

Address by A.A. Roberts, M.A., LL.B., K.C., Secretary  
for Union Education  
to the S.A. Institute of Race Relations, Cape Town, 19/1/1949.

FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION.

The task has been assigned to me of addressing you today on Fundamental Education from the Unesco point of view, but I shall not hesitate to express my personal opinions, and the lines on which I develop my argument is my sole responsibility.

The expression fundamental education has been talked and written about so much in the last few years that it is in danger of becoming another of those terms which we use to avoid thinking clearly, like democracy, liberalism or communism.

It would be a most salutary measure to pass a law making it a punishable criminal offence for anyone to use a word for which the user could not produce an accurate written definition upon request by the person addressed or by any other person learning of such use. But in all seriousness I am afraid "word throwing" is today a symptom of a much more widespread and dangerous disease of the mind of humanity than ink throwing. Expressions too often become mere manifestations of emotions - sometimes of self-glorification like the claim to be "democratic" but more commonly of fear and its concomitant hatred as when we brand our neighbour as a "liberal" or "a Jew" or "a communist". I have invented my own labels for such people: "Pandammers" for the first qui damnant quod non intelligunt and whose signature tune is "We are the sweet selected few"; ~~and for~~ the second class I call "Panquakers" because <sup>it is continually possible</sup> it can happen to them and whose patron saint is the White Queen complete with shawl and an atomic brooch.

I once shocked a friend of mine who wished me to join a religious group, by telling him that after considering the way of life of professed Christians and what was being done in the sacred name of Christ I had decided that I was not a Christian.

I disturbed another "pandammer" friend who had been very dogmatic about Jews and communists by telling him that Christ was a Jew and a communist.

Let us then take the elementary precaution of understanding what we mean by the terms we use, and if we have to condemn, of knowing what and why we condemn.

It was Unesco that introduced the use of the expression fundamental education and the history of its acceptance is set out in the Report on "Fundamental Education" by a Unesco special committee, published in 1947. At the First Plenary Meeting of the Preparatory Commission in 1945, Sir Alfred Zimmern, who played so important a part in the early proceedings until ill-health intervened, suggested immediate selection of the direction in which Unesco should place its work. "And the subject that occurs to me", he said, "is illiteracy among adults and the means to be taken throughout the world to combat it."

It is interesting to note that there was general approval of these remarks and that the delegate from Mexico, Dr. Jaime Torres Bodet, emphasized the urgency of the task.

Allow me here to digress for a moment to say something more about Dr. Torres. At the first plenary session of Unesco proper in 1947, that brilliant scientist and author Dr. Julian Huxley (who it may be remembered visited East Africa in 1929 to advise on African education) accepted appointment as Director-General for a period of two years only. It thus became necessary at the Beirut session last month to appoint his successor. After consideration of 23 possible appointees, the Executive recommended the name of Torres Bodet, who was duly appointed for the statutory period of six years.

He is a comparatively young man of 46, but he has had a varied and distinguished career. Born in Mexico City, where he graduated and was trained as a teacher, he at an early age became Head of the Mexican State Library Department and then Professor of French there. He is the author of a dozen volumes of poems, novels and educational works, and has contributed to many periodicals. From 1929 to 1940 he was in the diplomatic service in different parts of Europe, and was then appointed Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs in Mexico. In 1943 he became Minister of Education and in 1946 Minister of Foreign Affairs. In addition he has represented Mexico at many international conferences with distinction. My own impression of him is that he possesses considerable force of character, is an eloquent speaker and is full of practical enthusiasm for the ideals of Unesco. I think therefore that we can with some confidence look forward to wholehearted support for fundamental education on the part of the organization and accelerated progress towards the attainment of Unesco ideals.

To return to the committee's report: Early in 1946 it was a memorandum from the Mexican Delegation which helped to bring about the immediate appointment of that same committee. In presenting the matter for consideration to Unesco the Senior Counsellor for Education, on the Secretariat, Dr. Kuo Yu-Shou explained why the new term had been chosen. "One might speak", he said, "of illiteracy, mass education, basic education or popular education. One should, however, think not only of an attempt to liquidate adult illiteracy but also of the problem of providing elementary education for all young people of all the world. The expression "mass education" corresponded to some degree to what the educational staff of Unesco had in mind, but evoked displeasing connotations of educational methods which paid insufficient attention to individual differences. The phrase "fundamental education" which at least has the merit of indicating an education on to which more could be built, seemed to have the fewest disadvantages. It would be used to indicate a field of activity which would include and go beyond mass education, adult literacy campaigns, popular education, and the provision of primary education."

