

The Growth of the Self and the Role of the School in Developing Key Intelligences; Some Reflections (3) on *Education* by T. Percy Nunn

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Abstract

Following on from our previous two articles on Nunn's work, in this third article we shall, with a similar approach to Nunn's book *Education*, focus on 'the growth of the self', 'the mechanism of knowledge and action', 'the development of knowledge', 'the school and the individual' in which he deals with 'the growth of self', and the role of the school in ensuring that each individual is able to achieve the fullest expression of his or her individuality and the fullest possible development of the social, emotional, instinctual, physical and spiritual intelligences, learning by doing, discipline and good conduct, and curriculum content. He was of course a pioneer in recognising that schools should aim to develop and produce individuals who can contribute to society through their capacity for creativity and self-expression, and through their passion for lifelong independent learning. In the conclusion we consider the way in which the atmosphere, the ethos and the culture of the school impacts on its pupils; the significance of 'willpower', which is able to arouse the 'integrative function' and becomes the base of human development Nunn described; the key intelligences to develop individual character. Finally we, in order to reform education in schools, give a strong admonition to our contemporary educational systems which calls competitive emotions from school children.

Keywords: growth of self, learning by doing, discipline and good conduct, curriculum content in the school, multiple intelligences

Introduction

In our previous publications – two articles on *Education: Its data and first principles*¹ (hereafter *Education*), which 'was a powerful influence on those teachers wishing to introduce progressive methods in the primary school' in the UK, written by Sir Percy Nunn (1870-1944) (hereafter Nunn, see Picture 1 and 2) - we were concerned with his beliefs about 1) the aims of education titled "The Aims of Education and Individual Life; Some Reflections (1) on *Education* by T. Percy Nunn"² and 2) the best means for schools to ensure that effective learning takes place, through classroom practice and choice of curriculum, titled "Individuality and Play in Education; Some reflections (2) on Education by T. Percy Nunn."³

In the former article, in terms of contemporary education we considered the development of IQ, EQ, SQ with reference to the 3D theory of intelligences proposed by Gary Foskett, through reflecting on Percy Nunn's view of the main aim of education. Children who might learn to love learning are able to grow into an enlightened and civilized personality/character. In the latter article, we concluded that methods of teaching

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might be adopted which encouraged individuals to assume responsibility for themselves and their own learning at an early age, and that such methods might also facilitate interaction, promote discussion and collaboration, and enable students to practice many key skills, including communication skills.

In this third article of our series on Nunn's book we turn our attention to chapters 12 to 15⁴ in which he deals with mainly the growth of self and the role of the school in ensuring that each individual is able to achieve the fullest expression of his or her individuality. Our main concern for this reflection, as ever, is with the extent to which schools currently address the holistic development of each child. Our awareness to this issue is, furthermore, that in many parts of the world school systems now appear increasingly to focus on preparing children for success in tests and examinations, in spite of the thoughtful opinion of all progressive educators, which is not the same thing as success in learning, success in life, or indeed in careers and work. We shall, therefore, abstract meaningful ideas from the viewpoint of the growth of the self and the role of the school, paying philosophical and educational attention to Nunn's words, and think about developing key intelligences.

The responsibilities for the introduction and the conclusion belong with Yoko Yamasaki and in the other chapters with Gary Foskett⁵ mainly; the whole article, nevertheless, was developed through our working collaboratively.⁶

The Growth of the Self ⁷

In this chapter Nunn considers the "passions" and "drives" that are part of each human's character— in other words, key aspects of the self which motivate people and direct their behaviour. For Nunn, the 'growth of the self' begins with such impulses, drives, dominant interests, instincts, emotions, appetites, etc. Nunn asks the reader to consider what schools can and must do to 'educate' children's passions and drives:

It is the relatively permanent basis of . . . individuality . . . is expressed in a unified system of thought, feeling and action.' (p. 142)⁸

He chooses to give a name to this complex of drives and impulses – *sentiments*.

