CHAPTER XI

AN ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND EFFECTS

Having surveyed and assessed, in the foregoing chapters, the educational contributions of all the major national movements of India during the period covered by this work - from the beginning of the nineteenth century to 1947 - we have virtually reached the end of a long episode. We may now, therefore, cast a glance in retrospect and gather the various threads together by giving an assessment of the educational contributions and effects of these movements as a whole.

The educational contributions of Indian national movements - it may be stated at the outset - emanated from their common interest in education, resulting from their belief that ignorance is the root-cause of all social evils. The leaders of these movements conceived of education as the most potent tool for effecting the desired reforms in various fields - social, religious, political and so on -, for which they strived ceaselessly. This naturally led them to evince great interest in educational matters and also motivated them to start their own educational institutions.

By far the most significant contribution of these movements was their attempt to democratise education, so that knowledge could be disseminated among the teeming millions of the country. "So long as millions live in ignorance", said Swami Vivekananda, "I hold every man a traitor, who having been educated at their expense, pays
not the least heed for them."¹ In more recent years, G.K. Gokhale, one of the well-remembered leaders of the Indian National Congress, spoke in the same vein, "------------- an ignorant and illiterate nation can never make any solid progress and it must fall back in the race of life. What we, therefore, want and want most urgently is, first of all, a wide-spread diffusion of elementary education, an effective and comprehensive system of primary schools for the masses; and the longer this work is delayed, the more insuperable will be our difficulties in gaining ourselves recognised place among the nations of the world."²

The leaders of these movements were convinced that the Government's educational policy was not at all suited for this task, as it was based on the fallacious theory of 'downward filtration', and was also costly. They denounced this theory in no uncertain words, for, according to them, it could only create a gulf between the higher classes and the masses, and was based on the unrealistic presumption that knowledge automatically filters down from the former to the latter - it simply showed a poor understanding by the official bureaucracy of the nature of Indian society, characterised by class stratifications, due to which such a 'filtration' could never take place. Instead, they advocated a policy of cheap education and direct approach to the problem, for they believed that education, to be sufficient for the large populace of this country, must pour and not trickle. That the leaders of these movements were right is borne out by the fact that even "after more than a century of

2 - Gokhale, G.K. - Speeches; pp.74-75.
British rule, 94 percent of the Indian population remained illiterate in 1911, and 92 percent in 1931. The number of students receiving education in primary and secondary schools amounted to 13.5 millions only or 4.9 percent of the entire population in 1934-35.¹

Further, these movements took a sufficiently comprehensive view of the educational process, for they stood for an all-round development of the educand's personality. One of the most glaring defects of the then-prevalent official system of education was its lop-sidedness, as it laid sole emphasis on the intellectual aspect of the students' personality, by providing them with such bookish knowledge as had no significance for the other aspects of their personality - moral, physical, social and spiritual. As a corrective to such a narrow concept of education, the leaders of these movements advocated a broad and balanced aim of education. Swami Vivekananda, for example, laid great emphasis on the 'man-making' aim of education, whereby "character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one's own feet."²

Next, true to the religious traditions of the country, these movements were inspired by a profound spiritual idealism. Their educational ideology, therefore, bore an indelible impress of moral and religious fervour. This was, in fact, what gave a distinct nationalistic touch to their efforts in the educational field. The policy of religious neutrality, followed by the British, could never evoke any response from the leaders of these movements, for they knew that without religion, which constituted the fountain-head of lofty

¹ - Dutt, H.P. - India Today; p.78.
² - Swami Vivekananda - India and Her Problems; p.51.
moral character, a truly national system of education, based on the cultural genius of the people, could never be established. This weakness of the official system of education has been admitted even by English writers. For example, Arthur Mayhew says, "The identification of a necessarily neutral Government with a system of education has robbed that system of religious warmth, colour and significance, and the want of this has made the education unreal and unconvincing among peoples whose life, for good or evil, is fundamentally religious." ¹

