



TERRITORY OF PAPUA

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# The Blending of Cultures:

## An Essay on the Aims of Native Education

By

F. E. WILLIAMS

*M.A. (Adelaide) ; B.Sc., Dip. Anth. (Oxford)*  
Government Anthropologist

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## PREFACE



HIS essay, under the title of *Education and Culture Contact*, was written in 1933 and gained the Wellcome Medal for Anthropological Research for that year. The terms of reference, laid down by the Royal Anthropological Institute, require a "research essay on the application of anthropological methods to the problems of native peoples, particularly those arising from intercourse between native peoples, or between primitive natives and civilized races." The claim of native education to represent such a problem needs no defence.

Since my own practical experience has been limited to Papua some of the more concrete suggestions in what follows may be considered to have special reference to local conditions. But the essay represents a theoretical approach to the problem of native education as a whole, and its main conclusions, whatever their validity, are set down as if for general application.

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## The Blending of Cultures: An Essay on the Aims of Native Education.

### *Native Education and Native Policy.*

NATIVE Education is something more than a mere department of Native Policy. Viewed in the wider sense it is no detached subject, but rather permeates the whole problem of administration. For every new measure adopted in native interests, or in the combined interests of native and European, will depend for its success on a favourable reaction. It must be acceptable, and permanently so; and this implies, again and again, the necessity for educating our native up to the mark. And further, if he is to help in solving those problems which are gathering inevitably ahead of us, which are his as well as ours, then he must be definitely armed for the fray. Indeed, if we allow a sufficiently wide meaning to the term, it appears that education is the very essence of native administration. Where government aims at something more than compromise or temporary expedient, where in short it is progressive, it must recognize that progress depends on education and merely keeps pace with it. If, then, we are content to say, somewhat vaguely, that what we have in view is native welfare, conditioned by the just claims of the country and its European inhabitants, then it may almost be said that the aims of native education and of native policy are one and the same.

### *Cultural Change and the Justification for Education.*

It is very obvious that there is change ahead for every primitive society that is brought under European control or influence. Most prophets agree that there must be a transitional stage of moderately rough weather, though the ultimate forecasts, guided by the prophets' temperaments and to some extent by their professional outlook,

that they will lead a fuller, more satisfying, and more effective life under a somewhat changed culture, then the somewhat changed culture is what he will hope to see and strive to bring about. This in itself would be reason enough for encouraging change, quite apart from the possible requirements of his territory and of his policy at large.

It may seem hardly necessary to prove at length that native culture admits of or calls for improvement, though much of this paper will be devoted to that task. In the minds of those who are responsible for the government and education of natives the question is already answered, and I think correctly: cultural change is not only inevitable but desirable.

It is, I think, solely these assumptions—that change is inevitable and desirable—that justify us in attempting to educate the native. Were it possible, and were we satisfied, that the old culture should remain precisely as it was, then we might wash our hands of any responsibility, since the educative mechanisms which the old culture already possesses are all that is needed to maintain it. But having made the above assumptions we must realize that the pre-existent means of education will be unable to cope with the new conditions and requirements. Not that such means are to be despised; they certainly exist, and such as they are might well be adapted to new purposes. But by and large it may be said that institutionalized education as we know it has no parallel in primitive society. If we wish the primitive to raise himself to a new level, then we must ourselves set about providing him with the means of reaching it.

There are several good reasons, of different order, why we should do so. In the first place it is obvious that our civilization is incomparably richer than the native's, and that we, who happen to be the masters, are in a position to broaden and elevate the life of those who are in the position of pupils. With due precaution lest we destroy too much in our desire to build afresh, and with a proper sense of limitations to govern our zeal, we may extend widely, and yet we hope judiciously, the scope of the native's mental experience. All this, we may judge, is worth while doing for the native's sake. It represents the altruistic aim which inspires and justifies the work of the missions.

new shape under our eyes. We may take it as certain that in the future the life of the native will become more and more interconnected with that of the European; and that greater demands will be made upon him to aid in the development of his country. In fact he will have to adapt himself to a more complex social environment and learn to play some useful part in the life of a large unity. We may watch and in some measure control these changes. Indeed it seems that in the special case of native education the order of the definition might be reversed. Instead of fitting the man for the society or culture, we must attempt to fit the society or culture for the man. That is to say, we have it in our power to shape the new culture, or at least to influence its shape; and this, I take it, is the real problem and responsibility of education and of native policy at large. What then should we aim at?

### *The Error of Europeanization.*

Answers to this question range between the two extremes of absolute non-interference and complete Europeanization—from changing nothing to changing everything. The first of these extreme views we have already discarded: in spite of the conservative bias discernible in many quarters, it probably has no serious advocates in theory. The other extreme, that of Europeanization, may likewise have no theoretical support in its fullest sense, yet there are many whose practical aim seems to be the closest possible approximation to it.