. . . a sentiment is not a single state of feeling, but a *system* of feelings – that is, of emotions, appetites and desires – organized with reference to a particular object, and having a considerable degree of stability.' (p. 143)

And he considers how we as individuals develop and maintain our personal preferences and dislikes - the things we love, and the things we hate:

. . . a sentiment . . . draws into its empire a wide range of emotions, and gives exercise to high powers of aesthetic judgment and practical skill.' (pp. 143-4)

It is an ancient and profound truth that education should teach . . . [us]⁹ to love and to hate the right things.' (p. 144)

We conclude that the central duty of school teaching is to encourage loves the first step in teaching any subject should be to lay the firm foundations of a love [of it], by so presenting it [in ways that] *tempt the pupil to a joyous pursuit.*' (our italics) (p. 145)

Nunn is clearly drawing a distinction with *other forms of teaching that do not engage the interests and energies of pupils* – the type of schooling that merely insists on a set curriculum for all pupils, regardless of their temperaments or *sentiments*. Based on this view we are able to critique some problems of our educational systems that in both traditional and contemporary schools there are no concern about the pupils' attitudes or feelings regarding the curriculum and the style of teaching and learning that is imposed on them.

He goes as far as to say, with regard to the complexities of the human personality, "Sentiment acts like a gyroscopic wheel", and we agree that the analogy with a gyroscope is a good one. We would take it further, in line with our 3D theory of intelligences. As we know, gyroscopes are instruments that are capable of maintaining balance and stability even in the most turbulent and most unstable conditions. The simplicity and beauty of a gyroscope cannot be achieved in its human form if the individual is lacking in proper proportion and balance as far as the three axes of intelligence, IQ, EQ and SQ, are concerned. Hence the need for schools to concentrate on developing all three dimensions of the human personality.

The Mechanism of Knowledge and Action ¹⁰

Nunn, in this chapter, outlines the case for 'learning by doing'.

. . . the well-worn maxim, Learn by Doing; which means that understanding and action are so intimately related by nature that they cannot be. . . [parted] without loss. (p. 162)

. . . it is hardly possible to overestimate the value of practical work in teaching such subjects as mathematics, geography and science, especially in the earlier stages. Even where practical work is not feasible, a theoretical argument should generally be presented . . . [through] imagined experience, rather than in a purely logical exposition. (p. 162)

Nunn reminds us that such approaches are characteristic of Montessori schools. In such schools pupils not only learn practical skills through working on projects with their hands – they also learn "by doing" [i.e. through collaboration and cooperation] a wide range social and emotional skills. Social and emotional intelligences cannot be simply 'taught' – they have to develop through regular interaction and involvement with a wide range of one's peer group, and with individuals who are both younger and older. '. . . we have insisted . . . on the importance of basing moral training on vivid and natural social experience.' (pp. 162 - 163)

Nunn addresses the question of *will* placed in the core of self and 'free will' as the mechanism, and the individual's capacity for exercising his or her 'will'. He does so because he recognises that in school, and in life, positive things rarely happen and we rarely achieve things unless our 'willpower' is engaged. So what can the school do to build up willpower and make it a positive force in young people's lives? According to Nunn,

willpower is ‘a specially important type of behaviour in which the *integrative function* [i.e. the integrated intelligences] appears at its highest’. (our italics)(p. 173) Then referring to the philosophy of Dr. Montessori he mentioned:

. . .there can be no “training of the will” apart from the general process by which the *sentiments* are built up. Hence Dr Montessori is right in maintaining that to train a child’s will we must begin by leaving him free to work out his own impulses. For if he is constantly checked [i.e. prevented from doing something] or constantly acts only on the directions of another [i.e. a teacher or parent], there can be no building up of strong sentiments to be the basis of effective and well-regulated conduct. . . .we shall produce in the end a man who has never learnt to act from a wide and firmly organised *inner* basis; a man who will . . . face a critical situation in hopeless indecision, [or] break out in childish and inconsequent action. (our italics) (p. 174)

Nunn goes on to discuss different personality types and human ‘temperaments’– the sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, melancholic and cautious - and considers whether such ‘types’ arise from ‘nature’ or ‘nurture’. As to whether schools can do anything to modify children’s behaviour when they seem excessively one or the other of these ‘types’, Nunn says:

