

JANUARY—FEBRUARY, 1961

# THE CEYLON TEACHER



*In this Issue* ★

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TEACHERS WAKE UP



## ARTICLES

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CHILD HEALTH AND SCHOOL



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COMPROMISE SOLUTION

EDITOR BIDS FAREWELL



## UNION NEWS

PENSION RULES

MONTHLY ORGAN OF THE ALL CEYLON UNION OF TEACHERS

Vol. XXIV. No. 145.



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### Cover Page Picture

**Children at Play.** Let us in the midst of educational changes remember that educational systems can be justified only to the extent to which they help to promote the spiritual and material welfare of the thousands of innocents whom parents entrust to our care.

## THE ALL-CEYLON UNION OF TEACHERS

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# THE CEYLON TEACHER

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## EDITORIAL

### WAKE UP TEACHERS

#### The Commission

The much spoken of Commission on Education has at last been appointed. We as a Teachers' Union cannot be fully satisfied with its composition. When we say so we are in no way commenting on the ability or otherwise of the people who have been invited into its charmed circle. All that we would wish to say is that we have a right to be disappointed in that responsible teachers associations have not been adequately represented. The Rajaya Guru Sangamaya, The Jatika Guru Sangamaya, The Ahila Ilankai Asiriyar Sangam and the All-Ceylon Union of Teachers have in the past been in the forefront of movements for educational reforms and for better conditions of work for teachers. It is a pity that the powers that be, among whom are quondam teachers, thought it fit to leave active teachers out of such a Commission.

#### Teachers Ignored

To ignore teachers has been a regular feature of educational reforms in the past. People in the active ranks of the profession, people who have dedicated themselves to teaching, people who are conversant with the everyday problems of the class-rooms have not been considered fit to be given a share in shaping educational policy. The practice in other countries is very different. Both in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R. class-room teachers have had much to do in framing educational schemes. In fact in these countries educational policy very often emanates

from Teachers' Associations. We only hope that to ignore the teacher is not going to be a characteristic feature of the National System of Education.

#### Teachers Called for it

While blaming the powers that be for the extent to which they have ignored the teaching profession we must also admit that the teachers themselves have to a large extent called for such callous treatment. The fault lies fairly and squarely on the large body of teachers, men and women, swabasha as well as English educated, who have not had the professional sense to join a Teachers' Union. If Teachers' Unions have been ignored it has been due to those teachers who did not help to strengthen their Unions and thus make their Unions the effective organisations they should have been.

#### Monopoly

At least now we hope that these people will realise the folly of their selfishness, indifference and lack of public spiritedness. The new educational changes will result in a virtual state monopoly of education. As far as we teachers are concerned we must realise that this means a virtual monopoly of control over the appointment, promotions, transfers and dismissals of teachers. Governments are not immune from the faults of ordinary mortals for governments ultimately consist of very human, human beings. Hence

government control will not automatically mean an end of the abuses which owing to a lack of conscience on the part of some managers, appeared characteristic of the entire "managerial" system. On the other hand it may result in an intensification of the abuses that were a characteristic feature of the state schools. In fact under a monopolist employer the danger of injustices and abuses can be much greater.

#### Only Remedy

The only remedy for the future will be strong and powerful teachers Unions or better still one single Union of teachers interested only in educational and professional matters and steadfastly eschewing all else. Such Unions must be comprehensive, including each and every member of the profession. They must be alert, active and ready at a moments' notice to stand up for the rights and privileges of the profession. The unwillingness of many to resort to stronger action in the case of the Moratuwa dismissal and the Telli-palai transfers is still a disgusting and nauseating thought. We hope that the dangers of a monopolist system will now at least rouse the conscience of those men and women who have so far, through ignorance, and indifference, through a sense of superiority and even for communal or religious reasons, kept out of Teachers' Unions. It is necessary in conclusion to repeat that it is these teachers we have to thank for the relative ineffectiveness of the existing Teachers' Unions.



# UNION NEWS

## ● PENSION RULES

Dear Friends.

A few letters have been received from members asking that security of tenure of teachers in Unaided Schools be provided for.

In a memorandum to the Minister of Education (a copy of which I had sent you earlier) we had recommended that teachers in Unaided Schools should be guaranteed their salary scales by legislation. Regarding security of tenure we had discussed this matter with Ministry Officials and Dr. Guruge himself thought that in the case of discontinued teachers we could complain to Labour Tribunals. If necessary the Minister of Labour could declare teaching an industry under the Industrial Disputes Act and then the teachers could go before Labour Tribunals as of right.

You will recall that when the former Minister of Education, Mr. Dahanayake, refused to hold an inquiry into the discontinuance of Miss C. H. Kanasundera of Prince of Wales College, Moratuwa, we appealed to the Commissioner of Labour, but that request was turned down because a ruling of the Minister is final under the Ordinance. The act of approval by the Director of Education is an administrative act and therefore even under the Code of Regulations for Assisted Schools the Director did not hold inquiries into every case of discontinuance, because he was not obliged to do so. Even after the inquiries we were not always satisfied with the verdict because the verdict could have been influenced by pressure from politicians and interested parties. But the Labour Tribunal is a Court of Law and if teaching is an employment covered by the Industrial Disputes Act then a teacher could go before the Labour Tribunal as of right and be sure that he has a fair hearing and the verdict itself would be by a Judicial Officer.

