CHAPTER-THIRD

MORAL EDUCATION IN ANCIENT VEDIC INDIA.

“Inculcation of civic and social duties, promotion of social efficiency and the preservation and spread of national culture were the chief aims and ideals of ancient Indian education.”

3.1 INFUSION OF A SPIRIT OF PIETY AND RELIGIOUSNESS-

Religion played a large part in life in ancient India and teachers were usually priests. It is therefore no wonder that infusion of a spirit of piety and religiousness in the mind of the rising generation was regarded as the first and foremost aim of education. The rituals which were performed, the daily prayers which were offered morning and evening, the religious festivals that were observed with brilliant display in the school or the teacher's house almost every month, all these tended to inspire piety and religiousness in the mind of the young student. It was the spiritual background that was thus provided which was expected to help the student to withstand the temptations of life. The very atmosphere, in which he lived and breathed, impressed upon him the reality of the spiritual world and made him realize that though his body may be a product of nature, his mind, intellect and soul belong to the world of spirit, the laws of which ought to govern his conduct, mould his character and determine the ideals of his life.

Though the educational system thus provided the background of piety and religiousness, its aim was not to induce the student to renounce

the world and become a wanderer in the quest of God like the Buddha or Tulsidas. Even in the case of Vedic students, who intended to follow a religious career, only a microscopic minority used to remain life-long Brahmacharis, pursuing the spiritual quest, the vast majority was expected to become and did become householders.

3.2 FORMATION OF CHARACTER BY PROPER DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL FEELING -

The illumination and power, which men and women received from education, was primarily intended to transform and ennoble their nature. The formation of character by the proper development of the moral feeling was therefore the second aim of education. Like Locke, ancient Indian thinkers held that mere intellectual attainments were of less consequence than the development of a proper moral feeling and character. They declared a person of good character with a mere superficial knowledge of the Vedic knowledge is to be preferred to a scholar, who though well versed in the Vedas, is impure in his life, thoughts and habits. Indian thinkers were aware of this natural human tendency and wanted to counteract it by pointing out that character was more important than learning. One thinker goes to the extent of saying that he alone is learned who is righteous.

Virtue is knowledge. Evil effects of divorcing power from virtue, intellectual and scientific progress from moral and spiritual values, which are being so vividly illustrated in the west in the modern age, were well realized by ancient Indians; they have therefore insisted that, while a man is being educated, his regard for morality ought to be developed, his feeling of good will towards human beings ought to be strengthened and
his control over his mind ought to be perfected, so that he can follow the guiding light of his conscience.

In other words, education ought to develop man's ideal nature by enabling him to control his original animal nature.

Direct injunctions to develop a sense of moral uprightness were given to students by their teachers every now and then. The very atmosphere in which students lived, was calculated to give a proper turn to their character. They were under the direct and personal supervision of their teacher, who was to watch not only over their intellectual progress but also over their moral behaviour. Ancient Indians held that good character cannot be divorced from good manners; the teacher was to see that in their everyday life students followed the rules of etiquette and good manners towards their seniors, equals and inferiors. These rules afforded an imperceptible but effective help in the formation of character.

“The rituals which students occasionally performed and the prayers which they regularly offered every day were calculated to emphasise upon their mind the fact that the student life was a sacred one and that its ideals could be realized only by those who did not swerve from the strict and narrow path of duty”\(^2\). Examples of national heroes and heroines like Harishchandra, Bhishma, Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Sita, Savitri and Draupadi, which were prominently placed before students, also served to mould their character in a powerful manner. Character was thus built up partly by the influence of direct injunction, partly by the effect of continued discipline and partly by the glorification of national heroes, held in the highest reverence by society.

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3.3 DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY-

The development of personality was the third aim of the education. The feeling of self-respect was praised, the sense of self was encouraged and self-restraint developed by promoting the growth or development of the powers of discrimination and judgement. The student was always to remember that he was the protector and the torch-bearer of the culture of the race.

Its welfare depended upon his proper discharge of his duties. A well-trained youth, who had finished his education, was to be honoured more than the king himself.

It is but natural that such an atmosphere developed the student's self-respect in a remarkable manner. Self-confidence was also fostered equally well. It was pointed out that divine powers would cooperate with the student and help him on to the achievement of his goal, if he on his part did his duty well, poverty need not depress him. The element of self-restraint, that was emphasised by the educational system, further served to enrich the student's personality. Self-restraint that was emphasised was distinctly different from self-repression. Simplicity in life and habits was all that was insisted upon. The student was to have a full meal, only it was to be a simple one. The student was to have sufficient clothing, only it was not to be fashionable. The student was to have his pleasure activity for refreshing and entertainment, but they were not to be useless waste of money or time. He was to lead a life of perfect chastity, but that was only to enable him to be an efficient and healthy householder when he married. What the educationists aimed at did not result in self-repression, but only promoted self-restraint that was so essential for the development of a proper personality. Nor was this self-restraint enforced by Spartan
ways of correction and punishment. The teacher was required to use persuasion and spare the rod as far as possible. He was liable to be prosecuted if he used undue force. Self-discipline was developed mainly by the formation of proper habits during the educational course.

It may be further pointed out that the powers of discrimination and judgement, so necessary for the development of proper personality, were well developed in students.

3.4 INCULCATION OF CIVIC AND SOCIAL DUTIES-

The inculcation of civic and social duties, which was the fourth aim of the educational system, was particularly emphasized. The graduate was not to lead a self-centered life. He must teach what he has learnt i.e., traditions and subject knowledge, to the rising generation even when there was no prospect of a fee. He was to perform his duties as a son, a husband, and a father conscientiously and efficiently.

He must be hospitable and charitable, particularly emphatic are the words in the convocation address, emphasizing these duties. Professions had their own codes of honor, which laid stress on the civic responsibilities of their members. The physician was required to relieve disease and distress even at the cost of his life.

The warrior had his own high code of honor, and could attack his opponent only when the latter was ready. Social structure in ancient India was to a great extent independent of government. Governments may come and go, but social and village life and national culture were not much affected by these changes.
3.5 PROMOTION OF SOCIAL EFFICIENCY AND HAPPINESS-

The promotion of social efficiency and happiness was the fifth aim of the educational system. It was to be realised by the proper training of the rising generation in the different branches of knowledge, professions and industries. Education was not imparted merely for the sake of culture or for the purpose of developing mental and intellectual powers and faculties. Indirectly, though effectively, it no doubt promoted these aims, but primarily it was imparted for the purpose of training every individual for the calling which he was expected to follow. Society had accepted the theory of division of work, which was mainly governed in later times by the principle of heredity. Exceptional talent could always select the profession it liked; Brahmanas and Vaishyas as kings and fighters, Kshatriyas and even Shudras as philosophers and religious teachers, make their appearance throughout the Indian history.

By emphasising civic duties and responsibilities on the mind of the rising generation, the educational system contributed to the general efficiency and happiness of society.