In either case, . . . [children] are, by the school age, characters which are alterable [only] with difficulty, if at all, and when [these characteristics are] present in a marked degree, [they] must be taken carefully into account in the management of children. Having stated the conditions [and] the problems they present, we must leave the reader to consider the solutions.” (pp. 175 - 176)

So what to do, if anything, if a child is too fiery, too extraverted, too introverted, too melancholic, too cautious, etc? In the next chapter of this book Nunn focuses on the development of knowledge and refer to ‘spiritual intelligence’ and its beneficial application, but first he addresses another issue.

The Development of Knowledge ¹¹

Knowledge arises from the ‘instinct of curiosity’. Visual perceptions are built up and developed into ‘concepts’ and ‘schemas’. According to Carl Jung; ‘our power of seeing and understanding the world around us depends upon a power to read ‘patterns’ into it.’ (p. 177) Direct, first-hand experience provides us with categories, concepts, or schemas, by means of which we can ‘take hold of’ situations before us. (p. 181) Education of our physical senses is vital to our direct engagement with our surroundings. ‘Perception, the earliest of intellectual activities, is the key by which all the rest may be understood.’ (p. 182)

Young children must be given a rich variety of first-hand experiences from which they can benefit, both in terms of developing the use of the physical senses, but also in order to drive forward the development of thinking skills and the imagination. Experience inspires questioning, reasoning, thinking and wonder, and creative thinking engages the imagination, speculation, and our powers of invention. We may consider how many of our schools work in this way.

He declares:

The inventive mind possesses in a high degree the analytic and synthetic powers common to us all. Unlike routine-bound minds, it readily separates the elements of things from their usual contexts, and it is fertile in new constructions. Above all, it has the energy that expresses itself in the strongly sustained purpose needed to make good use of those gifts. (p. 190)

Reviewing the whole discussion, we may say that self-assertion, as far as it is expressed in cognitive activity, has always the same immediate aim – an aim that may be described as the intellectual control of the world over against which the individual maintains his creative independence. (p. 191)

As the mind matures, there grow . . . three lines of conscious purpose, which, though they constantly come together, are perfectly distinct in character. These we may distinguish as practical, aesthetic and ethical.(p. 191)

We are able to replace here these theories with 3D theory and would regard them as practical/intellectual (IQ), personal/emotional (EQ), and spiritual/ethical (SQ). Through engagement with the aesthetic our artistic natures give form and beauty to ideas, observations, awe and wonder, etc, in forms that are accessible by direct apprehension rather than intellectual analysis, because human nature appears to have a powerful urge to express in some aesthetic and concrete way the things that are the most meaningful to an individual.

Nunn clearly believes that schools need to address all of these forms of human development, which is hardly the case in far too many schools when their main concern is with preparations for tests and examinations of a very narrow range of knowledge and understanding. He expresses that;

. . . great art often has the highest ethical value. . . .This remark brings us to the ethical purpose. . . .moral development begins in the compulsion a child feels to bring his impulses and desires in harmony with those of others. . . .as his moral insight deepens, he comes to see that, while the end of ethical activity is always individual good, that good can be realized only if it is identified with a universal good. Henceforward, ethical cognition is a search for the universal principles of conduct which *must* be followed . . . (p. 193)

insight, may feel that he is in touch with the very foundations of the world's reality, and may gain the completest vision of its tragic beauty. (p. 194)

In modern language and expression, this may be taken to mean that the sage, or wise person, is able, by using all of the intelligences, including intellect, the physical senses, intuition and empathy, to discover the true nature of reality, and to find in it enormous beauty and enormous sadness. This thinking of Nunn's is similar in many ways to the spiritual insights and intelligences found in Taoism¹² and Zen Buddhism advocated by Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki¹³ in Japan, in the sense of their basic philosophy without the human hierarchy. This brings us to

the concluding chapter, which, as we've already stated, concerns itself in part with spiritual growth and the role of the school in developing it.