I would however wish to know from you whether you agree with the suggestions that:

- (1) we should urge the Minister of Labour to declare teaching to be an employment under the Industrial Disputes Act; and
- (2) we should press for the same salary scales for teachers in Unaided Schools as in Director-managed or Government Schools to be guaranteed by legislation.

Please consult your Committee or your Association on these matters and let me know early what their views are on the subject.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. ASEERVATHAM,  
*General Secretary.*

### PENSION RULES

The final amendment to enable pensions to be granted to Uncertified Teachers was gazetted on the 6th January 1961. The following is the amendment given as para. 3 of Regulation 4 of the School Teachers' Pension Regulations:—

“(3) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the preceding provisions of this regulation, the name of an uncertified teacher may be entered in the Register of Pensionable Teachers:

(a) if he is —

(i) employed in a Government School, or

(ii) on the eligible staff of an Assisted School, or

(iii) employed in an unaided School within the meaning of the Education Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939, being an unaided school which has been approved by the Director, and

(b) if he satisfies the Director of his physical fitness by a certificate from a medical officer nominated by the Director.”

### SUMMARY OF ALL RECENT AMENDMENTS RE PENSIONS

The following is a summary of the amendments that will now become effective:—

#### (a) Uncertificated Teachers:

(1) All Uncertificated Teachers who are in Government, Assisted or Unaided Schools in service on or after 1-10-54 can be registered as pensionable teachers.

(2) For every month of service prior to 1-10-54 they would be entitled to 1/960 of their salary at retirement and 1/720 for every month of service from 1-10-54. Contributions towards pensions, and widows' and orphans' pension at 6 per cent will have to be paid from 1-10-54.

#### (b) Qualified Teachers:

Qualified teachers will be entitled to 1/960 of their salary at retirement for every month of service prior to qualifying. Such service will be considered non-contributory service.

#### (c) Those teachers who have withdrawn their pension contribution.

Any teacher who had withdrawn this pension contribution after a certain period of teaching but has reverted to teaching will be entitled to get 1/960 for every month of service for which he had withdrawn his pension contribution

#### (3) Teachers in Training:

Teachers in Unaided Schools who are in training either in Ceylon or abroad on full pay will continue to receive their full pay during the period of training, as they are paid from a separate vote.



# COMPROMISE SOLUTION ON SCHOOLS ISSUE

## AGREEMENT BY ALL RELIGIOUS GROUPS

### National System?

The New Education Act, viz. the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act No. 5 of 1960 gives the Director of Education the management of all Assisted Schools in the island, except a few schools that have opted to go private. The reasons urged by every single spokesman of the Government is that this step was necessary to provide a National System of Education. This claim has been hotly challenged and there is substance in this challenge. Recently Mr. Badi-ud-din Mahmud the Minister of Education visited a number of countries to acquaint himself with the educational systems obtaining there. He visited England, Holland, France, Italy, United Arab Republic and Pakistan.

### Government Teacher?

In England and Holland the Minister himself must have found that education is not managed by the Government and not a single teacher in these countries is a Government teacher. Education is in the hands of Local Authorities. But in both these countries Denominational Schools both Protestant and Catholic exist side by side with schools run by Local Authorities and paid by the Local Authorities with the help of the Central Government. All salaries of teachers in Denominational Schools are paid by the Local Authorities. In England the Denominational Schools get half the cost of buildings in addition to the teachers' salaries, and in Holland they get the full costs of the buildings too.

### India and Pakistan

In France education has been centralised and they have been having Government Schools and Denominational Unaided Schools for a long time. But recently the Denominational Schools

have begun to receive aid from the Government. In Italy there are Government and Unaided Schools, but in neither France nor Italy is an Unaided School prevented from levying fees. In the United Arab Republic and in Pakistan the Denominational Schools are assisted. In fact in Pakistan and India the Denominational Schools are welcomed and supported and given grant-in-aid in the same way as in Ceylon before the free Education Scheme.

If the claim that the new Education Act in Ceylon is for the purpose of introducing a national system of education is to be maintained, then we would be obliged to conclude that in England, Holland, France, Italy, United Arab Republic, Pakistan and India there is no national system of Education!

### Buddhist Education

The real originators of the take-over of the Assisted Schools were prominent Buddhists and the Buddhist Congress. Their contention was that the Christian Schools were being subsidised by the State for educating Buddhist children and that Buddhist and Hindu children should not be allowed to remain in the Christian Schools. It was as a result of this agitation that Regulation 11 of the Schedule to the Education Amendment Act No. 5 of 1951 provided as follows:

"11. (1) For the purposes of the computation of the amount of the grant payable from State funds in the case of every denominational school which was registered as an Assisted School after July 1, 1947, and of every new denominational school hereafter registered as an Assisted School, a pupil whose parent does not profess the religion of the proprietor of the school shall not be an eligible pupil if—

- (a) in the case of a boy over 8 years of age, a suitable alternative school is available within a radius of 2 miles from the first-mentioned school; or
- (b) in the case of a boy under 8 years of age or of a girl, a suitable alternative school is available within a radius of 1 mile from the first-mentioned school.

In this regulation, "suitable alternative school" means a Government school, or an Assisted school the proprietor of which professes the religion of the parent of the pupil concerned."