3.6 PRESERVATION AND SPREAD OF NATIONAL HERITAGE AND CULTURE-

The preservation and spread of national heritage and culture was the sixth and one of the most important aims of the Ancient Indian System of Education. It is well recognized that education is the chief means of social and cultural continuity and that it will fail in its purpose if it did not teach the rising generation to accept and maintain the best traditions of thought and action and transmit the heritage of the past to the future generations. Anyone who takes even a haste view of Hindu
writings on the subject is impressed by the deep concern that was felt for the preservation and transmission of the entire literary, cultural and professional heritage of the race. Members of the professions were to train their children in their own lines, rendering available to the rising generation at the outset of its career all the skill and processes that were acquired after painful efforts of the bygone generations. The services of the whole Aryan community were enrolled for the purpose of the preservation of the Vedic literature. Every Aryan must learn at least a portion of his sacred literary heritage.

It was the duty of the priestly class to memorise the whole of the Vedic literature, to ensure its transmission to unborn generations. The emphasis laid on obedience to parents, respect to elders and teachers and gratitude to learned persons of the bygone ages helped to preserve the best traditions of the past. Especially significant rules were; a daily recapitulation of at least a portion of what was learnt during the student life and a daily tribute of gratitude to be paid to the literary giants of the past at the time of morning prayers. In later times, when archaic Sanskrit ceased to be understood, a new type of literature, the Puranas, was composed to popularise national culture and traditions among the masses. It was daily explained to the masses in vernaculars, and as a consequence the best cultural traditions of the past filtered down to and were preserved by even illiterate population. Devotional literature in vernacular also served the same function.

Body, mind, intellect and spirit constitute a human being; the aims and ideals of ancient Indian education were to promote their simultaneous and harmonious development. Men are social beings; ancient Indian education not only emphasised social duties but also promoted social happiness. No nation can be called educated which cannot preserve and
expand its cultural heritage. Our education enabled us to do this for several centuries.

Ancient Indians held that the individual exists more for society than vice versa; it was therefore the function of education to acquaint the individual with the culture of the race.

Ancient education was for piety and wisdom; it developed virtue, wisdom, good manners and learning.

3.7 IMPORTANT EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES-

Important educational principles and postulates accepted and assumed by ancient Indian thinkers were, education was regarded as a source of illumination and was expected to enable its recipients to meet successfully the difficulties and problems of life.

The educational system did not aim at imparting general knowledge of a number of subjects; its ideal was to train experts in different branches. Printing and paper being unknown, the educational system therefore took particular care to train and develop memory in order to ensure that what students had learnt during their college days should stand them in good stead throughout their life. Personal attention to each student was insisted upon to ensure a high degree of proficiency. In professional education the necessity of practical training was emphasised for the same reason. Education was for all. Since education was regarded as the best agency for improving society, it was available to all. It was not regarded, as the privilege of a lucky few. To ensure education to the largest possible number, it was declared that a man can discharge his debt to ancestors merely by providing proper education to children, whether male or female.
Things however changed during the first millennium of the Christian era, when Kshatriyas and Vaishyas gradually ceased to perform Upanayan sanskar to the Shudras. This gave a great set back to their literary education. As far as the professional education was concerned, it was ensured to almost all persons anxious to receive it, when the profession became hereditary; every family was expected to train its children and bring them up in the traditions of its profession. Society took several other important steps to realise the ideal. To ensure an adequate supply of teachers, it ordered that teaching was a holy duty which a Brahmana was bound to discharge irrespective of the consideration as to whether any fee was likely to be received or not. It made education free and held to public disgrace any teacher who would demand for fees. In order to bring education within the reach of the poorest, it not only permitted students to beg, but elevated begging into the highest duty of the student life. In order to ensure a reasonable maintenance to teachers, who were expected to devote their lives to the cause of teaching in the missionary spirit of self sacrifice, the public and the state helped learned teachers and educational institutions very liberally. Though ancient Indians held that all should normally receive the benefits of education, they have also laid down that persons who were morally and intellectually unfit to receive it should be excluded from its benefit; this was a necessary precaution to avoid waste.

They further point out that real scholarship cannot be obtained by superficial knowledge; impatience is a great enemy of learning. The rich and the poor have both to submit to stern discipline in order to become learned. Long continued and laborious preparation is necessary to acquire real grounding and efficiency in a subject. One who is lazy or takes superficial interest in several matters, or who wants to have a merry time
during his school and college days, cannot become a good scholar. Authorities insisted students to observe celibacy both in thought and deed. He can marry only at the end of his course, when permitted by his teacher to do so.

Ancient Indians were convinced that no good results would follow if education is begun late, in life. A boy who begins his education at 16 is not likely to bring any credit to his teacher. During our childhood, mind is submissive, memory keen and intellect receptive; it is only at this period of life, that it is possible to form good habits that may be of lifelong use to us. Ancient Indians have therefore insisted that education ought to commence in childhood. Parents themselves become the greatest enemies of a child, if their education is neglected during the childhood. It was held that the 5th year and the 8th year was the proper time for the beginning of the primary and the secondary education respectively.

To forget what had once been learnt was pronounced to be a sin. Plain living and high thinking was desired; In order to develop a liking for it the use of costly food and gorgeous dress was prohibited. Life is a hard and long struggle against circumstances; in order to prepare students for it, rules were laid down, with the intention to develop students into strong and hardy men with determined will and great enduring power. It was recognised that routine also play a great part in the formation of habits. The daily routine was carefully determined with a view to enable students to form good habits and master their subjects at the end of their course.

Ancient Indians had realised that association and imitation play a great role in moulding the character and improving the calibre of a student. Even a dull student, improves his intellect if he is in close
association with a brilliant boy and imitates his methods of study. One can now understand why our educationists have attached a great importance to sending a student to live under the direct care of a teacher.

The Gurukula system, which necessitated the stay of the student away from home, near teacher, was one of the most important features of ancient Indian education. Direct, personal and continuous contact with a teacher of noble character naturally produces great effect on the mind of the scholar during the submissive period of childhood and adolescence. The close association with elderly scholars, who had made progress in education and won the praise of their teachers, induces the new entrants to imitate their example. The invisible yet all pervading influence of established traditions of the institution naturally stimulate the student to identify himself with them. The system eliminated the factors in home life, prejudicial to the educational atmosphere and facilitated better studies; it however did not altogether eliminate the refining influence of the family life, because students used to come into indirect contact with it when living under the guardianship of their teachers, who were usually householders. It also served to tone down personal angularities of pampered children and made all students more resourceful and self-reliant and better acquainted with the ways of the world.