The School and the Individual ¹⁴

Nunn describes school life:

To round off our task we must, therefore, consider more definitely the relation between school life and studies and the *spiritual growth* of the individual pupil.' (our italics) (p. 195)

The real question is whether our schools do indeed promote the spiritual growth of individuals.

Few things are more deplorable than the weakening of individuality, the chilling of enthusiasm, and the disillusion that so often attend the progress of [a child] through a school that has, . . . ,the reputation of being "good".(ibid.)

Can any of us doubt that many schools, in their quest for improved test and exam scores, dull children's enthusiasm for learning, or fail to awaken it in the first place? Or that many of those same schools create disillusionment in pupils who imagined that schools are places in which creativity, self-expression and the satisfaction of curiosity are allowed to take place? As it was in Nunn's time, so often it's the case still, in the 21st Century. Nunn goes on to say:

. . . the excessive use of competition – in which the school reflects one of the greatest evils that afflicts the modern world; for competition, like alcohol, though it may begin by stimulating, tends to bring men in the end to one dull, if not brutish, level. But behind and deeper than such causes one may suspect the influence of the erroneous ideas about the relation between the individual and society, which were pointed out in the first chapter (p. 3). There is the thought [in some traditionalists], working obscurely or openly held, that [good] social conduct involves the sacrifice of individuality, not its enrichment; that it means self-surrender, not *self-fulfilment*. (our italics) (pp. 195-6)

However, Nunn invites us to consider the case of;

. . . the cultured missionary who cuts himself off from civilization . . . [and a comfortable life] . . . [who] surrenders a great deal [for the good of others], but he does not surrender his self. On the contrary, his conduct is unintelligible except as the self-assertion of an unusually strong individuality. (p. 196)

In other words, in order to be of great service to others we first have to make ourselves into strong and independent individuals. Nunn is clearly against:

. . . the sin of exploitation in its myriad forms . . . the conduct of persons who, while making use of the gifts and labours of others, deny, in effect, the reciprocal obligation to put something of their own creation back into the common stock(sic). . . . social value or “utility” is the one criterion of good or bad conduct. (p. 197)

Nunn maintained that good conduct will always have social value.

. . . human lives, like works of art, must be judged by their “expressiveness”. . . . our bodies, or rather our “body-minds”, are meant to be temples of the Holy . . . [spirit], and . . . we . . . [must] make the building as fair as the materials, and the powers at our disposal, permit. . . .our ultimate duty . . . is . . .to use our creative energies to produce the most shapely individuality we can attain. For only in that way can we be, as we are bound to be, fellow-workers with the Divine in the universe. (p. 187)

In terms of our 3D theory of intelligences, this is what we would call doing everything possible to develop our spiritual intelligence, as well as our social and emotional intelligences. He mentions:

We conclude, then, that the idea that a main function of the school is to socialize its pupils in no wise contradicts the view that its true aim is to cultivate individuality. (p. 198)

Hence while the school must never fail to form its pupils in the tradition of brotherly kindness and social service, it must recognize that the true training for service is one that favours individual growth . . . (ibid.)

Thus we reach once more the principle (p. 145) that the proper aim of education is positive, to encourage free activity, not negative, to confine or to repress it. (ibid.)

He insists then:

What becomes, then, of the concept of *discipline* which is so essential in the traditional ideas about school training? . . .we must first distinguish between discipline and school *order*. . . . [Self] Discipline . . . is not an external thing, like order, but something that . . . [comes from] the inmost springs of conduct. (pp. 189-9)

Children must want to behave properly, with real emotional and social intelligence, and schools need to allow them to practice proper self-discipline, and not simply impose order through repression and the threat of punishment. Nunn believed that the best form of punishment is to simply exclude pupils from the regular, enjoyable activities of the classroom - assuming they are indeed enjoyable.

The wise teacher, then, will not be contented merely to repress the symptoms of spiritual sickness, but

will try by all possible means to remove its causes. (p. 201)

The conviction, once so deeply rooted in the teaching profession, that punishment and the fear of punishment are the natural foundations of school government, is gradually being recognized as merely a barbarous superstition. (ibid.)