I do not know why Dr. Kuo discarded "basic education", (which expression is not infrequently used in the report) but the important thing for present purposes, is that, although "illiteracy" was the first idea, the concept of fundamental education is much wider, and "illiteracy is presented in the report (p. 11) not as an isolated fact to be treated out of connection with its causes and its setting, but as one element in a complex human situation". In my further remarks I shall concern myself with these other aspects and leave illiteracy to Mrs. Maida Whyte who will follow me.

But I want first to place on record my recognition of the value of the campaign against illiteracy in general and the work done in this connection by the Institute of Race Relations in particular. The continuance of this aspect of fundamental education is essential, and we are indeed grateful to the Institute and especially to Mrs. Whyte for so notable a contribution to education in South Africa. I hope she will give you some idea of the careful planning for her undertaking, the amount of solid hard work put into it, the scientific methods employed and the interesting results obtained in her attempt "to provide material and to establish methods of teaching for making adult Africans literate."

I might just mention that the total amount of assistance which the Institute obtained from my Department was only £2,615 over three financial years, and that the work was already in full swing as early as 1946. Well may Mrs. Whyte say with the Son of Sirach "consider that I laboured not for myself only, but for all them that seek learning" (Ecclesiasticus 33-17).

I trust that I have made my views on illiteracy clear, and I hope you will not misunderstand me when I say that there is a danger of our failing to realize that the three Rs are purely and simply tools, dangerous in the hands of those without the knowledge and judgment to use them properly, and that making them available is only a small part of fundamental education.

The Unesco report goes on (pp. 128 et seq.) to define it as "a basic education of the mass of the people and therefore essentially popular and universal. It is teaching the people for the people's needs and aspirations. The primary purpose will be to combat ignorance and illiteracy, and to spread elementary knowledge and the means of acquiring" and (I add) using it. "It must aim at improving the life of the nation." Dr. Margaret Mead (Report p. 153) calls attention to a danger which I think has by no means been avoided in education in South Africa, particularly in respect of Africans. Those leaders, she says, who have been educated in the West may demand for their own countries the content of Western education, rather than the form. To put upon a people, not only the burden of assimilating a whole pattern of thought which is different from their own, but to ask them to assimilate other peoples' pasts, is too much.

Fundamental education must rest upon the social human and economic environment which it has to transform. Economic and social progress is not only a consequence but also a condition of general education. Its spiritual and moral value depends upon a successful synthesis between traditional forces and ideas and the modern progressive movement through the schools. "In the words of a recent Gold Coast report: "Any process of education which is not founded upon spiritual values may ultimately destroy human virtue." (p.159)

The main Unesco publication to which I have been referring however, is far too long and too crowded with thoughtprovoking material for me to handle adequately this morning, and should be read in its entirety and studied by all interested in education. The South African section (pp. 60 - 74) was contributed by two members of the Institute of Race Relations, and, as is to be expected, paints rather a gloomy picture - too gloomy I think, and I would have preferred the inclusion of additional information on the credit side, available though possibly not known to the writers at the time. But that does not detract from the value of their contribution or effect my earnest commendation of the whole report. That report was of course never intended as the last word on fundamental education and I proceed to deal briefly with the contents of some further Unesco papers on the subject.

From a working document (F.E. Conf/6) prepared after the Report, and issued on 20th October, 1947, for use at the Mexico Conference, I have abstracted and condensed the following to ~~give you~~ <sup>show</sup> ~~an idea~~ of the way in which Unesco's ideas of fundamental education have been developing.

- (1) Fundamental education is intended to be a first step to further education and is specially concerned with less advanced regions and under-privileged groups, where the education provided, falls below an essential minimum, where ignorance and illiteracy, disease and poverty constitute a hindrance to progress and a barrier to international understanding.

