



VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE

(Residential & Autonomous - A Gurukula Institute of Life - Training)

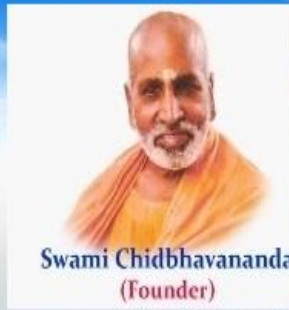
College with Potential for Excellence

Re-accredited with 'A' Grade (CGPA 3.59 out of 4.00) by NAAC

Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University, Managed by Sri Ramakrishna Tapovanam, Tirupparaitturai, Trichy

Tiruvedakam West, Madurai District - 625 234, Tamil Nadu

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



Swami Chidbhavananda
(Founder)

University Education on the Gurukula Pattern

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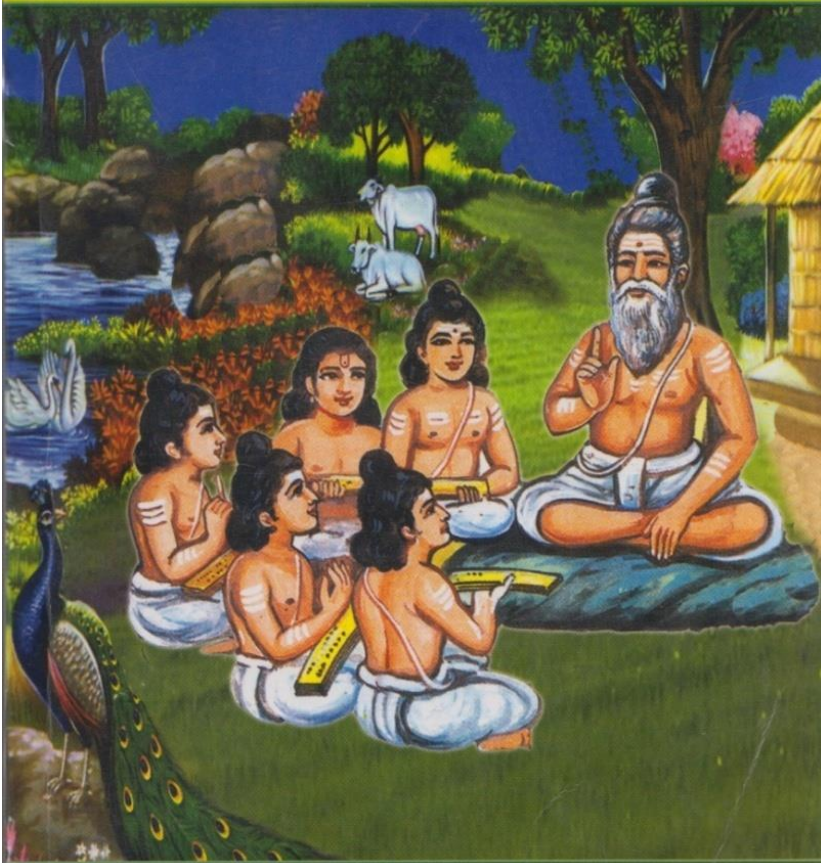
Indian National Education

by

Srimath Swami Chidbhavananda

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Assistant Professor & Head(i/c),
25-03-2020