. . . it is a sound principle to regard then [bad behaviour], in general, as a sign of mal-adjustment rather than of natural wickedness: that is, to take them as an indication that there is something wrong in the curriculum, the methods of instruction, or in the physical or spiritual conditions of the school work and life.(p. 202)

. . .while it [a school] should reflect the outer world truly, it should reflect only what is best and most vital there. A nation's schools . . . are an organ of its life, whose special function is to consolidate its spiritual strength, we might say, and to guarantee its future. . . .The school should be an *idealised* epitome or model of the world. (ibid.)

As to the controversy about the respective merits of a 'general' versus a 'vocational' education, Nunn says:

To school a boy [children] in the tradition of one of these ancient occupations is to ensure. . . that he will throw himself into his work with spirit, and with a zeal for mastery . . . And it does more. Work which carries a boy directly towards the goal of his choice, work whose obvious usefulness gives him a sense of dignity and power, often unlocks the finer energies of a mind which a "general" education would leave stupid and inert. The boy's whole intellectual vitality may be heightened, his sense of spiritual values quickened. In short, the 'vocational' training may become, in the strictest sense, "liberal". (p. 205),

We come now to the last of our problems: the problem of the curriculum. Upon what principles are we to decide what is to be taught and the spirit of the teaching. (sic) (p. 207)

The most obvious criterion is that of usefulness. . . . the plain man . . . [dislikes] the academic folly that cuts culture off from its roots in common life. He is right in thinking that that this tendency . . . does untold harm. . . . [His] criticism . . . brings us back to the true function of the school in relation to society (p. 202), and challenges us to examine the relevance of our teaching to the needs of life. (pp. 208-9)

Our view of the curriculum now shapes itself as follows. The school must be thought of primarily *not* as a place where certain knowledge is learnt, but as a place where the young are disciplined in certain forms of activity. (our italics) (p. 211)

If this was true in Nunn's time, then how much more true is it now, when computers and the Internet have

created not only an explosion of knowledge but have also made it easily accessible to anyone who has access to a library, or to a home computer and a broadband link? How can we possibly decide precisely what each child should know, and precisely what they should study? Essentially Nunn advocates teaching pupils how to become self-directed and independent lifelong learners, and also enabling them to become socially, emotionally, physically, instinctually and spiritually intelligent. He also believed strongly that schools must help pupils acquire the habit of thinking and acting *creatively* – ‘. . . the typical creative activities that constitute, . . . , the solid tissue of civilization.’ (p. 211) He clearly believed that pupils should become enthusiastic about participating in the arts and in science, and also in the humanities – ‘For these are the grand expressions of the human spirit.’

Nunn was a ‘green’ pioneer we called recently, an environmentalist, and an internationalist, because he thought schools should teach ‘the dependence of man’s life upon his natural environment, and the interdependence of human activities all over the globe. (p. 212) He believed that the development of spiritual intelligence (‘the religious spirit’) and ‘devotion to truth’ would create individuals who show ‘devotion and loving service’ to all human beings. (pp. 212 - 213) He also believed strongly that young people needed to learn through literature, through music and through the arts and crafts—weaving, painting, ceramics, calligraphy, woodwork, textile art, etc. Physical education, mathematics and citizenship should also be contained in the curriculum.

All of these areas of learning are clearly of value, but most valuable of all is a love of learning for its own sake, which the majority of pupils clearly do NOT develop in a rigid system that lacks choice, individuality and freedom, and which reduces all learning to preparation for tests and examinations. Nunn was particularly concerned about the ‘unsatisfactory state’ of religious education, which he believed ‘weakens the spiritual energies of all the civilized peoples’. (p. 213)

Thus a man may reveal the religious spirit in devotion to truth or to art, or in the loving service of his fellows ... (p. 213)

Nunn recognised the difference between mere theology, and a belief in God or gods, and what on the other hand we might term spiritual intelligence. ‘In religious training the first thing is to awaken and feed the religious spirit.’ (p. 214) His use of the word ‘religion’ is perhaps questionable, given that he recognises that atheists and Buddhists also seek spiritual intelligence and enlightenment, and can be seen as ‘spiritual philosophers’ who have no need of ‘religion’, since religion seems always to involve a God or deities. And he recognised that books and the finest literature also have more power than anything apart from actual contact with ‘noble characters’ to heighten the sense of life and of its values. Once again Nunn states ‘The subjects of the curriculum are, we have said, to be taught as *activities*.’ (p. 215) All subjects should be taught the ‘play way’. His final comments he reserves for the key issue of freedom and independence in learning.