The stress laid on religious education by the Arya Samaj and the Ramkrishna Mission movements apart, even Mrs. Annie Besant - an English woman - , the leader of the Theosophical movement, realised that religion constituted the most precious part of India's ancient culture and that it should, therefore, form an integral part of her educational system. "Religion", she said, "is to us the only sure foundation for the building of character, the development of true manhood, and our hopes of noble citizenship for these youths depend on the laying of this religious foundation, the only foundation strong enough to bear the weight of a national civilisation."² True to her such a tremendous faith in religion, she made it the very soul of the great college started by her - the Central Hindu College of Benares. "We are here to teach religion - Hinduism to Hindus,"³ she emphatically declared.

Though with the advent of the political phase of Indian nationalism, represented by the Congress, the religious tradition in

1 - The Education of India; p.67.
2 - The Besant Spirit, vol.7; p.63.
3 - Ibid; p.3.
the domain of Indian education became almost extinct, but the earlier national movements continued to remain animated by their original faith and conviction on the subject of religious education.

The next noteworthy thing about the educational work and ideology of Indian National movements was their intimate and sincere attachment to the ancient educational ideals and institutions of the country. The Gurukulas, started by the Arya Samaj, are certainly the most outstanding embodiments of the ancient Indian culture in the educational field. All those distinguishing features which lend novelty to them — emphasis on the formation of character having religious bias, strict adherence to the principle of Brahmacharya, compulsory study of the Vedic literature and Sanskrit, very close relationship between the teacher and the taught and the 'Ashrama' life — are simply the reproduction of the ancient educational ideals in the modern times. Although it is true that no other national movement of India can equal the Arya Samaj, so far as translating the ancient educational ideals into action is concerned, but the fact remains that all of them have held the ancient educational system and ideals of the country in high esteem and have pointed to the necessity of incorporating them into our modern educational pattern, to the extent it is possible. Even Raja Ram Mohun Roy — the greatest advocate of the Western education — believed that the 'Vedas' had a divine origin and hence they contain the highest truth; he even founded a Vedanta College of his own for higher study of Sanskrit and Hindu scriptures — especially the Vedas.

The great importance attached by these movements to the principle of 'education through the mother-tongue' constitutes their
another significant contribution to Indian education. Their leaders have been almost unanimous on this point. Even Raja Ram Mohun Roy—who was by far the greatest champion of the study of English language—did not like that a foreign language should be studied at the cost of native languages, and laid great stress on the improvement and popularisation of vernaculars—the language of the masses, for he knew that it was only through them that new ideas and knowledge could reach the lower strata of the society. In fact, he himself gave the lead in this direction by writing a number of books in Bengali on various subjects—Grammar, Geography, Astronomy, Geometry and the like, and that is why he is called 'the father of modern literary Bengali Prose'. In the same way, Mahadev Govind Ranade advocated the use of Marathi and Swami Vivekananda of Hindi as media of instruction, for these were the languages of the masses in those parts of the country where they worked.

It is, however, worthy of note in this connection that despite the advocacy of vernaculars by the earlier national movements, these could not gain sufficient popularity for a pretty long time, with the result that English continued to hold the field almost completely. The Indian youth, who had developed tendencies towards denationalisation under the first impact of the Western culture, took pride in 'out-Macaulaying Macaulay' himself and considered it below their dignity to use vernaculars as the media of their conversation or writings. It was only from 1880 onwards—when the national feeling crystallised into a real 'cultural self-respect sentiment' that a reaction started against English and a positive feeling in favour of vernaculars began to develop. The leaders of the Indian National Congress
laid special stress on the principle of 'education through the mother-tongue'. Mahatma Gandhi had denounced the predominence given to English in the national life of the country as early as 1906, in these forceful words, "To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them. The foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us. ------ we write to each other in faulty English; the proceedings of our Congress are conducted in English; our best thoughts are expressed in English; our best newspapers are printed in English. If this state of things continues for a long time, posterity will - it is my firm opinion - condemn and curse us."\(^1\)

Gandhiji was an advocate of Hindustani - a happy amalgam of both Hindi and Urdu - but, for medium of instruction, he advocated the use of regional languages, that is, vernaculars. The lead given by him in this direction was followed by other leaders of the Congress as well, with a firm conviction in the soundness of the cause they represented.

