patronage of the Hon'ble Minister of Education. The Hon'ble Mr E. A. Nugawala, Minister of Education and his Parliamentary Secretary Mr. K. Kanagaratnam were very enthusiastic about this novel method of education. The Director of Education Mr. W. A. de Silva helped not a little towards the success of the conference. The Parliamentary secretary presided over the conference and pledged the support of the Ceylon Government to this experiment. No less a leader and educationist than Sri. G. Ramachadran of Sevagram conducted the conference and opened the Wardha Experiment. The conference was well attended by over 400 educationists and others. He addressed many meetings all over Ceylon.

The experiment was started with 30 children. The results during the first year were very satisfactory. Sri. E. W. Aryanavagam, Srimati Asha Devi and Mr. F. G. Pearce, Asst. Secretary to the Ministry of Education visited the school in June 1949 and addressed a public meeting on the advantages of Wardha Education. Dr J. C. Kumarappa, President of the All India Village Industries Association, Wardha paid a tribute to the work that was being done in the school when he visited us in September 1949.

The first anniversary of this experiment was celebrated with Mr. K. Kanagaratnam, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of

Education in the chair. prominent educationists and members of Parliament addressed the meeting. They all stressed the importance of this education of 'Learning by Doing' They exhorted the teachers to work this scheme to a success.

The movement received a temporary setback at the beginning of the second year. Opposition came from the staff led by the Head teacher who refused to abide by the earlier agreement to send teachers for training in India. It must be noted that they did not stand to lose financially by going to India for the training. It was sheer unwillingness to work throughout the day in the school which made them to rebel in this way. The significance of the new education was not clearly understood by them. This new education was discovered by Gandhiji through his own experience in South Africa while he was living in Tolstoy farm. The Children in the farm were educated in this fashion. But our teachers little realising that they were the pioneers in this education in Ceylon found the work at the school to be irksome.

The manager little realising his responsibility did not use his power to send them for training. The Education Officer did not persuade them to go for training. I was in a difficult situation. Therefore I was forced to select a Tamil Trained Teacher Mr. A. Namasivayam from outside and to send him for training in India.

The teachers of the School set their relatives and the public against the experiment. It is no doubt a fact that new ideas will be resisted till they get their roots deep in the people. Neither the Teachers union which had made a big noise in 1945 nor the Govt. which had associated itself with the resolution of experimenting with the new education scheme came to my rescue at that juncture I made many appeals. I had to struggle hard and was forced to carry on with the help of a single teacher.

To pacify the parents parallel classes were started. It was left to the option of the parents to select the course they wanted for their children. This involved additional financial commitment I had to appoint another teacher to assist Mr. Sadacharam who was in charge of the experiment.

Dr. Howes, the Director of Education visited the school in March 1950. A demonstration was staged by the opponents with black flags and slogans. But the Director was satisfied with the work and our arrangement for the parents to select whatever suited their children. He addressed the meeting and explained the advantages of "Learning by doing" Mr. A. V. Kulasingam, Chairman of the Board of Trustees presided over the function.

Sri Aryanayagam inspected the school in 1951 and found the work very satisfactory even in the adverse circumstances prevailing then. He analysed the situation and advised us to shift this section to a separate premise. Thus in January 1952 the Wardha section found its home in a new place in a rented out building. The very success of the new education created for it more and more enemies.

There was a big rally of the parents engineered by the staff and few power hungry men. Resolutions were passed demanding the withdrawal of the Wardha Scheme of education from the school curriculum. A Committee was elected to go on a deputation to meet the manager and myself. I explained to them that if they were not satisfied they could put their children in the normal section of the school.