Does that conception imply that every pupil shall be free to take from it [the curriculum on offer] or to ignore whatever he pleases? If so, would education be reduced to an anarchy . . . ? (p. 216)

His answer to this question is:

A normal child's appetite is as varied as it is vigorous, . . . Thus it is not often difficult to make him take his intellectual meals, providing the fare is properly chosen and attractively set out.'(ibid.)

And so Nunn concludes that a teacher who is brave:

. . . enough to dispense with all compulsions and skilful enough to maintain' good conduct in the classroom, would have no difficulties with allowing more freedom and more choice in the curriculum. What is more, . . . there would be in the school life as a whole a sincerity, a vigour, a dignity, that are hardly attainable under the *authoritarian* tradition.' (our italics) (p. 217)

And in any case he mentioned:

Do we really succeed in forcing unwilling students to assimilate what we think they ought to know? (p. 218)

Let us face the issue and admit that in our ideal school the ultimate veto lies with the pupil. (ibid.)

If the resistance persists . . ., it is better to cut the loss rather than to do violence to the pupil's nature. . . . we once admit that minds of varying types have an equal right to exist.(ibid.)

We stand at an hour when the civilization that bred us is sick – some fear even to death. . . .Thus the question we have debated is of *no* mere academic interest.' (our italics)(p. 219)

They[our children] have in them a creative power which, if wisely encouraged and tolerantly guided, may remould our best[society] into a life far worthier than we have seen or that it has entered into our hearts to conceive.' (p. 220)

With this optimistic thought, the book ends.

Conclusion

Having current awareness for education, as above, we have reflected Nunn's views on "the growth of the self", "the mechanism of knowledge and action", "the development of knowledge", and "the school and the individual". In "the growth of the self", through referring to 'the self-regarding sentiment', Nunn described the way in which the atmosphere, the ethos and the culture of the school impacts on its pupils – and insisted that there must be a positive atmosphere in which pupils are able to develop social and emotional intelligence and their associated life-skills. Every adult within the school must ceaselessly 'model', i.e. unfailingly demonstrate, high levels of social, emotional and spiritual intelligence. Nunn made some very important observations about

the ways in which the various intelligences act both as supports and as restraints on one another, if they are developed in equal measure and in harmony with one another. He pointed out that a ‘three-dimensional’ set of intelligences produced an individual whose ‘self’ is rounded, well-balanced, strong and stable. (p. 157) In “the mechanism of knowledge and action” he referred to the significance of ‘free will’ as the mechanism and the individual’s capacity for exercising his or her ‘will’. Willpower is especially important type of behaviour in which the *integrative function*, i.e. the integrated intelligences, appears at its highest, and in “the development of knowledge” he presented ‘perfectly distinct in character’, so ‘schools need to address all of these forms of human development’, and finally in “the school and the individual” he concluded that a teacher who is brave enough to dispense with all compulsions and skilful enough to maintain good conduct in the classroom, would have no difficulties with allowing more freedom and more choice in the curriculum.’

We are able to return here, therefore, to Nunn’s pioneering work about education in terms of;

- meeting *all* of the developmental needs of each child
- seeing children as individuals with diverse needs and abilities
- recognising that motivation is the key factor in successful learning in their school

Nunn mentioned, in fact, in 1929 after this book that ‘the basic principles of the New Education are to be found in a synthesis of some of the fundamental ideas of biology and philosophical or religious notion that man is essentially a creative spirit.’¹⁵ He was of course a pioneer in recognising that schools should aim to develop and produce individuals who can **contribute to society** through their capacity for **creativity and self-expression**, and through their passion for **lifelong independent learning**. Nunn was concerned that schools should aim to nurture these abilities. In too many countries at the present time there has been a return to the 19th Century practice of merely or mainly preparing pupils for success in tests and examinations. Without **emotional, social and spiritual intelligence**, as well as intellect, and without **originality and creativity**, adults cannot function effectively, and neither can society. Nunn was very aware of this, and therefore very concerned that schools should address these other key intelligences, which he thought of as the development of “character”. Nunn understood that there is even more urgency for schools to take on this responsibility where pupils come from homes where parents are unable (or only partly able) to assist their children in the development of these other key intelligences and attitudes.

