CHAPTER II

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In the preceding chapter the ups and downs of the political condition of India have been summed up. It is noticed that political anarchy had gone deep to uproot the social structure of the people during the period under review. When a country is politically disturbed, its social condition go far away from being satisfactory. In the 18th century, the wild scramble for power subjected people to the despotism of militant aristocracies and intensified feudalism.

History does not mean wars, battles, court intrigues and the rise and fall of the empires only. It also means a society which must be studied in its right shape and true perspectives. All aspects of the life of the people, a society or civilization and culture are all interconnected and interdependent and as such, its effects were also felt in the medieval Indian society. To show a clear picture of the social and cultural background of the period, it is necessary to study the medieval society in its own terms. In modern society, the general view is that every man's life is his own and society should interfere with it as little as possible. But it was not so during the period under review. The

1Raghvanshi, V.P.S. : Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century, p. 5
multilingual races, religion and culture and the long exploitation of the society had made the life of the down trodden greatly miserable. Poverty, insecurity and class hatred had become the fate of the people. Due to this wretched condition, people were forced to take refuge in meditation, seclusion and observance of religious rites and ceremonies. Scholars of different branches made themselves busy in writing books after books on sensual nature—on odes, ghazals, fictions etc. Side by side, the educationists also tried to enlighten the society with the spread of education. The Sufis and the Bhaktas also did not lag behind. They busied themselves in solacing the afflicted hearts by providing materials of spiritual nature with which they tried to wipe out the social evils from the society.

Regarding the social life of the medieval India, most of our histories and chronicles are almost silent. "Most of them have, tended to depict the history of medieval India under the Muslim rule as a succession of battles, rebellions and despositions of one Muslim soldier of fortune by another." They seldom attempt to discuss the general background of Muslim and Hindu conception of the nature and purposes of Government as against the back cloth of caste, class, tribal, racial as well as economic structure of the medieval Indian Society. The chroniclers sharply ignored the masses as well

2. Hardy, p. : Historians of Medieval India, p. 3
as the society which is an integral part of the society, which reflects a complete picture of the state. Fortunately the accounts and memoirs of European travellers who visited India during the middle ages help us a lot in this direction. The informations furnished by them is varied and extensive. It covers Government, administration, social customs and institutions, religious practices and beliefs, trade and industry and the economic condition of the people. Mannuci, Bernier, Hawkins and Terry entered the Mughal service or otherwise attended the imperial court and observed royal etiquette, ceremonial functions and festivals.

"The Medieval period of Indian history is an interesting and indispensable link between the ancient and the modern. It was a period partly of transition and partly of transformation, and all these, in long run, made it one of the most formative periods in Indian history." The society as was seen during the Eighteenth century was the outcome of the impact of many divergent races and cultures and their transformation was by a process of assimilation and adjustment. In the matter of religion and social institutions, which were the most important aspects of the life in medieval India, the society was divided as the Hindus and Muslim society as it was based on religion.

"The difference in their theological conception, method of

4. Ojha, P.N.: Aspects of Medieval Indian Society and Culture, p. IV
worship and everything connected with daily devotion to God made them distinct and identical. Therefore, throughout the medieval ages (including the period under review) the problem was, how these two systems each with their own strong roots could develop a healthy relationship." Therefore, a great deal of efforts have been made to study and understand their relationship in terms of its assimilation and effects on various aspects because, Indian culture is the outcome of assimilation of the two great peoples." Both of them were responsible in the making of great Indian society." On the one hand there was the influence of Islam and the philosophy of life represented by it. On the other hand there was the pervasive influence of Hindu culture and civilization."

It is not possible to give a comprehensive account of the general life of the people of different classes of the eighteenth century, as it would be straying away from the main concourse of the present work. Therefore a detail discussion of the social condition of the people is avoided here. Another significant point to reckon is that during the

5. Ghose, U.K. : History and Culture of Indian People, p. 128
7. Yasin, Muhammad : A Social History of Islamic India, Preface, p. XXIII
8. Chopra, Puri, Das : op. cit., p. 29
period under review, the central activities were concentrated only in the north and therefore, what was true of the north in respect of social activities was also true of the south with only a slight local variations. More so because Delhi was in truth, the Rome of medieval India, diffusing the rays of authority and culture, of taste and refinement over whole of India."

Mode of daily life

The European considered the daily life of the Indians as a studied deviation from the ordinary purposes and convenience of human life as a product of a matigrant genius. We are informed that the daily life of the people, come dress, ornaments, food and drinks and other miscellaneous daily habits.