Mr. A. Namasivayam on the completion of his training joined our staff. But as we were then in the thick of our fight, he being an outsider, decided to leave us thus crippling our efforts very seriously. He was taken into a new school by a Principal who had actively supported the Wardha scheme at the Kandy conference. I appealed to him not to take him. When I begged him to allow him to remain with us for a few months till at least the storm was over, he said to me, "When the people and the Government are opposed to the experiment why don't you give it up". It was a shock for me to hear this from a man of such eminence. I murmured, "Et tu Brute". To meet the situation at that juncture a qualified music teacher was appointed.

I went to Sevagram with this agony of mind and told this incident to Nayakamji. He felt very unhappy over this. He was kind enough to obtain for us the services of Sri R. Subramaniam of Sevagram until we found a qualified teacher of our own. He joined us in 1951.

Even though I was fairly conversant with this educational system, I was anxious to study it further and relate it to western thought on the subject. So I joined the Diploma-in - Education course of the University of Ceylon in 1952. Professor T. L. Green, a renowned educationist, was in charge of this Department.

A charge was often levelled against me by my opponents why I had not given up teaching at Jaffna College, and occupy myself fully with the Wardha experiment if I was really sincere about its usefulness. I told them time and again that if they would only find me the money to run this experiment I was prepared to devote the entire attention to the school. The very fact that I did not marry till late in life will show that I was anxious to give this movement undivided attention with all my resources.

By 1953 the experimental section of Nai Talim (new education) had survived all its trials. The public showed enthusiasm and sent more children to this section. This new section completed Junior Basic stage in December and was at that stage imparting Basic education to 80 children between the ages of 5 + and 11+ in 6 classes in charge of 4 teachers, one was paid by the Government and the other 3 were paid by me. This meant more financial commitment. I had to pocket out Rs. 9307-50 for the period ending April 1954.

But a few opponents still remained. A deputation met the Minister of education and begged him to close this experiment. The Minister called for a report from the Director of Education. After a perfunctory inspection by a team the experiment was ordered to be closed.

This gave me an opportunity to bring this experiment to lime light. As a first step a progress report and prospectus of this experimental school was published with the statement of accounts in April 1954. Mr. A. T. Vethaparanam and myself met the Honourable Mr. A. Ratnayakka and the Honourable Mr. M. D. Banda. The Minister of Education after careful inquiry directed the Director to grant permission to continue the experiment.

The period of trial was over and antagonism was changed into co-operation, prejudice into admiration, ignorance into enlightenment and people were rallying round the movement. But we were unable to admit more students due to inadequate building space and equipment. There were 160 children in 7 classes.

In April 1955 Post Primary classes were opened by Sri. E. W. Aryanayakam under the patronage of the Hon'ble Mr. M. D. Banda, Minister of Education, Members of the Parliament, Ministers and other educationists from all over Ceylon graced the function. It was well attended by thousands of people.

The opposition (confined to a few) too helped us to gain publicity through their intensive campaign. They posted big wall-notices and distributed black flags, hand bills etc to disturb our meeting. They sent telegrams and letters to the Prime Minister, Governor General and other Cabinet Ministers. They threatened danger to the lives of speakers if they attended the meeting. Their action made the government to take security measures and the Government Agent was instructed to take measures for the preservation of peace. The Government Agent Mr Srikantha played an important role by summoning the Police force from Jaffna and Kankesanthurai to assist the Kayts Police to maintain order and peace.

It was a colourful sight. The Ministers and Sri Aryanayakam were received by the reception committee headed by Mr. A. V. Kulasingam Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Wardha Education Society and taken in procession for half a mile. A guard of honour was given by girl students of Colleges and Training Schools of Jaffna. People on the way garlanded and received them with Poorna Kumbams.

Telegrams for the success of the function were received from many distinguished men from Ceylon and India including the Governor General and Prime Minister of Ceylon Chief Minister and Minister of Education of Madras. The Hon'ble Mr. M. D. Banda was very pleased to see the exhibits of the children of the Wardha school. He expressed great satisfaction to the

people and said that he was really ashamed not to have gone to the rescue of the school much earlier. The Hon'ble Mr. S. Natesan remarked that the organiser of this experiment was wedded to the Wardha scheme and that was why he was able to overcome difficulties. Sri E. W. Aryanayakam opened the Post-Primary classes and explained the manifold benefits of this education to the people at large. This meeting gave a death blow to the opposition and thus ended their agitation.