(2) The purpose of fundamental education is:

- (a) to help men and women to live fuller and happier lives in adjustment with their changing environment, to develop the best elements in their own culture and to achieve the social and economic progress which will enable them to take their place in the modern world, and to live together in peace; and
- (b) to enable them as workers to conserve and exploit natural resources, so as to raise their standard of life; as citizens to live together in harmony in family, group, tribe, nation and eventually in a world society; and as individuals to achieve physical health, and to develop self-respect through spiritual, moral and mental progress and the formation and fulfilment of noble aspirations.

- (3) Children must move into an adult community where the skills, knowledge and ideals acquired in school are understood and appreciated by the older generation: if they do not, serious frustrations and conflicts arise and the younger generation is in danger of coming to despise or to abandon its own people. Fundamental education should therefore include adult education designed to liquidate prejudice and ignorance in the whole community.
- (4) In many areas where we find underprivileged groups, schooling for the children is provided, but the home and community background is so unc congenial, so lacking in beauty and harmony and in opportunities for fuller living that the teaching in the schools makes little impression on the ignorance and mental and physical poverty which prevail in the community.
- (5) Efforts expended on mass literacy teaching will be wasted unless adequate reading material is available for new literates; it will be worse than wasted if the contents of this material is malicious or salacious or of low quality. Libraries must therefore play a vital part in any fundamental education programme, and should be assisted by popular museums.
- (6) Fundamental education must encourage traditional forms of self expression in music, dancing, drama, sculpture and the graphic arts.

Both the creative and the appreciative aspects of art should have their place in school and adult education and particularly in community activities, which must play an important part in the programme.

- (7) As far as possible these community activities for education, work or leisure should grow naturally out of the needs and aspirations of the people, and be linked up with the customs and traditions of the country.

In many tribal communities there are "initiation grades" in which boys develop high qualities of courage, endurance and self-reliance through vigorous and exacting trials of manhood, and the girls are given training designed to fit them for adult life as wives and mothers. The best elements of these traditional youth organisations, though there may be much that is corrupt in many of them, should be developed and adapted in fundamental education.

- (8) The impact of "civilisation" on less developed regions has generally resulted in a loosening of the spiritual and moral sanctions and disciplines, which, however pagan, played a vital and essential part in the life of the individual and the community, giving it its direction and purpose. Education introduced from an alien source, has often aided this disintegration by sweeping away what was regarded by the educators as primitive superstition and irrational belief. Fundamental education must beware of liquidating the traditional spiritual and moral sanctions of a people, without replacing them with others more valid and as well adapted to the people's levels of thought and development.

I am reminded of the words of the Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran  
 "No man shall ram the towers of yesterday and escape the falling stones."

The next document I wish to mention is a valuable bibliography of the "Sources of Information for Fundamental Education with special reference to education for literacy". It is a preliminary report by Katherine Murra, prepared by the U.S.A. Library of Congress for Unesco in 1948. It contains the following interesting remark: "Education for literacy is more than teaching and learning the three Rs. It involves changing group mores to improve opportunities for self-development and self-support without imposing one culture upon another. Effective education for literacy provides the student with the understanding and techniques for making the best use of his resources. Education for literacy touches every facet of life, and the range of subjects included is broad indeed".

This is stretching the meaning of "education for literacy" somewhat, but it is <sup>another</sup> useful reminder that education is a continuous process and should not be regarded as consisting of watertight compartments.

The fourth and last Unesco document dealing with Fundamental Education to which I shall refer, is the report of the Programme Commission as presented for adoption at the end of the Beirut conference (No. 30/98, 8/12/1948).

The chapter on Education contains 59 resolutions of which 22 deal with Fundamental Education. It is not to be expected that these resolutions should contain any startling new ideas or in fact do anything more than carry out the accepted policy of the organization.

It may be of interest, however, to quote half-a-dozen resolutions:

- (1) "The general conference recommends to Member States that they provide fundamental education for all their people, in conformity with Article I paragraph 2(b) of the Constitution of Unesco; including the establishment as soon as possible of universal free and compulsory primary education, and also education of adults"\* (Resolution 241).

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\*1. The relevant part of Article I is as follows:

1. The purpose of the Organisation is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.
2. To realise this purpose the Organisation will:
  - (b) give fresh impulse to popular education and to the spread of culture; by collaborating with Members, at their request, in the development of educational activities;
    - by instituting collaboration among the nations to advance the ideal of equality of educational opportunity without regard to race, sex or any distinctions, economic or social;
    - by suggesting educational methods best suited to prepare the children of the world for the responsibilities of freedom.