### "Alien" Atmosphere

But this restriction on the admission of children of unlike denomination applied only to schools registered after 1947 but not to the older schools and so the Buddhists were not satisfied. They felt that the older Christian schools continued to teach Buddhist children in their schools. The argument of the Buddhists was that the Christian environment was not suitable for the bringing up of a non-Christian child. Therefore the chief reason for the demand of the take-over was that non-Christian children were being educated in an atmosphere foreign to their religion.

In 1959 the Buddhist Congress' agitation was at its highest. The All-Ceylon Union of Teachers decided to get together leaders of the various denominations to see if there could be some agreement on this question. Though the Buddhist Congress did not officially take part, Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the President of the Congress at the time, attended not only the First Plenary Meeting of the Denominational Bodies, but also attended the sub-Committee Meeting which worked out certain details. The following is an outline of the scheme which was



accepted unanimously. Those present, besides Mr. P. de S. Kularatne were:

**Mr. D. H. Panditha Gunawardene**  
**Mr. D. B. Ellapola**  
**Mr. S. Sivasubramaniam**  
**Very Rev. Fr. Peter A. Pillai, O.M.I.**  
**Rev. Fr. S. I. Pinto, O.M.I.**  
**Senator A. M. A. Azeez**  
**Rev. Cyril L. Abeynaike**  
**Mr. A. J. L. de Mel**  
**Miss R. Wickramanayake.**

Mr. S. Natesan and Mr. C. Coomaraswamy on behalf of the Hindus wrote to say that they were unavoidably absent, but that they endorsed the scheme fully.

### The Agreed Scheme

The principles on which the scheme was based were —

- (1) that education in the atmosphere of his own religion was essential for the child;
- (2) that this atmosphere could only be provided by denominational schools exclusively for children of the particular denomination; and
- (3) that the present State Schools and Assisted Schools should become truly denominational.

Arising from this the Committee agreed that there would be in the new set-up three types of schools —

- (1) State Denominational Schools;
- (2) Assisted Denominational Schools and
- (3) Unaided Schools (levying fees).

*State Denominational Schools:* These Schools would have to be built and financed entirely by the State. They would consist of —

- (1) New Schools in areas where there are no schools for the children of any particular denomination
- (2) Schools which may be handed over by certain managements; and
- (3) the present Government Schools.

All these schools should be run as truly denominational schools.

The Management of the State Denominational Schools would be vested in Governing Boards the majority of whom would belong to the denomination of the particular school and having a few representatives from the Department of Education. The Governing Boards may be for a group of Schools in a particular area or they may also be for individual schools, i.e. for big Secondary Schools.

*Assisted Denominational Schools:* The Committee decided that Assisted Schools could continue provided they were truly denominational.

In future too Denominational Bodies could build schools for children of their own denomination and get assistance from the State as they receive at present.

*Facilities where there are no Schools of one's own denomination:* State Denominational Schools and Assisted Schools would generally supply the needs of the school-going population but there could be certain areas where the children of a particular denomination may be so small in number that they cannot have a school of their own denomination run either by the State or the Denominational Bodies. In such a case the following methods may be adopted:

- (1) They should be sent to a boarding school of their own denomination at State expense;
- (2) There should be State aid for transport to the nearest school of his denomination; and
- (3) If these are not feasible the parent should have the choice to send the child to a school of another denomination without the payment of fees.

All State Schools and Assisted Schools should be free. Therefore a parent, when he has a school of his own denomination should not be allowed to send his children to schools of other denominations even on payment of fees. In the choice of schools for children of any Protestant Denomination who have no schools of their own denomination, a school of another Protestant Denomination should be considered as being of the same denomination. Hence a number of Protestant denominations can be in the same school and can be considered as being under one denominational management.

*Teachers:* Appointments, transfers and discontinuance of teachers would be in the hands of the Governing Boards in the case of State Schools and the Denominational managements in the case of Assisted Schools. But the ultimate authority for decisions would vest in a Schools Commission similar to the Local Government Service Commission or the Public Service Commission. This would ensure that teachers would not be arbitrarily dealt with.

### Best Solution

We still maintain that this would be the best solution to the problem and would meet fully the objections of the Buddhists to their children being educated in Christian schools. If necessary, modifications of the scheme can

be made by agreement. This scheme could have been brought into operation by amendments to the Code of Regulations without upsetting the present arrangements and causing all the bitterness and resentment the present Act has caused.

A national system of education meant to promote the spiritual and material welfare of the country could certainly be best administered under this system and what is required to make the present system more a national system is to modify the content of education and redraft the syllabuses to serve national needs.

### Departmental Control

There have no doubt been certain defects in certain managements, but a remedy was fully in the hands of the Ministry and Department of Education. There have been ample powers in the Education Ordinance and in the Code of Regulations for dealing with schools that are badly managed. It is unfortunately true that the Department sometimes, may be due to political pressure, refused to look into mismanagement in schools and often sided the managements. If the law had been administered impartially and the guilty ones punished, the Department could have been sure of effectively controlling the Assisted Schools, to prevent abuses and to help to serve national needs.

### Is It too late ?

It is still not too late to seek the co-operation of everyone in this country interested in education. If the Government thinks that the Government's control over Assisted Schools is insufficient, the best remedy would be to have a representative of the Director of Education associated with the Management of the various Assisted Schools. This would ensure not only control but also co-operation between the Government and the Denominational Bodies.

