CHAPTER III

THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

The annals of Indian history, during the ancient and medieval periods, abounded in high traditions of learning, associated as they were with the names of such reputed centres of education as Takshhila, Nalanda, Vallabhi, Vikramshila and the like. The arts and sciences, literature and philosophy of India, flourishing and commanding widespread fame through the ages, constituted the brightest jewels in the treasure of her ancient culture. These high traditions of learning which have passed through many ups and downs resulting from the political and social vicissitudes of the times, have formed a part and parcel of the socio-cultural life of the Indian people from the earliest times down to the advent of the modern era. To put it in the words of Dr. F. A. Thomas, "Education is no exotic in India. There has been no country where the love of learning had seen such an early origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence. From the simple poets of the Vedic age to the Bengali philosophers of the present day, there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars."¹

¹ - Thomas, P.W. - History and Prospects of British Education in India; p. 4.
of education, prevalent in the country when the British came here, as 'hopelessly inadequate and ridiculously useless'. By turning and twisting facts, they have tried to show that the British, when they came in this country, found themselves in an educational vacuum, that learning and enlightenment were more or less, non-existent, and that the natives of the country were steeped into a pitiable state of ignorance, conservatism and superstitious beliefs.

No doubt, at the beginning of the 17th century, due to general political and administrative instability - caused by frequent foreign invasions and the weakening of the Central Government's authority under the decadent Muslim rule - the traditional current of indigenous education was at a low ebb, it is, however, not a travesty of truth to say that the state of education in India, even at this period, was higher than that existing in most of the European countries then. The viewpoint of Sir Philip Hartog and others of his type would invariably look erroneous and misleading if we survey the large number of indigenous institutions then existing in the country and doing remarkable service in the field of education. As the late Sir R.R. Paranjpe observed, "...Officials and non-officials who lived in the fifties and sixties of the last century have, like Adam, admitted the existence of a school in every village. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there existed a fairly widespread organization for primary education in most parts of India. In Madras Presidency Sir Thomas Munro found 'a primary school in every village' (Mall - History of British India, Vol.I, p.562, 4th edition). In Bengal, Ward discovered that 'almost all villages possessed schools for teaching, writing and elementary arithmetic (Ward - View of the Hindoos, Vol.I, p.160)."
In Falva, which was for more than half a century suffering from continuous anarchy, Malcolm noticed that 'every village, with about a hundred houses, had an elementary school at the time of its coming under the British suzerainty' (Malcolm - Memoirs of Central India and Falva, Vol.II, p.150). 

KINDS OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Educational surveys undertaken by the official and non-official agencies during the beginning of the nineteenth century reveal the existence of two types of educational institutions in the different parts of the country. Firstly, there were the Elementary Schools meant for imparting education to the masses. These Elementary Schools were either Persian Schools teaching through the medium of Persian which, being the court-language, was held in high esteem then or the schools teaching through the medium of modern Indian languages. The instruction -- imparted in these two types of Elementary institutions was of a simple nature, confined mostly to three R's and designed to be of some practical utility for the child in his future life.

The second type of institutions, existing side by side with these Elementary Schools, were the schools of higher learning which sought to impart a more advanced and theoretical kind of knowledge, which, in those days, meant religious instruction calculated to produce men well-versed in religious scriptures and philosophy. By their very nature, these schools of higher learning were, therefore, the monopoly of the priestly class and were divorced from mundane studies. Hindus and Muslims maintained separate schools of higher learning for their children.

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1 - Progress of Education; July-1940; p.38.
The indigenous education that existed in the different parts of the country at the beginning of the 19th century may be depicted as below:–

**INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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Elementary Education    Higher Education
  
Persian schools teaching through modern Indian languages
  
Fathshalas of Hindus
Madarsahs of Muslims
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As to the number of these indigenous institutions, the data collected by Adam in his third report (1838), as a result of his findings into the state of education in the 5 districts of Bengal, is fairly revealing. (Please see the table No. I – on page 47).