Gurukula was located in a secluded place or garden and in holy surroundings. Buddhist Universities like Nalanda or Vikramasila and Hindu agrahara were like modern University towns of Oxford, Cambridge or Benares Hindu University, independent educational settlements, where arrangements were made for the lodging and boarding of students who flocked in hundreds and thousands. They combined the advantages both of the town and forest life.
Association and imitation begin to influence the student not only from the time of his joining a school or Gurukula, but from his early childhood; ancient Indians therefore attached great importance to the family in their scheme of education. They held that the child begins to receive influences that mould its character and determine its efficiency right from the time of its conception. If Prahlada became a deep devotee and Abhimanyu a skilful warrior, the reason was the influence indirectly exercised upon them by Narada and Krishna respectively, when they were still to be brought in this world. It was believed that the impressions, which would be conveyed on the mind of the expectant mother, would be automatically transmitted to the mind of the child to be born. The mother therefore was advised to devote herself to the study and contemplation of the achievements and biographies of great national heroes and heroines, so that she may herself get a child that may be a worthy successor of theirs.

The ambition of the child was first aroused and its imagination induced not by the lessons it received in the school but by the stories it heard from its mother and grandmother. Well known is the part which the home influence played in shaping the career and discharging the imagination of heroes and saints like Shivaji and Ramadasa. The home thus not only prepared the child for the school, but also supplemented its work.

In pre-historic times, the family played a greater part in the educational system. At that early period, the professional teacher was rather rare; so generally the father was the usual teacher and the home the usual school. Several examples are preserved in Vedic and Upanishadic literature of fathers themselves teaching their own sons. The father himself was to begin the Vedic education, because it was he and he alone
who was regarded as eligible for teaching the Gayatri Mantra to the boy; help of another teacher taken only if the father was unavailable for the purpose. In course of time, owing to greater specialisation that became necessary, home education became possible only in the case of a few cultured families. Remaining families were however expected to take prompt steps to send the children to a teacher or a school at the proper time and supervise their lessons at home if necessary. Supervision of the education of the family wards was one of the most important duties of its head.

3.8 TRAINING AND ENVIRONMENTS IN WHICH WE LIVE DETERMINE OUR CHARACTER

Are human beings born with their mental, moral and intellectual characters and faculties rigidly predetermined, or can these be modified by education, and if so, to what extent.

It is not nature but nurture that determine our destiny. It is the training which we receive and the environments in which we live that determine our character and capacities. Young people, fortunate to have a series of successes, naturally feel that there is nothing impossible or difficult for man. Vedic Aryans belonged to this category and their age therefore did not much believe in heredity or natural endowments. This is expressed in one of the hymns of the Atharvaveda, where it is said that given proper education, everything can be accomplished. Even Indra owes his supremacy among the gods not to any previous merit or self punishment in guilt, but to his proper training during his studenthood. Parents expected some of the sons to become good priests, others brave warriors and the rest successful merchants.
Obviously they did not much believe in heredity and held that a good deal depended upon proper training and education.

Though natural talents play a great part, it was realised that they exist only in a potential condition in our childhood and would not flower into perfection unless they are properly developed by training and education. If a person receives proper education and the benefit of good training under a competent teacher, his qualities improve. That nature can thus be considerably modified by nurture seems to have been the considered opinion of ancient Indian educationists from about the beginning of the Christian era. Man is born with tendencies, which are conditioned by heredity but which are transformed into the qualities of human personality through a process of development and training. The caste system has got a long history and has undergone many changes during the last five thousand years. It was formerly much less rigid than now. Upanayana ritual began to fall into disuse in the case of the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas and this naturally gave a great set back to their Vedic education. Gradually they were reduced to the position of the Shudras and completely debarred from the Vedic education by about 1000 A. D.

The art of writing was not utilized for the purpose of preserving the Vedic texts for a long time. The Aryan theologians believed that if there was the slightest mistake in the accent or the pronunciation of the Vedic Mantras, a disaster would inevitably issue. As the Vedic Sanskrit was not the mother tongue of the Shudras, it was feared that Vedic hymns would be transformed out of recognition, if they were transmitted orally in Shudra families from generation to generation. In the eyes of the theologian, this would be a great disaster. Later on when female
education began to lag behind, and women as a class ceased to be educated in Sanskrit, it is interesting to note that the Brahmana theologians did not drew back from placing their own mothers, wives and daughters in the same category of the shudras and declaring unhesitatingly that they also were unfit for Vedic studies. Theological ill feeling or pride was not at the root of the exclusion of the Shudras and women from the Vedic education. Nor did it amount to a total denial of religious education; for women and Shudras were permitted to get religious enlightenment from the study of Smritis, Epics and Puranas.

It will be thus seen that with the exception of the exclusion of the Shudras from the Vedic education, the caste system for a long time did not result in restricting professions to particular castes. This was but natural. Teaching may be a fit profession for Brahmanas, but if some of them were intellectually inferior, their birth could not impart to them the necessary efficiency as teachers. The importance which in modern times is attached to the Institution or the Alma Mater was in ancient days attached to the teacher in India. This was but natural, for organised educational institutions came rather late into existence in this country. The person who takes charge of immature children and makes them worthy and useful citizens in society, was naturally held in high reverence. It was the function of the teacher to lead the student from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. The lamp of learning is concealed under a cover, the teacher removes it and lets out the light. The student therefore must be very grateful to him and show him the highest possible reverence. He is to be revered even more than parents; to the latter, we owe our physical birth, to the former our intellectual regeneration. From the Vedic age downwards the teacher has been all along designated as the spiritual and intellectual father of the student.
Without his help and guidance, no education is possible. He is in fact indispensable. Buddhists and Jains also attached equally great importance to the teacher. This importance attached to the teacher need not surprise us, for it is now admitted on all hands that neither buildings nor equipment exercise such influence on students as is exercised by cultured and competent teachers, who instruct as well as inspire.

With the rise of the mystical systems of philosophy in the age of the Upanishads, the reverence for the Guru became still more intensified; for spiritual salvation depended almost entirely upon his proper guidance. A competent and sympathetic teacher, would unreservedly place at the disposal of his pupil the essence of all his experience. In the modern system of education students can get their degrees by listening to their teachers in the classrooms and answering the question papers in the examination halls. Such was not the case in ancient India. Several times during his course the student was called upon to pass through the enthusiastic tests of learned debates, when he was called upon to defend his own position and attack that of the opponent in heated discussions. Powers of debate and discussion were thus remarkably developed by the time the student finished his education. Advanced students were also given opportunities of teaching the beginners in most of the educational institutions.