- (2) "Unesco will help Member States which desire aid in campaigns for fundamental education, giving priority to less developed regions and to under privileged groups within industrialized countries". (Resolution 2.42).
- (3) "The Director-General is instructed to develop a system of associated projects and agencies, by which important activities in fundamental education in various parts of the world are linked through the (Unesco) clearing-house". (Resolution 2.423).
- (4) "The Director-General is instructed to arrange at the request of Member States for regional study conferences to consider problems of fundamental education of member states". (Resolution 2.424).
- (5) "In studying the programme of fundamental education, emphasis should be placed on the development of the intelligence of the individual and not merely on his economic betterment." (Resolution 2.11.3A).
- (6) "The needs and resources of the local community should be the basis of the fundamental educational programme. No attempt should be made to reach arbitrary conclusions about a minimum standard of education applicable to all countries and all peoples." (Resolution 2.11.3B).

I hope I have now said enough to indicate the scope and purpose of fundamental education as understood by Unesco. It must be remembered, however, that Unesco's task is to collect, collate and disseminate information; to induce action by Member States, international organizations, national commissions and co-operating bodies; to advise, but not to undertake the work itself. Our future in other words, is in our own hands; as citizens of this our country, the future of South Africa, as men and women, the future of humanity.

We have of course been trying to make the masses literate for many years : we have been trying to improve the health of the people, to raise living standards, to spread knowledge and bring about understanding and co-operation. And with what results?

One could readily become pessimistic about the future if one paid attention to the chorus of croaking that daily goes up from the multitude of Job's comforters with which every country is cursed.

Complacency is not to be encouraged and inability to foresee dangers can have disastrous results. But there is little chance of our not hearing immediately of disputes, provocative acts, violence or injustice anywhere in the world. We collect and pass on with alacrity every case of failure of co-operation, every clash which the United Nations have been unable to prevent or stop. But one rarely hears of any attempt to compile a list of the occasions where the United Nations have succeeded, of new international co-operative action, or of improved social and economic conditions.

Prophets of evil have existed in every age and clime and we ought by this time to recognise them and refuse to listen to them, but it is a curious thing that we are always ready to believe them. We seem to find a morbid enjoyment in contemplating all the horrible things which may happen to us.

I do not believe that there has been a lowering of cultural, ethical, economic or educational standards in the world as a whole. I do not believe that there is proportionately or quantitatively an increase in violence and intolerance.

On the contrary, there is today less fighting and oppression in the world than in any previous age, only what there is, is at once reported and (what is after all a good sign) shocks us more than it would have done our forefathers.

I believe that there is today a greater percentage of learned, cultured, honest and peace loving men and women in every country, than ever before in the history of mankind. I know that many eminent men contend that it is only in scientific and industrial techniques, in mechanical devices and particularly in instruments of destruction that we have made such rapid progress. They believe that the culture of the Western nations was the mainspring of civilization: that now the glory has departed from Europe and the world is ruled by semi-educated selfseeking upstarts, skilled only in modern propaganda techniques and the use of weapons of destruction.

It requires little thought to see that this cannot be true. We have not got statistics of the world's intelligence quotient through the ages, but there is certainly nothing to show that the average I.Q. today is any lower than it was in previous ages. Schooling is incalculably more universal, as the records show, and continues longer. The ordinary high school boy of today has a great deal more general knowledge than a well educated successful man of mature years would have possessed a century ago.

I do not pretend that justice is always meted out with an impartial hand today, but it is impossible for anyone who has made any study of legal systems to deny that we have made great progress, and I believe that that progress is symptomatic of a general development of civilization. I hold with the school of thought exemplified by A.S. Diamond, in his most interesting book on Primitive Law (1935) that legal systems are subject to a universal law of evolution in terms of which they pass through the same stages, correlated with the stages of the development of the relevant civilization irrespective of race, place and age. In fact I think the thesis is true of our whole social structure, for as Julius Stone says in his monumental "The Province and Function of Law": "It is an elementary doctrine of the social sciences that law is conditioned by the social, political and economic environment as well as by thought processes, and indeed that such thought processes themselves are largely conditioned by the same environment."