Dress

The dress used in India was the product of the social taste and is suited to the climatic and living condition of the time. Foreign influences also played an important role in the evolution of Indian dresses. "Aesthetic consideration also have been responsible for determining our clothing." The people used to have variety of dresses for different seasons of the year and also there were different ways of putting them, more so in the case of women. Many of the European travellers were seemed to be highly impressed by the dress of the people of the medieval India.

10-Chopra, P.N. : Some Aspects of Society and Culture during the Mughal Age, p. 18
During the period under review, the dress of Hindus as well as the Muslims was particularly the same. The dress of the common people of various communities was almost similar. Longota was used by workers, peasants and labourers and it was tied around their waist reaching their knees. "Small quilted coats were used during winter. There does not seem to have been any particular uniform for soldiers. They could be distinguished from the arms they carried." The royal slaves put on waist band, red shoes and ordinary Kulah. We are informed by Buchanan that the dress among the Hindus and the Muslims of the upper classes in Bengal and Bihar was similar. He further states that on ceremonial occasions the Hindus including the Brahmans dressed entirely like the Muslims gentry. The author of Khazana-i-Umara states that, "the Hindusthani male dress of the gentry was comprised between the heavy and flowing garments of the Mughal and Rajputs. The nobles and kings wore dastar, jama, kamarband, ghaghia and shoes. Della Vella, the famous traveller, writes about the Indian dress in regard of its cleanliness and cosiness and for the goodly show that," I caused one to be made for myself, complete in every point and carry it with me to Italy.

16. Della Vella : The Travels in India, p. 23
The poor wore a piece of cloth wrapped round their waist like dhoties while the rich people used costly dresses, an intermixture of Indo-Persian style. The upper class of both the communities wore a shirt quite open at the neck and wrist (called Kurta), a long jama or angarkha, both with long straight sleeves, coming almost to the ground. The dress of the Brahmins was dhoti and at the same time they wore a kind of jacket called chand-band. Over the dhoti, the use of half coat was also in vogue.

Female dress:

The women of this period covered their head with dopatta (urni) which is mentioned as the most graceful part of the costume. It has been remarked by few European observers that the white cloth was costly and it was used for turbans, scarfs and robes and for light dresses of women. The dress of high born well to do and most fashionable lady was Pyjamas reaching the feet, made of extremely fine silk and highly embroidered.

"The Zarband (the silk cord) which held at the waist were often rendered with magnificent pearls and jewels." Kurti and choli

17. Araish-i-Mehfil, p. 86
18. Sehrul Bayan, pp. 101,106
Ornaments:

Ornaments had a peculiar fascination for the people of all classes in that age. Love of ornament was and still is, an inherent weakness of Indian character and this was particularly true of women. Ornaments made of gold, silver and jewels have always been the most useful and natural aid to beauty. "In 18th century, the use of about 125 varieties of ornaments are listed which was used by women of the period." We are informed by the author of Qanun-i-Islam that, of the ornaments 8 chief ornaments are used for head and for head only, 16 for ears, 5 for the nose and about 30 for the neck and a similar number of different ornaments, bracelets, rings for fingers, ornaments for waist, for anklets, toes etc. Ornaments like churis (bangles)
Tikka, Karnaphool, Bulaq, Nath, Tang, Chandan har, Tora, Kara and Chara were the main ornaments of the women of the period under review. But ornaments are prohibited when a woman unfortunately become widow. “Arms without ornaments were considered a bad omen.” Regarding soap and dyes, Watt says that, the art of soap making has been known and practiced in India from a remote antiquity, the impure article produced, being used by washermen and dyers. “The Muslims of the period were also delighted in the extravagant pageantry in the form of ornaments. The sons of Tipu Sultan sent as hostages to the camp of Lord Cornwallis, are described as wearing necklaces of pearls round their necks.” Children were specially decorated with ornaments and amulets were prescribed to them and also the elders to avert misfortunes. “These amulets also contained ‘magical mantras’.”

