

9. The most profitable job

ON the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Institution called Pinge's Classes, I am glad I have this opportunity to emphasise the moral and spiritual aspects of education; for, Pinge has dedicated his life to the fostering of these aspects. No praise is too small for such endeavours as these classes; such institutions have to multiply in this land, and all encouragement must be rendered to them, for they supply that extra, which is so urgently needed.

You all know and declare that India is *Yoga-bhumi*, *Thyaaga-bhumi* and *Karma-bhumi* (land of Divine Communian, Sacrifice and Selfless Action), par excellence. Picture the land in your mind; the first and the most prominent feature that you see is the Himaalayan ranges, the silver peaks piercing the blue sky. From these peaks flow the pure pellucid waters of the Ganga---the symbol of Indian Culture.

Indian Culture is the very basis of human progress. It will uplift humanity by promoting brotherhood, upholding righteousness, and saturating every thought, word and act with reverence and humility. This culture will stand unshaken so long as the Ganga flows; no attempt to suppress or destroy it can succeed. It can disappear only when the Ganga goes dry! The history and traditions of Bhaarath are as pure. as the Ganga; as holy and sanctifying, as curative and as precious. The origins of both are cool, comforting, spotless snows!

Habit of prayer will inculcate confidence

This country is suffering from social, political, and economic ills, because those who are responsible for laying down guidelines for educational progress have not endeavoured to instruct the boys and girls of India in the principles of Indian Culture. When man is not trained to live a good and godly life, teaching him various skills and tricks, only makes him a danger to himself and to others. There is unending controversy now about the language which should be the medium of instruction; but, no one seems interested in the language of the heart, which uses the vocabulary of Love and the idiom of Self-examination and Self-sacrifice.

Now, schools and colleges are engaged in stuffing facts and fancies into the heads of the pupils; they do not equip them to face the fortunes of life, to bring the best that is in them and place them at the service of the community. The habit of prayer will inculcate courage and confidence; it will provide the pupil with a vast new source of energy. No effort is made to introduce the pupil to the sweet experiences of meditation and *Yoga*, or to the joy of inquiry into one's own reality.

When the course of studies is over and the pupil has come out of the drill and grill, he is awarded a Degree, at the Convocation! This Degree is, in effect, only a begging bowl! With that in hand, the Graduate can go to every office, and clamour before every door, "Give me a job! Give me a job!" Present day education converts youth into beggars, seeking food from door to door. They cannot stand on their own legs, and earn food, independently. This is not a sign or characteristic of *Bhaaratheeya* culture. No. The mistake lies in the teachers and leaders, the leaders and their advisers.

Don't be ungrateful to parents

They are the sculptors, who are charged with the carving of boulders into lovely figures, that can inspire and elevate the mind. They do not chisel at all; they leave the boulder as it is. In the name

of freedom, they promote licentiousness. Freedom involves restraint; restraint alone can heighten energy. *Vidhya vinaya sampanna*, they say: "Education must foster humility and discipline."

Ask any student why he is attending school or college---he seldom gives a clear answer! The answer usually will be 'I want to read,' 'I want to study;' but, if that is all he wants, he can read at home or study at home, under the guidance of some one. Why should they attend schools and colleges, that are far from their home, spending huge amounts of money? They do attend schools and colleges in order to cultivate discipline, control emotions, canalise passions, learning just a small fraction, of what can be gained from schools and colleges. They instil into the pupils the lessons of mutual co-operation, good manners, courtesy, compassion and comradeship, adjustment to limitations, overcoming of obstacles with calm deliberation.

The marks you get in the tests and examinations in each subject are not so important; I attach more importance to the 'remarks' that you earn---whether you are judged good, bad or indifferent, fresh, fair and free or wicked, vile and vicious. Parents put themselves into a lot of privation, in order to provide their children with good education. And in return, if you cause greater privation to them, turning into a never-do-well, a person whose character is so bad that no one dare take you into his care, how ungrateful you are! Give them the peace and joy they deserve, for all the service they have rendered, all the sacrifice they have made.

Seek character more than intellect

Students should not have any dealings with politics. Now, contact with politics is ruining students, in schools and colleges. Politics without principles, education without character, science without humanity, and commerce without morality are not only useless, but positively dangerous. Character is to be sought more than intellect. Now, you may consider bad behaviour to be just an adventure; but, later, when your own sons behave in that manner, you will realise the mistake of dismissing it as such. The attitude today is the root on which the future grows. The consequences of action can never be avoided. If you give joy to your parents now, your children will be a source of joy to you in your declining years.

In schools we must learn to cultivate unselfish love, with no fear or suspicion. Teachers must lead lives based on upright conduct, moral grandeur, and spiritual *Saadhana*. The teachers of tomorrow are the students of today; so, cleansing of the atmosphere of the classroom is very necessary, in the interests of the future. Teachers are reservoirs from which, through the process of education, students draw the water of life; so, every effort has to be made to see that the reservoir is not contaminated by hate or pride. Schools and colleges should not be engaged merely in the processes of teaching and learning. Reading, writing and arithmetic do not exhaust the task of the school. The inculcation of great ideals and the attempt to put them into practice are also equally important tasks.

Learn the art of living together

You have many teachers in a school; of them, the history teacher teaches from the book with maps; the maths teacher works out sums on the blackboard; the science master has his lab; but, the physical instructor has to stand before the students, drawn in lines, and himself swing his arms and legs, bend and rise, turn and twist, just in the same way he wants his pupils to do! You must do well, and be an example to others. This is the only way to ensure a glorious future for this country.