Once agreement on the method of control is reached, the best brains of the country can be harnessed for improving the content of education, and there can be no doubt that we can have a system with a positive approach and meant to serve maximum national ends.

Is it too late to get an agreed solution?

**J. D. ASEERVATHAM,**  
*General Secretary,*  
*All-Ceylon Union of Teachers..*

6th January, 1960.

10, Modera Street,  
Colombo 15.



# WHAT TO DO

## ABOUT

# BOYS?

By JOHN MAXWELL

### Girls are Superior

Whatever compels us to start boys to school at the same age as girls?

Our rules of learning tell us distinctly and without major equivocation that girls are superior to boys in practically every area of development until they are well into their teens. But in the critical, primary years of education, we send these defenseless males into combat with an already superior opponent.

Look at what happens in language arts alone. Compare the handwriting of boys and girls, men and women. The chicken scratching of most of our boys may well be traced directly to their forced, too early entrance into handwriting before their hand-to-eye co-ordination is adequately developed, before their small muscle control can make the pencil behave. When they should be throwing a ball or wrestling to refine big muscle movement, we have them in school guiding a pencil point between two blue lines.

The product of this folly is a generation of head-shaking teachers who are prone to condemn the boys because they are not neat and who feel secretly partial to the girls because they are.

*Adapted from the March 1960 issue of the N.E.A. Journal, organ of the National Education Association of the U.S.A. The author is a specialist in language arts in the public schools of Racine, Wisconsin.*

It's simply not the boys' fault. Had we waited until writing readiness had developed, we'd have had better results.

### Trying to Recoup

We send the boys to school to compete with girls in verbal expression when we know that the girls are already more adept at talking. They use better sentence patterns, have larger vocabularies, and have better muscular control.

The girls are a giant step ahead of the boys, and the boys spend the next ten years trying to recoup their position in the world—fighting off a gross inferiority complex, pretending that academic matters don't matter, and developing into the overwhelming majority of our discipline cases.

### Immediate Frustrations

Boys, too, make up the majority of our reading problems. Why should this be? Is there something naturally reluctant, stupid, or non-literary about boys? Of course not. But because we send them to school to meet almost immediate frustrations in competition with a superior opponent—*femme fatale*—the boys fall behind, and many never really catch up except through the efforts of superior teachers and the natural competitive instincts of the male.

Written composition, an outgrowth of all the other language arts, is merely an extension of the ills that affect the education of our boys. The boys

have ideas, plenty of them, and good ones, too. But they become so ensnared in the mechanics of expression which they were forced to learn too early and not too well that they would just rather not write—it's too much trouble.

### Machiavellian Female

Look at the figures for retardation and failure in the elementary school years, and compare the achievement of boys and girls. The whole system is a method, it seems, devised by a Machiavellian female to ensure the continuing superiority of women and to continue the strengthening of a matriarchal state.

### Boys at Six

Let's make sense. Let's use our knowledge of child growth and development. Let's fight off the mothers who want to foist the boys off on the teacher as soon as possible. Let's start the girls at five years of age and let the boys wait until they are six (or even older).

Let's make it possible to have an eighth-grade dance at which eighth-grade boys squire eighth-grade girls who then would be their psychological and social age-mates. Let's try to graduate a more mature boy who will profit more from his college experience. But above all, let's see what can be done to solve some of our language arts (hence all curriculum) problems through the eminent pedagogical method of delay.



# Editor Bids Farewell

*With this issue we lay down our editorial-cum-managerial mantle. We feel sure it will fall on someone more competent and worthier to maintain the standards and the traditions established by all earlier editors.*

*We have tried during the last three and a half years to produce this journal regularly. We have not always been able to do so. The human and the sympathetic will understand and will not merely forgive the few lapses but probably will appreciate the efforts made. Most of our members being so we retire without any fear of too adverse criticism.*

*We have adhered strictly and steadfastly to Union policy, sometimes even suppressing our own views on various issues. We feel sure we cannot be criticised on this score.*

*We must thank those who held the offices of President, Secretary and Treasurer during our period of office for their assistance, advice and above all for their encouragement. They who worked with us realised that we did what was humanly possible for a full time teacher and amateur and honorary editor. We shall remember with gratitude the efforts made by the Executive Committee to give us an honorarium from a depleted treasury and we hope we will be excused for declining to accept this generous offer.*

*To all members of the Union we would say. "Great changes lie ahead. In the midst of all these do not for one moment forget that our main concern should be the children of the island not only those living today but the millions yet unborn. Educational Reform and satisfactory conditions of employment for teachers should only be in relation to the spiritual and material welfare of these innocents."*

*To all those who have sympathised with us and have at least by their silence encouraged us we say most gratefully "Thank You." We lay down our pen feeling that in spite of shortcomings we have done something. We ask you to think of this and to forgive and forget our weaknesses and our failings. Our only wish for the future is that the country's children will receive due recognition in educational reforms and that the teaching profession will get its rightful place in society.*

L. H. HORACE PERERA.



# COMPETENCE IN TEACHING SCIENCE

By FRANKS OLSEN

*Summary of an address by the director of external studies and former senior lecturer in methods of teaching physical sciences and mathematics at the University of Queensland, Australia. Adapted from the August 1959 issue of The Australian Science Teachers' Journal, official organ of the Australian Science Teachers' Association.*

After 35 years of science teaching in schools and universities, I have given my last lesson. Chalk and duster, test tubes and gas jars, batteries and balances, will no longer be the symbols of my life's work. As the more recent part of my work has been the training of science teachers, I thought that I might sum up for you the qualities in terms of which I have attempted, over the years, to evaluate the work both of myself and of my students.