Food and drinks:

Indian diet of the Eighteenth century, the first thing to note is the variety and richness of taste. “The common people both Hindus and Muslims, could ill afford expenditure on rich and dainty dishes and contended themselves with simple food. Khichari— pulses mixed with rice and cooked with water—was the most popular dish of this class. The middle masses

29. Ibid, p. 340
32. Dubois,Abbe,J.A.: Description of Character, Manners and Customs etc of Hindus,(Tr)Beauchamp, pp. 335-336
managed to have their meals thrice daily." The author of "Daria-i-Latafat" informs us that the gentry of this period used to spend 20 rupees in the preparation of half seer of Polao. Rice-polao and Kabab-polao of different varieties were fond of by the kings, nobles and general people. Bread leaven and unleaven and many preparation of rice were popular. Among Indian dishes, puri and kachuri were much liked. Cooked pulses and bread were the diet of the poor masses. In Bengal, people ate fish, rice, curd, fruits and sweetmeat from the high to the low and liberal use of mustard oil. "The Brahmans here also ate fish." Un coastal areas, fish was a common and cheap article of food on account of its easy availability. The Brahmans used purely vegetarian diet comprising of milk, fruits, vegetables but the Rajputs ate vension, mutton, fish as well. Use of pork by the Muslims and beef by the Hindus were banned by religion. Ghee, milk and curd were also used abundantly as diet. Different kinds of halwa were the food of the Mughals of the period. Among fruits, mango was the most favourite.

34. Ibid; Shureef, Z.: Qanun-i-Islam, appendix VI, pp. XVI-XVII
35. Umar, Dr. M.: Athara Sadi me Hindusthani Ma'sirat, p. 217
38. Sauda, M.R.: op.cit., p. 208
40. Umar, Dr. M.: op.cit., p. 212
Milk, syrup and coffee were the main drinks for the people of both the communities. The drinks offered to the guests were water and variety of sharbats. It was only in the privacy that the Mughals and the Persian nobility did not object to liquors. Yet majority of Muslims looked upon drinking as second madness. Smoking was common for both Hindus and Muslims and so was betal leaf and tea.

Amusements:

Pleasure and recreation had always been the need of human being. There was no dearth of music, recreation and amusements in the Indian society. The people of this period took delight in different kinds of games and sports. The Europeans' account clearly bring out the fact that there was plenty of leisure and gaiety, feasts and festivals, conjuring tricks and acrobatic shows. The monotony of life was mitigated by festive diversions of varied character and people had enough time to stand and stare. People used to derive pleasures in the outdoor and indoor recreation in the form of games and sports—some of which are still very popular in India.

Out of the old games Chess was the most important indoor game of the people. Almost all the Mughal kings

42. Manucci, N.: *Storia Da Mogor* (Tr) William Irvine, p. 208
and kings of the later Mughal period were very fond of this game. The Indian origin of this important game is indisputable and played by many elites of the time under review. Shah Alam II and Muhammad Shah used to play Chess in the dormair of harem at night.

Playing of cards was popular in the century whose history goes back to the ancient times. The game Chaupur was quite popular among the people. Zaibun Nisha, daughter of Aurangzeb was very fond of this game.

Among the Muslims of this period, after Chess, the game of Puncheesee appears to be very popular, which was so interestingly played even by the women. Gambling was not known to Indian society but was not as popular and general as in European society.

Wrestling was also popular at that time. Manucci has described in details the amusements of princesses and high class ladies. They were allowed to enjoy the pleasures of comedy and dance, tales and strings of love, to walk about garden, to listen to the murmuring of the running water to hear singing and other similar past times.

46. Manucci, N.: *op.cit.*, p. 460
48. Sarkar, J.N.: *Studies in Mughal India*, p. 29
50. Manucci, N.: *op.cit.*, pp. 352-353
Jugglars as Bazigars were common during the Mughal age. Bernier and other travellers wrote about them and their wonderful tricks. They used to gather near the great royal square in Delhi. The rope dancers called 'nats' also used to entertain the audiences with their wonderful acrobatic feats.

Music was also an important part of amusement among the various classes of the society with its varying moods. Chorms was popular specially among the village ladies. Ramlila as theatrical representation of scenes from the holy Ramayana were common during the period. Often Muslim also joined the musical play of Ramayana. Qawwali along with other several ragas came to be enjoyed by people as modes of music.

The author of Qanun-i-Islam has mentioned many other indoor games like Cowries, Chowsur, Lyay, Shutranj etc which were other form of amusement to the people of the time and these were very popular.

Of the outdoor recreation games like Chaughan(Polo), hunting, horse riding, animal fights, boxing, kite flying, pigeon flying, dog races, swimming and athletics etc were the main which were enjoyed by one and all. The most popular

51. Bernier, F. : Travels in the Mughal Empire, p. 243
52. Worris : Embassy to Aurangzeb, pp. 166-167
53. Indian Culture; Vol.X, 1944-45, p.121
54. Shu'stery, M.M.A.: Outline of Islamic Culture, p.275
source of recreation and amusement to the boys were gulli-danda. The games of ball playing, blindman's buff, climbing on trees and mock fights were also important source of amusement and past time to the people of the period.