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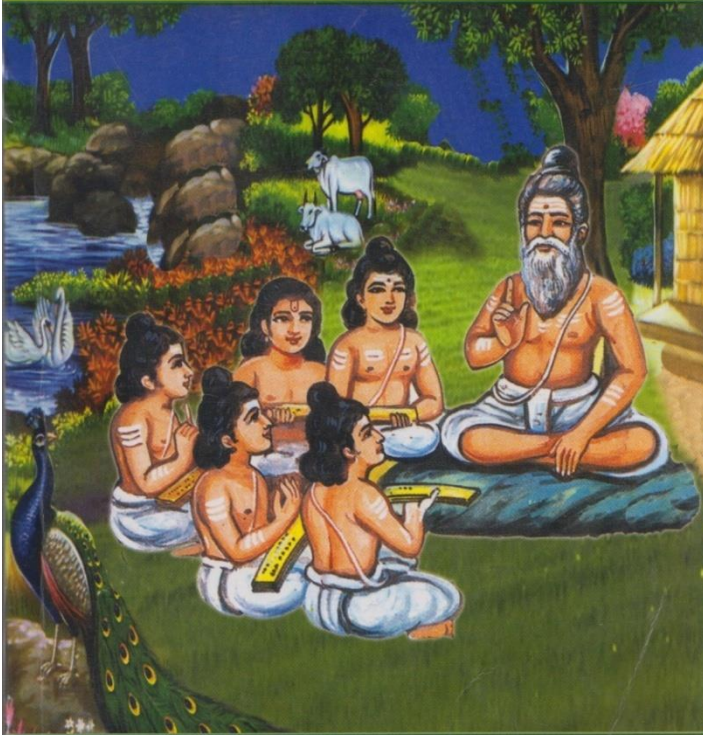
The teacher must, no doubt, fit into the administrative set-up in vogue, but the powers that be should on no account interfere with the due discharge of his vocation. The boat of the teacher can well afford to float on the waters of the administrative scheme; but those waters should on no account get into the boat.

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Srimath Swami Chidbhavananda



Swami Chidbhavananda (March 11, 1898 – November 16, 1985) was born in Senguttaipalayam near Pollachi in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, India. His parents named him 'Chinnu'. He studied in Stanes School, Coimbatore. He was one of the two Indians in his class, the rest being British. His parents wanted him to go to England after completing his degree in Presidency College, Chennai.

CHAPTER VI

गुरुकुल महाविद्यालय

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ON THE GURUKULA PATTERN

Why this Blueprint?—The Gurukula College—The Setting—
Holiday and Vacation—Martial Training—Play—Discipline—
Soul Culture—Executive Efficiency—Service—Excursions—
The Science Supreme—Our Foreign Policy—Finance—The
Dwija or Twice-born.

WHY THIS BLUEPRINT ?

A great tree does not rest content with merely growing to huge proportions. It finds its fulfilment in leaving behind seeds and saplings to ensure the proper coming up of the next growth. In a similar manner one generation of society owes a solemn duty to the next generation. The earlier generation must conserve racial tradition and national genius and pass them on to the next generation, enriched if possible. A nation too like man does not live by bread alone. Economic prosperity is not everything. Intellectual eminence and moral perfection have vastly superior values. Unless the best minds of a society safeguard the intellectual vigour and the moral virility of the succeeding generation, the continuity of national welfare is jeopardized. In India today we are grandly planning and performing. But projects and plans, though they are the symbol of a mighty national striving, cannot by themselves make the nation great. Architects and engineers in hundreds are

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no doubt needed to add to India's material abundance. But they do not and cannot exhaust our national endeavour, which has always been tuned to the high things of the Spirit. Rationalists and logicians, poets and philosophers, thinkers and dreamers, leaders and moulders, anchorites and ascetics, sages and saints are indispensable to a reblossoming of the Indian genius. Attention and thought have not been paid so far to an adequate degree to national planning on this all-important aspect of social well-being. It is the duty of the Indian genius to analyse the position and evolve a bold scheme for a rational, imaginative and purposeful reorientation of the educational pattern at the university level, with a view to raising an army of neo-graduates steeped in the hoary culture of the motherland and dedicated to serving her as potential leaders in the manifold departments of national effort.

THE GURUKULA COLLEGE

Schools and colleges of a period provide a preview of the type of society that will emerge in the next decade. Any plan for the betterment of the nation must therefore make use of the educational institutions, very much as the planter bestows care and attention on the nursery. Starting a reformation within the walls of the university is taking the path of the least friction in regard to national renaissance. The Gurukula College is a big step in this direction. A pen-picture of this unique type of institution is attempted herein.