One thing which is remarkable in this connection is that, besides these formal institutions of education, there existed also a large number of centres of domestic instruction which are excluded from the above figures. Howsoever rudimentary the instruction given in these centres, the fact remains that they were an important agency of education and existed in sufficiently large numbers. This is borne out by the following figures collected by Adam in one Thana from each of the 5 districts of his investigation:–

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Number of centres for domestic instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Murshidabad</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thana Deulatbazar</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thana Nagulia</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thana Culna</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thana Jehanabad</td>
<td>560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thana Bhawara</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,747</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE NO. I.

STATISTICS OF INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS GIVEN BY WILLIAM ADAM *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Bengali</th>
<th>Hindi</th>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Persian</th>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murshidabad</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birbhum</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>544</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burdwan</td>
<td>629+1(Infants)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>931</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bihar</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>605</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirhut</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>374</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,567</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THEIR NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Elementary schools, which were by far the most popular agencies of education to the masses, were essentially secular in their character, for they did not cater to the educational needs of any particular religious community, Hindu or Muslim. They were open to all and sundry. As regards the instruction imparted in them, it was of an elementary nature, mostly confined to the learning of 3 Rs and the subjects of practical utility.

Schools of learning were different in nature. Narrow in scope and denominational in character, they sought to impart only religious education to their students. Their aim was to turn out Pandits and Foulvies, well versed in their respective religions. They were more often than not attached to local temples or mosques and were manned by the high dignitaries of the Hindu and Muslim religions. They were neither the agencies of popular education nor had they anything to do with the teaching of such practical subjects as could have any utility in the mundane affairs of the community. Medieval in their approach, conservative in their tone and dogmatic in their spirit, these schools stood cut off from the contemporary current of popular educational consciousness.

Compared with these two sets of formal educational agencies, the centres of domestic instruction were purely informal in nature. In fact, these centres were devised to impart to the younger generation the traditional stock of the communities' culture, consisting of its language, religion, literature, customs and the vocational efficiency. These centres of domestic instruction were popular mostly with the commercial and trading classes who wanted to give their children the
knowledge and practical efficiency necessary for pulling on smoothly with their respective family trades. Instruction in them was imparted through the mother-tongue. The system was pretty cheap, for it required no professional skill or training, and was given to the younger ones by the elders of the family. Though considered inferior to the systematic instruction given in the formal schools of learning, the system of domestic instruction was in great vogue, as will be evident from the report of the Collector of Madras, submitted in compliance of the Minute of Sir Thomas Munroe, dated 25th June, 1922, saying that for every boy in a school, there were five under domestic instruction.

ORGANISATION

So far as the elementary schools are concerned, their organisation was very simple. They had no buildings of their own, and, as such, were held in the house of the teacher or the patron, or sometimes also in the open air. The equipment used in these schools was also very simple. There were no books or note-books. Only locally made wooden slates and chalk-pencils were used by the pupils. Most of the teaching was oral. There was no hard and fast routine in these schools; there were no regular classes, no fixed hours of study, no time-table, and no rules of admission. Everything depended upon the implicit and casual understanding existing between the teacher and his pupils.

Teachers in these elementary schools were men of ordinary learning and knowledge. They took to teaching only as a side-work, and had some other profession or trade as their regular and whole-time occupation. Majority of teachers came from the Brahmin class; teachers from other castes were very few. The emoluments which were paid to
these teachers were neither fixed nor regular. Only casual remunera-
tion in the form of collections or occasional presents and gifts from
the parents of the students was received by them. The total remune-
ration and the mode of its payment differed from one place to another.

Most of these elementary schools used to be run on a very
small scale, so far as their enrolment was concerned. Most of them
had a very small number of students varying from one to ten or fifteen.
There were some bigger schools also where the number of students some-
times ran into three figures, but such schools were very few. The bulk
of students in these schools came from the upper classes, but they
had also students from the lower strata of society, such as, Wannies,
Prabhus, Sonars and Banias. Only the children from the Harijan class
were not admitted. The presence of girls in these schools was also a
rare thing.