## Thorough Mastery

The first essential for successful teaching is, I believe, a thorough mastery of one's chosen field of scholarship. There are, to my mind, two aspects of academic competence. The first is the need for the highest possible initial qualifications of the teacher before entry to the teaching service. I have always been opposed to special science degrees for teachers, for not only do other graduates think of these as inferior degrees, but the teachers themselves come to think so too, and this is not good for the profession. I would always attempt to attract to the service as many honours graduates as possible, and I would encourage all teachers to add to their science degree a degree in education. The second aspect of professional competence is the need to keep abreast of both new scientific information and modern teaching practices. Teachers grow into their jobs, and many a science teacher with no initial degree becomes a far better teacher than many of his contemporaries, in spite of their honours degrees. But in spite of this fact, I still believe that we should aim at a teaching service with a science degree as the minimum entrance qualification.

## Two Aspects

Teaching is essentially a personal matter involving a personal relationship, the contact of mind with mind. Academic competence is shadow, not substance, if it is not matched by teaching competence. There are, in my opinion two particularly important aspects of the task of successfully imparting knowledge. These are:

1. Continually acquiring knowledge about the techniques of the art of teaching. Theory is, after all, good practice made articulate, and all teachers should, in their initial training, be thoroughly grounded in the technique of conducting demonstration lessons, laboratory classes and so on. I should like to mention six aspects of teaching method which I have found personally to be of particular value to me.

## Two Approaches

In every theory lesson involving the introduction to an entirely new topic, the teacher must make a choice between two approaches; he must either choose a suitable class demonstration, or he must draw skilfully upon the past experience of his students concerning the topic being introduced. At this point I cannot help, perhaps for the last time, mounting my pet hobby horse and dashing at the windmills of the way some teachers plan their demonstration lessons. My hobby horse is the use of control experiments. I believe that every demonstration that involves the understanding of the significance of a change should be designed round a control experiment. I want to show that an acid turns blue litmus red. I take a large beaker of blue litmus, divide it into two approximately equal parts, and add the acid to one part. I can

thus refer back as often as I want to the fact that the acid has turned the blue litmus red. I want to show that the extension of an elastic body is proportional to the added load. I take four or five identical rubber tubes with scales and pointers, and load them in such a way that the required relationship between extension and load can be referred to as often as necessary during the lesson to drive home the basic fact of the demonstration to the slow learners as well as to the able students. At least three barometer tubes are necessary to show saturated and unsaturated vapour pressure, one being left unchanged as the basic control unit. I know of no more useful technique for making the fullest use of demonstration lessons than the use of one or more control experiments for every demonstration based on an observation of some change in property or dimension.

## Capitalise on Past Knowledge

The alternative approach to a new topic is to capitalize on the past knowledge and experience of the students. An introductory lesson on the topic of relative humidity might well discuss the degree of comfort in three towns such as Cairns, Brisbane and Canberra when the temperature in each case is 68 deg. F., with humidities of 80 per cent, 40 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. The day is judged as hot, pleasant, or cold, in the three places. Having established the importance of a knowledge of humidity and the causes of its wide variation, a follow-up demonstration lesson of the usual kind would take on a new significance. Modern text-books contain a wealth of topics which could well start from a discussion of common experience, and



lead more interestingly into the usual demonstration lessons.

Never tire of planning **regular visits to places of scientific interest**, but always build the visits into your teaching by careful preliminary briefing of students, and by a follow-up lesson to sort out the science from the technology.

Persevere with a **science club**, particularly encouraging the making of simple apparatus, charts, and working models. There are so many inexpensive books about this subject that your club should never run out of ideas.

Keep building up the **science library** involving students as librarians.

Build up your collection of **science pictures** and charts, change them weekly, and keep a tack board in the laboratory to which students can pin cuttings from magazines and newspapers that interest them.

Continually **broaden the basis of your teaching** so that you impart to students some appreciation of scientific method and of the achievements of science, and give them a wealth of the kind of information that can't readily be in-

cluded in the "swot" book they use to prepare for their examinations.

Continually **cultivate acceptable personality traits**. To return to the main topic after this long digression, the teacher needs not only a knowledge of how to teach, but he needs to develop his personality to make effective use of his developing teaching skills. Personal integrity, sincerity, loyalty to the ideals of the profession, and above all, an abiding interest in children and an appreciation of the worthwhileness of attempting to treat every child as an individual, are essential personal characteristics of every good teacher, and these traits can be continuously developed and consolidated. By the conscientious observation of the teaching attitudes of successful teachers, by methodical self-analysis, by careful elimination of irritating mannerisms such as chalk tossing, floor pacing, chair tilting and the like, by the banishing of discouraging phases such as "it is perfectly obvious," and particularly by curing oneself of that most criminal weapon, sarcasm, we can consciously develop acceptable personality traits that will transform our academic

competence, and our knowledge of teaching theory, into the complete professional competence of a successful and acceptable teacher.

