

# 1. Exhortation to Students

When clouds gather in the high skies, they are usually accompanied by lightning. In the same manner, wherever there is education, it should be accompanied by wisdom. We have to recognise such an association as an essential truth. Many things, like the fullness of life and all that is purposeful in this world, have been involved in problems of education. Because we do not see these things clearly and they appear to us tarnished to a large extent, whatever is good in education is being hidden from us. Every thinking individual concerned with education is today faced with a large number of problems; problems that have been agitating the minds of students and of teachers. It is the duty of everyone to see that these problems are solved and the right solutions are put into the hearts of young people, and thereby infuse a sense of the Divine in their minds. Because good qualities like sacrifice, forbearance, truth and love have been somewhat pushed to the background, the society is suffering from various ills. It is the sacred duty of good education not only to rectify such ills and give proper shape and form to society, but also to rid the minds and hearts of people as well, of all evils.

In our educational methods of today, we are attaching great importance to giving voluminous books and the information contained in these voluminous books to the students. We are not making an effort to improve the ideas and ideologies of the students. By their acquaintance with these books, the students are filling their heads with the contents of such books to the fullest capacity and without any discrimination. They are not utilising properly the matter that is going into their heads. It has been mentioned earlier this morning that the present educational system in our country is resulting in our students taking in quite an amount of information and that they are not converting this information into useful knowledge and wisdom. But I feel that our students lack the discriminating ca-

capacity by which they can absorb only good information. If they do so, they can also convert it into useful knowledge. We are no doubt keeping in mind today the ideals and the goals of good education, but that is not enough. We should also make an effort to put them into practice.

Keeping aside, for one moment, the educational system itself, I have to state that in the name of education many new habits, many new cultures and many new ideas are being injected into the minds of our children. As a result, the parents are not able to lift their heads with honour in the society around them. Fathers and mothers, who have sons and daughters who are students and are part of the contemporary educational system, know that the children are behaving in such a manner as to create problems in the house. The parents often wonder how these problems can be tackled and how their children can be handled. These sons and daughters are not able to develop sufficient confidence in themselves. Their fathers and mothers wonder what their future is going to be. Today man's ideas are taking an extraordinary and crooked shape because there is a certain amount of distortion in their minds caused by their running after western civilisation and western notions. As a result, they attach great importance to temporary gains and transient successes. Life is not that transient or that trivial as to be played with. It should not be bartered for achieving wrong and distorted aims. Students should attach more importance and sanctity to life than they do now. The minds and hearts of students are tender, sweet, soft and gentle. If at this age, when their hearts are still tender and gentle, they cannot take in the values of life, they will not be able to take them in later. The essential reason for this lies in the way fathers and mothers are looking after their children and in the ideas they are giving to their children. In the ambition and desire of the parents that their children should have freedom and that they should rise to high positions in their lives, they are giving them freedom without telling them how dangerous freedom could be if not utilised properly.

The end of wisdom is freedom.  
The end of culture is perfection.  
The end of knowledge is love.  
The end of education is character.

There is a desire on the part of all of us to acquire these four qualities, namely, wisdom, culture, knowledge, and education, and reach their ends, namely, freedom, perfection, love, and character. But students should realise that if these qualities are not properly utilised, then they cannot call themselves students. As students and future citizens of this country, you have the responsibility for shaping the future of this country. Put your hearts in the right path by listening attentively to the more experienced men. Then you will be in a position to enlighten others and proclaim the ancient glory and culture of this land to the whole world. I have no doubt that after this summer course, you will be able to proclaim proudly the sacredness of the culture of this land of ours and of the values contained therein. You may be thinking that there are only about three hundred students from this vast country of India attending this course, and you may be wondering how such a small number can do anything to rectify and alter the terrifying phases which life in this country has assumed.

### **My dear students!**

There may be hundreds and thousands of *sepoys* and *jawans* to be trained, but there will be only a small number of teachers to train them. These are the commanders and leaders. Taking this example, even though there are thousands of students in this country, you, as leaders, must get the training you require to train the many thousands of others in the country. This is the idea with which you must go through the summer course. This is the first summer course you are attending; and I hope and bless you that after you have gone through it, you will acquire the virtues of leadership. Those of you who are here have to acquire, by going through these classes, a certain amount of strength and character. With this strength, you will be

able to lead your country. In this world most of you wish to do some noble and difficult work. All those who wish to participate in such work have to accept leadership and responsibility. Those students who today feel that it is good to accept such a responsibility are the ones who will do well in the future.