Festivals:

Both the communities, Hindu and Muslims, had a large number of festivals which they celebrated with great enthusiasm during the period. Barring the religious festivals, the medieval Indian society had common elements in some of the festivals, and this was the outcome of living together of the people for many many years. In medieval India, a large part of the year was meant for public festivals. Hindu festivals were more than those of the Muslims. A large number of these festivals, based on mythological, historical and astronomical consideration, were celebrated during the different seasons of the year. Muslim festivals were a few and celebrated with zeal and formalities. Most of them are connected with religion, like the anniversaries of some important events as the birth anniversary of the Prophet. Many of the social festivals of both Hindus and Muslims bore the testimony of influence of one another. This is responsible in making the great Indian culture. The secular Mughal Emperors celebrated Hindu festivals in the four walls of the Imperial palace. The

European travellers often give interesting details of the festivals, for which grand preparations were made months ahead. Bazaars, porticos, the public and private halls were decorated with costly stuffs at the time of festivals. Restriction on gamblings were relaxed during the festivals. Mina bazar was an important celebration among the Mughals.

Among the important Muslim festivals which were observed with all solemnity during the Eighteenth century were Muharram, Id-i-Milad, Shab-i-Barat, Id-ul-Fitr, Id-uz-Zuha, Nauruz, etc. The rare and voluminous manuscript, 'Ahsan-ul-Akhlaq' dated A.D. 1781 by a Chisti saint of Rajgir, gives details of all that a religious Muslim ought to do and all that he must avoid. We also get a long list of such practices as were considered censurable, such as eating meat in a state of impurity, or near a dead body, putting on trousers while standing or leaning against doorway, getting garments repaired while still on the body, allowing spiders to spin cobwebs in the house, puffing out a candle with the breath, eating onions at night, urinating in a state of nakedness and so on. More important is his list of customs and ceremonies which had been adopted from the Hindus by the Muslims.

58. Ibid
59. Diwaker, R.R.: Bihar Through the Ages, p. 534
The two ids i.e., id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Zuha were the most important festivals of the Muslims. Id-ul-Fitr which marks the end of one of month fast of the month of Ramazan, was celebrated with much pomp and grandeur. It was celebrated by the orthodox as well as unorthodox Muslims, purely as a religious festivals. Muslims assembled in the Id-gah to offer prayer. Music and dance, though forbidden by Islam, were the accompanying factors of the day of Id-ul-Fitr. The another festival notably the Id-ul-Zuha or Id-i-Qurbani (the feast of sacrifice), which is held on the 10th day of Zil-hijja, the last month of Muslim calendar— is the most important of Muslim festivals. In India it is generally regarded as a substitute for the sacrifice in commemoration of Ibrahim's (peace be upon him) readiness to sacrifice his son Isma'il in obedience to the command of God. After the Id-ul-Zuha prayer, every Muslim whom Islamic law permits, sacrifices goats or cow or camel in rememberance of Hazarat Isma'il (peace be upon him). "Between these two great festivals, there fell an important festival called Shab-e-Barat."

Some of the Muslim festivals referred to in the contemporary literature are, Bara-Wafat, Akhri-chahar-shamha,

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Marthia-Khani, festival of Khwaja Khizr, etc. Bara-wafat (Bara="twelve" and wafat="death"), the death anniversary of the prophet which is also called Milad-sharif or Maulud, is celebrated with a mix feeling of joy and sorrow.

The festival of Khwaja Khizr, popularly called Khizri was also celebrated. The feast is held in honour of the mythical Khwaja Khizr, "the green one".

Persian festivals like Nau-ruz and Ab-pashand also found places among the Muslim festivals celebrated during the Mughal rule. Nau-ruz, the popular spring festival, was celebrated in all the big cities of India during Eighteenth century also. But during Aurangzeb's time, he substituted it with another imperial festivity, Nishat Afruz, that which heightens gaiety of the banquet.

During the period the practice of Marthia Khani was prevalent in Delhi in such proportion that it was in its peak popularity. Many a reknown singers used to rob hearts of the people. Festivals like Shab-i-Barat or Lailat-ul-Barat was also observed during this period.