Another remarkable contribution of Indian national movements to education was their strong plea for a realistic system of education, wedded to the socio-cultural traditions of the country. Their leaders could never reconcile themselves to the characteristic Victorian belief that the British culture was superior to other cultures and that it could alone, therefore, act as the 'Massiha' of the whole world. Such a belief, they held, was misfounded, especially on the spiritual side in which West was no match for India. The fallacy of 'culture-superiority', put forward by the British officials, like

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\(^1\) - Patel, M.S. (quoted by) - The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi; p. 222.
Macaulay, by way of justification for the official policy of Westernising Indian education apart, the belief of the leaders of these movements was that it was fundamentally wrong to train Indian boys and girls in the Western mode and ways of life. Their contention was that a national system of education in India, as elsewhere, must be realistic in terms of the cultural traditions and social environment of the country. For instance, in very clear words did the leader of the Theosophical movement say, "Under a foreign system of education, no youth of any land can truly grow. Only with an education full of Indian simplicity, full of Indian purpose, full, that is, of Indian life, can Indian youth grow into Indian manhood, can India be herself."¹

That the official policy of 'substitution' was fundamentally wrong has been admitted even by English writers, as will be evident from the following two quotations:

"There is no doubt that men such as David Hare and Ram Mohun Roy, Alexander Duff and Macaulay strove to do what according to their lights, was in the best interests of the people of India. They failed, however, to realise what seems so obvious today - that an educational system is a delicate organism which may flourish in its own time and place, but which cannot be transplanted to a foreign soil and be expected to thrive in an alien environment."²

Another English writer has expressed the same view in a very cogent metaphorical style thus, "The Government, at the outset, in its desire to serve India by substituting its own culture for what

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1 - The Besant Spirit Series, Vol.2; p.77.

was indigenous, may remind some of the well-intentioned lady-elephant who stoned for her destruction of the brooding hen by sitting on the eggs."  

Lastly, laudable contribution was made by these national movements in the field of women's education. Almost without exception, they took a keen interest in the upliftment of Indian women who, oppressed by tyrannical social customs - most particularly that of 'purdah' - were steeped into a heart-rending state of ignorance and misery. The very first national movement - the Brahma Samaj - raised its voice in favour of Indian women. Keshub Chunder Sen did admirable pioneering work in this field. His Social Reform Association paid special attention to this problem. The two women's educational institutions - the Normal School for Girls and the Victoria Institute for women, started by the Association, were novel ventures in the field of women's education. The vigorous advocacy for women's education by Keshub Chunder Sen and the actual work done by him in this sphere of social reform, proved an inspiration to the leaders of the subsequent national movements who tried their best to keep the torch of knowledge and enlightenment among women burning through their educational efforts.

One thing that is remarkable in this connection is that the ideology which inspired these movements in the sphere of women's education was essentially nationalistic by nature, for they sought to educate Indian women in a truly Indian spirit, keeping before them the Indian ideals of womanhood. They did not, of course, deny them the study of Western sciences and literature, but at the same time,

1 - Hayhew, Arthur., The Education of India; p.105.
they were scrupulously against their imbibing the Western ideals of womanhood. They stood for such a system of women's education as could make them faithful wives and good mothers, sisters and daughters—an ornament of home. Most categorically did Keshub Chunder Sen denounce the Western ideal of womanhood, as entirely ill-suited for Indian women, by saying "I, for one, protest against these foolish ideas and projects of denationalising Indian women. At least, spare us the Crinoline. There is not room enough in the small houses of India for that huge thing with a large circumference. I hope and trust that if you desire at all to enlighten and alleviate the condition of Indian women, you will give them a solid education, not external refinement, not mere outward improvements in dress and diet, but solid education which ennobles and purifies the heart."¹ Even Mrs. Besant—a woman from the West—and the leader of the Theosophical movement in India—spoke in the same vein on this subject, "-----, permit me to say that you will be most unwise if you adopt for the education of your women, a mere copy of the education given to Western women. ----. What you want to do is to devise a system of education which shall make them ideal Indian women of ancient types.-----."² Swami DAYANANDA, the leader of the Arya Samaj movement, was also prompted by the same consideration while laying special emphasis on the study of subjects like 'Dharma' (Religion), Medicine, Mathematics, Arts and so on, by women, as the knowledge of these subjects is necessary for a successful home-life.