Notwithstanding the sincerity of their motives the exponents of this policy have been responsible for some of the worst errors in native education. The complacent conviction that our own culture is at all points superior to the native's and the idea that it may be transplanted by simple straight-forward conversion has led us to force European traditions and learning upon him without regard to their fitness or usefulness. It is only within comparatively recent years that we have recognized that the methods, and the very subjects, used and taught in European schoolrooms are not immediately suitable for the native pupil; and that "education for life" in his case is education for a life which is at many points radically different from the European's.

culture in order to strengthen its defence against the attacks, urged on by pushfulness, benevolence, and self-conceit, of the Europeanizer.

### *A Blend of Cultures.*

If we are right in rejecting the two extremes of non-interference and complete change it is obvious that our ideal should lie somewhere between them; and I venture to suggest that the solution of the problem will be found in what may be called a *Blend of Cultures*. Some kind of blending must follow naturally from contact, but my point is that we should deliberately view it as an ideal—making as it were a virtue of necessity—and that we should set ourselves to determine as far as may be its proportions and character.

The ideal blend will retain the best of the old culture—perhaps the mass of it—which has been tried and proved and is at least, to use a plain phrase, to the native's liking. But it will be found necessary or advisable—and of this more hereafter—to remove some features which work for evil in native culture itself or which are clearly incompatible with the ideal which we envisage. The resultant gaps must be filled, or the weaknesses repaired, by such substitutes as we can devise; but over and above this the native culture may be vastly enriched and enlarged by contributions from our own. If these changes can be carried out gradually and with understanding, or if we can successfully guide the changes as they take place of themselves, then we may foresee an invigorated, growing culture, necessarily more complicated by reason of many new relations, enriched by borrowings from European civilization, and yet still retaining enough of the old material to make it distinctively native. We shall require the primitive to learn a good deal from our own civilization in order that he may play his part in a wider scheme of co-operation; and he is welcome to learn much more, to enter new worlds of experience, if he will. But at the same time he must be allowed figuratively to stand his ground, to keep his grip on the past. We can overwhelm him if we will, or drive him like a fugitive out of his own culture. But that is neither to his advantage nor to ours. Instead of becoming an indifferent copyist, definitely accepting a position of inferiority, he should keep enough of the past

make extensive additions. Thus we have a dwelling, altered, enlarged and improved, but still the same—the same with a difference.

This simile of the renovated dwelling will serve well enough to illustrate the three tasks which we are to consider; but it is a lifeless simile and therefore a very inadequate one. A brighter imagination might have drawn some more accurate parallel from the organic world; for we must remember that culture is in a sense a living thing, with its own power to change, either towards decay or growth. When we speak of Maintenance, then, we should mean something more than mere continuance or repetition: the word must be taken to cover the idea of fostering something that can respond to care by growing or developing. Again, when we speak of Expurgation we must bear in mind that we shall actually endanger the life of the whole if we clear away what is irreplaceable or of deep importance. And lastly, the task of enlarging or enriching native culture, which for lack of a better term I have called that of Expansion, is not a process of inflation or stuffing, but one, literally, of incorporation. Our contributions should be such as to form a living blend with the old culture.

### *The Task of Maintenance.*

The problem of what to change and what to leave alone is perpetually before us. Many conscientious educators of the native have been led by an enthusiasm for European traditions in general and for the letter of Christian law in particular to think that we should change as much as possible: we should rub the slate clean in order to start afresh. This indeed argues that there really is something to change. Few of us can dismiss the question and the responsibility so easily as the missionary who cried, "It is often complained that we are Europeanizing the native, and that this should be avoided. How are we to avoid it? These folk have no civilization which we might be accused of changing." There is on the contrary a great deal to change—or maintain, according as we think fit.

Those who stick unimaginatively to European standards may find it difficult to approve of anything in



take up some stronger attitude than one of mere neutrality. It is often argued that native customs must stand or fall on their own merits; and this view is often again coupled with the melancholy conviction that they are naturally doomed. Those—often true sympathizers—who hold this view will recommend that we take no action either to hasten their demise or to bring them back to life: all we can do is to stand regretfully by and watch them expire. This seems unduly pessimistic. Yet there is a real danger that many features of native culture, quite admirable in themselves, will become extinct under pressure of alien influences. For instance, too great a preoccupation with European interests—by no means unworthy in themselves—may lead to the decay of native art; or reliance on Government appointees, councillors, or deacons, may undermine the institution, such as it may be, of native chieftanship; or European employment, even the time expended on Government labour, may interfere with the performance of feasts and ceremonies; or a strict missionary discipline may forbid the dance. Everywhere new influences and temptations are at work: cutters and launches are displacing the sea-going canoe; the convenience of hardware stores is damaging the craft of pottery; and the example of the white man is leading the villager to discard his traditional dress in favour of felt hat, singlet and long trousers.