### Discipline

I cannot resist the opportunity of saying a word about discipline, or should I bow to psychological fashion and say "order in the classroom?" **I have always believed that the teacher who couldn't maintain discipline was a menace both to his students and to his colleagues.** But I would respect only that discipline which springs from the willing co-operation of students who are enjoying the task of learning. I believe that the teacher who is academically competent, who is skilled in the art of teaching, and who has cultivated personal qualities acceptable to colleagues and students can never be a poor disciplinarian, or an indifferent teacher.

I have found great happiness and satisfaction in my teaching career, and I lay it aside with deep regret. May you all, in the years that lie ahead, be they many or few, find equal fulfilment in your own teaching careers.

## ALL-CEYLON UNION OF TEACHERS

Accounts from 1st November 1960 to 31st December 1960.

EXPENSES			INCOME		
Travelling .. .. .	202	65	In Bank on 1-11-60 .. .. .	33,330	98
Ceylon Teacher — Printing .. .. .	67	03			
Telephone, Telegrams, etc. .. .. .	101	05	<b>Subscription 1959-60:</b>		
Wreath to Mr. T. D. Jayasuriya .. .. .	25	00	Negombo .. .. .	6	00
Clerical Assistance .. .. .	400	00	Kalutara .. .. .	6	00
Rent .. .. .	100	00	Batticaloa .. .. .	12	00
Secretary's Honorarium .. .. .	1,000	00	Moratuwa .. .. .	36	00
Refreshments at Meetings .. .. .	15	00	Colombo .. .. .	72	00
Electricity .. .. .	48	00			132 00
Repairs to Office Equipment .. .. .	2	00	<b>Additional Subscription 1959-60:</b>		
Postage and Stationery .. .. .	220	55	C.T.A. .. .. .	12	00
Balance in Bank .. .. .	31,333	70	Ceylon Teacher Advertisements .. .. .	40	00
	33,514	98		33,514	98

Sgd. I. R. ARIARATNAM,  
Hony. Treasurer,  
All-Ceylon Union of Teacher



## **Presidential Address at WCOTP Conference**

BY SIR RONALD GOULD

# **CHILD HEALTH & THE SCHOOL**

**"Schools are Beacons of the future. Capsules with a hundred bright little seeds in each, out of which will spring a wiser better world of the future."**

### **Health Indivisible**

When I began preparing this address it seemed to me that we had chosen a poor subject in selecting "Child Health and the School" as our conference theme. What was the relevance of this, I thought, to a country like my own, where there is excellent health provision and inadequacies are recognized by teachers, authorities, and the government? They know some schools are ill-lit, ill-ventilated, and unsanitary, and unsatisfactory, and that there is a shortage of dentists and workers in other fields of health, but, given time, they will reconstruct or replace bad buildings, and, if they can get them, employ more dentists.

On reflection, however, I realized it was relevant, for health, like peace, is indivisible; self-interest dictates that we should also be concerned about world health. Epidemics know no frontiers. Asian flu knows no distinction of creed, race, or colour. Disease knows nothing of apartheid. As John Donne put it: "No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main."

When any country grapples with any of the problems, we all benefit. If somewhere a swamp is drained and a breeding ground for malaria disappears, life becomes healthier for all and valuable acres are added to the world's resources. The world is healthier and richer, and we all benefit.

### **What is Health**

But there is another reason why this subject affects countries like my own. For what do we mean by health? It is not just the absence of disease, but rather the ability to do things. Better still, to use the definition of the World Health Organization, it is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease and infirmity." Measured by this standard, no country can afford to be complacent.

### **Toothless Gums**

Let me give a few illustrations which leap readily to the mind. In Britain and other Western countries the incidence of dental caries is increasing, because we are richer and eat more sugar, chocolates, sweets, and ice cream. The skulls of neolithic man show that on an average their teeth were 8 per cent defective. Bronze age men were even better, with only 3 1/2 per cent. But in Britain today the average is 42 per cent. What progress! More wealth, more sugar, and fewer teeth! Toothless gums are a symbol of the affluent society. And few care. In a country selling fantastic quantities of deodorants, cosmetics, soaps, and perfumes, advertisements for tooth paste are less concerned with preserving teeth than with promoting sex appeal. Toothpaste to a woman is the gun of the North West Mounted Police—helpful in getting your man. Obviously we need a belief in the importance of preserving teeth and a change in die-

tary habits, in short, more health education.

### **Overweight or Slim**

If we are really concerned about positive health, the problem of overweight needs attention. This is not because overweight makes it difficult to be fashionable but because it has a serious effect on heart and arteries, because it limits the capacity to get things done and destroys the sense of well-being. And the real answer is not to destroy appetite by swallowing drugs, but to live less sedentary lives and to eat less fattening things. This is the cure—suitable exercise and suitable diet. By that I mean an attractive and balanced diet, and this must be taught in school. We must correct the foolish notions current even amongst school girls, who in an attempt to keep slim have been known to refuse bread, potatoes, milk, and other foods and have eaten insufficient to maintain health.

### **Mental Illness**

There is another sort of problem thrown up by an industrial and affluent society. Many have more leisure, without the sense of purpose to use it satisfactorily, and this results in mental illness and social maladjustment. Teddy Boys in Britain, *Blousons Noirs* in France and *Stilyagy* in the U.S.S.R. know nothing of physical, mental, and social well-being. They are socially sick, suffering from a surfeit of leisure without purpose.