Muslims used to go to pilgrimage to Mecca, Karabala, Mashhad and Najf and visited the shrines of the saints on the occasion of their 'Urs'(anniversaries). In India the

64. Rogers and Beveridge : Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, Vol.I, p. 128
65. Yasin, A. : A Social History of Islamic India, p. 55
67. Shauq, Q.A. : Tazkera-i-Tabaqat-al Shu'ra-i-Hind, p. 81
The 'Urs fairs of some of the saints were held at places like Ajmer Sharif, Bihar Sharif, Rewar Sharif and Phulwari Sharif. Moreover, coronation ceremonies and birthday celebration of kings were other festive occasions.

Like the Muslims, the Hindus had also a large number of festivals. Holi, one of the ancient festivals of the Hindus, was one of the most popular festivals of them. In many places of India it was the most popular festival after Durga Puja. It was observed with music and feast as it is observed today. Deepawali or Diwali was another popular and colourful festival of the Hindus. We learn from Macauliffe that in the time of the later Mughals, it appears the permission of the Governor was necessary to hold the Deepawali festival for which a pol tax was sometime imposed.

Among the other festivals, Ram navami, Raksha bandhan, Rath yatra at Puri were important and were performed with great jubilation. Both solar and lunar eclipses were observed with all solemnity by the Hindus who kept a fast for 24 hours. They used to take holy bath in the Ganges on this occasion. Shivaratri and Durga puja were performed with all solemnity and gaiety during this period.

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68. Shauq, Q.A.: Tazkera-i-Tabaqat-al Shu'ra-i-Hind, p. 81
69. Naqvi, G.A. Khan: Ahmad-us-Sa'dat, MS, fol. 19a
The places of pilgrimage of the Hindus were Benares, Paryag, Ayordhya, Gaya and Jagannath in the north and Tirupati, Mahabaleswar etc were in the south.

Position of Women in the Society:

Women held an honourable position in almost all the ages of India because their status in a country reflects the standard of civilization, culture and refinement. The women in the Eighteenth century Indian society held an unique position. They were primarily intended for their role as good wife and mother. Charity and modesty were her chief characteristics. She was a ministering angel to her family while bad and impious one was like an evil star on its fortune.

In the period under review, the society did not allow the women for free association with the male persons either at family meals or public festivals. The condition of Muslim women has differed from time to time and from country to country. In India, during the period, the women lost the proud position of free Arab women and occupied definitely a subordinate position, having been subjected to the will of their polyamnous master. Yet, the women were treated as the honour of the family.

71. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol.II, p. II
74. Yasin, M.: A Social History of Islamic India, p. 107
and no sacrifice was thought too great to maintain it." "If they dishonour their husband's beds, or being unmarried are found incontinent and filthy, professing chastity rather than they shall want the severest punishment, their own brothers' hand will first against them to take away their lives, and for so doing, shall be commended, but not questioned."

The pardah system was unknown in the ancient India but with the advent of Muslim and specially after the Mughal's establishment in India, the system found its inroad among the Hindu society of India during the medieval period. It was never observed among the lower class. Della Vella writes, "The Muslim women did not come out of their house and regarded it as a sources of degradation, except on special occasions in planquins. Manucci observes with interesting details about the princess, "when a princess desired to ride an elephant, the animal was made to enter a tent near the palace gate and the elephant driver(mahut) covered his face with a cloth so that he did not see the princess while entering the covered Hawadah (wooden seat on the back of the elephant)."

75. Yasin,M. : A Social History of Islamic India, p. 109
77. Diwakar,R.R. : Bihar Through the Ages, p. 680
78. Della Vella : The Travels in India, p. 56
Marriage was almost an universal feature of the contemporary Indian social life. There was no age limit for marriage though Muslim favoured early marriage. The practice of child marriage was in vogue in many societies of the period. The birth of a daughter was considered as unfortunate. Only women rejoices and feasted but for a prince the whole court enjoys. The practice of polygamy was a shocking practice prevalent during the period, both among the Hindus and Muslims. Polygamy was also prevalent among some women mostly belonging to the lower caste. It was in vogue amongst certain classes in the hilly regions south of the Himalayas. Of the evil practices of the period, notable among were the dowry system and kulinism. "Dowry was demanded in some localities from the guardians." "But Rajput girls enjoyed great liberty in selecting their husband." The life of a widow was miserable. Sati or practices of the Hindu women burning themselves in the funeral pyres of their husbands, was the most ugly and evil feature in the social life of the Indian people of this country during the period under review. But thanks to Raja Ram Moham Roy, the prophet of the modern renaissance, who helped in eradicating this social evil of sati and also the system of polygamy. He also published a pamphlet in Persian in which he protested against the idolatry and superstitions of

81. Ibid : p. 55
83. Roy, R.M.: A Dictionary of Indian History, p. 786
all creeds. "On the whole, the Hindu women had maintained its tradition, receiving its strength from religion and usage, but in proportion to general advancement which the period shows, there is no evidence of progress." During the closing years of the Eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century, some new faces raised their voices against these practices and as a result of which the Sati practices was ultimately obliterated from its roots.