Since the teacher was held in high respect, he was naturally expected to possess several qualifications. The student was to look upon the teacher as the ideal person and regulate his own conduct by the example of his teacher. The latter therefore was expected to be a pious person of very high character. He was to be patient and treat his students impartially. Above all he was to be well grounded in his own branch of knowledge; he was to continue his reading throughout his life. He must
have a fluent delivery, readiness of wit, presence of mind, a great stock of interesting anecdotes and must be able to explain the most difficult texts without any difficulty or delay. In a word, he should be not only a scholar but also an adept in teaching; then only he would be a great teacher, as pointed out by Kalidasa. The teacher must further be able to inspire as well as to instruct; his piety, character, scholarship and cultured life should be able to exercise a penetrating and permanent influence over the young students sitting at his feet for their lessons. The duty to teach was obligatory; all students possessed of the necessary calibre and qualifications were to be taught, irrespective of the consideration as to whether they would be able to pay any honorarium or not. We have seen already that no regular fees were charged by ancient Indian teachers and institutions. The poorest of the poor could demand and get education from the teacher by merely agreeing to do household work in the teacher's house. Further, the teacher was required to teach everything he knew to his disciple; he could withhold nothing under the apprehension that his pupil may one day outshine him in the profession. Teachers were generous and large hearted. The relationship between the teacher and the pupil was regarded as filial in character both by Hindu and Buddhist thinkers; the teacher therefore had to discharge several duties in addition to imparting intellectual education and helping spiritual progress. He was the spiritual father of the pupil and was held as morally responsible for the drawbacks of his pupils. His extra-academic duties were varied and numerous. He was always to keep a guard over the conduct of his pupil. He must let him know what to cultivate and what to avoid; about what he should be earnest and what he may neglect, he must instruct him about sleep and health, and what food to take and what to reject. He should advise him about the people whose company he should keep. If he was poor, he was to help him in getting some financial help from people of
influence and substance in the locality. He was to arrange for his food and clothing. If the student was ill, the teacher was to nurse and serve him as a father would do his son.

The duty of student was to hold his teacher in deep reverence and honour him like the king, parents and god. His outward behaviour must be in conformity with the rules of decorum and good manners, he ought to get up and salute his teacher in the proper way, he ought not to occupy a higher seat or wear a gaudier dress. Reviling and backbiting are severely condemned. It however did not follow that the student was to connive blindly at his teacher's misconduct. The student should draw his teacher's attention in private to his failings, and dissuade him from wrong views if he happened to be inclined towards them; the duty of obedience comes to an end if the teacher transgresses the limits of Dharma. His commands were to be regarded as ultra vires, if they were likely to jeopardise the student's life or were against the law of the land.

Both in Buddhist monasteries and Hindu Gurukulas, the student was expected to do personal service to the teacher like a son, suppliant or slave. He was to give him water and tooth stick, carry his seat and supply him bath water. If necessary, he was to cleanse his utensils and wash his clothes. He was further to do all sundry work in his monastery or his teacher's house, like cleansing the rooms etc., bringing fuel or guarding cattle. This custom existed in the Vedic age; and was widely prevalent in later times also. Tradition asserts that even great personages like Sri-Krishna had deemed it an honour to do all kind of menial work in their teacher's house during their student days. It was held that no progress in knowledge was possible without service in the teacher's house. There were, however, limitations to this duty to work. The teacher was prohibited from assigning any work that was likely to interfere with the
studies of the student. The duty was further more nominal than real in the case of paying scholars. Poor students were admitted if they were willing to help the teacher in his household or farm work, this duty to work was effectively operative only in their cases. At Taxila the students who used to pay their teachers honorarium in advance used to stay in their houses like eldest sons, doing no household work and spending all their time in study. Free students, on the other hand used to do all kind of manual work for their teachers. They used to work by day, when paying scholars were receiving their lessons; teachers used to hold special classes for them at night with a view to see that their education did not suffer on account of their day's work on the farm or in the household. At Nalanda also secular students who sought free boarding, lodging and education had to do some manual work for the monasteries.

Public educational institutions, where teachers used to teach students admitted by the managing body, were not many in ancient India. The relations between the teacher and the student were therefore direct and not through any institution. The student usually went to such a teacher who attracted his attention by his reputation for character and scholarship the teacher selected such students who appeared to him sincere, zealous and well-behaved. The student usually lived either under the roof of the teacher or under his direct supervision. The teacher did not demand any fee and helped the poor students in getting food or clothing also. He nursed him if he was ill. The student naturally lived as a member of the household of the teacher and helped him in doing the household work if necessary.

Under such circumstances the relations between the teacher and the student were naturally very cordial and intimate. The mutual contact between the teacher and the student was not without mutual benefit. The
students taking the religious and literary education used to get up early in the morning before birds had begun to stir, about 4.30 A. M. Then they used to attend to morning functions, take their bath and offer their prayers. Vedic students used to spend a good deal of the morning time in performing various morning rituals connected with fire sacrifices; this afforded them practical training in the rituals they were expected to perform in their after-life. Other students contented themselves with their prayers and spent the rest of the morning either in learning new lessons or in revising old ones. At about 11. A. M. this work would come to an end and students used to break off for their meals. After the noon meal, there followed a period of rest of about an hour or so, and teaching started at about 2 P. M. and went on till the evening. Evening was probably spent in physical exercises. At sunset they offered usual prayers, attended to fire sacrifices, and then took their supper. Poor students, who had to work by day in the teacher's house or elsewhere, used to spend a considerable part of the night in studies. We should not forget that paper and printing were unknown so there was little of homework possible, except the revision and recapitulation of the lessons learnt in the teacher's presence.

The begging of the daily food has been enjoined on the student as a religious duty. The rule of begging was laid down for the student in order to teach him humility and make him realise that it was due to the sympathy and help of society that he was learning the heritage of the race, and being enabled to follow a profession that would secure him a living. This rule further removed the distinction between the rich and the poor and brought education within the reach of the poorest. It was also useful in reminding society of its duty and responsibility about the education of the rising generation. Civilisation will not progress if each generation does not take proper steps to transmit its heritage to the next. Hindu
thinkers therefore made it an incumbent duty for all householders to offer cooked food to the begging student. Educationists have pointed out that a student can beg food just sufficient for his needs; if he collected more, he would be guilty of theft. Similarly he could not have recourse to begging when his education was over. Society was morally bound to support every poor student who was honestly struggling to educate himself, when however he was educated, he was expected to stand on his own legs.

In richly endowed colleges like those at Nalanda, Salotgi and Ennayiram, arrangements were made by the college administration for the free boarding of students from generous endowments received for the purpose; begging food was not necessary at these places. Sometimes, as at Benaras, such arrangements were independently made by rich citizens of the locality. Begging food was not necessary at such places. It was felt that student's life should be characterised by dignity, decorum and self-discipline and should be devoted to acquire a grounding not only in learning but also in the culture and religion of the race. In order to infuse piety, it was therefore laid down that they should regularly offer the prescribed prayers and sacrifices both morning and evening. In order to inculcate good etiquette and manners, it was insisted that they should show proper courtesy and respect to their elders and teachers. In order to develop character, emphasis was given on moral earnestness; lying, slandering and backbiting were never to be indulged in. They were to observe strict celibacy even in thought and speech. Strength of mind and character is developed if we learn to deny to ourselves our natural desires and inclinations.