Health, then, is a world problem, and no country has solved all the problems of positive health. Self-interest indicates we should discuss this subject here.

We join W.C.O.T.P. to give as well as to get, and perhaps a discussion of our failures and successes in establishing health services may help and encourage others. In London, at the time my father was born, 10 per cent of the children were too hungry to learn. When I went to school, ear-ache, tooth-ache, and dirty heads and dirty bodies were commonplace. It is only in recent years that the Government has taken positive steps to enable modern lavatories and baths to be installed in some of our older houses.

### Live Fuller Lives

The history of health education amongst children in highly developed countries will, I hope, challenge, help, and inspire teachers everywhere.

Clearly, then, this is a subject which affects us all. Note that I have assumed, quite naturally, that the purpose of education is not just to make a living, still less to make an easy living, but to enable life to be lived more fully.

It is folly to confine the purposes of education (as many do) to securing big wages, a white-collar job, and a high standard of living. Education must have both purposes — to earn a living and to live a life. So the three R's and knowledge of the world of yesterday and today must be taught, and children must be helped in their physical and spiritual development, too.

### Role of Teacher

What is the role of the teacher? His first task is to instruct, to teach hygiene, physical exercises, games, anatomy, physiology, biology, and nutrition. Secondly, teachers should co-operate with parents. We have discussed this at previous Conferences, and in health education the need is obvious.

Thirdly, the teacher should urge the authorities to provide the necessary remedial and preventive treatment, or, if it is already theoretically accepted, to provide it in reality. Improved facilities are essential, and this will involve an army of doctors, nurses, dentists, sanitary inspectors, and clinics and hospitals as well.

### Vigilance

The danger in this is that teachers may be regarded as cheap substitutes

for other professional people. I have known teachers who are veritable Pooh-Bahs — teachers, cooks, waiters, nurses, doctors, bankers, swimming instructors, fathers, and mothers, all rolled into one. And they should not be. Teachers should undertake all those tasks requiring their own professional expertise, leaving to others the tasks requiring professional expertise not their own. Teachers should not be the doctor's or any other professional person's substitute. And when other professional people are employed, teachers should be their colleagues not their servants. Thus in the development of health services, teachers should be particularly vigilant to make sure their professional autonomy, their freedom, and their status are not diminished.

### School Environment

And fourthly, teachers should urge authorities to provide the right school environment. It is silly to talk about physical education when there is insufficient space to enable it to be done. It is nonsense to talk about swimming without a water supply or about good sanitation when the schools are examples of what ought not to be.

We should therefore urge the authorities to shape the school environment so that children are cleaner, stronger, and healthier. If this is done, there will be widespread effects, for when children from hygienic, spacious schools grow up, they will demand homes that conform to similar standards. They will insist on unpolluted water ways, on piped water, on modern sewage disposal, on the safeguarding of milk and food. So schools will become great reforming agents, levers by which society's standards will be raised.

All these proposals are in general terms. They must be, for health problems differ in different areas. Malaria, yaws, and yellow fever menace some parts of the world but are unknown elsewhere. In polar regions, to keep warm, the people wear skins; in other areas, to keep cool, the people wore no clothes at all until the missionaries told them the story of the Garden of Eden. In the Orient, rice is the staple food; in Eire, potatoes; in Italy, pasta. The Argentine prefers steaks; England, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding; Greenland, seal meat. Clearly there are vast differences, and interesting differences, but there are so many we shall have to define our objectives in

general terms and then undertake more detailed work at national level.

### Costly

All these proposals, considered as theoretical questions, appear reasonable, but in fact they will arouse strong opposition — because they are costly, they increase the number of mouths to be fed, and they may run counter to traditional ways of life.

Of course these proposals are expensive; it would be idle to pretend otherwise. But the value received will be even greater. Ceylon saved in one year six times the cost of a 10-year campaign to eliminate malarial mosquitoes. What a return on the money spent! India suffers from malaria an annual loss of earnings and output of 500 million dollars. The total cost of eradication over 10 years would be 190 million dollars, about five months' loss from the disease. Wall Street has never offered so good a bargain. Yet there are still 200 million people in 86 countries for whom nothing has been done.

### Four Ages

But, it may be replied, in spite of the return, some countries are so poor they cannot afford these health services. And this is true: twentieth century social services cannot be supported by an economic system which belongs to the Middle Ages.

In early days, production depended upon the muscular energy of man and animals; then on the mechanical energy of wind and water; then on the molecular energy of coal and oil and now on nuclear energy. The fact is that while well-developed countries use molecular and even nuclear energy, others use muscular and mechanical. Industrially, they are still in the Middle Ages; to pay for modern health services they must make in a short time the progress that others have made in 500 to 1,000 years.

This can only be done through technology, which depends upon education. Education can help people in their jobs, enable them to live a better life, make them healthier, and produce more wealth to pay for the services. If you have doubts as to whether this much-needed technological education can be liberal, let me assure you that any education can be made liberal if it is related to man and his hopes and aspirations. The sort of education I am talking about is as truly liberal as an education in the arts. It should be



related to man and his needs, for its purpose is to set man free from hunger, disease, and war.