Finally we would like to refer to the perspectives of the educational system and the need to remake schools. According to our views after observation for some schools in Japan and England, Japan relatively may be a country where most parents possess and are able to teach their children high levels of emotional, social and spiritual intelligence. But in many other countries around the world it’s clear from their levels of violence and social break-down that schools have a very important role to play in making up for the failure of parents to help their children to become non-violent and to have a value system that includes respect for others, politeness, concern for others, generosity, kindness, and so on. We, therefore, need to give a strong admonition to contemporary educational system which calls competitive emotion from school children.

Postscript

Understanding children and education by Nunn are partly attributable to his being a polymath and having many interests in addition to education and psychology, as Richard Aldrich describes:

Nunn was a polymath – astronomer, mathematician, musician, philosopher, psychologist and scientist, and a great teacher who could present the most complex ideas in simple form.¹⁶ Nunn gave evidence to and was on the drafting committee of the Hadow Report on *The Education of the Adolescent*.¹⁷

The Hadow Report had a great influence on the Plowden Report (1967) in which the child-centred ethos in the school was described. Again according to Aldrich;

After 1945 many features of New Education were incorporated into English education, especially in primary schools which received international recognition for their child-centre ethos. And in the 1960s, as British society experienced radical changes, the publication in 1967 of *the Plowden Report, Children and their Primary Schools*, demonstrated a renewed commitment.¹⁸

Looking back furthermore Nunn's active devotions to the New Education movement began in 1914, when he drafted the 'Conference Aims' of New Ideals in Education.¹⁹ Percy Nunn, as Professor of the University of London, delivered the keynote lecture entitled 'The basic Principles of the New Education' at the International Conference of the New Education Fellowship at Elsinore, Denmark, on 19th August 1929 (see Picture 2), and finally he took the position of the Chair in the English section of the New Education Fellowship in January in 1930.

Picture 1: Sir T. Percy Nunn (1870-1944)



(Source; Richard Aldrich and Peter Gordon, *Dictionary of British Educationists*, London: Woburn Press, 1989: 186)

Picture 2: Professor T. Percy Nunn as a keynote speaker



Standing—Dr. H. Rugg (U.S.A.), Mr. B. P. Fowler (U.S.A.), Mr. G. Mattsson (Sweden), Dr. A. Ferrière (Switzerland), Prof. R. J. Fynne (Ireland), Herr P. Högström (Denmark), Dr. R. Raup (U.S.A.)
Sitting—Dr. W. Boyd (Scotland), Mme Ferrière, Herr G. J. Arvin (Denmark), Mrs. B. Ensor (England), Prof. T. P. Nunn (England), Mrs. Chattopadhyaya (India), Colonel Qvist (Denmark), Miss C. Soper (England)
Mounted copies (sepia 11in. by 9in.) of the above can be had price 4/6 (\$1.25), post free, from the *New Era* Office

He is the fourth from the right together with main delegates, the International Conference of the New Education Fellowship at Kronborg Castle, Elsinore, Denmark, in 1929.²⁰

(Source; New Education Fellowship, *The New Era*, October 1929: 203)

Note:

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1 T. Percy Nunn, *Education: its data and first principles*, London: Edward Arnold, 1926.