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Any process of learning which is book-centred cannot be anything more than information-mongering. It is like a loose piling of brick on brick with no cohesive or cementing matter in between. But emulation of elders and betters touches and refashions life. Soul reacts on soul. The contact and the clash of brain and brain and mind and mind lead to illumination. The main function of education is to provide for the students this great opportunity of a ceaseless contact with mighty minds and exemplary characters. In the Gurukula College the teachers will not be mere lecturers, but paragons of all-round excellence and they will reside and live in the College campus with their families. This will save the teachers themselves from adopting a double standard of living, one at college and the other at home. They will be always 'on duty'. Their 'family-life' will be a unit in, and be harmonious with the College life. Elderly teachers and their wives will function as fathers and mothers to the students at College. This was what obtained in the forest universities of Ancient India where the Rishis and Rishipatnis regarded and brought up the students as their own children. The Gurukula College will be a happy fusion of the Rishi-manned Gurukula and the Oxford-Cambridge type of university. What we find today in the existing colleges is that a few lecturers employed on a salary-contract come into the lecture hall now and then in a decorative sort of way, do the lessons allotted and then get out, as much strangers to

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the taught at the end of the lecture as at the beginning. They do not know the students and the students do not know them. The Gurukula College on the other hand will be a home and family. Parental affection and filial reverence will envelop the atmosphere. Study and leisure, labour and recreation, work and play, serious business and merry-making, idealism and actual doing will all be co-operative efforts of teacher and pupil. This sanctified teacher-pupil contact will be productive of immense good to both the master and the student.

Life-training will be the curriculum in the College; book learning and intellectual equipment will be there, but just as an important aspect of that life-training. The College will be a beehive of active community-living and sustained co-operative effort. The invocation सहनौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहे ।—May we together be nourished! May we together be endowed with virility!—will not be merely a pious wish. It will be a fact of hourly experience in the life lived here.

If our education has to be effective, teacher and pupil must unite, and the college must be a veritable Prayag where the young waters of the pupil-Yamuna perpetually flow into and become one with the pure waters of the teacher-Ganga. In the Gurukula College therefore twelve to sixteen of the professors will live with their families in the campus. Not only they, but their families will be a part of the institution. The Gurukula students will, because of their proximity to a

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- The professors and their family will be a part of the Gurukula College

monastic institution, have constantly before their eyes modern ascetic models of India's twin ideals of Renunciation and Service, and in the persons of their professors they will have noble examples of first-rate householders. It is necessary to keep constantly before the students both the monastic and the householder types of dedicated living. The householder professors will regard the College as an extended family, and board and lodge as much in the College as at home. They will be kept above want, but they will be models of simple living and serious intellectual pursuit. Their lives will teach the students the great lesson that abundance of material possession is not a big thing in itself either for the individual or for the nation. In sleeping and eating, in bathing, walking and play, in social relationship and service, in talking and debating, in worship and exercise, in nursing the sick and cooking and distributing food, in fact, in every conceivable daily activity students and professors will come into active contact. The Gurukula professors will not merely be shining specialists in this or that narrowing branch of knowledge, but they will be Professors of Life and their profession will be preparing for Life.

THE SETTING

Cities are no good for purposes of true education. The noise and the hurry, the crowds and the distractions are inimical to the formation of the proper

- The Gurukula students will, because of their proximity to a monastic institution (Ashram), have constantly before their eyes
- Models of India's twin ideals
 - (1) Renunciation and
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- **Professor of Life**

environment for education. Cities are all right for commercial, examination-coaching tutorial institutes; but not for live institutions aiming at real enlightenment. The Gurukula will be situated far away from the madding crowd's ignoble strife. The Rishi Ashramas of old India which were the educational nerve-centres of the Indian body-politic were located amidst the exuberance of Nature's luxuriance, on river bank, mountain side or forest site. Being as much in tune with Nature as possible is the right way to education. The Gurukula College will be located in a suburban area, at a convenient distance from the city, but not inconveniently away from the city. For, proximity to the city has its advantages in respect of providing to a large student-population contact with society whenever necessary. The primary concern of an educational institution is self-reform of the individual. This self-reform does not depend for its success on too much of external contact. The tortoise is well-known for its capacity to shrink into itself, with all its limbs indrawn. The height of culture lies in the inner blossoming of faculties in the student; not in the multiplicity of his contacts with the outside world. Just as the evolving chick needs the protection of the shell, and utter segregation from outside contact for its quiet growth, so too does the college student need the hallowed seclusion and purposeful isolation of the Gurukula during his period of formation.