If we cannot recognise our duties, we will not be able to rectify our methods. Take the example of a leader who is very much addicted to drinking. How can he propagate the virtue of keeping away from drink? How can he preach prohibition? In the same manner, how can such teachers and students who succumb to evils, do good to and improve society? If we want to accept the responsibility of telling others to rectify their faults, then the first thing to do is to rectify our own faults and change our own lives so that there are no more faults left in us. So the right thing to do is to cleanse our own hearts and then move to the area around you, say your own village. After purifying the people of the village, then you can move to the district; after purifying the district, you can move to the state and after purifying the state you can become a leader in your country. If you want to become a leader without these prior acts, then you will be disappointed and you cannot be a leader. It is only when we understand and recognise the responsibility and the duty of a citizen, will we be able to change the methods of education and infuse into those methods, love and peace which are the essential qualities of a good citizen.

For students and other members of society, education should be a kind of social ideal. It should constitute a bridge on which you should walk to reach your goal. If this bridge of education is not built with sufficient strength, it will be harmful to the individual. The students should take the road of reorganisation and endow education with the strength it needs. By developing prejudicial attitudes and maintaining attachments, we are not going to derive happiness from our actions. It is only by developing a correct vision of things that we will be able to derive happiness. Today's education is aimed at giving those who go through it an amount of temporary happiness,

temporary beauty and temporary pleasure. The conduct of students of today is not controlled in any manner.

Principles of education that do not connect the students with their parents will bring unhappiness to all of us in the future. One of the essential facets of Indian culture is to recognise the mother and father as equivalent of God. If we do not deserve the love of our mother and of our father, from whom else can we ask for such affection? We should therefore develop attitudes by which we can promote such love and respect. It is only when you are able to respect your parents, will your children respect you, in future, when you become fathers and mothers. In every action of ours and in every thought of ours, there is a reflection and an echo. If in your future, you aspire to, and want, some happiness, pleasure and peace, you must practise certain principles at the present time. You must practise these principles now to bring peace and contentment for yourself in the later stages of your life. Indian culture is constituted of certain rituals and certain practices that have been handed down to us through the ages. Today, students regard these rituals, some of which are the essence of Indian culture, as being foolish. They think that they are very clever and that these rituals are meaningless.

Today many scientists of great reputation are inventing gadgets and flying to the moon. They are spending so much money on such things, but they do not have peace of mind. Leaders and men who are at the top of society feel that they have everything. Alas! they do not have any peace of mind. Why is this so? We have to enquire and find an answer for this. One can count stars and fly to the moon. But if one cannot look into the inside of one's self, how can he find happiness? Our culture and traditions are such that they enable you to know who you are and help you to understand yourself. The first thing to have is self-confidence, after which, alone, you will get self-satisfaction. Once you have got self-satisfaction, then you must acquire the virtue of self-sacrifice and after self-sacrifice, alone, you come to self-realisation. Thus, to achieve self-realisation, self-confidence is the most important thing. In all these four attrib-

utes, namely, self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice, and self-realisation, the one common word is self. To understand the self, you must find out from experienced people what they know about it. From today, for a whole period of one month, to enable you to find out the meaning of this self, we have invited a large number of people who have experienced this self to tell you what it means.

It is possible during this one month, there may be certain inconveniences you have to put up with. The food and comfort may not suit you. You have to bear up with all this and bear it with pleasure, because such a training is essential in your lives. This discipline is, in fact, the first step in self-realisation. The reason why I have called this the first step during your training is that today there are a large number of people who cannot put up with difficulties and inconveniences, and yet, wish to achieve bigger and more subtle things. This study and discipline, to which you will submit your-selves, will lead you to happiness and bliss. If you cannot put up with small difficulties, how will you be shaping into people who are to rectify social evils? Some day or other difficulties are going to come your way. So also sorrow and great inconveniences are going to come your way. It is much better to stand firm and know what those difficulties are when you are young. Then you will be able to withstand such difficulties in your later lives with some ease. In this summer course, you must take various difficulties you come across as part of your education and put up with them cheerfully. Some people do physical exercises to keep their bodies strong. While doing such exercises, you feel tired and experience discomfort; but after the exercises are over, you get the strength for your muscles. There is no doubt that all the difficulties and obstacles you may come across will be the necessary exercises to give you happiness in your later lives.

**Dear students!**

This is your house, and in the one month you are going to spend in this house, you must acquire the necessary wisdom and knowledge and then communicate this knowledge to your friends

and to the society in which you live and thereby proclaim the greatness and glory of our culture.

There is one other matter: According to our rules, we give great importance to silence and cleanliness. If you should talk, you may do so softly and in a controlled manner. Do not go out of the campus and move freely. These are the tools with which you should give shape to your future lives. We are used to regarding summer as a month of holidays. This is not correct. Those students who are here should not regard this as a month of holidays but should regard it as one of holy days. The manner of spending our holy days is not by eating sweets but by filling your minds and hearts with matters pertaining to the Divine. Try to imbibe all the things that various teachers are going to tell you. It is not enough to imbibe what is taught, but you must also put into practice the sayings of those teachers.

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