I suggest further that a study of historical sources discloses a political, commercial and social morality even in the 18th century which is certainly not of a higher standard than ours. Compare reputable newspapers of today with those of a century ago and less. Heaven knows there are some shocking things still permitted on the plea that the freedom of the press must be respected, but I am convinced that modern standards are much higher than they used to be.

Being oldfashioned I have very grave doubts as to whether art, music, poetry and ethical ideals have advanced qualitatively since the renaissance, but I firmly believe that knowledge and wisdom, unselfishness and honesty, good manners, good morals and good taste are more widespread than in any previous age.

How is it then that one sees so much boorishness in street, office and home today? Why is there not more general appreciation of the finer things of life? Why are the products of our universities often **intolerant**, ignorant of all but the specialist knowledge acquired in their own course, and unable to adapt themselves to unfamiliar circumstances?

There is a saying that it takes three generations to make a gentleman: it requires three generations to produce an educated man under our educational system.

The reason is that that system regarded its task as intra-institutional instruction for examination purposes, instead of as part of a continuous process of preparing body mind and soul for a continuous life. It built on the foundations laid by parents, church and home environment generally: it did not do enough to supply deficiencies in that foundation, although one must remember that it is never possible to make up for what should be done in that most important of all educational stages - the pre-school stage.

Let us consider a hypothetical case - the son of a Knysna wood-cutter at the end of the last century or of a nomadic trek-boer living very much the life of a voortrekker. The boy at the age of 8 or 9 attends a little one teacher school and shows so much promise that his parents, with help of friends and relatives, allow him to matriculate, and enter the service, where he becomes a senior clerk while his children are being educated. His wife is the daughter of a shopkeeper in the village where he was first stationed and where she passed standard VI and worked in her father's store.

It is more than likely that in these circumstances all the children will attend school regularly and that at any rate the boys will matriculate. But although the home will have some books, decent furniture and some pretence of culture, the standard will not be high. I assume then that one son shows sufficient aptitude and keenness and is trained as a graduate teacher. He marries a fellow teacher and becomes headmaster of a school in one of the large centres. It requires no argument to satisfy one that if his children have the intelligence they will be able to reach a standard of culture and education higher than that of the preceding generations.

I do not think the picture I have drawn is in any way far-fetched or that it represents an uncommon occurrence. Hardly more than two generations back, education in most countries was practically the monopoly of the few. Today the position is very different.

From 1910-1915 the average number of matriculants in South Africa was 832 per annum: from 1930-1935 it was 4269 excluding private entries. The average annual total of all university students including external and part-time students for the period 1910-1915 was less than 1300; the average number for the war years 1940-1945 was about 14,600 and in 1947, the last year for which final figures were available, there were 23,973 university students including of course returned soldiers - with a comparatively small but unascertained number of students who have enrolled as both internal and external students.

The privileged students under the old dispensation came from homes where they had good food, medical and dental attention and comfortable homes where they had opportunities of getting to know good books, to hear good music and to see good pictures, even if only in reproductions. Without realising it, they were constantly learning from their parents and friends, not only a wealth of general knowledge, but above all an attitude towards life difficult to define but of the utmost value. They learned consideration for others and acquired a sense of security and confidence from



their human relationships - they took in fact the first step towards that mastery of the science of human relationships in which, as President Truman said, lies humanity's defence against the atomic bomb!

Those students who had not these advantages were undoubtedly seriously handicapped. My first realization of this came when I began life as a relieving teacher in 1909 and within two years taught every form from I to matric. Those of my pupils who came from poorer homes displayed a lack of general knowledge as compared even with those of lower intelligence from the more privileged class. Their essays showed a poorer command of language and less imagination. Upon enquiry I found that their home reading had been negligible and that they had never heard of the books and music on which we had grown up - Grimm, Andersen and Lang's Fairy Stories, Lewis Carroll, Burnett and Macdonald, Ballantyne, Marryat, Henty and all the others, light classical music, Gilbert and Sullivan or even the Scottish Students' Song Book. It seemed to me extraordinary that there were children who had never been introduced to Uncle Remus, Don Quixote, Umslopogaas or Sherlock Holmes.