The proprietor of the building where we were carrying on the experiment gave us notice to vacate his premises as he wanted the house badly. My aged mother who is deeply interested in this movement pressed me to buy a land and put up buildings of our own for the further success of this work.

I informed the school manager of this new proposal and asked him whether he would continue to abide by the assurance already given to us to carry on this experiment to a success. He reaffirmed the assurance that the school would be converted into a Wardha school as soon as sufficient number of students go into the experimental section. It was after obtaining this assurance from the manager that a land was bought for Rs. 10,000, and two cottages were put up to house these children. The experimental section went into the new premises in 1955.

The land was vested with the Board of Trustees by virtue of deed No. 12607/309 dated 20-th August 1956 and attested by Mr. A. Kanagasabai. Notary Public.

As it was earnestly felt that the children should be brought up in a Gurukulam a building was put up during the Buddha Jayanti celebrations to commemorate the great teacher-Buddha at a cost of Rs. 15,000. This was opened in May 1956 by Swami Satchithananda of Rishikesh, Head of the Divine life society, Ceylon. The children lived with the teachers in the Gurukulam to practise religion as is the practise in Ashram in the days of old. Several children from all over Ceylon came to reside here. The numbers came to 60. Thereby units rose up still more and vacancies for staff were created.

To get over the difficulty of adjusting the teachers according to the units of the two sections I persuaded the Head teacher to retire

one year ahead of his time by paying compensation to him. This was done after obtaining the assurance from the manager that a person qualified to carry on the wardha experiment would be appointed in the place of the retiring head teacher, But when he retired contrary to his promise the manager appointed his own uncle as head teacher. This appointee was one who was very vehemently opposed to the Wardha Scheme. Further he was also very junior in service.

The new head teacher from the very beginning used his position to break this experiment. He prevented the English Assistant teaching English in the Wardha Section as provided for in the time table with the sole purpose of creating confusion among the parents and compelling them to remove their children from that section. He intimidated and threatened to discontinue Mr. S. Kanaganayagam who had joined the staff after completing his training in Wardha Education. He was using his influence as a local chieftain to drive this teacher who was an outsider out of the school. He used physical force on Mr. A. Sadacharam and ordered him to leave the place. Some children who were studying in the Wardha School had not been enrolled in the register of the school for several months with the sole intention of persuading the parents to remove their children from this section. The parents did not fall into his trap. As the work of the Wardha section had now progressed it became necessary to have two sessions daily to implement the scheme. But he refused to have two sessions. The essential part of the Wardha Scheme is craft work by the students. But he refused to provide the number of hours in the time-table for practical work.

In spite of all the obstructive tactics against the scheme by the head teacher that year, while 20 new students joined the lower kindergarten of our section only 2 joined the other section. The new experiment had slowly taken root in the locality and the people had come to realise its worth. When the manager ordered the Head teacher to carry out his instructions latter defied his orders and even used physical force on the manager. The manager showed himself to be helpless. He did not want to take drastic steps against him. Thus we were allowed to suffer under his tyranny.

The parents who had been watching this situation slowly removed their children from the normal section and had them admitted into the Wardha section.

As the numbers moved out of the normal section the manager didnot transfer the teachers to the Wardha section. He was more concernad with his uncle cum Head Teacher and not the education of the children, or my financial strain. As there were-classes up to standard 8. I had to appoint 6 other teachers in addition a graduate was placed in charge of the Post Primary classes.