Plain living and high thinking was to be the student's ideal. They were to shave their heads clean or keep matted hair, no time was to be wasted in oiling, combing and dressing the hair. Food and dress were to
be simple but sufficient. The aim in prescribing these rules was to enable students to form a number of useful habits during the formative period of childhood and adolescence, which were expected to be of good use to them throughout their life. And finally students were to attend their classes regularly, listen to lectures attentively and master and digest carefully all that was taught before the school met the next day. Strict celibacy was insisted upon, but that for the purpose of promoting concentration in studies and the development of the body. At the end of the course, students were enjoined to marry.

Menial duties like personal service at the teacher's household were expected to be performed only by the poor students, who were given free tuition by the teacher, they were a mere formality in the case of the rest.

In medieval times the Matbas of the various religious pontiffs (Acharyas) used to organize small centres for higher education, which co-operated with the private teacher in rendering the valuable service of keeping the lamp of learning burning in a dark age when society was often over-whelmed by anarchy, interneceine war and foreign rule. Corporate educational institutions were first evolved in ancient India in connection with Buddhist monasteries. The Buddha had emphasised the vital importance of imparting systematic instructions to novices, who were required to be educated for ten years, not only in spiritual practices, but also in the study of the sacred literature, which required a good grounding in Pali and Sanskrit, logic and metaphysics. When Buddhist monasteries developed into big establishments from the time of Ashoka onwards, they naturally developed into centres of education. They were the counter parts of Hindu Gurukulas, where the Guru was the head, not of a family but of a monastery. At first they were intended for monks and nuns only, but later on for the lay population as well; for it was soon
discovered that the best way of getting a good supply of novices of the right type and of propagating the religion among the masses was to mould the pliant minds of the young generation by taking up its education. Hindu educational institutions, so far known, are all later than the time of the Nalanda University (c. 400 A.D.). It is probable that the starting of organised public institutions for education may have been suggested to Hindus by the transformation of Buddhist monasteries into colleges and Universities. Temple colleges started by Hindus were a natural reaction to the Buddhist monastic Universities. We can get a fairly good idea of the organisation of Buddhist Universities from the accounts handed down to us about Nalanda and Vikramagila, which were typical of their class. The whole establishment used to be in charge of a famous abbot (bhikshu). He was usually elected by the members of the Sangha. Character, scholarship and seniority were the factors usually taken into consideration. It was not till the 11th century that there was any education to speak of outside monastic schools. Demand for fees was strongly condemned in ancient India. No student could be refused admission even by a private teacher simply because he was too poor to pay any fees. A teacher guilty of this misdeed was declared to be unfit to officiate at religious ceremonies and was spoken of as a mere illegal dealer in learning. It was held that the cause of education was a sacred one; every teacher qualified to teach must teach as a matter of duty.

The relations between the teacher and the student should be based upon mutual affection and regard, and not on any money or reward. Society, which had disapproved the practice of charging regular fees, used to succeed in getting ample support for the cause of education by appealing to the religious and charitable instincts of the public. Vidyadana or a gift in the cause of education was pronounced to be the
best of gifts, possessing a higher religious efficacy than even the gift of land or bhumidana. Religion had a great hold over the public mind in ancient times and this spiritual exaltation of Vidyadana secured so wide and ample a response to the cause of education, both from the public and the government, that it used to become possible to impart free education at least to all poor students, wishing to derive its benefits. Society was always anxious to help the cause of education in a variety of ways. Even the poorest family was required to support the cause of education by giving a morsel of food to the poor and hungry student coming to beg food at the door at midday; to turn away such a student was pronounced to be the gravest of sins. Rich persons used to help the cause of education in more substantial ways. They would often engage the services of a teacher for their children and permit the villagers also to send their wards to study under him. Sometimes they used to take the lion's share in meeting the expenses of the local school; sometimes they would construct college buildings either as a matter of charity or in commemoration of some departed relation.

Some made grants of land to meet some recurring expenses. This was a combination of Vidyadana and Bhumidana, and was very popular. Those who were extremely rich would often found and endow schools and colleges. There is no Smriti which does not recognise patronage of education as one of the most important duties of kings; and as a general rule, rulers in ancient times used to vie with one another in discharging it. This they did both directly and indirectly.

Sometimes they used to found or endow colleges, as was for instance, done by the Guptas at Nalanda. On auspicious occasions like coronation they used to invite learned Brahmanas and found a colony of theirs, endowing villages to meet the expenses of the new settlers. This
was tantamount to founding a new college, for these Brahmana colonies used to develop into famous centres of education. Governments used also to grant lands or pensions to most of the learned Brahmanas that used to come to their courts. It was the king's duty to make such grants. It was the Brahmana's duty to teach, even when there were no grants. Each side was to perform its duty though there were no specific stipulations. Kings were giving grants to all institutions, without caring to control their policy or curricula. It helped the cause of free educational development. By showing encouragement to learning in a variety of ways, by securing ample patronage from rulers and landlords, by penalizing any stipulation for fees and by laying down a very high code of conduct for the teaching profession, Hindu society tried to make fairly efficient arrangement and provision for the education of the rising generation. The results show that before the decay set in, these measures for the spread of education proved to be fairly successful. Considerable changes took place in the curricula in the course of centuries. This is but natural; for the curriculum is intimately connected with the achievements and aspirations of a people. When the outlook on life changes or when new branches of knowledge are developed, extensive changes become inevitable in the curriculum followed in schools and colleges.

In Early Vedic age (C. 2000 to 1500 B. C.), the Vedic literature naturally formed the main topic of study in this period. Besides the sacred hymns, there were also some historical poems, ballads and hero songs in existence, which were also committed to memory by the young scholars, of the day, as they often helped the elucidation of many references contained in the Vedic hymns. Students were required to master the principles of prosody and encouraged to develop the powers of versification. Those who intended to follow the priestly profession had to
study the details of the rituals associated with the hymns they had committed to memory.

In later Vedic age (C. 1500 to 1000 B. C.), the mass of the Vedic hymns was classified in this period and as a result, the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda came into existence. Vedic students were expected not only to memorise the Vedic hymns, but also to explain their meaning. Learned discussions were a normal and important feature of the student life and young scholars were very anxious to come out successful in them.

In the age of the Upanishads and the Sutras (First millennium B. C.). The art of writing was known by this time, but its aid was not taken for this purpose, as it was believed that it would be irreligious to do so. The theory that the slightest mistake in the recitation of the Vedic hymns would not only prevent the realisation of the expected reward, but would also bring about a disaster on the reciter, gained ground in this period and necessitated the devotion of a large part of the energy of the rising generation to the task of the accurate memorizing of the Vedic literature.

In the age of the Smritis, Puranas and Nibandhas (1st century A. D. to c. 1200 A. D.)

Vedic studies usually meant the mere cramming of the sacred texts. Kings of this age were more disposed to extend their patronage to poets, who could compliment them by composing neat poems in their honour, than to Vedic Brahmanas, who could recite hymns, which neither they themselves nor their hearers could understand.