¹ Extract from his Speeches at Newington Butts, 1870; (compiled by Banerjee, G.C.); pp.49-50.
² Ancient Ideals in Modern Life; pp.115-16-17.
The above were, no doubt, significant contributions of the Indian national movements in the field of education from the national point of view, but their educational ideology and efforts suffered from certain limitations which need also be pointed out here. Firstly, the educational efforts of the earlier national movements—representing the socio-religious phase of Indian nationalism—were not all-inclusive, for they were confined only to the Hindu society. Secondly, they did not have any clear or coherent conception of national education. Thirdly, they were obsessed with a revivalistic fervour, and hence, in their efforts to revive the cultural values and institutions of ancient India, they were inclined to follow an extremist policy—which was especially true during the early years of the emergence of these movements. Fourthly, from the quantitative point of view, their educational efforts were most conspicuously inadequate, for, as compared to the number of schools and colleges run or aided by the Government, the number of educational institutions started by them was very small and the total number of students who received education in them was negligible. These institutions could, as such, serve only as models in the educational field. Lastly, they could not bring enough pressure on the Government to reform the official educational system in the light of the educational ideology upheld by them.

It goes to the credit of the Indian National Congress, which arose towards the closing decades of the nineteenth century and represented the political phase of the Indian national movement, that it kept itself free from most of the above limitations of the educational ideology and efforts of the earlier national movements. Though the Congress also upheld most of those principles of education which
were advocated by the leaders of the earlier national movements, but, in certain respects, its ideology showed new trends which deserve a special note. Firstly, it took a more secular view of national education, ruling out religion almost completely from its scope. This was a natural corollary of its general nationalist ideology which was wedded to the basic principle of secularism, without following which, its leaders believed, it could not be a truly national organisation, representing peoples of all religious faiths in the country. Secondly, it sought to harness education not only for social reform, but also for political freedom of the country. For, what was of utmost and immediate importance to the Congress was the political freedom of the country. Mahatma Gandhi explicitly said, "All those studying in national educational institutions must do all the things that the country has to do and must go through the same discipline as the country has to go through for the attainment of Swaraj, -----."¹ For the achievement of its political aim, the Congress tried to employ all possible means, including education. That is why, it laid special emphasis on inculcating patriotism in the students studying in National Schools and Colleges, and encouraged them to contribute their mite to the struggle for national independence. Thirdly, the Congress - more particularly the extremist wing of it - laid great stress on the principle of nationalist control of education. The leaders of the movement believed that so long as education was controlled by an

¹ - Address delivered before the National Educational Conference, held under the auspices of the Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad - published by Navjiwan Publishing House, Ahmedabad - 'To the Students'; p.196.
alien bureaucracy, having its own axe to grind, no real change in the educational pattern of the country was possible. A truly national system of education, they held, could be created only by Indian themselves, for even the most denationalised Indian, they felt, was still more Indian than an European. Lastly, under the influence of the Congress the movement of National Education became a more progressive and rational force, for, on the one hand, it became shorn of/earlier revivalistic obsession, and took to modern education - the study of Western literature, philosophy and sciences, without uncalled-for reservations, on the other.