As regards the Schools of Learning, their organisation was
on communal lines. Muslims and Hindus maintained their separate
schools of learning. The very division of these institutions into
Pathshalas and Madarssahs was based on communal considerations. Path-
shalas were institutions run almost solely by Brahmin-Hindus and were
meant primarily for the children of this class. Madarssahs, on the
other hand, were run by Muslims and were meant primarily for the
children of this community. The former concentrated on the study
of Hindu religion and the latter on Muslim religion and scriptures.
Of course, the organisation of these two sets of schools of learning
was not communal in the sense that they had any attitude of hatred or
hostility towards each other; they were communal in the sense that
they catered to the educational needs of the two communities separately,
and were confined to the study of their respective religions.
The orthodox communal organisation of these Pathshalas and Madarssahs apart, they had a number of features which were very much common to both of them. The most outstanding of these were:

(i) They had nothing to do with the state, in as much as, for their maintenance, they did not depend upon state-grant. On the other hand, they received donations, endowments and pecuniary assistance from rich citizens, especially those with a religious bent of mind.

(ii) The teachers in both were men of learning. They enjoyed reputation for their knowledge and scholarship in the field of their respective religions.

(iii) Instruction in both was imparted gratis. No fees were charged from the students.

(iv) Both used classical languages as their medium of instruction. Sanskrit was used in Pathshalas and Persian or Arabic in Madarssahs.

(v) Women-students were conspicuous by their absence in both.

(vi) Unlike the teachers in elementary schools, the teachers in these both types of schools devoted whole of their time in teaching. They did not work as part-time teachers.

(vii) Lastly, the remuneration of teachers in both was usually low. It was, however, higher than that of the elementary school teachers.

CURRICULUM AND METHODS OF TEACHING

The curriculum of these Schools of Learning was almost completely religious. This was due to the fact that the aim of these schools was not to produce men of letters but men of religion.
Hence secular subjects were ignored. Pathshalas, teaching through the medium of Sanskrit, strived to produce learned Pandits and Madarssahs, teaching through the medium of Arabic or Persian, sought to produce learned Moulvies. As a matter of fact, the very concept of higher education in those days was narrow. It was confined to an intensive and profound study of religious scriptures, mythology and philosophy. As such, Pathshalas and Madarssahs, which were the institutions of higher learning amongst the Hindus and Muslims respectively, concentrated on the study of their religions as intensively as possible.

The curriculum of Elementary Schools was, however, immune from any marked religious tinge or bias. It was essentially secular in nature. These schools were the agencies of mass-education and had no pretensions to higher learning or scholasticism. Their curriculum was simply rudimentary. It was confined to the imparting of knowledge of 3R's. Instead of imparting a purely theoretical instruction, these schools had an utilitarian bias as well. Their curriculum was, therefore, wide enough to include vocational training suited to the requirements of the trading and agricultural classes of the society.

Methods of teaching, followed both in the Elementary Schools and Schools of Learning, were of the stereotyped and traditional type. There were no printed books then. Knowledge was, therefore, imparted orally, and drilling was considered to be the most effective way of learning. Learning by rote was emphasised and memorisation of multiplication-tables and other facts and figures, given by the teacher, was enjoined upon the students. Severe punishment, so frequently given by the teacher, was supposed to be an indispensable aid in teaching. A successful teacher was supposed to devise new and effective means of
punishment, and these were meted out to the students with utmost strictness.

One of the most important features of the methods of teaching adopted in these indigenous schools was the practice of putting the newly-admitted students under the charge of those senior students who were more advanced in knowledge and who were, therefore, entrusted with the work to give lessons to the younger pupils, with a view to helping them in learning, and to report their work and behaviour to the master. This system was an effective way to save the teacher from being over-burdened, especially when he had a big number of students under him. For the Westerners this system had a great appeal; this is borne out by the fact that it was later incorporated into the educational system of England by the name of Monitorial or Bell's system.

LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTH OF THE INDIGENOUS SYSTEM

From the above description of the indigenous education, it will be obvious that it suffered from many limitations. Firstly, it was not democratic. Even elementary schools were meant chiefly for the children coming from the higher classes. Untouchables and girls were excluded from them. Their equipment was very poor and crude. Buildings, built especially and exclusively for schools, were conspicuous by their absence. Methods of teaching were also far from satisfactory. Text-books were not in vogue. Learning by rote was the order of the day. Students were subjected to harsh and severe forms of punishment. There was no pattern in the educational organization. Everything - the time-table, hours of study, rules of admission and mode of examination - depended upon the good sense of the teacher concerned. The schools of learning were essentially medieval in
character; their curriculum was almost wholly religious and, as there existed separate schools of learning for Hindus and Muslims, they had a communal air about them.

In all fairness, however, these limitations should be considered in their true perspective, keeping in mind the general educational standards and conditions of the times. Even the educational system of England, as it existed then, was not free from most of these limitations. The Charity Schools, which were so popular in that country, were meant mostly for the children of poor classes. The teachers were also drawn from the priestly class who concentrated chiefly on the teaching of religion and scriptures. Secular studies were confined to the teaching of 3R's. Women education was also neglected. Methods of teaching were no better. Equipment and books were badly lacking. Several schools had no books except the Bible. The state of education in other European countries was hardly better. As such, it would not be fair to judge the indigenous education of India from the modern standards in the domain of education. We must give it due latitude, bearing in mind the general educational standards of the day.

These limitations apart, a word must also be said about the inherent strength of the indigenous educational system, as it existed before the British came into this country. The system had a long tradition behind it and was the part and parcel of the socio-cultural life of the people. Elementary Schools, which were the most popular agencies of education, represented the better part of it. They were highly decentralised and were, as such, spread to the interior-most villages. The strength and potentiality of the indigenous system,
especially of the part represented by the elementary schools, is borne out by the fact that even some British Officers and social workers felt that this system could be made the foundation of a national system of education for the country. Adam², for example, firmly believed, "To whatever extent such institutions may exist and in whatever condition they may be found stationary, advancing or retrograding, they present the only true and sure foundations on which any scheme of general or national education can be established. We may deepen and extend the foundations; we may improve, enlarge and beautify the superstructure; but these (indigenous institutions) are the foundations on which the building should be raised."³ He was so earnest about his conviction that he even went to the extent of formulating a scheme whereby the indigenous system of education could be made to flower into a national system of education.

THE BEGINNING OF NEW EDUCATION

About the beginning of New Education in India, as contrasted with the traditional indigenous system, the notion generally held is that it was the East India Company which introduced it in the country for the first time. The facts have, however, a different tale to tell. For, much before any real step was taken by the Company in the field of education, the ball had already been set roiling by other European Settlers, particularly the Christian missionaries. The work was pursued by the missionaries with great zest and enthusiasm characteristic of the missionary spirit.

THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE MISSIONARIES

No doubt, the credit for bringing Western thought and knowledge to the doors of India goes to those missionaries, who started coming here from the 16th century. It is, however, obvious that, as missionaries, their real aim, in undertaking educational work, was neither the diffusion of European knowledge nor the encouragement of the study of Western sciences. Their real aim, on the other hand, was to spread Christianity among the natives of the land. Education was used by them only as a means to achieve this aim.

It is, nonetheless, remarkable that preselykisation was not only the cause of opening schools by the missionaries but also the result of it. Converts to Christianity were usually persons coming from the lower strata of society, and one of the important ways through which missionaries could raise their cultural, economic, social and moral status was by imparting education to them.

EFFORTS OF THE PORTUGESE SETTLERS AND THEIR CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES

Portuguese were the first Western settlers on the soil of India. They came here "not merely for trade in spices, coconuts and cardamoms, but also as missionaries with the express commission of making Christ known to the peoples with whom they would trade".\(^1\) Imbued with this double purpose, Portuguese were the first to start schools in the places where they settled. They, as such, opened schools at Goa, Daman, Diu, Hooghly and other places. Converts to Christianity were given entrance in these schools with a view to raising their general moral, intellectual and social status. Teaching in these schools usually started with reading and writing, but the emphasis would gradually shift.

