

Education — The Imperatives

Musharraf Hossain

THE main object of education in any country is to educate the entire population and enlighten people with nobility of thought. It enables people to understand the phenomena of nature, know the things which will eventually help the welfare of nations as a whole, and have correct ideas of duties to God, and fellow countrymen.

The civilised countries of Europe have left no stone unturned to decrease the number of the illiterate and ignorant. They have succeeded in reducing the number of such people to a large extent. But, sadly enough Bangladesh has yet to succeed in that respect. Education, in its truest sense of the term, does not simply imply the smattering of a few languages or subjects in the Arts and Sciences. It has far more significance. It is, in the words of Herbert Spencer, "a preparation for complete living". Its main function is the development of our moral, intellectual

physical powers. A good system of education, therefore, should accomplish the development of all the three mentioned above.

In our country, we see that there are a good many universities and educational institutions which seem to be working very enthusiastically. But the results of these institutions have been rather unremarkable. If a man observes the state of affairs and thinks on its consequences, he is sure to feel disheartened.

The universities of most civilised and cultured countries of the world produce such an impression on the students that they become practical, realistic men when marching forth on the journey of life. Unfortunately, the universities of our country have not succeeded in producing the required impression on those who get their degrees and diplomas. Students are given their degrees, when they have mastered a certain branch of

knowledge, though intellectual and moral powers may still be wanting in them. From the economic standpoint, unemployment on a wide scale is owing to the fact that they are only trained in the theoretical sense.

It is not the fault of education, for education is a remedy to cure our drawbacks. It is rather the fault of our system of education. It surely does not help us to tackle the great economic problem.

Only look at a boy of ten. He is to labour hard and master many branches of knowledge, he is confined to a monotonous routine of daily work, his countenance becomes pale and he is unable to grasp his subjects thoroughly. Somehow or other he tries to pass his examination in order to get rid of the "load of books" imposed upon him. Instead of having a real craving for and hunger of books, he memorises all he can. He is thus just

being misled instead of being guided. He is not even given the scope for a full play of his imagination. Besides, there is the fact that, Bangladesh being a poor country, the people cannot bear the expenses involved in imparting education to their children. The government of the country should shoulder the burden and help the people. Though a little help has come from the government, that only seems to be a drop in the ocean. Positive action, actuated by the dedicated approach of educating people is needed if we are to compete with other developing nation.

The next important flaw in the system of education is the medium of instruction. English despite being an international language, was left out of the education system for such a long period of time that now the language seems to be an insurmountable barrier. Perhaps we have lost a generation for that sad step.