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- The height of culture lies in the inner blossoming of faculties in the student.
- The college students need isolation of the Gurukula.

HOLIDAY AND VACATION

One of the chief drawbacks in the organization of college work at present is the fact that the colleges actually work for less than half the year! Of course a wise use of leisure is the mark of culture, and he who knows to spend a holiday well also knows to live life well. But in our land holidays are periods of utter wastefulness. This is a pity. And nobody seems to be worried about it. As sleep is necessary for the body so is a holiday necessary to any worker. But the right attitude to a holiday and to the proper utilization of rest-time are matters which deserve some thinking over. In the Gurukula College things will be done differently. Actually a home knows no holiday in the sense of an utter cessation from work. The Gurukula College will function exactly as a home does. After all, rest is change of work. Lessons in the Gurukula College will be spread over the whole year of twelve months and not be compressed into 150 days. Like slowly-eaten and well-chewed food they will be assimilated better by the students. The lesson-lectures will be followed by relevant group-discussion among students which will instil the ideas taught deep into the minds of the learners. We must take a lesson from Nature in regard to this. In the growth to maturity of the physical frame of the human personality, does Nature suffer any pause, or break, or hurry, or speeding up in the process? No. The process goes on cease-

- A wise use of leisure is the mark of culture
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lessly, unobtrusively. Intellectual growth must take place in the same manner. It must not occur in periodical gusts followed by periods of hibernation. In the Gurukula, work and rest will harmoniously mingle like rhythm and pause in music.

The Gurukula College will never remain closed. It will be functioning all the time. But once a year the College will go on camp to a new place and carry on its activities there. A stay of a month or two in new congenial surroundings will help students acquire many desirable traits of character. Hill stations will be selected for this purpose in summer. This physical change of environment, and the adaptation to the new surroundings will achieve the purposes of a holiday quite well. The lecturers at College will be given a compulsory vacation of a month a year. This vacation of a month will be enjoyed by turns by all the lecturers. The absence on leave of one or two at a time will not dislocate College work. The staff will be numerically strong enough for this purpose. When the College goes out on camp, the needed staff of course will go too.

Students who pass out of the Secondary School and enter the Gurukula College will be expected to stay in it for four or five years. During this period the students will not go home except for extraordinary reasons. Parents will however be permitted to visit the College and spend a week there once a year. Frequent visits by students to, and long stays at, their

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homes counteract perceptibly the process of training they receive.

Gurukula life in the old days extended over twelve to fourteen years This was so in the belief that a human being could be cast into a new and wholesome mould if he submitted himself to a wise training of 12 to 14 years under a master hand. Under ideal conditions the modern student also must have this 12-14 years of training. The best thing for a student will be to enter a Gurukula Secondary School when he is 9+, stay there seven years and then pass over to the Gurukula College for a further training of four or five years.

MARTIAL TRAINING

Education of old did not fail to pay attention to educating the body and to equipping it with martial valour and fighting skill. Viswamitra and Drona were famous teachers in this respect. Rama with his Kodanda, Bhima with his Gada, Arjuna with his Gandiva and Krishna with his Chakra were shining products of the ancient type of Kshatriya education. In the period of our national torpor the idea somehow gained a footing that military training made men ruffians, and blotted out their finer sensibilities and turned them into tyrants and oppressors. This idea is not borne out by facts. The young man who has had a proper course of martial training is lion-like in his majesty and chivalrous in his dealings. His strength

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is never for oppression, but is used only for upholding Dharma. The Gurukula College will avail itself of all the facilities which the State provides for military or semi-military training. Such a training will make our young men agile and alert and also help them remember their unlimited potentialities and work out their destiny with new courage and faith. Military training will bring out the Mahavira in every young man. A militarily trained youth is the biggest safeguard for orderly social progress and the greatest bulwark against littleness and unrighteous conduct.