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indoctrinating the students into the principles and philosophy of the Christian religion. These schools succeeded in their work to a great extent due to the fact that they taught not only through Portuguese but also through local languages.

Besides, the Portuguese Catholic missionaries, led by St. Francis Xavier, also did a good amount of work in the field of education. They opened schools in Goa, Calicut and other parts of South India in the 16th century. To them goes the credit of setting up the first printing press in India, at Ambalacat, near Cochin. With the help of the printed material in local languages, these Jesuit missionaries could carry on their educational activities with a fair amount of success. They successfully conducted schools for the children of the native people, imparting them rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing, combined with instruction in Christian religion and theology.

EFFORTS OF THE FRENCH SETTLERS AND THEIR MISSIONARIES

The French followed suit. They also started schools in their settlements, namely, Pondichery, Mahe, Chandranagar and Yanam. Teaching in these elementary schools was done through the medium of mother-tongue, and their special feature was that Indian teachers were also employed in them by the French East India Company. These schools, therefore, attracted a considerably large number of native students. Exclusive emphasis on the teaching of French was put only in the secondary schools which were meant primarily for the children of French settlers and soldiers and secondarily for the children of those Indian employees of the Company who were more advanced in society. In both these types of schools, the French chaplains taught Catholic Christian doctrines
and religion. The normal teaching-work was done by other teachers. These chaplains had, of course, the support of their Company. That is why they could manage to start schools for non-Christian children also both in their own settlements and also in their neighbouring areas. They attracted children of the natives to their schools by giving them food, clothing and books, sometimes. In these schools, as in others, general education and religious instruction in Christianity would, almost as a rule, go side by side.

EFFORTS OF THE DANISH PROTESTANT MISSION IN THE MADRAS PROVINCE

The Protestant missionaries of Denmark came to India in the beginning of the 18th century. They landed at Tranquebar, on the south-east coast, in 1706, and shortly afterwards started their educational work. They had the two well-known German missionaries - Ziegenbalg and Plutschau - as their leaders.

Educational efforts of these Danish Missionaries resulted in the establishment of 21 schools by 1725. Of these, 17 were for the children of the natives, whom they called as Heathen and Mohammaden children. These schools could not, however, flourish, as they met with opposition from the parents and non-Christian teachers on the issue of teaching Christian religion. Hence they soon evaporated. The rest of the four Missionary schools, which were founded for the Christians and were known as Missionary Schools, continued to work. Also, a teachers training institution was started by them at Tranquebar, in 1716; and in the following year two charity schools were opened in Madras where education was given gratis to Tamil as well as Portuguese children.

After the death of Ziegenbalg, his work was carried on by his successors, among whom Grundler, Kiernander and Schwartz were the
most outstanding. The work of Kiernander attracted the attention of Clive and he invited him to Bengal where he started a Charity-School in Calcutta and continued to work for the cause of education in that province for the rest of his days. Schwertz did laudable work in the province of Madras. His unique contribution was that he founded a number of schools for teaching English to the native children with the avowed aim to bring about a better understanding between the Company and the Indian people. This attempt on his part was highly appreciated by the British bureaucracy in India and also by the Court of Directors who went to the extent of sanctioning a grant-in-aid to these schools.

EFFORTS OF THE ENGLISH PROTESTANT MISSIONS

A number of English Protestant missions came to India in the 18th century. In 1727, came the first Protestant English mission which started its work at Madras. It employed the services of Schulze and Schwartz and tried to promote Christian knowledge by starting schools at Tanjore, Cuddalore, Trichnopoly, Palamcottah and Madras.