*The Attitude of Encouragement.* In the face of these influences, sometimes direct, sometimes insidious and indirect, it is not enough for us to pursue a policy of *laissez-faire*. For, while the well-wishers of native culture stand idle, there are many who, whether with good intent or with no intent at all, are really its enemies. If we wish native customs and institutions to survive we must on the one hand guard against too drastic changes in the culture as a whole, such as may remove their motive and support; and on the other we must do something actively to encourage and foster them.

As an example of what I mean let us consider the case of native art. We are familiar with the expressions of regret that village arts and crafts should be on the decline. There is here indeed a general consensus of regret in which even the most intransigent Europeanizers are

writer, to take an extreme instance, the finest expression of decorative art is found in the fashioning and painting of war arrows, and the finest achievement from a craftsman's point of view in the preservation and stuffing of the severed heads of victims. With the suppression of head-hunting the motive for this art will go. We can only regret it as a side-issue.

One would be loth to think, however, that artistic gifts, where they exist, cannot be sustained and developed by the proper kind of encouragement. In the first place it is in the power of the educator to give a place to art in his curriculum, and by this I mean the furtherance of of existent native art, not the introduction of alien forms. It should be feasible and inexpensive to provide for æsthetic education, since the teachers are to hand in the persons of the native artists themselves. The function of the European teacher would be guidance without too much interference, and it is assumed that he will be imbued with a proper respect for native art as such and for the artist himself. The most valuable help he could give would be in suggesting new applications for old motifs and techniques. Nor need we be afraid of using commercialism as a stimulus. Within the educational establishment the commercial stimulus could be controlled, while beyond it we must face its inherent risks if we are to make use of a powerful motive in a good cause.

I have dwelt rather long on native art because it provides a good instance of a department of native culture which it is obviously worth while encouraging. Several other subjects we may consider more briefly. In manual education it seems obvious that before seeking to introduce new crafts we should fully exploit native aptitudes and materials. It will be one of our problems to discover new applications for them, partly within native culture itself (those who now make clay water-pots may some day learn to make clay storage urns), but inevitably to some extent in relation to needs introduced by Europeans (leather workers may become bootmakers, and the man who can make a hoe may turn his skill to making a ploughshare).

We can help in another way also, by improving the native's technique. To teach him the use of European tools is not to transform native crafts in point of character,

eliminate it. I shall attempt to answer these questions here before proceeding, but shall return to them, because of their theoretical importance, in the final section.

### *Bad Elements in Culture.*

Now to one possessed of the Functional outlook it is immediately apparent that much can be said for what are *prima facie* the worst of social practices. Head-hunting itself has its good side, and a case can be made for it. Viewed in its manifold aspects, economic, political, religious, it appears to lie at the very heart of the culture in which it is found. We may dwell on its social ramifications, its effect on individual status, its ritual importance: the taking of a head may be viewed, for instance, as a qualification for marriage, or as a very condition of full manhood, and the raid may be the motive cause for a whole cycle of ceremonies. We may dwell again on its value as a stimulus to energy and efficiency and above all as a force making for social solidarity. It seems indeed that the viewpoint of the man who loses his head has not always been sufficiently considered by those who have taken up a brief for the head-hunter; but it is undeniably true that the functionalist can, and should, make out a case for an institution which most of us would be satisfied to condemn outright.

Then there is sorcery. We need not review at any length the arguments in its favour. It is perhaps everywhere one of the strong sanctions of native morality; it is often a pillar of chiefly authority; it provides the puzzled primitive with an answer to the riddles of causation and affords him an outlet for pent-up emotion. Here once again it seems that attention has been directed rather exclusively to one side of the question and that the defenders of sorcery, in their search for recondite justifications, have missed the obvious. But there is no doubt that a case can be made for sorcery too: it is almost inextricably intertwined with native life and thought, and it is responsible for good as well as evil.