PLAY

A book-worm is no true student. Play is vitally indispensable to a virile life. It is necessary for the lover of learning. It is as well necessary for him who aspires for spiritual gains. A weak body is the mother of all unhealthy development even on the mental and the moral planes. In the animal kingdom we find that the young ones take to play and physical exercise with enthusiasm. In the human kingdom it ought to be much more so. The Gurukula College will pay all attention to physical culture. Our indigenous games of the past tended to develop and bring to display individual excellence, while western games have been organized to inculcate team-spirit of the best type. The Gurukula play-programme will be a harmonious commingling of the best in both.

- Martial training will make our young men agile and alert.
- A militarily trained youth is the biggest safeguard for orderly social progress.
- The Gurukula College will pay all attention to physical culture.

The Gurukula will also provide for the perfecting of the taste for fine arts which no young man is bereft of and for developing histrionic, oratorical and other talents.

DISCIPLINE

In the listless college curriculum of today, discipline finds no place. The college measures reading capacity, not the mode of life lived. We call a young man good if he carries on his life somehow without coming into clash with others. But character-building is more important than mere peaceful existence. Thought and emotion mould man's personality. The peculiarity of the human mind is that it cannot harbour at the same time diametrically opposed feelings and urges. It is either the healthy or the unhealthy and never both. The advantage in the Gurukula is that its environment is helpful to the functioning of the healthy urges alone. Gurukula life is so intensely preoccupied with good that the bad gets emaciated and wiped out. As the mind and body are interrelated, right thinking leads to right doing. The imposition of a rigid and stern discipline, lubricated by love and affection, will inculcate punctuality, promptness and efficiency. It will drive out the undesirable samskaras in the human personality and instil self perfection. The Gurukula College will function as a powerful mechanism for bringing about this much-needed metamorphosis.

SOUL-CULTURE

Soul-culture is not something that is the business only of the superannuated or the other-worldly or of

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the monk who has renounced home, family and social ties. It is everybody's business every day and every hour. Indian civilization in fact can be equated with spiritual culture. One who ardently cultivates the soul lives life well. Without allowing the concerns of life to enslave or smother him, he rides through life with ease and efficiency. He works like a master, and never like a slave. In the Gurukula College spiritual culture will envelop and pervade all the atmosphere and activity. Thrice a day the students will gather for self-composure and contemplation—at dawn, noon and dusk, which are the three periods of natural calm. Professors and students will assemble in the Prayer Hall in solemn quiet and impressive orderliness at these times. Sitting erect and stilling the oscillations of the mind they will meditate on the body as a sacred temple, and on the Blissful Conscious Principle within as the true Self of their being. All this will be an affair of five minutes each time. But no other five minutes of their daily life will have been better spent. This five-minute absorption in the immensity of the Inner Self is the secret of true progress. This five-minute experience will be a thing of such a powerful and joyous appeal that the mind of the student will recapture and re-experience its bliss over and over again in the interval between prayer times. It will provide a basis of high thinking, chastened feeling for all the subsequent activity of mind and body. It will be one of the chief planks in the Gurukula programme to bring to the students this lost faculty of contemplation.

- In the Gurukula College spiritual culture will envelop and pervade all the atmosphere and activity.
- Professors and students will assemble in the Prayer Hall

EXECUTIVE EFFICIENCY

The average student of today is more a parasite than a person of self-reliance and self-help. In the Gurukula College the student will be thrown on himself for the satisfaction of his needs. The day to day management of the Gurukula will be a student-responsibility. The system provided by the Gurukula will be so well-planned that the student cannot help acquiring fine executive efficiency and skill. He will be a fully educated man and be up to any call or situation in life.