Education and Learning:

Life in every age and country varies greatly according to the education that men receive. The progress of education implies generally the progress of the country. The history of education and learning in the Eighteenth century India is much interesting and instructive because it was experiencing the impact not only of the political imperialism and new born industrialisation of the west but also of her culture.

As we know that the death of Aurangzeb caused much harm to the already checkered state of affairs of the mighty Mughal empire as well as the country during those days. His successors and petty rulers busied themselves in suppressing these disturbances, which took much of their time and energy and it left a big vacuum in the management of their kingdom. They could hardly take any interest in the development and

84. Luniya, B.N. : *Evolution of Indian Culture*, p. 498
85. J.I.H. (Golden Jubilee Volume), 1973, p. 11
propagation of education. But despite the disturbed condition in the country, we find that education was not totally neglected and ignored. Education depended entirely upon private initiatives and private arrangements, made chiefly under the patronage of the local Rajas, Zamindars and the Emperors who were in the helm of affairs in that period. Beside, ideals of religion also inspired for the love of education and learning.

Muslim Education:

The author of Qanun-i-Islam informs us that the elementary education to the Muslim boys was imparted by the Maktabs or private houses. Such type of institutes were spreaded all over the country during the period under review. The ceremony of Bismillah, commonly known as Bismillah-Khani, was performed,' at the age of 4 years 4 months and 4 days.' The curriculum adopted in these primary schools was very simple. The study and recitation of the holy Quran was the principal element in instructions. The students were also taught how to write words and short sentences. To this was added rudimentary knowledge of Islam enabling Muslims to fulfil their religious duties.

Secondary education was generally held in the mosques, dargahs of celebrated saints, spreaded all over the country. To every mosque and dargahs, the Maktabs and Madrassas were attached. In the Madrassa the medium of education was Urdu

86. Kishori, S.P. : Some aspects of North Indian Social life, p. 126

87. Ibid
and Persian. Besides these two, Arabic was also taught in these institutions. The nobles and other lovers of education showed keen interest in extending their patronage to men of learning and grants for the upkeep of the Madrassas. These Madrassas were very much like our modern colleges and were regarded as the highest seat of learning. Their number was not very large. They flourished only in the towns and the cities.

Element of Arabic, Urdu and Persian grammar, poetry. Algebra, Arithmetics, Biography, Tradition (Hadith) were the courses in these Madrassas and secondary schools. Madrassas like the Madrassas of Ghazi-uddin Khan, the Madrassas of Faushanud Daula and similar Madrassas of Allahabad, Hyderabad and Kurnul were founded by nobles.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, a new syllabus known as 'Oars-i-Nizamia' was introduced by Mulla Nizamuddin, the son of Qutub-Uddin Sahlawi. It provided for the study of eleven subjects and was accepted all over the country. These subjects were, (1) Sarf, (2) Nahva (Grammar and syntax), (3) Mantiq (Logic), (4) Hikmat (Philosophy), (5) Reyazi (Mathematics), (6) Balaghat (Rhetoric), (7) Fiqh (Jurisprudence), (8) Usul-i-Fiqh (Principles of Jurisprudence), (9) Kalam (Dialect), (10) Tafsir (Exegesis) and (11) Hadith (Traditions). After some

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89. Srivastava, M. P.: Society and Culture in Medieval India, p. 70
90. Hussain, Y.: Glimpse of Medieval Indian Culture, p. 89
years subject like Adeb (Literature), Fraiz (Obligations), Manazir (Disputation) and Usul-i-Hadith (Principles of Traditions) were also added. These Madrassas introduced the award of the degree of 'Alim to those who excelled in logic and philosophy and degree of Qabil to the experts in literature.