The Baptist mission which was the most important in the series came to Bengal in 1793. The outstanding figures of this mission were Dr. Carey, Ward and Marshman. They wanted to start their work in North Bengal, but their plans could not fructify due to the opposition they had to face from the East India Company. They were, as such, constrained to shift their area of work to the Dutch settlement at Serampore. Working with a fine team-spirit, they came to be known as the famous 'Serampore Trio'. They undertook the translation of the Bible in several languages with unprecedented zeal. Ward, who was a printer, printed the Bible in large numbers; Carey, who was a forceful propagandist, pushed these printed translations of the Bible among the
natives with great tact and imagination. Marshman did not lag behind; he was a school-teacher, hence he started many schools at Serampore, Calcutta and other places in the neighbourhood. The chief aim of the 'trio', like those of other missionaries, was proselytisation. To achieve this aim, they did extensive work in the field of education by bringing as many as 10,000 children into their schools.

The other English Protestant missions that came to India were the London Missionary Society (1795), the Church Missionary Society and the Western Mission. The first one started schools in Ceylon and South India and the latter two selected new and distant places, namely, Surat, Agra, Meerut, Calcutta and the like, for their activities.

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF THE MISSIONARY EFFORTS

It can hardly be denied that behind all the educational activities of the missionaries, there was the ulterior motive of spreading Christianity on the Indian soil. Hence the nature of educational work done by them was bound to be narrow and rudimentary. It was, on the one hand, confined solely to the teaching of reading and writing of the local languages, and laid great emphasis on the instruction in Christian knowledge and religion, on the other.

Due credit must, nevertheless, be given to the missionaries for the important contributions which they unmistakably made to Indian education. These may be summarised as under:--

(I) Writing of text-books in vernaculars; this led to the encouragement and growth of the Indian languages.

(II) Translation of many English works of literature and of the Bible into vernaculars; this brought the Indian people into the contact of the Western knowledge and thought, for the first time.
Special attention to the education of the converts, coming mostly from the lower strata; this resulted in general toning up of their social and cultural status.

Inspiration to the British officials to undertake educational activities, with a view to winning over the hearts of the people; this led to the opening of schools and colleges by the Government.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND ACTIVITIES OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

FROM 1600 TO 1765

The East India Company, during this period, remained a purely trading body, its main concern being the promotion of business and commerce between India and England. It did not, therefore, evince any clear or direct interest in the education of the Indians. Whatever educational work the Company did during this period was by way of its proselytising activities within its own territories. In the early teens of the 17th century, the Company took steps "for the recruitment of Indians for the propagation of the Gospel among their countrymen and for imparting to these missionaries such education, at the cost of the Company, as would enable them to carry out effectively the purposes for which they were enlisted."¹

The proselytising intentions of the Company became quite evident when, in 1698, the Court of Directors inserted the famous missionary clause in the Charter of the Company. As a result of this clause, Chaplains were appointed by the Company in all the three Presidency towns. Their work was "to instruct the Gentooos that shall be

¹ - Law, N.N. - Promotion of Learning in India by Early European Sellers; pp.7-8.
the servants or slaves of the same Company or of their agents in the Protestant religion."¹ This clearly indicates the proselytising motives of the Company. The chief contribution of these Chaplains, however, was the establishment of a number of Charity Schools which were run mainly through the subscriptions raised by them. It is, however, remarkable that these schools, which gave education gratis, were not meant for the Indian people but for the European children and those Anglo-Indian children, who, born of the Company's soldiers and their Indian wives, were usually ignored and abandoned.

The attitude of the East India Company towards these Charity Schools was that of encouragement and patronage. It helped them in many ways, such as, sanctioning recurring grants, permitting lotteries in their support, giving non-recurring grants for buildings, providing sites, accepting their funds as deposits at comparatively higher rates of interest, and so on.