Now the first of these two factors which we have chosen as examples will perhaps find no serious, whole-hearted defender; if anyone justifies head-hunting we shall be free to suspect him of being a sophist or a leg-puller. But the second, that of sorcery, approaches the

Whatever view the anthropologist may take in this matter, however, he will frequently find that the question has been already settled by the administrator. In a wide area to which the writer has devoted some study there exists the universal practice of sodomy. It is associated with ritual initiation to the bull-roarer, and each individual male in his turn plays successively the passive and active parts over a long period. The anthropologist will be able to show that sodomy is thoroughly established in the culture of the region, and plays a highly important part therein, with repercussions in many departments of life. He will be able to show also that it is a practice to which the natives in question feel a very strong attachment; and he may be of sufficiently liberal mind himself to regard it morally with complete indifference. But the administrator or educator, though he may listen with patience and sympathy to the defence, will, when all is said and done, continue to regard sodomy as a vice and cast about for means of exterminating it. To sum up therefore I submit that some parts of native culture may be actually bad and should be got rid of if we can manage it; and that, whether anthropologists agree with this view or not, they must for practical purposes accept it, since it is the view of those who are ultimately responsible for native policy.

### *The Risks of Elimination.*

We saw however that over and above this question of value there arose the further question as to whether we could safely run the risk of eliminating what we thought to be bad.

I am bound to think that this risk has been somewhat exaggerated. The conception of culture as an integrated whole, highly organized throughout, leads logically to the conclusion that interference with any part of it will more or less seriously affect the whole. No part indeed is to be regarded as a functionless "survival," but each, down to the smallest and apparently most insignificant, is supposed to play a vital part in the life of the whole system.

Without presuming to gainsay the doctrine that every part of culture has its function, we may say that for many parts of it the function is at least difficult to

sumption. The most that can be said of culture is that it is partially-organized, semi-integrated. And it is only such a conception which is in keeping with the fact that relatively important customs can actually be done away with without involving the ruin or stoppage of the whole.

The conception of culture as an "organism" comes much nearer the truth than does the mechanistic comparison which I have quoted. Without trying to ride the analogy too hard we can at least say that culture has a power of continuance, or figuratively speaking, a life. And personally I am more and more impressed by its adaptability, its plasticity, its power to heal over wounds and survive even drastic changes.

After this somewhat lengthy introduction we may proceed to deal with the Task of Expurgation. Assuming that there are bad elements in native culture and that we are justified in trying to eliminate them, how should we set about it?

#### *Intellectual Education.*

This Task of Expurgation is essentially educative throughout, if we give a wide meaning to the term. But it will be followed by the soundest and most lasting results if it is approached through education in the stricter, intellectual, sense. If we can convince the native that some of his beliefs are untenable or that some of his social habits are harmful, then he may give them up of his own accord. It is true that the beliefs will linger in the back of his mind and that evil practices will tend to reassert themselves in spite of his new convictions; but as time goes on and his education strikes deeper we may expect these reversions to occur less often.

Let us consider the effect of education on a factor of great significance to our problem—the belief in magic. It will not be regarded as an exaggeration to say that we here touch upon the most important distinguishing feature of the mental life of primitives. Magic is not only ubiquitous but so firmly implanted as to seem almost ineradicable. We cannot claim indeed that twentieth century Europeans are whole free from the magical way of thinking; but the contrast between our largely determinist viewpoint and that of the native, where mystic

optimism. A relative indifference to suffering, disregard for the value of human life, the idealization of revenge—these and other factors will at least be modified by moral training; and we may hope that the native will someday develop moral scruples against such practices as the blood feud; that he may be more considerate to his women folk; that he may feed his dog better; despatch his pig more mercifully; and cease to pluck the tail feathers out of his live rooster.

*Suggestion and Example.*

It may well be objected that we are asking a great deal of education if we expect change to depend on fully reasoned conviction, as if the native must first come to an intelligent realization of a custom's futility or harmfulness and then give it up of his own accord. This does indeed represent an ideal of education which is to be striven after; but for the time being it is largely beyond our reach. It is accompanied, however, or perhaps preceded, by another very effective method of approach, that of suggestion and example. It is by these means that the missions secure some of their most striking results, not only in this expurgative process of education, but also in its more constructive tasks. By dint of consistent example and of drumming their opinions into the minds of their pupils they are able, apart from any rational demonstration, to build up therein the conviction that this or that practice is wrong. One may take the liberty of disagreeing with some of the missions' opinions, but that is beside the question here. Whether those opinions be right or wrong, this is a legitimate way of establishing them in the native's mind. If a powerful, authoritative body, which is further held in high respect and admiration, declares that dancing is wrong, and if it forbids dancing to all those immediately under its control, then the opinion will gather ground that dancing really is wrong. Or if the same body consistently condemns cruelty to pigs it will eventually succeed in building up among those that come under its influence a prejudice against such cruelty. Or if it continually discounts magic it will create a doubt of the efficacy of magic.<sup>1</sup> It is well known that the great proportion of our own judgements, intellectual and moral,

1. It sometimes seems that the doubt is no more than superficial, even that it represents a kind of lip-service to the mission. But there is no question that scepticism regarding magic is abroad among the missionized: the superficial doubt is the beginning of disillusion.

stopped. It is conceivable that moral suasion and intellectual education should eventually achieve this result, conceivable that the native should develop moral and intellectual convictions that head-hunting is wicked and dysgenic, and thereupon give it up of his own accord. But this consummation is a long way off. It would be a sad look-out if we had to wait for it, and with European example before our eyes we may well doubt whether such convictions will ever amount to a practical preventive. In the meantime we are so happily placed as to be able to punish acts of warfare among the native peoples set under our control, and we find that this method is effective. It is hard to imagine where punishment, of which reform is the ultimate justification, could be more justifiable.