Hindu Education:

Hindu education during the period were imparted in the Pathsalas or elementary schools, tols or college or private tutorial schools. The Brahmins were highly respected because the teaching profession was their monopoly during those days. There were only two kinds of schools during those days—one was the elementary or primary schools and the other was the tols or the colleges for higher learning. The regular study of a Hindu child started after the 'Upapayana' ceremony. The courses for study of the children were the instructions in the alphabets, combination of word spelling, vowels and consonants, grammar, lessons in reading elementary arithmetics. Wooden boards were used by the children because there were no printed primas or text books. According to Bernier, Puranas were taken up after learning the alphabets. In giving lessons in the elementary mathematics, the teachers used to say Ek Duna Do, Do Duna Char, i.e., one

92. Hussain, Y.K. : Glimpse of Medieval Indian Culture, p. 89
93. Siqueira, T.N. : The Education of India, p. 7
94. Srivastava, R.P. : Society and Culture in Medieval India, p. 72
95. Bernier, F. : Travels in the Mogul Empire, p. 335
time two makes two and two times two makes four. The others repeated it jointly and wrote after him in the same way. The Hindus received higher education in the Catuspathis which could be found in many of the important towns or villages where the medium of instructions was Sanskrit. These Catuspathis were cosmopolitan in nature, welcoming teachers and scholars from different parts of India.

Like the Madrasas of the Muslims, the Tols of the century were the seats of higher learning where Sanskrit language and literature formed a very important subject of study. A Tol considered generally of a thatched chamber in which the teachers and the taught met and collection of mud house round a quadrangle in which the students lived in the simplest possible manner. The author of the 'Bihar through the Ages' writes that:

In Bihar the schools for higher learning as well as for primary education were accommodated mostly in thatched cottages built by the teachers themselves on land donated by local persons of repute and wealth. At some places there were no school buildings at all and these classes were held in the out parts of gardens of other people's houses. The remuneration of the humble but valuable class of village school-

96. Dutta, K.K. : Alivardi and his Times, p. 186
masters' was not at all attractive. The average monthly professional income of such teachers in Bengal and Bihar was about three rupees. This was supplement to some extent by presents of foodstuffs, clothings and so on during annual festivals. The teachers enjoyed high social prestige.

The subjects taught in the Tols were Kavya (poetry), Jyotish (astronomy), Vyakarana (grammar), Chanda (rhetoric), Nirukta (lexicon) and Nyaya darshan (philosophy) etc.

Female education:

The cause of female education in India received subsequently some impetus through the efforts of the Christian missionaries, certain measures of the Government and the enterprises of the various reformed social groups and other educational and social associations like the Brahmo Samaj, the Prathana Samaj, the Arya Samaj and the Servants of Indian Society. But illiteracy of women is still a phenomenal problem in India. Although there was no formal schools for the female, people from well to do families had their female folk learn through private education.

We shall now try to study the different system of education of the eighteenth century India— the Persian and

98. Diwaker, R.R.: Bihar Through the Ages, p. 716
100. Raghuvanshi, V.P.S.: Indian Society in the Eighteenth Century, p. 197
Arabic education, the Sanskrit education and the Vernacular education.

Persian and Arabic education:

As Persian was the court language, much importance was given to its studies. Education in Persian was widely used. It was the only medium of higher education for the Muslims. It has a long history behind it. Although this century was the last century of the survival of Persian study yet Persian was in a flourishing condition. Persian being the official language, the knowledge of it became a practical necessity for both Muslims and Hindus. As it was a job-oriented language, people from both the religions took full advantage by mastering over the language. The Hindus took up the study seriously and developed this language at every stage of its progress. "The schools of Persian language were nearly as frequented as a necessary accomplishment for the elites. To know Persian was a must for those who wanted to make a living in the courts of law."  

During the period under review, Azimabad (Patna) was a very important centre of Persian studies. The author of 'Siyar-ul-Mutakharin' observes, "there were in those times, at Azimabad, a number of persons who loved science and learning and employed themselves in teaching and in being taught. I remember to have seen in the city and its environments nine..."

101. Diwakar, R.R.: Bihar Through the Ages, p. 715
or ten professors of repute and 300/400 students and disciples from whence may be conjectured number of those that must have been in the great towns or the retired districts. Among these that flourished in the town of Bihar, the Kazi Ghulam Muzzaffar, better known under the title of "Muzzaffar Ali Khan", was personally known to Aliwardi who appointed him to the office of supreme justice of Murshidabad." The Hindu officer of Aliwardi "could not have worked satisfactorily in the different departments of the state, unless they had some knowledge of Persian. The Nawwab and many of their grandees were patrons of Persian language and literature. In Bihar, the Hindus having good knowledge of Persian were called Munshis. Yet the patronage and grandeur it received during the earlier period, has received a setback due to the bizarre political condition that prevailed during the period. Beside Bihar and Bengal, the towns and cities in the provinces like Allahabad, Lucknow, Sirhind and other places were great centres of Persian learning and culture.