The teaching of the important works on philosophy, logic and poetics was hardly possible without exhaustive discussions pertaining to the views expounded and controverted. In these discussions there was an
investigation of the subject matter, distinctions and contra-distinctions were drawn, and an effort was made to show the reasonableness of one's position and the errors of the opponent. The students of the various schools of orthodox and heterodox systems of religion and philosophy used to listen to the exposition of their respective systems, deliberate on their natures, discuss their features, raise doubts on obscure themes, determine for themselves the main outlines and enter into discussion with the opponents. Reasoning and analysis formed the crux of the method of study and teaching. Indian teacher’s value was not their capacity to recite the sacred texts, but their remarkable ability in explaining obscure passages and offering illuminative suggestions on doubtful points. Since early times, debates and discussions have always played an important part in the literary training of students.

The training in debates made students ready-witted and developed their powers of speech.

The use of parables was often made in expounding obscure principles, as would appear from the plot of the Hitopadesa and the Panchatantra, where principles of politics are taught under the guise of telling stories about animals. The dialogue method was followed by many a philosopher.

It enabled the teacher to ascertain the reactions in the student's mind to his own observations. The value of comparison and observation was also realised by many teachers who used to develop the power of understanding of dull students by asking them to carefully observe new facts and compare them with those already known.

Students could not go to the class room without thorough preparation. There was a daily examination of every student and no new
lesson was given until the old one was thoroughly mastered. There were no annual examinations. If a student was intelligent and industrious, he could finish his education much earlier than is possible in modern times. The idle and careless student had not as pleasant a prospect of a merry college life as he has in the present age.

In order to make personal supervision effective, the cooperation and help of advanced students were enlisted in the cause of education. They used to guide the studies of the juniors under the general supervision of their teachers.

New lessons were given to students only when the teacher was satisfied after a searching oral examination that the old one was thoroughly mastered. The end of the education course was not marked by any lengthy and exhaustive examination, but by the pupil reciting and explaining the last lesson. Passing examinations and getting degrees, which dominate the present system of education, played hardly any part in ancient India. It was not the allurement of the degrees or the prizes but the thirst of knowledge or the desire to preserve the national heritage which was the main spring of the educational effort and activity. Moral training through the stories of epics constituted the curriculum at about 1200 A.D. The Vedic education had practically died down among the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas before the 11th century A.D. In the earlier centuries of the Christian era, the ritual was performed by these castes as an unmeaning formality.

Brahma originally meant prayer; the original meaning of Brahmacharya was thus the period of study of the sacred prayers or the Vedic Mantras. Since chastity was usually observed in this period, the term came to acquire the secondary sense of a period of chastity as well.
Teacher and pupil prayed for perpetual and perfect accord between them. All this was intended to emphasise that the relations, between the teacher and the pupil were sacred and progress in education was possible only if there was complete harmony between the teacher and the taught.

For a successful and brilliant career, what is most essential for the student is the possession of an efficient intellect. Health, wealth, good memory are all desirable, energetic and stimulating, intellect is also important. It is therefore quite appropriate that the prayer offered to the sun endow him with a brilliant intellect, and also give a proper stimulus to it. The prayer is offered to the sun because it was regarded as the one and universal source of stimulation for both the animate and the inanimate world.

The Guru charged the student to follow the well known rules of the student life and refrain from lust, anger, covetousness, laziness, pride, untruth and cruelty. The student was specially required to be always industrious and engaged in the pursuit of fresh knowledge. He ought to have faith in his teacher, who was required to teach him all that he knew.

After the teaching of the Veda is over, the teacher advises the student. "Speak the truth. Do your duty. Neglect not the daily study (of the Veda). After having brought to your teacher his proper reward, do not cut off the line of progeny. Do not swerve from the truth. Do not swerve from duty. Do not neglect what is useful. Do not miss opportunities to become great. Do not neglect the daily duties of learning and teaching (the Veda). Let your mother be to you like unto a god. Let your father be to you like unto a god. Let your teacher be to you like unto a god. Let your guest be to you like unto a god."
Whatever actions are blameless, those should be followed, not others. Whatever good works have been performed by us, those should be emulated by you, not others.

Whatever is given should be given with faith, not without faith, with joy, with modesty, with fear, with kindness. If there should be any doubt in your mind with regard to any duty or with regard to conduct, in that case conduct yourself as Brahmanas, who possess good judgment.

This is the true purport (Upanishad) of the Veda. This is the command. Thus this should be observed. "3

A wise man will indeed gather something from every quarter; a fool only thinks otherwise, and shows jealousy. Taking all things into consideration, a wise man should listen to and derive benefit from the discoveries or observations even of an enemy, if they are calculated to promote one’s fame and prosperity in this world.

The decay of moral education started with the advent of the British. The colonial interests of the British shaped the then educational policies of India. The development of education system during the British period was determined by the needs of the colonial powers that is the spread of English language and culture in the colonies.

3.9 Conclusion-

Inculcation of moral duties, promotion of moral efficiency and the preservation and spread of national culture be the chief aims and ideals of Indian education system. Teachers play a large role in life of students and they are the real moral instructors. Infusion of a spirit of brotherhood, truth and non-violence in the mind of the rising generation be regarded as the first and foremost aim of education. The regular practices and the daily activities which are performed, throughout the school hour, the programmes that are observed with brilliant display in the school almost every month, all these tend to inspire moral attitude in the mind of the young student. It was the spiritual background that is thus provided which is expected to help the student to withstand the temptations of life. The very atmosphere, in which he lives and breathes, impresses upon him the reality of the spiritual world and make him realize that though his body may be a product of nature, his mind, intellect and soul belong to the world of spirit, the laws of which ought to govern his conduct, mould his character and determine the ideals of his life.

The educational system thus provides the background of moral behaviour, its aim is not to induce the student to renounce the world and become a wanderer in the quest of God like the Buddha or Tulsidas. A person of good character with a mere superficial knowledge of the Vedas, is to be preferred to a scholar, who though well versed in the Vedas, is impure in his life, thoughts and habits. Indian thinkers be aware of this natural human tendency and counteract it by pointing out that character is more important than learning. He alone is learned who is righteous. Virtue is knowledge. Evil effects of separating power from virtue, intellectual and scientific progress from moral and spiritual values, which are being so vividly illustrated in the modern age, be well realized by
modern Indians; we therefore insist that, while a man is being educated, his regard for morality ought to be developed, his feeling of good will towards human beings ought to be strengthened and his control over his mind ought to be perfected, so that he can follow the guiding light of his conscience.