### Death Control

Some prophets will no doubt tell us our proposals are dangerous. You are urging people to engage in wholesale death control, they will say. You are destroying the three traditional checks on population — war, pestilence, and famine — and if you do that there will be so many people the world cannot support them. This is Malthus in modern guise. In 1798 he argued that man's capacity to produce food could not equal his capacity to reproduce. Sir Charles Darwin has forecast a population explosion and global misery. But on the other hand, Marx claimed that an increase in population is always an increase in capital, and Benjamin Franklin said: "We can never have too many people nor too much money."

Teachers, I think, must be with the optimists. We must believe in the possibility of human betterment, in man's capacity to control nature and himself. So much could be done, if only man were wise enough and good enough to seize his opportunities.

### Food Supply

Think, for example, of the vast amounts of empty space in the world. Brazil's Amazon Basin, one-twentieth of the land surface of the world, lies unproductive; so do 180 million acres in Ethiopia, the whole Philippine island of Mindanao, and the central highlands of South Viet-Nam. Think, too, of the vast unrealized potential of the sea, where man has been an exploiter and a hunter, not a producer or a cultivator. What food could be produced if man set out to breed, feed, and catch fish on a scientific basis?

Think how much the production of cultivated land could be increased. Could not many countries increase their grain crops three-fold to match the production of the Japanese? All that is needed is better seed, insecticides, and fertilizers. Colin Clarke has claimed that if the arable land of the world could be used as efficiently as it is in Holland, ten times the present population of the world could be fed at European levels. Think, too, what could be done if food were better distributed. This is one world and it cannot be maintained permanently with one half underfed and the other half overfed. Is it not crazy that, while

men are dying of starvation in one country, surplus food is burnt in another?

All these, the use of uncultivated land and the uncultivated sea; the use of insecticides, seed, and fertilizers; and more equitable distribution of food are basically problems of education. Given the right sort of education, moral and spiritual as well as scientific, I believe man is capable of maintaining a balance between population and the supply of food.

### Traditional Ways

The classroom, however, may pose another set of problems — a possible clash with traditional ways of life. We should be aware of this occupational risk, for it is a real one. Some of the religions of the world put taboos on certain kinds of food, insist on preparing food in a certain way, and impose strict rules on personal hygiene. These rules are often based on sound hygienic principles, and most, if not all, do not affect health adversely. But when people superstitiously believe that sickness is caused by spiritual forces emanating from enemies or other external agents, it requires courage to teach something else. In the West it may be easier, but we, too, ought not to be self-righteous. We, too, are not free from ancient superstitions.

Another difficulty may also be met. Even if health education does not fall foul of superstition, it may cut across traditional ways of living. A simple and by no means extreme example is that people tend to eat what is available and traditional; this is often, but not always, good. *Cassava* or *garay*, which is a popular food in Western Africa, is available and traditional but certainly not good. And there are places where good food is available and is not eaten. In Singapore and Malaya, for example, the people will not eat tuna fish, but in the United States it is sold as a delicacy and described as "chicken of the sea." Sometimes, then, it will be necessary to urge a break with tradition.

Possibly, too, some health teaching may run counter to business interests. Cigarettes and cancer, chocolate and caries, television and ill-developed muscles are not unrelated, and this should be known. Round about us in modern society, too, are myriads of quacks, always ready to exploit the naive and innocent. Teachers must have the moral courage to defy superstitions, traditions, and even big business if by so

doing we can improve the health of the rising generation.

### Content Widened

In conclusion, I hope I have left the impression that the health of the school child is a vast subject, with explosive political, social, and economic implications. I hope you agree with me that the school has a part to play, that the purposes and content of education must be widened, the teacher's study made plain, and the attendant risks assessed.

Because I have frequently used statistics to prove a point I would not like you to feel that I think little of qualitative judgments. On the contrary, I am much more concerned with those things in life which defy the weighers and the measurers. A sick or ailing child, to a parent or teacher, is much more than a statistical abstraction. Money (which is one way of measuring value and an inadequate way of measuring the value of any things) is as dust in the balance compared with a child's health and well-being. Who can measure in statistical terms the sense of power and achievement, of being less dependent and more able to help, of a child set free from disease? This is why health can have no price tag, because man himself is beyond price and because, given the will, he can become a little lower than the angels.

### Beacons of the Future

This, then, is why I believe so much in education — because I believe in man and in what he can become. Listen to this! It comes from an English detective story:

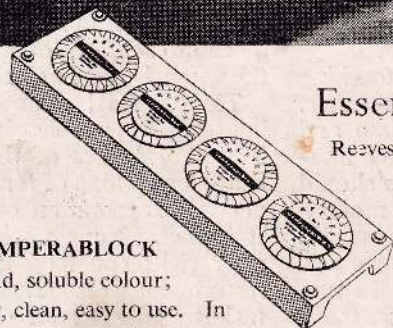
"Look," said Sherlock Holmes to Watson, as they came through the south of London by train, "look at those big isolated clumps of building rising up above the slates like brick islands in a lead-coloured sea."

"The board-schools," said Watson.

"Lighthouses, my boy," replied Holmes. "Beacons of the future! Capsules with hundreds of bright little seeds in each, out of which will spring the wiser, better England of the future."

Think of it! You work in lighthouses. Your schools are beacons. You are makers of the wiser, better, healthier nations of tomorrow! Is this poetry, exaggeration or untruth? No, it is fact. Your work can make the poor rich; can feed the hungry; can restore the sick. There is no greater task to which man can dedicate his energies, his talents, and his life.





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