SERVICE

Service to others is a spontaneous activity in a truly educated man. But this readiness to serve others is singularly absent in our youth. Not to serve, but to be served seems to be the attitude of modern students. In the good old days service was what students were taught first. Other aspects of education were built on it. Service to parents at home, to the preceptor at school and to people in general—the field of service was thus expanding. It will be one of the duties of the Gurukula College students to bring sweetness and light to the villages which are the nation's backbone.

Another field of service is also open to college students in our country. Temples abound in our country and temple festivals are celebrated all through the year. Vast crowds gather at these temple celebrations, but crowd-behaviour has vastly to improve. College

- The average student of today is more a parasite than a person of self-reliance and self-help.
- In the Gurukula College, the student will be thrown on himself for the satisfaction of his needs.

students will be doing an immense act of national service if they take up these temple festivals into their programme of social service work. The Gurukula College will take to this with all earnestness.

EXCURSIONS

As already pointed out the Gurukula College will go out on camp to hill stations and health resorts. The Gurukula excursions will be long, leisurely and of immense benefit. In these days of transport facilities tours of this kind are quite practical propositions. A more ambitious programme will be to take one of the ships of the Indian Navy and give the students a coastal voyage to ports like Bombay, Cochin, Colombo, Madras, Visakapatnam and Calcutta. Class lessons need not suffer in this arrangement. College work can go on as the ship sails round. The voyage will be an education in itself and the halts will bring students into contact with new places and peoples.

THE SCIENCE SUPREME

The Vedanta philosophy with its offshoots like Saivism and Vaishnavism has been from time immemorial the perennial mainstay of our national life. Our great men were all sustained by the spiritual food drawn from this *Rajavidya* and *Rojaguhyam*—King of all sciences. We as a nation were at our best whenever our homes were permeated with rich and dynamic Vedantic thoughts. Neglect and misapplication of the

- The Vedanta philosophy with its offshoots like Saivism and Vaishnavism has been from time immemorial the perennial mainstay of our national life.

tenets of Vedanta have been the root cause of every set-back that we have suffered. The revival of this soul-energizing philosophy shall occupy an important place in the courses of studies in the Gurukula College. Life and the science of life will thus be happily wedded. Those who specialize in this subject will be ideal administrators in any field, and specially in the administration of our magnificent temples. When our national life gets revitalized in this manner we are bound to shine in all fields. A Gurukula College alone will be capable of fulfilling this sacred and all-absorbing task.

OUR FOREIGN POLICY

Give and take is the law of life as much for nations as for individuals. India has necessarily to take many things from the West—her technical efficiency, her material prosperity, her organizing power, her flair for performing grandly all the things of this world. But India has much to give too to other lands. In fact Ancient India gave more than she received. India's deep poise and unruffled calm, her attunement to the Infinite, her wisdom and holy way of life have valuable lessons for other nations. The Gurukula College will have as its foreign policy the provision of facilities for young men of the East and the West to come over and study India *in situ* and with the right understanding. Equipped with a knowledge of India's ancient history, and with a deep acquaintance with her classical literature and with

- The revival of this soul-energizing philosophy shall occupy an important place in the courses of studies in the Gurukula College.
- Equipped with a knowledge of India's ancient history, and with a deep acquaintance with her classical literature and with

her unique achievements in the arts, and also endowed with something of that enchanting Indian spirit which chastens and sanctifies everything in life, these young men will go out as fine ambassadors of culture and messengers of goodwill and grace.

FINANCE

The working out of this scheme will mean money, lots of it in fact. But it must not be beyond the capacity of social economy to provide the financial background on which this mighty educational edifice pictured out herein can be erected. The State and the Central Governments, the international educational trusts and organizations and individuals gifted with the good things of life may all contribute to the carrying out of this plan. Buildings to house over a thousand students and the needed staff quarters and administrative offices will have to be put up. This strength of over a thousand will be needed to make the College an economically sound and an educationally all round institution. While students will be required to put forth all the manual labour they are capable of contributing, due provision will be made for the employment of all modern time-saving and labour-saving machines. Physical work and machinery will both be in operation in the College.