The Gulistan and Bustan of Sa'di were the common textbooks for the students. From those who offered Arabic as a subject had to study Hadith and Quran as a compulsory subjects. In Arabic education, emphasis was given on language and on the grammar as well.

By the end of Eighteenth century, the education of Arabic and Persian received a setback and owing to the overthrow of the Mughal rule, the Persian study was pushed to the back scene of the educational atmosphere of India.

Sanskrit education:

Sanskrit formed another part of education in the period under review. Among the most famous centres of Sanskrit learning in India during that period were, to speak a few, Kashi, Tirhut, Vanga (Bengal) and Utkal. In Bengal, "in truth, Nawadipa (Nadia) was the focus of intellectual development, the land of the Naiyayikas (Logician), who reasoned and argued on every conceivable topic, the abode of astronomers where Panjikas and Almanahs still regulate the festivals and the Pujas and daily domestic concern of the Hindus." Sanskrit was patronised by Rani Bhabani of Natore and Raja Krishna Chand of Nadia in their respective districts. According to S.H.Wilson (A.D.1829), there were 25 Sanskrit schools with about 500/600 people at Nadia. According to Ward, there were 28 such institutions in Calcutta with 173 students. V.P.Raghuvanshi quoting Adam says that, the course of studies in Sanskrit language "embraced a full course in general literature, grammar, lexicon, poetry, drama and rhetoric."

104. Calcutta Review; 1872, p. 97
106. Raghuvanshi, V.P.S. : India in the Eighteenth Century, p. 179
Vernacular education:

The Vernacular schools of this period played an decisive role in promoting literacy among the masses. The benefit of such education in these schools were within the reach of the people of all classes of the society. Its cosmopolitan features attracted people of different upbringings. The teachers and the students were recruited from all castes and classes, and their day to day working shows, remarkable fraternization between the two great communities. The first rudiments were given both by Hindus and Muslim teachers in small schools called Pathshalsas under the tutions of teachers called Gurus who may be of any caste or religion. There flourished a number of such schools in Bengal and Bihar. These schools directly influenced the character of the people. Although these schools suffered from serious drawbacks due to lack of patronage, poverty of the people, non-availability of published books, limited scope of instruction given in such schools to the pupils in the elementary stage. Yet, in the Hindi school of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, students at a tender age could recite even from the works of Tulsidas, Kesav Das and Behari etc. In the elementary Vernacular schools reading and writing was must for the boys who were of five or six years which according to Buchanan, was an excellent method.

109. Ibid, pp. 429-430
110. Ibid, pp. 707-708
Malcom tells us that in central India, sufficient education was given to children in the art of writing business letters and keeping clear accounts. Further he says that, education in arithmatic was carried to considerable perfection.

According to Buchanan, in south India he observed that the members of the different weaving classes were able to read and write accounts and letters of business. The lower classes of oil-makers and tradesmen were sufficiently literate in the Vernicular languages and the Ladas of the Sudra caste were familiar even with the Sanskrit language. The following were the four stages of instructions in a Vernicular school:

(a) Writing on the ground;
(b) Writing on the palm leaf or the wooden board;
(c) Writing on the plaintain leaf or the brazen plate;
(d) Writing on paper which lateron became quite popular.

India in the Eighteenth century was humming with some of the famous writers of Vernacular, specially in Bengal and Orissa. Bharat Chandra, Ram Prasad Sena and Ramesh Verma in Bengal and Upendra Bhanja, Ramadasa, Krishna Sinha, Sadananda, Kavi Surya Brahman and others were some of the famous poets of Orissa.

112. Ibid
114. Adam, W.: Reports on the state of Education in Bengal, pp. 232-233
115. Dutta, K.K.: Alivardi and his Times, p. 189
Musha'iras:

As the taste for poetry was widespread during the whole Mughal period, Musha'iras had a unique position in the literary circle. It was a poetical assemblies which were held either at the house or court of some eminent scholars, poet or noble to which poets would be invited to recite their own compositions. Bholanath writes:

A good poet would rapidly win fame. People would eagerly seek access to gatherings where it was known such famous poet was going to recite. There was as yet no printing but in Mughal India as in every country where Islam has spreaded, the art of calligraphy was highly appreciated and widely practiced and a great man might commission a good calligrapher to prepare him a copy of a favourite poet's verse or the poet himself might have a copy made for presentation to a patron.

116. Bholanath, MS: Tuhfatul Hind, Punjab University, Lahore p. 42