FROM 1765 TO 1813

From 1765 onwards the East India Company became conscious of its educational responsibilities towards the Indian people. This was due to two reasons. Firstly, from 1765 the Company became a political power vested with administrative functions. To justify its existence as a ruling power, it was incumbent upon it to do something positive for the good of the people. As such, the officials of the Company thought of starting schools for the children of the native people. Secondly, the officials of the Company had seen how the missionaries had gained popularity among the people of the land through their educational efforts. They thought to profit from their experience,

¹ - Ilbert, C. - Government of India; p.29.
and, as such, launched upon a policy of undertaking educational activities for the Indian people. Following the traditions of the Moghuls, whose successor the Company was, it started its educational work with the policy of encouraging the traditional learning in Oriental literature and thought. Sanskrit and Arabic were, therefore, predominantly taught. Of the institutions established by the Company during this period, the following two were the most outstanding ones:

1. The Calcutta Madarssah: It was founded by Warren Hastings in 1784. In the beginning, he met the expenses of the Madarssah from his own pocket, but later the Court of Directors accepted it as the responsibility of the Company. The aim of the founder of this institution was to conciliate the Muslims of the Presidency and to qualify their sons for higher posts in the Company. The subjects taught in the Madarssah were Natural Philosophy, Theology, Law, Astronomy, Geometry, Arithmetic, Logic, Rhetorics and Grammar. Teaching of Qur'an, for which a Khalif was specially put on the staff, was an important part of the education that was imparted to the students for a total period of 7 years in this institution.

2. Benares Sanskrit College: It was established in 1791 by Jonathan Duncan, the Resident at Benares. As he himself observed, the two aims which he had in his mind while starting this institution were, firstly, to endear the British Government to the native Hindus and, secondly, to disseminate a knowledge of the Hindu Law so that such Hindus may be available who may assist the European judges to administer justice according to the traditional tenets of the Hindu Law. The curriculum of the College was more or less on the same lines as of the contemporary indigenous Pathshalas. It received a grant of Rs. 20,000 per annum, and since the affairs of the College were mismanaged
by the Pandits, it was placed under the control of an European Super-
intendent.

COMPANY'S UNFAVOURABLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MISSIONARIES (1765-1813)

Prior to 1765, the missionaries had not only received encouragement at the hands of the Company but had been positively helped by it in the form of grants and buildings. But from this year onwards, the Company assumed a definitely hostile attitude towards them. This was due to the following reasons:

(i) With the grant of Diwani to the Company in 1765, it became an administrative power. The Directors now, therefore, realised the danger involved in the policy of encouraging the educational activities of the missionaries which had the ulterior motive of proselytisation. They thought it safer, so far as their administrative interests were concerned, to follow a policy of religious neutrality.

(ii) Certain incidents, like the Sepoy Mutiny of Vellore in 1800 and the bitterness caused by the publication of the pamphlet 'Address to Hindus and Muslims' by the Baptist Trio, were the outcome of the religious stirring of the native people. The East India Company decided to take a lesson from it, and, as such, kept itself away from the religious tangle, withdrawing all support that it had hitherto given to the missionaries.

(iii) For obvious political reasons, the Company wanted to gain for itself that popularity that had already been gained by the missionaries through their efforts and work in the field of education. Hence, instead of supplementing the
The efforts of the missionaries, it was considered more judicious by the Company to work independently of them.

The missionaries naturally did not like this hostile attitude of the Company. Their friend, Wilberforce, tried to defend their case by moving a resolution in their favour when the Charter of the Company came up for renewal in the House of Commons in 1793. To this, the Directors gave a blunt reply saying, "The Hindus had as good a system of faith and of morals as most people and that it would be madness to attempt their conversion or to give them any more learning or any other description of learning than what they already possess."

As a result of this changed attitude of the Company, all help that was being given to the Charity Schools, run by the missionaries, was withdrawn forthwith. No permits were given to them to work within the territories of the Company and several missionaries were even expelled therefrom, as soon as their activities appeared to be dangerous. The missionaries felt very indignant, but they were helpless, and, despite their efforts to bring pressure upon the Home Government, nothing could be done in their favour till 1813.

THE CHARTER ACT OF 1813 — A TURNING POINT IN THE HISTORY OF INDIAN EDUCATION

Although from the year 1765, when the Company became also an administrative power, its officials had started doing some work in the educational field, but much could not be done. The Directors of the Company did not like to undertake the financial liability of running schools for the children of the Indian people, for it would reduce their dividends. But the general consensus of opinion was in favour of the attitude of the officials of the Company. A resolution was, therefore,

moved and successfully carried in the House of Commons in 1813. It assigned educational responsibility to the Company in the following words, "...a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year will be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction of and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India..."  