In relation to many other customs however the penal sanction remains the subject of controversy. It is plain that we should use it with circumspection, being satisfied, firstly that what we propose to punish is really deserving of suppression, and secondly that punishment is a sound and effective method of suppressing it. In no connection has this question of punishment been more fiercely debated than in relation to sorcery, and I propose to touch briefly upon this highly controversial matter before leaving the present section on the Expurgation of culture.

By sorcery I mean to include all kinds of magic intentionally devoted to harmful or anti-social ends. It is thus only a specific kind of magic in general. Now it is plain that the root of the evil is the *belief in magic*. If we could only banish that, then we could snap our fingers at the sorcerer; in fact he would automatically go out of business. The belief itself, however, is obviously something which we cannot punish. All we can do is to persevere with education in the hope of reducing it, recognizing that we must expect to wait a long time before the belief is so reduced as to cease being a potential danger. In the meantime the sorcerer plies his trade.

Whatever defence may be offered for sorcery it seems to the writer that the good in it is vastly outweighed by the evil. It provides a means for the strong and cunning to impose upon the weak and credulous; it is the instrument of extortion and terrorism; its general effect is to create an atmosphere of suspicion and vengeful

where corroborative evidence is to hand, or where the sorcerer pleads guilty, may be regarded as a punishable offence. For the man who says he practises sorcery (whether he does so in fact or not is of no great consequence) is a social menace and may be deterred by punishment from continuing his activities. The punishment should not be a light one, lest it serve merely to advertise the sorcerer's power, to give his reputation a fillip by government recognition; it should be severe enough to teach him a lesson, to make it psychologically impossible for him to pose as a sorcerer again. Without statistical evidence at hand to justify the assertion I feel confident that the enforcement of the law against sorcery has in practice done much to check this abuse in its overt, and therefore harmful, manifestations.

It is realized that there are many difficulties to be overcome, especially in regard to obtaining evidence from scared witnesses; and I do not pretend that the present brief discussion has taken them all into account. My object has been only to justify punishment in this connection as a deterrent. Finally it must be understood that punishment is not represented as an ultimate cure for sorcery. It is an expedient. Its purpose is to prevent the misuse of a power vested in certain individuals by the false beliefs of the masses. The real cure is to banish or rectify those false beliefs, and the only sound way of doing this is by education. But while we wait patiently for education to take effect we must recognize our obligation to protect the weak from victimization.

### *The Task of Expansion.*

While we set ourselves to maintain what is worthy of maintenance in the old culture and while we undertake to purge it of what is undesirable, we have yet a third task to perform, viz. that of enlarging and enriching it by positive contributions from our higher civilization. It is not enough that these contributions should merely counterbalance the losses entailed in the second of the above-named processes. We should certainly recognize our obligation to provide fit substitutes for what we take away; and although I have not dealt with the subject expressly in this paper it may be taken that such an obligation is implied when we presume to suppress or



figure as the first and foremost aim of education at the present stage. There we are dealing with a primitive horticulture based on the root crops, where tillage is practically unknown, where there are no garden tools save the digging stick, where there is no irrigation, and where the gardener moves from one part of the forest to another, felling and burning the timber in order to plant his tubers, and, after one year or two, abandoning his clearing to the undergrowth. In order to improve this style of horticulture we should first study it, and finding, as we shall, that it is not to be despised, we may then proceed to develop it along natural lines, advancing by short easy steps and seeing to it that the improvements we offer are not hopelessly in advance of the standard already reached. If we limit our early aims, as I think we should, to advancing the gardener's technique and producing better and more varied products for home consumption rather than the economic crops for sale abroad, then our horticultural education must have particular regard to the limitations of the native's mind and character as we find them and to the possibilities of his environment. We need not immediately introduce tractors and twelve-furrow ploughs or irrigate the land by means of electrical pumps and engineering schemes. There is little educative value in these. We should aim rather at helping the native to help himself, enabling him to build up an improved horticulture by degrees and by his own efforts. Perhaps, then, for those who have never turned the soil with anything save a digging stick, the iron hoe will be an adequate beginning (the single-furrow hand-plough being altogether too revolutionary); and where the lie of the land permits it, a simple gravitational scheme will be not only a sufficient, but also the best, means of irrigation. It may be suggested indeed that the agricultural methods of the relatively advanced native peoples are for the time being better models for the most backward than are the methods of modern scientific farming.