The Post-Primary classes were conducted temporarily in the Gurukulam buildings till the third Block of the Wardha School was completed. This block consisted of a hall and four rooms. It cost Rs. 8000/-

Mrs. K. Arumugam, the Inspector of Social Services visited our Gurukulam. She was pleased with the living conditions of the children. She urged on me to admit orphans and give them also this pleasant life in this atmosphere. She recommended that we have a Wardha School home in our Gurukulam. It was registered by the Director of Social Services in 1957.

These institutions were vested in the Board of Trustees of the Wardha Education Society by virtue of the Decree entered by Mr SriskandaRajah, District Judge, Jaffna, in case No. T. R 12 under the Trust Ordinance No. 9 of 1917 (ch 72) on the 27th day of June 1958.

The object of the said Trust is to promote a scheme of National Basic Education as expounded by Mahatma Gandhi and adapted to Ceylon's need by establishing new schools, converting existing schools etc.

I undertook a fast for my purification and guidance from the Almighty Appeals came to give up my fast. Mr. M. Sabapathippillai, the brother of the manager in the company of Mr A. V. Kulasingam persuaded me to give up the fast. An undertaking was given that the manager would carry on the work as agreed upon in the beginning of the movement; and the Head teacher his uncle, will be confirmed only after he had given a written agreement on the same lines.

The manager failed to keep up his promise. The Board of Trustees realising their precarious position in relation to the management of the school tried all methods to come to an agreement

through negotiation with the manager. He agreed readily to all the proposals but did not co-operate in the day to day running of the school.

The society urged the manager to forward the name of the graduate teacher who was teaching in the Wardha School for the approval of the Department and also to allocate the teachers between the normal section and the Wardha section in accordance with the ratio of the units. The manager went back in his undertaking. The Department of Education also did not realise our difficulties and give us no timely help. All this smothered the progress of our scheme.

Our relations with the management of the school were unsatisfactory. We had no legal status either as manager or Co-managers of the school and we had no control whatever over the manager. He was not inclined to further the progress of the Wardha Education. As Trustees and proprietors of the buildings in which wardha section was being conducted we were dissatisfied with the attitude of the manager towards the whole Wardha Experiment. We had done our best hitherto to persuade the manager to appreciate our point of view but we regret to say that the efforts proved fruitless. As a last resort we came to an agreement with the manager that the Wardha section should be managed by a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees. Even this arrangement, failed, for the simple reason that we had no legal control over the manager. Wardha Experiment is of vital importance to the course of education in this country. A fair trial should have been given to this experiment and this management failed to do.

As we held ourselves responsible for the proper education of the children we advised the parents to remove their children from the Post-Primary classes. We did this as we were not in a position to provide the necessary facilities. The students of Gurukulam were sent to Yarlton College. The Post-Primary section had to be closed by the end of December 1959.

The teachers of our section were very unhappy over this as they had undergone great hardships in building up this school at a great personal sacrifice. The decision to

close the past primary section was taken after sufficient representation had been made to the Department and after sufficient notice had been given to the public. It was now no longer possible to give the best of Education within the means at my disposal. I felt children were more important than prestige. I felt that my guidance and financial help were no longer needed to run the Primary classes of our section as there are sufficient Wardha Trained teachers the manager was requested to vacate our premises as there was enough space in the normal school. He vacated our premises in September 1960.

A prospectus was printed in 1958. In addition to our permanent staff we had a visiting staff consisting of eminent ladies and gentlemen who had agreed to do research and parttime work in the Wardha institution.

THE STAFF :—

- Sri T. Muttucumar, B.A. (Hons.), Hony. Principal
- „ M. Gunasekaran, B.Sc, Vice-Principal.
- „ A. Sadacharam, 1st Class Trained,
Wardha Trained Head Master.
- „ S. Kanaganayagam, Wardha Trained
- Miss R. Mahadevi, Wardha Trained.
- Sri V. Gengadaran, Music.
- Miss P. Sundaravally, Pre-Basic.
- „ K. Parvathy, Pre-Basic.
- „ K. Nallammah, Pre-Basic.
- „ S. Visaladchy, S.S.C.
- „ S. Ponnamma, S.S.C. Agl. Trained.
- Sri. A. Gunaratnam, Scout.
- „ E. K. Nagarajah, B.A.
- „ S. Nambiyarooran, B.Sc,
- „ R. T. Ehambaranathan, B.A.