A curious paradox is now gaining force in tiffs land: it is fraught with dire consequences. Though the world has become a very small globe, as a result of fast means of communication and transport, man has not yet learnt the art of living together in close proximity, as brothers, as children of the One God. The closer men are brought, the larger the differences appear! Thus, the little world is now fiddled with problems of conflicting cultures, competing creeds and contesting ambitions. The sorrows of one State spread fast into all its neighbours and infect the whole world. The world has become one vast battlefield.

When infectious diseases leap over boundaries, and slay men without distinction, immediate steps are taken to control the havoc and relief is despatched in haste to the scene of disaster. But, the infection of greed and hate cannot be held in check so quickly by any Government. Let us try to answer the question. "What kind of Government is the best?" The answer is: "That Government is best, which helps us to govern ourselves." Make your Conscience the Ruler, do not depend on the external Ruler.

Those who diagnose the ills of the world suggest various remedies to mend affairs; but, no analysis reveals the correct reason. The fundamental reason for the state of disease is "want of confidence in the self." There is no faith in the *Aathma* as the source and spring of Bliss. So, man allows his mind to run after worldly pleasures. And, grief is the result.

God seeks the pious seeker

The Bible says: "Pious seekers seek God"; but said Annie Besant: "God seeks the pious seeker!" God is seeking for the pure heart that longs to reach Him. The world is reduced to a theatre by man, for, devotion to God has become a histrionic performance. You find people weeping in their heart of hearts, but, laughing their lives away. We find people who laugh in their heart of hearts, but, to all observers, weeping profusely over their fate. Worship is more for effect, a play acted with the pit in view; there is no sincerity.

You find some one parades all of a sudden some ism, as new and revolutionary, Socialism, for example. Socialism, which means, recognising the equality of every individual with every one else, was in fact practised in India long ago. Raama, undisputed sovereign of a vast empire, gave heed to the flippant scandal uttered by an irresponsible washerman, during a quarrel with his wife, and sent his Queen, the very queen for whom he had waged a war of tremendous carnage, into exile, regardless of the fact that she was pregnant at the time!

Every one's voice was given equal weight in the empire ruled over by Raama. "Workers and peasants," that is the slogan nowadays, isn't it? These two classes were given their due share of social importance and honour, in the *Krishnaavathaara*. Now, people are honoured even if they grow, not food, but, cash crops! Foreign exchange is what we are after and so, people are encouraged to produce what others can buy, not what we need---milk and a variety of milk products, which are highly nutritious foods. Balaraama, the elder brother, an *Avathaar* in his own fight, had as his weapon, the plough! It declared the worth of agriculture as a consecrated occupation.

It is not impossible to realise God

God appears in human Form; He promotes pasture of cattle and agriculture, in order that the Food might sustain the Head and render it intelligent and clear enough to realise God. The body has to be nourished for the sake of the head, so that Jnaana (spiritual knowledge) can be attained and liberation gained. Food-Head-God--that is the chain of events.

You dread that it is very difficult, nay, impossible, to realise God. It is very simple; its very simplicity makes you feel that there must be some hidden trap. You do not appreciate simple things and habits. For example, there is nothing so simple as speaking the truth; yet, how many stick to Truth! If you venture into untruth, you have to invent new stories all along the line and keep in memory all the stories and all the persons to whom you have related them. It is all very complicated and confusing.

Students! You are embodiments of the Divine! There are two aspects of *Vidhya (jnaana)* that you have to master; *Vijnaana*--*understanding* the world around us, science: and also *Prajnaana*--*the* higher learning, the art of controlling the inner feelings and the many layers of Consciousness. Benefactors and beneficiaries you are in the educational field, and so, listen to this: Each student has a watch on his wrist. And, you look at the watch at least a hundred times a day. Well, learn from the watch a great lesson. When you watch the watch, remember the five letters of the word, WATCH; each is giving you a fine lesson for life: "W tells you, "Watch your Words;" A warns you, "Watch your Action;" T indicates, "Watch your Thoughts;" C advises, "Watch your Character;" and H declares, "Watch your Heart." When you are consulting your watch, imbibe this lesson that the watch is imparting.

Understand the true test of a good life

Dr. Gokak spoke of the four fundamental aims of education since he is the Vice-Chancellor of the Bangalore University. He said they are: Knowledge, Skill, Balance and Insight. Of course, knowledge is being gained by every one, through the senses as well as through inference and other categories. The voltage may be different, but, each bulb illumines to some extent. Gokak said that the knowledge has to be transformed into skill. But usually the S is removed and knowledge is used only to 'kill.' Knowledge is killed in the process of using it to kill. In that process the balance is upset; and, so, instead of insight, the fourth principle (Gokak's fourth principle) is transformed into 'out-sight!'

I call upon the students to revere their parents, for, that is the true test of a good life. I bless Pinge that Pinge's Classes may go on into the Golden and the Diamond Jubilees, so that I may come on those occasions also and bless him and this institution.

I wish that in these classes, not only the syllabus and the curriculum prescribed for the various examinations for which students are coached are taught; teach also some great scriptural texts, so that they may not miss this precious, treasure. I suggest that you should have prayer as an important item in the time-table of the classes; for, through prayer you can draw down unto yourselves the Grace of God. Have *Bhajan* and *Keerthan* also, for the Lord has said, "Wherever My Glory is sung, there I install Myself." *Bhajan* cleanses the atmosphere and sanctifies the air you breathe. Shri Bharde spoke about my establishing a college in this city, but, before the college is established, students worthy of entering its portals must be ready. Prepare the students; teach them the spiritual truths and the discipline that promotes their translation into daily life. That will hasten the foundation of the College you long for.

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Serve the world as you would serve as master; be humble, be eager, be efficient in that service. If you dare treat the world as your servant, you will be dragged down into disaster.

Sathya Sai Baba