DWIJA OR THE TWICE-BORN

The end of education is to transform man the brute into man the god. Man, it has been said, must

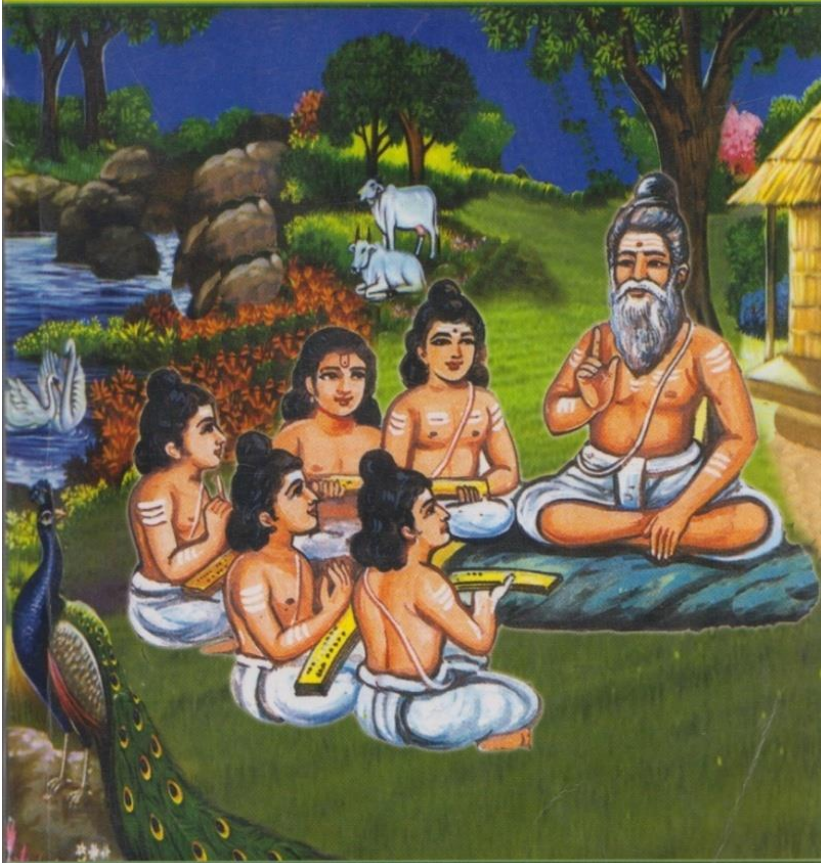
- Equipped with a knowledge of India's ancient history, and with a deep acquaintance with her classical literature and with her unique achievements in the arts

be born over again to inherit the Kingdom of Divinity. True culture lies in this second birth. Culture is the result of planned nurture. The task of the Gurukula will be the evolving, by means of wise and dexterous nurture of Finished Men. Democracy broadens the opportunities for human development, but it necessarily feeds mediocrity. Its broadened area of progress naturally tends to be shallow too. While the broadening is all-important for social advancement, the need for depth must not be lost sight of. An efficient nurturing of talent and excellence is vital to sustained progress. A few institutions of the Gurukula kind must dedicate themselves to this supreme task of drawing and nurturing genius. An aristocracy of high intellect and full-blooded character devoted to the service of the many is a primary need of every civilized society. The Gurukula College will be the nursery of such a corps. It will give the rebirth of *Vidya* and *Seela* to generations of chaste and robust graduates who will be a force working for national good.

They will inaugurate a new era.

- The end of education is to transform man the brute into man the god. Man, it has been said, must be born over again to inherit the Kingdom of Divinity.
- It will give the rebirth of *Vidya* and *Seela* to generations chaste

INDIAN NATIONAL EDUCATION



By
Srimath Swami Chidbhananda

The teacher must, no doubt, fit into the administrative set-up in vogue, but the powers that be should on no account interfere with the due discharge of his vocation. The boat of the teacher can well afford to float on the waters of the administrative scheme; but those waters should on no account get into the boat.

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Thank you

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