The general object of such horticultural reform is to change the *chena* system, which is wasteful in land and labour and which favours decentralization and the perpetuation of small groups and small ideas, for a more intensive cultivation of the soil, which will favour stability and a wider integration with all its social consequences.

The missions (in so far as they are responsible for secular education) are not to blame, for they are already taxed to the uttermost; nor can the exchequer of the average native administration supply more for the purpose than it does at present. It is obvious that the available force, if concentrated upon a chosen percentage of pupils, could produce, in them at least, results of a much higher standard; and the question is whether a little education widely dispersed is ultimately of greater or less value to the people than the higher education of a chosen few. This question may perhaps be answered from a study of the successes and failures of native administrations in the in the past, but it is one which I do not presume to tackle.

Nor do I propose to venture expressly upon that vexed question of the medium of instruction—whether English or vernacular. I will merely suggest that, within the limits of scholastic education, English *per se* is the most valuable gift we can bestow upon the native. Let the educator choose for himself what subjects he will teach, from algebra to botany or economic history, and let him give instruction in whatever medium he likes; but let him not forget that English, for that vast majority of pupils who never reach the higher standards, is *the* subject, and in teaching this subject at any rate he will best use English as a medium. I suggest, then, that our language should not be treated merely as one of the subjects of the curriculum on a par with the others, like a foreign language in our own schools, but that it be regarded emphatically as the first and foremost subject, the principal aim of scholastic education at the lower grades.

It is sometimes said that to deprive the native of his mother tongue would be a cruel injustice. Whether or no this be an exaggeration it is neither contemplated nor likely that such a thing should come to pass. While we make a definite set at teaching our native pupils English we can surely do so without impairing their knowledge of their own language. If there be any such danger it is probably well, apart from any other advantage it may bring, that the teacher should continue to use the vernacular in general instruction. But the danger, I think, may be ignored. Our aim should be, not to substitute English for the native's own language, but to give him English as a second language.

phrase, to get on with him, it seems that the teaching of English is one of the most valuable contributions we can make in the native's education.

### *Christianity.*

The third and last of the major contributions to which I shall refer is that of Christianity. There are many who wish the native well, even devoting much practical effort to the cause of his welfare, who yet view the project of converting him to Christianity with doubt or disapproval. It is argued that the native is best left undisturbed with such religion as he already possesses, and that this religion should lie unprotected from the attritional influence of secular education, until in the natural course it gives place to something like rationalism. It is a mistake, according to these critics, to substitute one kind of superstition for another.

Now no student of culture and culture-contact will imagine it possible for native religion to remain exactly as it was: it must be severely shaken by education and will inevitably tend to disintegrate. Nor must we of necessity shed tears over its disappearance, partial or otherwise. It is the native whom we have to consider as an end, not his religion; and if another is found to suit him as well or better, we shall not deplore the change. It is at any rate unlikely that the primitive will be content to do without any religion at all. If a genuine power to dispense with religion exists anywhere it is only among those who are possessed of the rational or scientific outlook in an advanced degree. They may rise superior and no longer feel the need for it; but they must not conclude that it is unnecessary or of no benefit to others. There is a wide stretch between primitive religion and rationalism, and we cannot expect the native to cover the distance at a stride.

In the meantime scientific determinism will give him cold comfort: he craves a more tasty diet and one that he can digest more easily. Without passing any opinion on its ultimate truth or merit I believe that Christianity is for the present and the long future the best available kind of spiritual diet we can offer to the primitive peoples. At any rate, if administration is to continue its very fruitful co-operation with the missions it must be prepared to regard conversion to Christianity as part of the general

boy ; and this impression gains ground among a population which is not distinguished for the impartiality of its judgments.

Altogether, allowing for certain mannerisms, such as an occasional sanctimoniousness, which may excite our personal distaste, it seems that the bad opinion of the mission boy is a matter of prejudice. In actual effect the moral training given by the missions brings about some regard for and some (necessarily imperfect) observance of rules such as those of truth, honesty and kindness, which are more pronounced in our code than in that of the native. For added to (rather than substituted for) the current sanctions of native morality we now have the religious sanction of heavenly reward and punishment, together with the perhaps more powerful sanction of mission surveillance and the chance of excommunication ; we have the continual example and teaching of the mission itself ; and finally a certain moral tradition which grows up in every community of Christian natives. Apart from such virtues as discipline, cleanliness, and a sharpness in response which are largely the result of secular training, we may thank the missions for creating in their pupils a keener sense of duty and of punctuality in obligation, of willingness, and I believe of kindness, truth, and honesty, all of which are essential to satisfactory relations between native and European.