As regards the effect of Indian national movements on the educational policy of the Government, it was almost negligible. The official bureaucracy, on the whole, maintained an attitude of complete indifference to the criticisms of its educational system by the nationalist leaders and did not evince the least inclination to reform it in the light of the principles and ideology upheld by them. Pinning their faith in their pet 'downward filtration' theory, they went ahead with their policy of educating the higher classes, with the result that the education of the masses remained badly neglected. They were never willing to undertake the full responsibility for the education of the Indian people. Further, they neither gave vernaculars their due place in the scheme of education followed in Government controlled institutions nor did they like to abandon their principle of religious neutrality in favour of religious and moral instruction advocated by the leaders of the national movements. The problem of women's education as well as of vocational and technical education also did not get any serious attention from them.
The most glaring example of how callously the official bureaucracy ignored the Indian viewpoint in educational matters is furnished by the arrogant and obstinate policy followed by Lord Curzon. While the Indian leaders demanded more wide-spread and cheap education for the masses, he took pride in giving more attention to higher education, and tried to make qualitative improvements by subjecting education to more strict Government control. The Indian Universities Bill of 1903, which raised a storm of protest from the nationalist leaders, was passed under the teeth of opposition by them in the Imperial Legislative Council. The outright and vehement opposition of the Gokhle's legislative attempts for compulsory primary education, a few years later, from the official members of the Council has the same tale to tell.

The reason for this official neglect of the Indian viewpoint in the educational sphere are obvious. The educational policy of the Government was guided by certain ulterior motives, having economic and political ends in view. It was devised mainly to ensure an adequate supply of cheap English-knowing clerks for their offices, and to strengthen the foundations of their political authority in the country by conciliating the higher classes. Since fostering of patriotism was an important part of the educational ideology of Indian leaders, the alien Government could never reconcile itself to it. For financial reasons also, the official bureaucracy did not want to undertake the responsibility of educating the Indian masses directly. For all these reasons, the Government was neither inclined to incorporate the educational ideology of Indians into its own system, nor did it like to sympathise with or encourage their independent efforts in the educational field.
The results of such a policy of deliberate neglect of the Indian viewpoint by the Government were bound to be serious, so far as the development and progress of education was concerned. This is borne out by the fact that even after about a century of British rule in the country, that is, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the educational position remained distressingly unsatisfactory. Even Lord Curzon - one of the most loyel Viceroyys that the British Government ever sent to India - could not help admitting the hard facts in this connection, as is clear from his following observations:

"--------there was a deplorable lack of coordination; there was a - vagueness as to fundamental principles; slackness had crept in, standards had depreciated, and what was wanting was the impulse and movement of a new life.--------

"We found Primary Education suffering from divergence of views as to its elementary functions and courses, and languishing nearly everywhere for want of funds.--------

"In Secondary education, we found schools receiving the privilege of recognition upon most inadequate tests, and untrained and incompetent teachers imparting a course of instruction devoid of life to pupils subjected to a pressure of examinations that encroached upon their out-of-school hours, and was already beginning to sap the brain power as well as the physical strength of the rising generation.--------

"But in Higher Education, the position was still worse; for here it was - a huge system of active but often misdirected efforts, over which, like some evil phantom, seemed to hover the monstrous and maleficent spirit of Cram."--------
"--------, I doubt if European Education in India, as we are conducting it, could be described as a preparation for living at all, except in the purely materialistic sense, where unhappily it was too true. But of real living, the life of intellect, the character, the soul, I fear that the glimpses that were obtainable were rare and dim."¹

As regards the quantity of education, the position remained equally hopeless, as will be evident from the following observations of the Hartog Committee:--

"Between 1892 and 1922, the percentage of male literates of five years and over in British India increased by only 1.4 percent (13.0 to 14.4) and that of female literates by 1.3 percent (from 0.7 to 2.0). The percentage of literates - for both sexes and all ages was only 7.2 in 1921. Progress has been extremely slow."²

Till the end of the nineteenth century, the leaders of Indian national movements could not do much to bring about a change in the official educational policy. The earlier national movements - the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical and the Ramkrishna Mission movements - disgusted with the official attitude, had already started their own independent efforts in the educational field, by founding schools and colleges on their own initiative. The leaders of the Indian National Congress, in the beginning, tried to bring pressure on the Government by agitating for certain educational reforms. In 1887, they passed a resolution demanding more technical and industrial education, and, in 1896, they asked for more places to Indian in

