PREFACE

Since Vedic times, we have, in India, a great tradition of Education and learning. This tradition has continuity in the form of Guru Kula system of learning. These institutions used to teach sacred as well as the secular subject. In the Medieval period, education was given through Madras’s and other types of institutions.

Since early times the aim of education is not merely learning but also inculcation of noble values of life and conduct. The syllabi of medieval institutions included literature, grammar, logic, Philosophy, Mathematics, Law, Astrology, history, Geography, Agriculture, Medicine etc. The medium of instruction in Hindu institutions was Sanskrit or Regional Languages and Muslim institutions Arabic and Parsi. Religions scriptures formed an important part of syllabi in the institutions of Muslims and Hindus.

Modern, Indian education, started under the British rule. As the Indian educated men in Hindu and Muslim institutions were not useful for working of the British Government, Lord Macaulay drew up a plan of western oriented education system in India in his minutes on February 8th 1935. This gave primacy to the propagation of European Literature and Science and the policy continued ever after.

The western impact has some positive aspect also. It brought a kind of renaissance and resurgence in Indian educational thought. Many of the western educated thinkers began to be proud of their culture and civilization and wanted to adopt the western educational models to suit Indian values and conditions.

These experiments bore fruits and made India, as one of the eminent nations of the world. After independence in 1947 the reports of number of educational
commissions, like Kothari Commission, Radha Krishnan Commission, New Education Policy etc. were implemented and they gave new directions to our Education.

I have confined my work to six thinkers they are Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Dayananda, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Mahendra Nath Roy. All of them are prolific writers and as such I tried to confine myself only to seminal ideas of their educational thought.

The first chapter is introductory and in the second I have given a historical review of Indian Education. The next chapters deal one each with one thinker. In the last chapter I have analyzed the general pattern of their educational philosophies and how they present rational, liberal, scientific, universal values of education.

Since independence over these six decades India took great strides in education, Science & Technology and all these achievements to some extent owe to our progressive educational policy which has its roots in these six thinkers.

Indian educational thought is also greatly influenced by the profound ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Radha Krishnan and vast literature is available on their contribution. In my study I have excluded these two great thinkers due to limitations of my study.