According to Dr. Peter Cunningham, the book as a historical material we have considered ‘ . . . had been reprinted ten times in a decade.’ Through to our research in the library in Institute of Education University of London the book was firstly published in 1920 and reprinted in 1920, 1921, 1922(3 times), 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929(twice), as second edition revised in 1930, reprinted in 1930, 1931,1933,1934,1935, 1936, 1937, 1941, and as third edition revised and in rewritten in 1945, reprinted in 1947, 1949, 1962, 1963, and 1992. Since 1945 one chapter Mental Measurement had been added to the book after chapter nine, and “The “Play-Way” in Education” in chapter eight, originally it is chapter seven, was replaced with “Freedom and Education”. The third edition was used in the translation version into Japanese; *Jiko hyogen no kyoikugaku (Education to Self-expression)* (Tokyo:Meiji tosho, 1985) translated by Professor Otohiko Mikasa, because the chapter “The “Play-Way” in Education” disappeared from it.

But surprisingly the first translation of this book, in part, into Japanese appeared in the research magazine of *Kyoiku mondai kenkyu (Study of educational problem)* published by Seijyo Primary School in Tokyo, in January, March, May, and June in 1926.

- 2 Yoko Yamasaki, Gary Foskett, ‘The Aims of Education and Individual Life; Some Reflections (1) on *Education* by T. Percy Nunn’, *Bulletin of Mukogawa Women’s University*, 2010: 1-8.
- 3 Yoko Yamasaki, Gary Foskett, ‘Individuality and Play in Education; Some reflections (2) on *Education* by T. Percy Nunn’, *Bulletin of Mukogawa Women’s University*, 2010: 9-17.
- 4 On chapter eleven “Instinct” we would like to separate and publish to another article of special version, for our analysis on it requires different and specific ideas.
- 5 See on topic of philosophy of schooling for children, Gary Foskett, Assessing the Strengths of Eveline Lowe Primary School, Naruto University of Education, *Research on development of curriculum and teachers’ practical abilities for Integrated Studies: Report of GRANT-IN-AID for Scientific Research in Japan* (A, No; 12308009) (Terms; 2000-2002), March 2003:282-6.
- 6 See our other collaborative research, Yoko Yamasaki & Gary Foskett, Study on Child-Centred Schooling and Progressive Education in Eveline Lowe Primary School: In order to Develop Integrated Studies in Japan, Naruto University of Education, *Research on development of curriculum and teachers’ practical abilities for Integrated Studies: Report of GRANT-IN-AID for Scientific Research in Japan*A, (No; 12308009) (Terms; 2000-2002), March 2003:291-304.
- 7 *Ibid.*, Chapter 12:140-159,
- 8 Hereafter the numbers in parentheses mean page numbers in Nunn’s book, *Education: its data and first principles*, London: Edward Arnold, 1926.
- 9 Some words in square brackets are our insertions, and hereafter square brackets mean similar writing.
- 10 *Ibid.*, Chapter 13:160-176.
- 11 *Ibid.*, Chapter 14:177-194.
- 12 Taoist propriety and ethics emphasize the Three Jewels of the Tao: compassion, moderation, and humility, while Taoist thought generally focuses on nature, the relationship between humanity and the cosmos, health and longevity, and action through inaction, which is thought to produce harmony with the universe. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taoism> (03 Jan. 2010)
- 13 See Daisetsu T. Suzuki, *Manual of Zen Buddhism*, Grove Press Books, 1935.
- 14 *Ibid.*, Chapter 15:195-220.
- 15 Percy Nunn, The basic Principles of the New Education, New Education Fellowship, *The New Era*, October 1929:208.
- 16 Richard Aldrich, The New Education and the Institute of Education, University of London, 1919-1945’, *Paedagogica Historica*, 45, nos. 4-5 (August-October 2009):493.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 494.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 501-2.
- 19 Introductory, *New Ideals in Education, Report of the Montessori Conference at East Runton*, 1914.
- 20 See Percy Nunn, The basic Principles of the New Education, New Education Fellowship, *The New Era*, October 1929:205-8. The translation of this lecture into Japanese is published in the book written by Yoko Yamasaki; *Niiru shinkyoku shiso no kenkyu (A study of Neill’s ‘New Education’: A New Horizon of ‘Free School’ based on his Social Criticism)*, Tokyo: Ozora sha, 1998:341-7.

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