Today school and children's libraries, the gramophone, radio and the film have largely supplied this want. The contribution of the home has I am sure also improved, but the attitude of toleration and the ability to see and understand the viewpoint of others, particularly of those whose language customs, and traditions differ from ours, is rare, as is that true courtesy which is based not on arbitrary rules but on a constant desire to make life happier for others, and on the habit of looking beyond one's own immediate selfish ends.

Many of my elders and contemporaries had that attitude and that courtesy, but in the ten years from 1919-1929 when I was in close touch officially and socially with hundreds of university students I was often horrified at the narrowness of their outlook and their lack of manners. And yet they were a fine bunch of boys and girls and those who offended were blissfully ignorant of having done so. This was partly due to the fact that they had come from homes where the occasion for the appropriate reactions did not arise, and partly due to the fact that they grew up in an atmosphere of self-assertion and struggle for opportunities of self-expression.

But the important thing is that although the proportion of students who in a previous generation would not have been able to go to university had vastly increased, the actual number of what you must forgive me for describing as "civilized" young people was also greater than when I was myself at college.

It was at this stage in the preparation of my notes for this talk that I came across an article by Professor J.Y.T. Greig in the second number of "Theoria" the interesting new annual of the Faculty of Arts of the Natal University. The article is part of a stimulating address entitled "Why not a Liberal Education".

Professor Greig defines a liberal education as one which enables a pupil to arrive at truth for himself in as many fields of human endeavour as time, place and his capacities allow. He continues:- "Obviously and inevitably, in the course of education from the nursery school to post-graduate study in a university, those of us who are ranged on the teaching side of this co-operative endeavour are required to pass on to our pupils a vast collection of established truths.... But the habits thus established in both pupil and teacher are, I believe, the most dangerous of all in education..." He quotes from "a very remarkable document", viz. the report on secondary education issued in 1947 by the Advisory Council of Education in Scotland, as follows:

"It is clear now that the marriage of freedom and order which democracy presupposes, is possible only for a people conscious of its inheritance, united in purpose, and proof against sophistry and propaganda; and that these qualities require not merely a literate, but an educated nation, capable of a high degree of self-discipline, objective judgment and sustained vigilance... There must be a change of emphasis. There must be less store set by knowledge often irrelevant and quickly antiquated, and more concern to create in the young certain attitudes of mind. Above all the new generation needs to unite with mental poise and serenity a nimble intelligence, a high degree of adaptability and a wider range of understanding".

I quote so freely from others without any apology. I think it is one of the encouraging things about the age that there are so many intelligent people in all countries thinking and saying stimulating and interesting things. The pity is that there is also so much rubbish being published that one cannot sufficiently keep in touch with, still less read all the worthwhile publications, even in a very limited field.

But I want to point out that with all these writings and in spite of all the valuable advice and warnings, no revolutionary change is suggested. The principles of education and the increasing complexity of modern life are constantly emphasised. We are told we must educate children to be healthy spiritually, bodily and mentally; that we must open our fundamental education campaign on all fronts; that intolerance must be prevented from developing, particularly in the pre-school stage that we must teach people to think and not to accept blindly, etc. etc. All true, all good, all necessary, but nowhere do I find the secret of what new methods are to be applied to bring these things about.

Please understand that I do not for a moment question either the validity of these theses or the necessity of saying them again and again. In the arresting words of Professor Greig: "I am talking commonplaces. I know that very well. But by heaven, these commonplaces need repetition until every one is weary of hearing them; for three quarters of our education today, though it may perfunctorily acknowledge the truth of these commonplaces, ignores them in practice".

It is interesting to note that Professor Greig's address was sent to six members of the N.U.C. staff with a request to reply to

certain questions based upon it. To the question whether improvements of our teaching methods are possible by way of enabling students to think for themselves and if so what these methods are, the replies suggest more seminars and more discussions. In other words once more merely application of recognized sound educational methods.

*Intelligence of the race*

The conclusion I draw is that there is nothing wrong with the principles underlying our educational system and no need to be pessimistic about the future. I have claimed that the I.Q. of human beings is not diminishing. I think the average ~~is~~ is increasing, even if only because of the improvement of conditions into which children are born, ~~and the advance of medical science.~~

The educational standard and professional training of teachers is of a higher order even than it was so recently as when I was myself at school. The principles for which the present day authorities plead were less effectively applied, and yet the results produced the very people whom we today regard as being a vanishing class.