Let us now turn to the intellectual content of Christianity, towards the more or less simplified dogma which is offered for native acceptance. It is here principally that we find the critics apply their strictures. In the first place it is said that the missions make no real converts. At most they succeed in laying a veneer of Christianity upon an internal structure of heathen superstition ; and further it is suggested that the teaching thus partially assimilated leads to confusion and disintegration.

It is, I think, beyond question that in the strangeness and sometimes the difficulty of Christian doctrine there exists some real danger. It must be recognized by all that conversion is largely a matter of degree, and that in the mind of the convert there often exists a strange medley of heathen and Christian notions. This is inevitable, and up to a point should give us no cause for anxiety. But the native, thanks largely to our imperfect means of

go-between. The effect of this transference is seen in the dwindling of sorcery under Christianity. Instead of blaming a fellow man, the sufferer must ascribe his misfortune to the wrath of God, or perhaps to the mischief of the Devil. This, it is true, may be psychologically less satisfying if he is seriously grieved or annoyed, but it will at least forestall suspicion and strife. It is one of Christianity's good marks that it has helped to throw the sorcerer, the general poisoner of good will, out of his job.

Turning finally to the emotional value of Christianity we shall admittedly find this hard to assess except in constant relation to its doctrinal content. But it is notorious that many who find difficulty in accepting its doctrines yet contrive to retain enough of their Christianity to derive from it a wealth of emotional satisfaction. It would appear to follow that it is the emotional satisfaction which constitutes for them the chief value of their religion; and this, I believe, is accepted as generally true for the majority of the religious, whether they be doubters or full believers. That is to say the main importance of Christianity, apart from its ethics, consists in its appeal to the emotions, or in what are somewhat vaguely called its spiritual blessings. We may take this to be pre-eminently the case with the native convert. Whatever doctrinal confusion may reign in his breast it will suffice if his ideas are clear enough to ensure him the emotional satisfactions which are enjoyed by more civilized Christians. If he can understand the major doctrines of a beneficent God and of a hereafter (conceived in a far more vivid sense than any hereafter of his own mythology), then he has, not only a more satisfying intellectual explanation of the supernatural, but also a basis for comfort and hope such as he has never known before; and furthermore he has found a point on which to focus those feelings of awe which form the material and dynamic of religion. Nor should one fail to mention certain more mundane benefits—his satisfaction in membership of the Church as a strong corporate body and particularly his satisfaction in the rites of worship and the Communion. Altogether there can be no doubt that Christianity in itself is of real value to the native, and save for the sacrifices which conversion so often entails there can be no doubt that he would welcome it with open arms.

of their own ceremonies while they practise Christianity, then their lives will be enriched by conversion, for it will be an added blessing. But if he insists that feasting and dancing and the performance of ceremonies are incompatible with Christianity, and that a man must put them away before he can enter into the Church, then after due subtraction has been made, the final question must be asked—whether the life of such a convert is any fuller and more satisfying than that of the heathen.

### *The Ultimate Aim.*

The difficulty of this situation should remind us that we have not fully settled the question of what is the ultimate end of native education. It might seem reasonable to have decided this question before beginning to write on the subject at all: but we have so far got along with a provisional definition, and the addition which I would make to it is really implicit in what has so far been said in this paper.

The provisional definition was that the aim of education is to fit a person for the society in which he is to live: and it was observed that this did not make full allowance for the development of individual personality. Now modern education, I believe, is in theory "individualistic." It recognizes that each human being has his own potentialities; and it aims at a full and balanced development of these, always with due regard to the needs and restrictions of society as a whole. This individualistic method may be observed in the education of natives as it should be in that of Europeans, though it is less a matter for those who have to frame a general policy than for the individual teacher (and considering the numerical ratio of pupils to teacher he will admittedly find it a large order). In attacking the wider problem we must be content to blur over the details; but the essential principle remains the same: the purpose of education is to provide means for the full and balanced development of human personality with proper regard to the conditions imposed by society.

We have seen also, however, that the society—or rather culture, as a less confusing word—is in a shifting, unstable condition; and it has been suggested that in considering a general policy of native education we may

relatively constant; or vice versa, the culture may change, perhaps be radically altered by some discovery or turn of events, and yet the society to which it belongs remains in its make-up unaltered. To repeat, then, the society and its culture are both subject to change, but they change in different ways and at different rates.