VISITING STAFF.

- Sri S. Shivapathasundaram, M.A., (cantb).
- „ S. Mahalingam, B.A., Dip. Ed.
- „ J. S. Ariyaratnam, B.Sc, Dip. Ed.

- ,, M. Sabanayagam, B.A., Dip. Ed.
- ,, N. Veerasingam, B.Sc, Dip. Ed.
- ,, A. Markandam, B.A , BSc Post Grad. Trad.,
- Miss P. Rasiah, B.A. (Hons.)
- Sri P. Paranirupasingam, B Sc., Dip. Ed.
- Vidvan K. Karthigesu B.A , Dip. Ed.
- Sri N. Sabaratnam, B.A. Post Grad. Trad.
- Miss C. M. Deva, B.A.,
- ,, E. C. Deva, B.Sc.,
- Sri T. J. Koshy, B A., M.Sc,
- ,, M. Ambalavaner 1st class Trained
- ,, P. Subramaniam, Pandit Trained
- Mrs. P. Vinasithamby, 1st Class Trained
- Sri A. Namasivayam, M.A.,
- ,, S. Saravanapavananthan, B.A. (Hons)
- ,, M. Gnanapiragasam, B.A., B.Sc,

THOSE WHO RUN THE COLLEGE

The Wardha Education Society.

COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

- Sri P. Navaratnam, M A , Dip. Ed., A.I.E. (Lond.)
Organiser and President.
- Sri A. Sadacharam, Secretary,
- Srimathi P. Manickam,
- Sri M. Ratnasingam, Manager.
- Vidwan K. Karthigesu B.A., Dip Ed.
- Sri S. Seenivasagam
- ,, K. Tiruneelakandam, B.Sc., Dip. Ed.

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- Dr. N. Sambanthan, M.B.B.S., F.R.C.S., Secretary
- Sri P. Navaratnam, M.A., Dip. Ed. A.I.E. (Lond.) Treasurer
- ,, V. Thillainathan, B A., Advocate.
- ,, A. S. Kathiravelu
- ,, V. Sivaguru B.Sc., (Hons.)
- ,, M. Vaitilingam
- ,, S. A. Kanapathippillai
- ,, S. V. Karthigesu.

Sri E. W. Aryanayakam was very pleased to guide us to do research in this field. I have gained a great deal of personal experience in this field as I had taken part actively in the educational seminars and conferences held in India from time to time.

In 1958 I attended the All India Basic Education Conference held in Punjab and actively took part in the deliberations. I extended an invitation to have the next session in Ceylon. The other members who extended the invitation, stood down on behalf of Ceylon saying it was befitting to have the next conference in the birth place of Sri Aryanayagam the renowned Gandhian Educationist. I made arrangements to invite Sri Pandit Jawarha Nehru to open this Conference called South East Asia Wardha Education Conference to be held at Kandy under the Patronage of the Government of Ceylon.

On my return to Ceylon I first contacted The Hon'ble Mr. C. P. de Silva and discussed all the plans. He was very happy to have this under the patronage of the Ceylon Government and he said he would get The Honourble Mr. S. W. R. D Bandaranayakka, Prime Minister of Ceylon to accept this proposal. While I was making preliminary arrangements the then Prime Minister of Ceylon was assassinated to our great misfortune. Whereupon Nayakamji requested me to drop the matter for the time being.