² Report; p.45.
Educational Services. They also stressed upon the need of rapid educational expansion and the use of vernaculars as media of instruction. This agitation for educational reforms was carried on by the Congress on constitutional lines, in the beginning, for its liberal leaders depended upon the sense of justice of the British and appealed to their instinct of generosity. But the educational policy and measures adopted by Lord Curzon, in utter disregard of the Indian opinion, gave a rude shock to their faith in the British. They could now see clearly through the educational game of the alien bureaucracy, of which Lord Curzon was the most typical representative, and realised that in framing their educational policies, the British officials were not concerned with the real interests and welfare of the Indian people, but wanted to use it simply as a tool to serve their own economic and imperialistic ends.

The rise of militant nationalism in the political sphere, towards the beginning of the twentieth century, gave a new edge to the nationalist opposition to the official educational policy. Due to the repressive policy followed by the Government in dealing with the demands of the Congress for certain administrative concessions and reforms, a marked feeling of hostility and resentment had already been brewing up among a section of the Congress leaders; the victory of Japan - an Asiatic power - infused national confidence among the Indian people, and the appreciation of the cultural treasures of the Indian civilization by Western scholars, like Max Muller, expressed in such high complimentary utterances as "Hail! Hail! Hail! May we hail a revival of thy past in our Western future." - developed a sense of 'cultural self-respect' among them. All these factors brought about a perceptible
change in the tone and temper of Indian nationalism. Under the growing influence of the extremist leaders, like B.G. Tilak, R.C. Pal, Aurobindo, Barindra Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, the Indian National Congress assumed a distinct militant tone.

This militant nationalism had its repercussion in the educational field also, which found expression in two ways: (1) a demand for 'Swadeshi' (national) education, implying (a) Indian control of education, (b) Indianisation of the content of education, (c) inclusion of Oriental classical languages in the curriculum, (d) greater attention to modern Indian languages, (e) use of vernaculars as media of instruction, (f) provision of vocational and technical education, (g) fostering patriotism among students, and (h) more wide-spread and cheap education for the masses; and (2) starting of parallel educational institutions independent of Government control - the lead in this direction had already been given by the earlier national movements.

The Brahmo Samaj of India had established some pioneer institutions for the education of women as well as for technical and vocational education; the Arya Samaj had founded the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore, in 1886, and the Gurukula, at Kangri, in 1902; Sir Syed Ahmad Khan - the great Muslim leader - had started the Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1877; the Ramkrishna Mission had also started founding a network of Students' Homes, and the Deccan Education Society - a great nationalist venture in Western India - had been founded in 1884. The leaders of the Congress, who were not unaware of these early nationalist efforts in the educational sphere, also started founding their own schools and colleges, under the impact of the Swadeshi movement in the first decade of the present century.
The foundation of the National Council of Education in 1906 was the first tangible expression of the militant Indian nationalism in the domain of education. It drew a very detailed programme of national education, starting from the infant stage right up to the university stage. A National College, with Shri Aurobindo as its first principal, and a technical institution (the present Jadavpur University) were soon established in Calcutta, and these brought in their wake a number of National Schools in the province. All this showed that the movement for national education was no longer confined to an ideological level, so far the Congress was concerned; on the contrary, it had started playing an active role in the educational field.

Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the movement for national education got a new fillip towards the closing years of the second decade of the twentieth century; he made the movement a mass-affair and hatched it up to the level of an open revolt against the educational policy of the Government. The Indian people now came to realise, once and for all, that the official educational policy was fundamentally inconsistent with their own interests, and that the existing educational institutions, because of their inextricable connection with the alien Government, could never give the type of education that a self-respecting nation needed. The result was that there was a more widespread and enthusiastic boycott of schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by the Government, and the establishment of national schools and colleges in various provinces in much larger numbers than under the impact of the Swadeshi movement.
How did the official bureaucracy react to this outburst of militant nationalism in the educational sphere? Of course, as long as Lord Curzon was there, the question of compromise with the nationalist viewpoint did not arise, for, as an administrator, he was temperamentally averse to such a policy; but did matters improve after he left India in 1905?