In other words, education ought to develop man's ideal nature by enabling him to control his original animal nature. Direct injunctions to develop a sense of moral uprightness are to be given to students by their teachers every now and then. The very atmosphere in which students live, is to give a proper turn to their character. They must be under the direct and personal supervision of their teacher, who was to watch not only over their intellectual progress but also over their moral behaviour. Good character cannot be divorced from good manners; the teacher is to see that in their everyday life students followed the rules of etiquette and good manners towards their seniors, equals and inferiors. These rules afford an effective help in the formation of character.

The activities which students occasionally perform and the prayers which they regularly offer every day emphasise upon their mind the fact that the student life is a sacred one and that its ideals can be realized only by those who do not swerve from the strict and narrow path of duty. Examples of national heroes and heroines like Harishchandra, Bhishma, Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Sita, Savitri and Draupadi, be prominently placed before students, serve to mould their character in a powerful manner. Character is thus built up partly by the influence of direct injunction, partly by the effect of continued discipline and partly by the glorification of national heroes, held in the highest reverence by society. Self restraint be developed by promoting the growth or development of the powers of discrimination and judgement. The student is always to
remember that he is the protector and the torch-bearer of the culture of the race. Its welfare depended upon his proper discharge of his duties. Simplicity in life and habits is all that is to be insisted upon. The student is to have a full meal, only it is to be a simple one. The student is to have sufficient clothing, only it is not to be fashionable. The student is to have his pleasure activity for refreshing and entertainment, but they are not to be useless waste of money or time. He is to lead a life of perfect chastity, but that is only to enable him to be an efficient and healthy householder when he married. The teacher is required to use persuasion, advise and attract students, so self-discipline be developed mainly by the formation of proper habits during the educational course. The educated is not to lead a self-centered life. He must teach what he has learnt i.e. traditions and subject knowledge, to the rising generation even when there is no prospect of a fee. He is to perform his duties as a son, a husband, and a father conscientiously and efficiently.

He is to be hospitable and charitable, particularly emphatic be the words in the convocation address, emphasizing these duties. Education be not imparted merely for the sake of culture or for the purpose of developing mental and intellectual powers and faculties. Indirectly, though effectively, it no doubt promotes these aims, but primarily it be imparted for the purpose of training every individual for the calling which he is expected to follow. By emphasising civic duties and responsibilities on the mind of the rising generation, the educational system contributes to the general efficiency and happiness of society. Emphasis be laid on obedience to parents, respect to elders and teachers and gratitude to learned persons of the bygone ages help to preserve the best traditions of the past. Body, mind, intellect and spirit constitute a human being; the aims and ideals of Indian education must be such, to promote their
simultaneous and harmonious development. Men are social beings.
Indian education must be such, which not only emphasise social duties but also promote social happiness.

View of an Indian must be that, the individual exists more for society than vice versa; it is therefore the function of education to acquaint the individual with the culture of the race.

Education must be for piety and wisdom; so it develops virtue, wisdom, good manners and learning.

Important educational principles and postulates to be accepted by Indian thinkers be, education be regarded as a source of illumination and expected to enable its recepients to meet successfully the difficulties and problems of life. Education must be regarded as the best agency for improving society, be available to all. Not regarded, as the privilege of a lucky few. To ensure education to the largest possible number, it be declared that a man can discharge his debt to ancestors merely by providing proper education to children, whether male or female. Teaching is a holy duty which a teacher is bound to discharge. Make education free, in order to bring education within the reach of the poorest. Teachers, are expected to devote their lives to the cause of teaching in the missionary spirit of self sacrifice, the public and the state, be ready to help learned teachers and educational institutions very liberally. Real scholarship cannot be obtained by superficial knowledge; impatience is a great enemy of learning. The rich and the poor have both to submit to stern discipline in order to become learned. Long continued and laborious preparation is necessary to acquire real grounding and efficiency in a subject. One who is lazy or takes superficial interest in several matters, or who wants to have a merry time during his school and college days,
cannot become a good scholar. Authorities insist students to observe celibacy both in thought and deed. He can marry only at the end of his course. Plain living and high thinking must be desired; in order to develop a liking for it the use of costly food and gorgeous dress be prohibited. Life is a hard and long struggle against circumstances; in order to prepare students for it, rules must be laid down, with the intention to develop students into strong and hardy men with determined will and great enduring power. Routine also play a great part in the formation of habits. The daily routine be carefully determined with a view to enable students to form good habits and master their subjects at the end of their course. Association and imitation play a great role in moulding the character and improving the calibre of a student. Even a dull student, improves his intellect if he is in close association with a brilliant boy and imitates his methods of study.

Direct, personal and continuous contact with a teacher of noble character naturally produces great effect on the mind of the scholar during the submissive period of childhood and adolescence. The close association with elderly scholars, who had made progress in education and won the praise of their teachers, induces the new entrants to imitate their example. The invisible yet all pervading influence of established traditions of the institution naturally stimulate the student to identify himself with them. The system eliminates the factors in home life, prejudicial to the educational atmosphere and facilitate better studies; it however does not altogether eliminate the refining influence of the family life, because students come into indirect contact with it when living under the guardianship of their teachers, who are usually householders. It also serves to tone down personal angularities of pampered children and make all students more resourceful and self-reliant and better acquainted with
the ways of the world. The mental, moral and intellectual characters and faculties, with which human beings are born, can be modified by education. It is the training which we receive and the environments in which we live that determine our character and capacities. Given proper education, everything can be accomplished. Though natural talents play a great part, they exist only in a potential condition in our childhood and would not flower into perfection unless they are properly developed by training and education. If a person receives proper education and the benefit of good training under a competent teacher, his qualities improve. That nature can thus be considerably modified by nurture, be the opinion of Indian educationists. Man is born with tendencies, which are conditioned by heredity but which are transformed into the qualities of human personality through a process of development and training. Neither buildings nor equipment exercise such influence on students as is exercised by cultured and competent teachers, who instruct as well as inspire. Teacher be competent and sympathetic, and unreservedly place at the disposal of his pupil the essence of all his experience. In the modern system of education students get their degrees by listening to their teachers in the classrooms and answering the question papers in the examination halls. Several times during the course the student must be called upon to pass through the enthusiastic tests of learned debates, when he is called upon to defend his own position and attack that of the opponent in heated discussions. Powers of debate and discussion are thus remarkably developed by the time the student finishes his education. Advanced students must be also given opportunities of teaching the beginners in most of the educational institutions. The teacher be held in high respect, and possess several qualifications. The student has to look upon the teacher as the ideal person and regulate his own conduct by the example of his teacher. The latter therefore is expected to be a pious
person of very high character. He is to be patient and treat his students impartially. Above all he has to be well grounded in his own branch of knowledge; he has to continue his reading throughout his life. He is to have a fluent delivery, readiness of wit, presence of mind, a great stock of interesting anecdotes, must be able to explain the most difficult texts without any difficulty or delay. In a word, he should be not only a scholar but also an expert in teaching; then only he would be a great teacher. The teacher must be able to inspire as well as to instruct; his piety, character, scholarship and cultured life should be able to exercise a penetrating and permanent influence over the young students sitting at his feet for their lessons. The duty to teach is to be obligatory; all students possessed of the necessary calibre and qualifications are to be taught. The teacher is required to teach everything he knew to his disciple; he could withhold nothing under the fear that his pupil may one day outshine him in the profession. Teachers are to be generous and large hearted. The relationship between the teacher and the pupil is to be regarded as filial in character; the teacher therefore has to discharge several duties in addition to imparting intellectual education and helping spiritual progress. He is the spiritual father of the pupil and be held as morally responsible for the drawbacks of his pupils. His extra-academic duties are varied and numerous. He is always to keep a guard over the conduct of his pupil. He must let him know what to cultivate and what to avoid; about what he should be earnest and what he may neglect, he must instruct him about sleep and health, and what food to take and what to reject. He should advise him about the people whose company he should keep. If he is poor, he has to help him in getting some financial help from people of influence and wealth in the locality. The duty of student is to hold his teacher in deep reverence and honour him like the king, parents and god. His outward behaviour must be in conformity with the rules of decency,
polite behavior and good manners, he ought to get up and salute his teacher in the proper way, he ought not to occupy a higher seat or wear a gaudier dress. Criticizing abusively and backbiting be severely condemned. It however does not follow that the student is to accept blindly his teacher's misconduct. The student is to draw his teacher's attention in private to his failings, and dissuade him from wrong views if he happened to be inclined towards them; the duty of obedience comes to an end if the teacher violates the limits of Dharma. His commands were to be regarded as authority, if they were likely to endanger the student's life or were against the law of the land.