As I could not proceed with the Wardha Experiment I proceeded to the University of London in 1960 to do research work on Wardha Education in the light of western Educational trends. I wish to mention here in all humility that my insight and Zealousness made me a pioneer in this field in the University of London Institute of Education. A thesis on "A Comparative study of Activity Method in England and India (Primary level) with the writer's experience in Ceylon" was submitted for the associateship of the London University Institute of Education (1960—61). On this thesis the University of London conferred on me the title of the Associate of the Institute of Education. I am now more than ever before convinced of the very great usefulness of this scheme.

If it is accepted it will prove a boon to our society. When I was away in England the Government took over the school

under its reorganisation scheme. When I returned I found that all traces of the Wardha scheme had disappeared from the curriculum of the school.

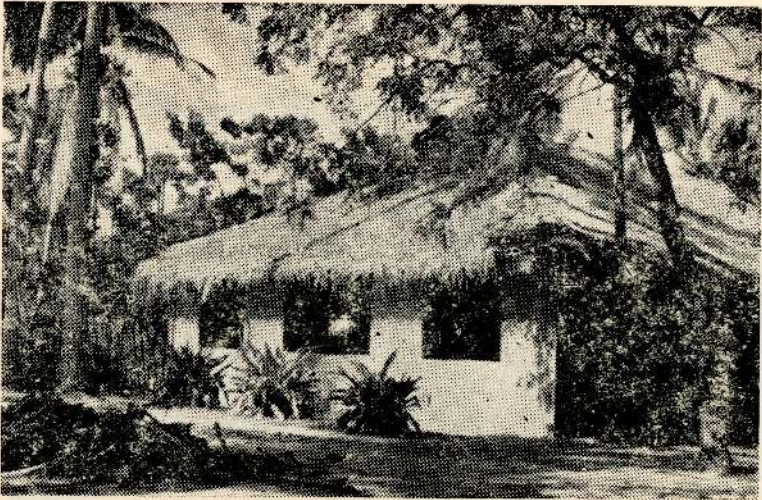
The Department of Education must accept its responsibility of furthering the objects for which the Society was established under the said provisions of Trust ordinance in the above mentioned District Court Case. It is not open to Education Department to go contrary to the avowed objects for which this society was established. It is therefore open to the Hon'ble Minister of Education either to give back the property to the Society or to run the Wardha Experimental school himself. The option is his

When the Tamil school was vested in 1962 the Gurukulam and the Wardha school buildings were not included in it. It is machination of the Head Teacher that these buildings were re-vested in 1965. During this period I was in India. On my return I protested. My protest went unheard because it was not made in time. Officialdom is more concerned with the letter of the law and not with its spirit.

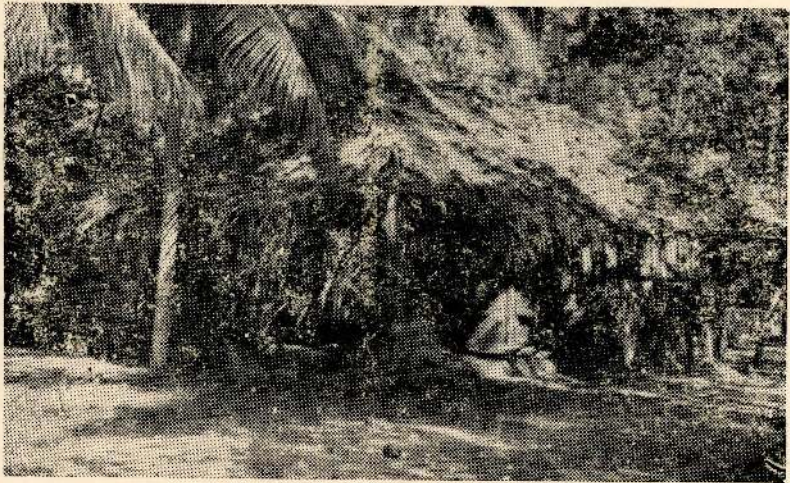
Their cruel action has caused great hardship and inconvenience to the children in the Gurukulam. An Inspector of schools under the direct orders of the Director of Education, Northern Region, ejected the children from the Gurukulam. This callous action has not benefitted any one. It has brought ruins to the buildings and put a stop to the healthy growth of the needy children who were in the residence.