It seems to me a piece of impertinent conceit for us to maintain that we old ones are so much better than the rising generation. We used to hear sometimes that it was the easy luxurious life that people led that had made them soft and selfish, that the qualities of the Huguenots, the 1820 Settlers and the old Voortrekkers had atrophied for lack of use. But what these allegedly decadent youths and pampered pleasure seeking girls did during the war has effectively given that accusation the lie.

No friends I cannot believe that humanity has retrogressed. But again I say the institutional training of the past was built on firm foundations of extra institutional environment and home influence.

All over the world hundreds of thousands of boys and girls have been coming from homes without any cultural background as we understand it and crowding into schools and universities. Often they come into a world so different from that of their parents that their education has little or no link up with their community history and ideals. They were the hewers of wood and the drawers of water of yesterday when the masses were illiterate, economically impotent and intellectually inarticulate. Leadership was almost entirely in the hands of a small aristocracy of wealth or birth. Today the effect of the changeover is becoming apparent. Many of those boys and girls are already in the professions - teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers -, or holding positions of authority in the political or business world. The masses are becoming conscious of their power, self-assertive and articulate. They are no longer willing to accept blindly what was told them by those who used to be the elite. In a sense it is an indication of the success of our efforts to make them think for themselves.

But they have not yet become accustomed to intellectual discipline or to the proper use of their analytical faculties. What is more disturbing, they are still capable of being easily swayed or roused by the skilful techniques of modern propaganda.

It is a dangerous situation and may produce explosions, but at the same time its potential for good is incalculable. It is a transition period, and the time factor is in our favour. The second generation already constitutes a considerable part of the educands of the world, has shed many of the superstitions and prejudices of its parents, and has commenced life with many more advantages.

Knowledge has been made available much more quickly than it could be assimilated, but much has been absorbed and each succeeding generation will make a progressively more substantial advance.

In the meantime, moreover, those who in the olden days would have gone to institutions of higher education are still doing so and that class continues as in the past to increase in number. In the course of my extensive travels during the past four years I have continually been struck by the large number of intelligent well-educated and well-balanced persons I have met. At Unesco conferences in particular, I have been encouraged and strengthened in my optimism by the fact that hundreds of leaders in the field of education, science and culture generally, have come together from the four corners of the earth, able to find common ground for amicable discussions, and one and all motivated by an earnest desire to promote international co-operation and understanding.

Before I sit down, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to invoke the name of one who has meant more to education in South Africa, and to the cause of righteousness and to the ideals for which both Unesco and this Institute stand, than we can ever acknowledge. Mr. J.H. Hofmeyr would I am sure have given you a message of hope and faith. I knew him for 36 years and at different periods and in three different capacities had the privilege of working with or under him. His colossal intellect and capacity for work, his courage and high ideals are everywhere recognised, but those qualities were matched by his faith and optimism. No one realised better than he the imminence of the dangers and the magnitude of the obstacles ahead; no one knew better than he how slowly the democratic machine works, and how unwise it is to attempt to drive the people, or to run too far ahead of them. But he never faltered in his faith in humanity and his belief in the ultimate triumph of those principles to which most of us pay at any rate lip service.

In June last Mr. Hofmeyr in his address at the unveiling of the War Memorial at the Potchefstroom High School for Boys, referred to the challenge that comes to all of us, to face the daily duty and the daily drudgery of the ceaseless war against the forces of vice and ignorance.

He pointed out that it is not only on the field of battle that men could sacrifice themselves for a cause. There is at all times a call to self sacrificing service, an insistent challenge to play one's part in raising the standard of welfare of one's fellowmen. "May I remind you of one aspect of the challenge that comes to us", he said in words so true of himself, "these men whom we are honouring today, in the desire to serve South Africa, did not think in terms of one section or another, of one racial group or another. It was for South Africa one and indivisible, that they made their sacrifice. We look back on that sacrifice through the receding arches of the years. Gradually there falls away the bitterness of suffering and of loss, but the glory and the pride of it remain and are confirmed. It is as though we were looking down through the arches of some great Cathedral at the distant altar, and the sweet savour that arises from it reaches us and brings with it the sense of that peace which is beyond all understanding".

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