It becomes obvious that the existence of a society does not depend on the continuance of its culture unchanged. We are familiar with countless examples of discoveries, of new fashions and cults, of the acquisition of traits from without, all of them expanding and complicating the culture in which they occur. On the other hand we are familiar with the lapse or going out of fashion of customs, or sometimes with their suppression. Strictly speaking we may say that the culture changes with each addition or loss; but it would be absurd to say that the society changed with it. Whether the change be for good or evil; the society in the normal case goes on, adjusting its life to the circumstances.

Towards the beginning of this essay it was asserted that the administrator is under no obligation to preserve any culture as it stands and for its own sake. For his responsibilities are toward his people: it is they who represent the end. He will take the view that culture is made for man, not man for culture; and it is important to recognize that he is right.

If his people represent an ultimate end, then it may be said that their culture represents a means. It is in fact the means which they have so far perfected for making the most of their lives in relation to their environment and to one another. It is not permanent or immutable; nor is it ever the best means possible. It is merely the best which society has succeeded in devising for the time being. An event or a discovery or a gift received in contact with another people may virtually transform it. The change may be for the worse. But it may be for the better—and this is our charter for education.

### *The Imperfection of Culture.*

Culture being relegated to the position of a means it is as well to recognize further that the means is necessarily far from perfect. Strains and stresses, abuses and mal-

these are thought too fanciful let us adopt some plainer language which brings us much nearer to the actual fact of the matter. Customs are cultural habits; some are good and some are bad; yet all are as much part of the working system of culture as an individual's habits are part of his character. Some of them have outlived their usefulness, but society does not wish, or does not trouble, or does not possess the power, to throw them off. The bad customs remain to hamper efficiency or to perpetuate ill will and suffering: they are the bad habits of society.

In yet a third way culture is imperfect—because of its limitations. I have already touched upon this subject in suggesting that culture was merely the best means which any society has devised hitherto, or up-to-date, for living well; and also implicitly in dealing with the positive contributions which we could make under the Task of Expansion. It is often remarked that culture is cumulative; and it is hardly necessary, so obvious is the contrast, to point out that our civilization is immensely larger in content than the culture of any primitive people. What further is in store for ourselves we cannot foresee, but we can look back at the relatively cramped cultures of the native peoples and realize the possibilities of expansion that lie before them.

### *The Evaluation of Culture Elements.*

We have seen now that no culture is to be regarded as an end in itself, but only as a means, and a very imperfect one at that. It may be said further that no part of culture is to be evaluated simply by its relation to the whole, but by the degree in which it contributes toward the ends which the culture subserves. It is for this reason that Functionalism, when restricted to the purely sociological field, can only be of limited service in application to the problems of native policy and native education; for it does not furnish us with a final criterion for evaluating those parts of culture on which we have to pass judgement. We have observed the false tendency towards the idealization of culture as it exists, and it seems to the writer that sociological Functionalism must logically force its exponents into the position of conservatism. But it is no ultimate justification for any part of culture to show that it is bound up with all the other parts, entering with them into a functional unity. It must stand on other merits.



presumptuously to offer a list of my own. But there is at least unanimity enough in recognizing the existence of human personality with an inward pressure of needs and interests which may be well or ill satisfied, and of potentialities which may be well or ill developed.

It is our opportunity, with the native's future in our hands, to govern the trend of cultural development so that he shall have a superior means of developing this personality. It is indeed a responsibility, not made any easier by the fact that our ideas on the subject of personality itself remain indistinct. And, as I have frequently said, there is always some risk in tampering with a culture. Not only are we liable to hinder the functioning of something which, however imperfect, is still a going concern; but we may forget that the culture has for many generations met the needs and interests of society in such a way as to give satisfaction to the society itself. If we repress or remove any part of it, then we may unwittingly leave some such need or interest without adequate means of satisfaction, and this is to prepare the way for repression and trouble.

There is ample scope here for the collaboration of anthropology and psychology; indeed to determine the fundamental needs and interests of human nature is work for the psychologist himself, or at least for the anthropologist with a psychological training. Lacking such training the writer will be excused for fighting shy of technicalities and using instead some very ordinary words in pointing to one great danger which attends our efforts at reform. With the best of intentions we may succeed in taking half the amusement, half the enjoyment, and perhaps more than half the pride out of the native's life. The native, like the rest of us, must have his fun; he is entitled to his occasional excitement; he should be allowed to assert himself, and to strut, metaphorically and literally, in his paint and feathers; and above all he should be encouraged to keep his individual and corporate pride. His own culture gave him plenty of scope for entertaining himself and for preserving a good conceit of himself. Let us beware that we do not deprive him altogether of these means of expression and leave him bored, discontented, and with a sense of hopeless inferiority.

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