The resolution, after being passed, was incorporated in the Company's Charter Act of 1813. Another important feature of the Charter Act of 1813 was that it laid to rest the controversy about the role of the missionaries in the field of education in their favour. Due to the efforts of their friends, like Wilberforce and Charles Grant, especially of the latter, a resolution was carried and incorporated in the Act laying down that measures ought to be adopted to spread useful knowledge and to effect moral improvement among the Indian subjects of the Company, and that, in furtherance of this object, sufficient facilities would be provided by the Company. The doors of India, for the free and unfettered activities of the missionaries, were opened by laying down in the Act that persons desirous of going to India with the above object in view would be given such facilities by law which may be necessary for the accomplishment of their benevolent designs.

The above provisions of the Charter clearly indicate its great educational significance. By laying the responsibility for the education of the Indians on the Company, it, on the one hand, paved

1 - Sharp, W.H. - Selections from Educational Records; p.22.
the way for the growth of a State-system of education, and, by allowing the missionaries to undertake educational activities on the Indian territory freely, it laid the foundation of a wide-spread system of education on Western lines, on the other.

EDUCATIONAL POSITION IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENTS

What has been said about the educational situation and developments during the early modern period - from 1600 to 1813 - in the preceding pages, is, perhaps, enough to give us an understanding of the background against which the national movements of India carried on their work in the educational field. These movements emerged, one after the other, from the early part of the 19th century, and continued to act and react against the educational policies and activities of the missionaries and the alien rulers for about a period of 150 years, that is, until Independence was achieved in 1947.

The first indigenous movement of India which, inspired by nationalist motives, strived for the welfare of the Indian people, was the Brahmo Samaj. It was founded in the year 1815, and within a few years of its inception, it started taking interest in educational matters, under the leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Roy - one of the most illustrious names in the history of modern India. The educational position, as it existed when this pioneer movement emerged, that is, during the early years of the 19th century, may be summed up more pointedly as under:

(1) The indigenous system of education stood utterly neglected. The vast number of indigenous institutions - Hindu Tols and Pathshalas, and Muslim Maktabs and Madarssahs - which had catered to the educational
needs of the people for a long time in the past, received a most indifferent and step-motherly treatment at the hands of the Government. They were "either killed by ill-planned attempts at reform, or destroyed by deliberate competition, or allowed to die of sheer neglect."¹

(ii) The Government had accepted the responsibility for educating the Indian people. Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813, through which the British Parliament accepted that education in India was a State responsibility, and had a claim on Public revenue, had opened a new chapter in the history of Indian education.

(iii) The assumption of educational responsibility by the British Parliament had given rise to a controversy in regard to the educational policy to be followed by the Government. The official bureaucracy was divided into two clear-cut camps on this subject, namely, the Orientalists who advocated the promotion of traditional Oriental learning, and the Anglicists, who stood for the dissemination of the New learning represented by the study of English language and Western sciences.

(iv) The missionaries had once again got a free hand to go ahead with their educational activities, having proselytising designs. The agitation led in their favour in England by their friends, among whom Charles Grant and Wilberforce deserve special mention, had proved a grand success, for the 13th Resolution, which was ultimately passed by the Parliament on June 23, 1813, gave them the desired freedom to enter India 'for the purpose of accomplishing their benevolent designs.'

¹ - Nurullah, S. and Naik, J.P. - A History of Education in India; p.50.
(v) A growing demand for English education by the Indians themselves was becoming increasingly discernible. The first impact of the Western culture on the Indian mind had been electrifying, with the result that English culture, language and education came to be prized by the elite of the Indian society - more particularly the younger generation - for obtaining social distinction as well as lucrative Government jobs.

It was under such educational conditions that the Brahma Samaj - the pioneer national movement of India - started its work in the field of education.