In the political sphere, the successors of Lord Curzon, no doubt, toned down their repressive policy and adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the Indian public opinion. This is testified by the annulment of the partition of Bengal and the unprecedented legislative concessions guaranteed to Indians through the Morley-Minto Reforms. But in the educational sphere, there was no going back upon the policy of Lord Curzon. His policy of qualitative improvement in education had become almost a fashion with the British officials, with the result that they continued to follow it with unabated zeal even after he had left the country. The most concrete example of this was the crushing defeat which the official members of the Imperial Legislative Council gave to the repeated legislative efforts of Gokhale for compulsory primary education in the second decade of the present century. The fact is that since, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the movement of national education became closely allied with the political struggle for national independence, the British officials assumed a distinct hostile attitude towards it and tried to crush it with an iron-hand, by arresting and interning a large number of students as well as teachers of national schools and colleges in the name of political security. It is obvious that they were not prepared to tolerate any-
thing which seemed to threaten their political hold over the country.

The result of this change in the tone of the movement for national education, as a part of the Non-cooperation movement, was that the rift between the Indian viewpoint and the policy of the Government in the educational sphere continued, more or less, on the same lines as in the days of Lord Curzon. As a matter of fact, the situation took a turn for the worse, as the Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, followed a policy of open defiance and persuaded students to participate in the struggle for freedom; and the Government, in turn, assumed a repressive and vindictive policy. This naturally made the conflict between the two more tense and bitter than before. Had not the Congress mixed up education with politics, the attitude of the Government would have, in all probability, not assumed such a hostile attitude towards the national schools and colleges founded during the Non-cooperation days. This is clear from the fact that the educational institutions founded by other national movements did not evoke any hostility from the official bureaucracy.

In view of the above strained relations between the Congress and the Government, the question of any reconciliatory gesture from the latter towards the movement for national education did not arise. This means that the efforts of the Congress leaders could not produce any favourable result, so far as the educational policy of the alien Government was concerned. For the implementation of the principles and ideology of national education, at the Government level, they had, therefore, to wait for better days - for the year 1921 when the Education Department was transferred to responsible Indian
Ministers in provinces, for the year 1937 when Provincial Autonomy was introduced in eleven provinces of British India, and for the year 1947 when complete Independence was ultimately achieved.

The transfer of educational control to Indian hands in 1921, which came in the form of Dyarchy in provinces, was by itself a significant achievement of Indian nationalism in the sphere of education, for it, for the first time, gave the Indians an opportunity to reform education at government level. Once the control of education came in the Indian hands, the long-cherished educational reforms could be introduced without any hindrance, as and when considered desirable - Educational Services were Indianised by discontinuing the I.E.S. (Indian Educational Service) in 1924, and organising Provincial Educational Service (Class I), instead; modern Indian languages were adopted as the media of instruction at the secondary stage in various provinces between 1925 and 1932; an unprecedented fillip was given to vocational and technical education, providing the highest type of such education in India itself, from 1921 onwards; and the Congress Ministries, when they came to power in 1937, launched upon large-scale literacy campaigns for adults, made intensive efforts to spread education among the Harijans, and adopted the scheme of Basic Education to provide free universal education to the children of the country.

With the out-break of the Second World War in 1939, the work of educational reform and reconstruction, that had commenced from the year 1921, got a set-back. The Congress Ministries resigned in 1940; the 'Caretaker Governments' of the Governors, which took their place, remained too busy with war-efforts to pay any attention
to education. In 1946, the popular ministries again returned to office, and shortly afterwards, that is, in 1947, the British Government transferred political power completely to the Indian hands. The attainment of Independence opened a new era in the educational history of the country—an era in which the educational ideology and work of Indian national movements found a free and unfettered opportunity to blossom forth into a full-fledged national system of education.