While associations are struggling to build up new hostels and orphanages for the children of the country Government red tapism has intervened here to destroy an existing institution which was doing useful work. The buildings had gone to rack and ruin and partially not in existence. The premises deserted were full with bushes. I was unable to bear the sight of these buildings and premises which once beamed with light and work and now deserted and going to ruins.

The photographs of some of the buildings given below :-

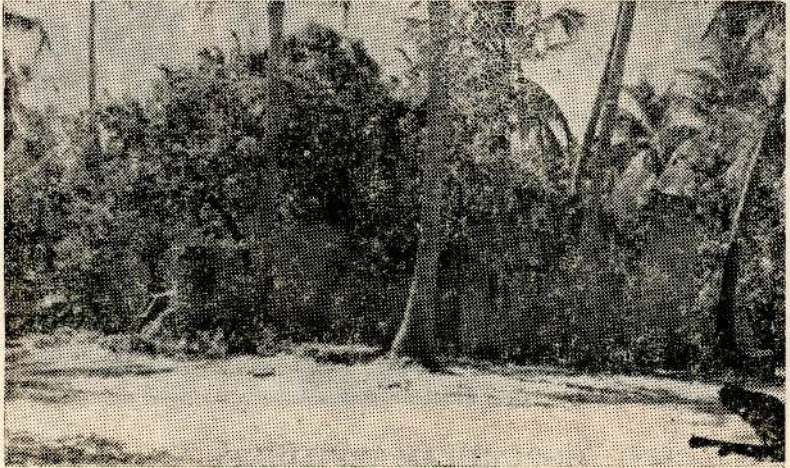


1. GURUKULAM BUILDINGS



2. KITCHEN AND DINING HALL

The photographs of some of the buildings given below.



**3. ROOFLESS PART OF THE WARDHA SCHOOL BUILDING
CONSISTING OF A HALL AND 4 ROOMS**

4. Shanti Cottage in ruin with pillars.
5. Kumarappan Cottage erased to the ground.

When I brought home these facts to Mrs. R. Navaratnam, Director of Education, Northern Region, an idealist of her calibre, was afraid to report the true state of affairs to the minister. Who else could have done it? She was at least kind enough to get the Gurukulam building thatched out of her humane nature. I thank her whole-heartedly for her immediate action and saved the Gurukulam buildings from further destruction. I really don't understand why she did not pursue her action without fear or favour to its logical end by enabling the building to be used for the purpose for which it was originally intended. Any how she came to the scene very lately when the buildings had gone to rack and ruin.

Our Gurukulam and orphanage work had been interrupted by this unkindly act of officialdom. I appeal to their good sense of Education Department and the leaders of our country to permit us to carry on the hostel and the Orphanage. When there is poverty and wrecked homes we should be allowed to bring up these children into good citizens. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Education might not have been aware of the very cruel act.

An appeal,

It is never too late to set a wrong right. The school take over act placed on the State the responsibility of continuing and improving in the work which private bodies had been doing earlier. I take it that there was no intention whatever to destroy or discontinue any good work already being done.

The buildings our society put up were intended (1) to house the Wardha section and (2) to serve as a Gurukulam and a home for needy children. The government is not using these buildings for either of these purposes. On the other hand they have allowed them to fall into ruins. As I have already said my request is that the government should use them for the purposes for which they were built. I am prepared to help the government and give my whole-hearted co-operation if they will come forward to carry out those purposes. If for any reason they have no intention to do so I want the buildings to be handed back to the Wardha Education Society.

My appeal to the public is that they should help in the realisation of either of these objectives. And if and when the buildings are handed over to the society I want their further active help in running the institutions so that I may not be thwarted once again.

Wardha Education Society
Karainagar.
4 - 1 - 69

P. Navaratnam
Organiser and President