In order to inculcate good etiquette and manners, it is insisted that students should show proper courtesy and respect to their elders and teachers. In order to develop character, emphasis is given on moral earnestness; lying, slandering and backbiting are never to be indulged in. They are to observe strict celibacy even in thought and speech. Strength of mind and character is developed if we learn to deny to ourselves our natural desires and inclinations.

Plain living and high thinking is to be the student's ideal. They are to shave their heads clean or keep matted hair, no time is to be wasted in oiling, combing and dressing the hair. Food and dress are to be simple but sufficient. The aim in prescribing these rules is to enable students to form a number of useful habits during the formative period of childhood and adolescence, which are expected to be of good use to them throughout their life. And finally students are to attend their classes regularly, listen to lectures attentively and master and digest carefully all that is taught before the school met the next day. Strict celibacy is insisted upon, but that for the purpose of promoting concentration in studies and the development of the body. At the end of the course, students are enjoined
to marry. The relations between the teacher and the student must be based upon mutual affection and regard, and not on any money or reward. Vidyadana or a gift in the cause of education was pronounced to be the best of gifts, possessing a higher religious efficacy. By showing encouragement to learning in a variety of ways, by securing ample patronage from landlords, and by laying down a very high code of conduct for the teaching profession, society need try to make fairly efficient arrangement and provision for the education of the rising generation.

It is the training which we receive and the environments in which we live that determine our character and capacities. Religion had a great hold over the public mind in ancient times and this spiritual exaltation of Vidyadana secured so wide and ample a response to the cause of education, both from the public and the government, that it used to become possible to impart free education at least to all poor students, wishing to derive its benefits. Society was always anxious to help the cause of education in a variety of ways. Even the poorest family was required to support the cause of education by giving a morsel of food to the poor and hungry student coming to beg food at the door at midday; to turn away such a student was pronounced to be the gravest of sins. Rich persons used to help the cause of education in more substantial ways. They would often engage the services of a teacher for their children and permit the villagers also to send their wards to study under him. Sometimes they used to take the lion's share in meeting the expenses of the local school; sometimes they would construct college buildings either as a matter of charity or in commemoration of some departed relation.

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Students not to go to the class room without thorough preparation. There be a daily examination of every student and no new lesson be given until the old one is thoroughly mastered. If a student is intelligent and industrious, he must be able to finish his education much earlier than is possible in modern times. The idle and careless student has not as pleasant a prospect of a merry college life as he has in the present age.

In order to make personal supervision effective, the cooperation and help of advanced students be enlisted in the cause of education. They need to guide the studies of the juniors under the general supervision of their teachers.

New lessons be given to students only when the teacher is satisfied after a searching oral examination that the old one is thoroughly mastered. The end of the education course must be not marked by any lengthy and exhaustive examination, but by the pupil reciting and
explaining the last lesson. Passing examinations and getting degrees, which dominate the present system of education, must play hardly any part in India. It is not the allurement of the degrees or the prizes but the thirst of knowledge or the desire to preserve the national heritage which be the main spring of the educational effort and activity. Moral training through the stories of epics must constitute the curriculum. Brahma originally means prayer; the original meaning of Brahmacharya was thus the period of study of the sacred prayers or the Vedic Mantras. Since chastity was usually observed in this period, the term came to acquire the secondary sense of a period of chastity as well. Teacher and pupil prayed for perpetual and perfect accord between them. All this was intended to emphasise that the relations, between the teacher and the pupil were sacred and progress in education was possible only if there was complete harmony between the teacher and the taught.

For a successful and brilliant career, what is most essential for the student is the possession of an efficient intellect. Health, wealth, good memory are all desirable, energetic and stimulating, intellect is also important. It is therefore quite appropriate that the prayer offered to the sun endow him with a brilliant intellect, and also give a proper stimulus to it.

The prayer is offered to the sun because it is regarded as the one and universal source of stimulation for both the animate and the inanimate world. The Guru charge the student to follow the well known rules of the student life and refrain from lust, anger, covetousness, laziness, pride, untruth and cruelty. The student is specially required to be always industrious and engaged in the pursuit of fresh knowledge. He ought to have faith in his teacher, who is required to teach him all that he knew.
After the teaching is over, the teacher is to advise the student to "Speak the truth. Do his duty. Neglect not the daily study. Do not swerve from the truth. Do not swerve from duty. Do not neglect what is useful. Do not miss opportunities to become great. Do not neglect the daily duties of learning and teaching. Let mother be like a god. Let father be like a god. Let teacher be like a god. Let guest be like a god.

Whatever actions are blameless, those should be followed, not others. Whatever good works have been performed by us, those should be emulated, not others.

Whatever is given should be given with faith, not without faith, with joy, with modesty, with fear, with kindness. If there should be any doubt in mind with regard to any duty or with regard to conduct, in that case conduct as Brahmanas, who possess good judgment.

This is the command. Thus this must be observed." 

A wise man will indeed gather something from every quarter; a fool only thinks otherwise, and shows jealousy. Taking all things into consideration, a wise man should listen to and derive benefit from the discoveries or observations even of an enemy, if they are calculated to promote one's fame and prosperity in this world.

The decay of moral education started with the advent of the British. The colonial interests of the British shaped the then educational policies of India. The development of education system during the British period was determined by the needs of the colonial powers that is the spread of English language and culture in the colonies.